
EXTENDED PHASE 1 HABITAT SURVEY & DAYTIME BAT SURVEY

LAND OFF FLEETWOOD ROAD,
THORNTON CLEVLEYS,
LANCASHIRE

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Site Information

- 1.1 Rachel Hacking Ecology Limited was commissioned in 2021 by Euro Garages to carry out an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Daytime Bat Survey at land off Fleetwood Road, Anchorsholme, Thornton Cleverly (O.S. grid reference: SD 31492 42221 – see Figure 1). The site currently comprises a petrol filling station surrounded by hardstanding (car parking and access and forecourt), amenity grassland, introduced shrub, trees, ruderal herb and scrub. The site lies within an area of residential and commercial development.

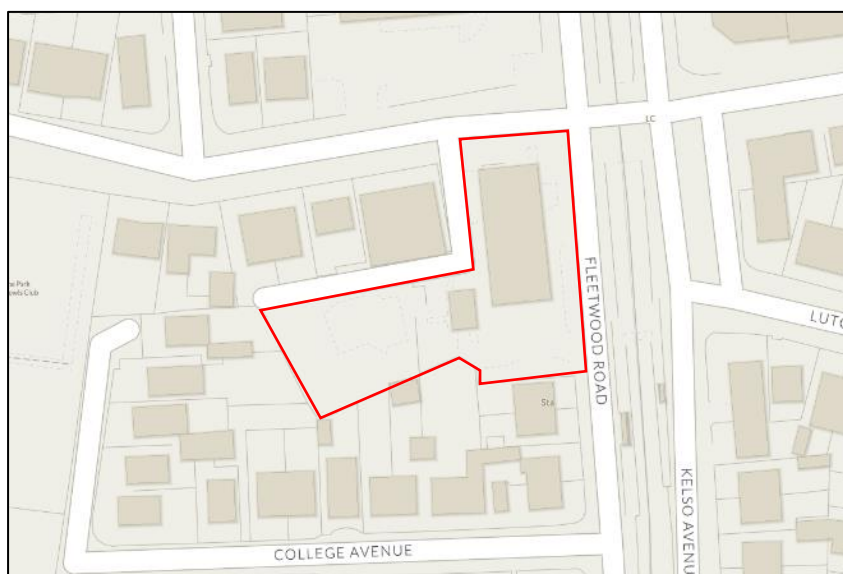


Figure 1 showing the redline boundary of the site

Description of Development

- 1.2 The site will be the subject of a planning application for the demolition and decommissioning of the existing petrol filling station, and linked convenience store, and erection of replacement convenience store and associated works.

Biodiversity in Planning

- 1.3 Biodiversity is a material consideration, and Local Planning Authorities have a requirement to consider biodiversity and protected species when determining planning applications. Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) gives specific reference to minimising the impacts of development on biodiversity. Local and Neighbourhood plans also provide guidance towards protecting and enhancing biodiversity, including priority habitats and notable species.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 2.1 A Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to JNCC standards (JNCC, 2010). The site was walked, and each habitat was assigned a Phase 1 habitat category. Species lists were taken at locations of botanical interest. All botanical nomenclature follows Stace, 2019. A Phase 1 map was produced showing habitat boundaries.
- 2.2 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is required to provide an overview of the habitats present within the site and to assess any potential protected species issues on the site.
- 2.3 During the Extended Phase 1 survey, the habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species. This included, for example, looking for signs of Badger activity (e.g., setts, paths, latrines and hairs on fences), assessing any waterbodies on site or near the site for their potential to support Great Crested Newt and a ground-level assessment of the trees on site for potential bat roost features.
- 2.4 The site was also surveyed for invasive, non-native plant species such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed.

Daytime Bat Survey

- 2.5 A daytime bat survey of the buildings was undertaken to search for, and to assess the potential for, a bat roost within the buildings.
- 2.6 An external assessment was undertaken, which included, for example, looking for gaps between any soffit boards and walls, gaps between window frames and the walls, and looking for bat droppings on the walls and window ledges. An internal assessment was also carried out, with particular focus on gaps in walls, cracks in roof beams, and any evidence of bat activity, such as bat droppings, in the internal spaces.
- 2.7 A ground-level assessment of any trees affected by the proposals was also undertaken. This involved a search for potential roosting features (PRF's), including peeled bark, knot holes and branch splits.
- 2.8 A pair of close-focussing binoculars, a high-powered torch and, where necessary, an endoscopic camera, were used to search for evidence of bats.

Personnel and Seasonal Timing

- 2.9 Ben Crossthwaite (Senior Ecologist) carried out the survey on the 15th December 2021. Ben is an experienced ecologist and is fully trained in Phase 1 surveys and protected species assessments and holds a Natural England Level 2 Class Licence for bats (Ref: 2020-48541-CLS-CLS).

Survey Constraints

- 2.10 December is outside the optimal time of the year for botanical surveys, but given the type of habitats present on site, a thorough assessment could be made for the purposes

of this assessment. Protected species assessments can be undertaken at any time of the year. The weather at the time of the survey was overcast, dry and cool.

3.0 RESULTS

HABITATS

- 3.1 The Phase 1 Habitat Map can be found at the back of the report. The habitats on the proposed development site are described below.

Bare Ground

- 3.2 Bare ground is located across the site consisting of the access points, petrol filling station (PFS) forecourt and some other areas of currently unused bare ground in the western part of the site which have ephemeral/short perennial species establishing around the peripheries and within cracks (see Photograph 1).



Photograph 1 showing an area of bare ground on site

Spoil

- 3.3 A spoil pile consisting of building materials is located on site (see Photograph 2).



Photograph 2 showing the spoil pile on site

Ephemeral/Short Perennial

- 3.4 A small area of ephemeral/short perennial is located in the western part of the site. This has established over hardstanding concrete and is dominated by bryophyte species. Other commonly occurring species are Common Sedge *Carex nigra*, Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Daisy *Bellis perennis*, Cotoneaster and Perennial Sow-thistle *Sonchus arvensis*.

Amenity Grassland

- 3.5 Pockets of amenity grassland occur around the PFS forecourt area (see Photographs 3 and 4). The areas of grassland are mown and species-poor. Dominant species include Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Daisy *Bellis perennis* and White Clover *Trifolium repens*.



Photograph 3 showing the amenity grassland



Photograph 4 showing the amenity grassland

Tall, Ruderal Herb

- 3.6 Tall, ruderal vegetation is across the western part of the site, particularly along the boundaries (see Photograph 5). This habitat is dominated by Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. Other abundant species include Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Cleavers *Galium aparine*, Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Pendulous Sedge *Carex pendula*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*.



Photograph 5 showing the tall, ruderal herb

Scrub

- 3.7 Scrub is present within the western part of the site as both scattered and continuous/dense features (see Photographs 6 and 7). Abundant species are Goat Willow *Salix caprea*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Cotoneaster species, Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., Butterfly Bush *Buddleja davidii* and Rosebay Willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium*.



Photograph 6 showing some of the scattered scrub on site



Photograph 7 showing the area of continuous scrub on site

Introduced Shrub

- 3.8 Shrub beds occur along the southern boundaries of the site, bordering areas of amenity grassland (see Photograph 8). These are mature and support garden varieties such as Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster* var., Hebe species, Viburnum species, Pendulous Sedge *Carex pendula* and Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.



Photograph 8 showing a shrub bed

Existing Buildings

- 3.9 A PFS is located on site. This is described in more detail within the protected species results section. A flat-roofed storage building also exists on site.

Scattered Trees

- 3.10 Scattered trees are located across the western part of the site and along the southern boundary, within an introduced shrub bed (see Photographs 9). Species include Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, Goat Willow *Salix caprea* and Prunus species.



Photograph 9 showing some of the scattered trees

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 3.11 Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a European Protected Species under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (Amendment) (EU Exit) and the species is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

- 3.12 No ponds are located on site or within 250 metres of the site boundary. The site supports limited terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt. However, the areas of ruderal and scrub vegetation offer suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt.

Bats

- 3.13 All bat species are European Protected Species. This is implemented in the UK through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Bats are also protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Daytime Bat Survey

- 3.14 The buildings proposed to be affected by the development were the subject of a daytime bat survey and the results are detailed below.

Petrol Filling Station – External Survey

- 3.15 The building is constructed from brick. The brickwork is complete and in good condition, as is the associated mortar (see Photograph 10). External vents and points at which cables enter through the walls are sealed, creating no gaps or holes.



Photograph 10 showing the exterior of the building

- 3.16 Sections of the exterior are clad with metal and plastic signage (see Photograph 11). The signs are in good condition and free from cracks and gaps.



Photograph 11 showing the exterior of the building

- 3.17 The metal window and door frames are in reasonable condition and are well-sealed to the surrounding masonry. The flat roof is covered with corrugated metal panels. The panels could not be seen externally but the underside of the roof could be seen from the internal space. No access points or water ingress was found, suggesting the roof is well-sealed and in good condition. The metal box cladding that covers the roof edges are in good condition and well-sealed to the top of the walls (see Photograph 12).



Photograph 12 showing the metal box cladding

- 3.18 A small extension is located to the rear of the building (see Photograph 13). This consists of a sealed metal container with no potential entry points found.



Photograph 13 showing the exterior of the building

- 3.19 A canopy covers the forecourt, which is attached to the filling station building. This is constructed from a metal frame and cladding. The frame and cladding panels are in good condition, with no gaps or cracks located (see Photograph 14).



Photograph 14 showing the canopy over the forecourt

[Petrol Filling Station - Internal Survey](#)

- 3.20 The internal spaces of the filling station offer a typical PFS sales building, with shelving, refrigerated units and a payment counter. A small office and storage spaces make up

the rest of the internal space (see Photographs 15 and 16). These spaces are well-finished, with no habitats associated with roosting bats.



Photograph 15 showing the internal space of the petrol filling station



Photograph 16 showing one of the storage rooms

- 3.21 A space is located between the false ceiling and the underside of the roof (see Photograph 17). This was accessed at multiple points by pushing the ceiling tiles upwards. The space consists of many services including lighting and ventilation ducting. The space is very cobwebbed and dusty (see Photograph 18).



Photograph 17 showing the void space



Photograph 18 showing the void space

- 3.22 The interior concrete block walls are in good condition and well-sealed with mortar. The void appears well-sealed as no daylight could be seen around the roof edges. The vents and ducts are well-sealed to the internal walls with expanding foam. No evidence of bat activity was found within the filling station building.

Storage Building

- 3.23 A small, detached, single storey storage building is located on site (see Photograph 19). The masonry is in good condition and well-sealed with mortar with no potential entry points or roosting habitat found (see Photograph 20).



Photograph 19 showing the storage building



Photograph 20 showing the external masonry

- 3.24 The flat roof is covered with roofing felt and stone chipping (see Photograph 21). The felt is in good condition and fitted flush to the roof edges. The roof edges are finished with timber bargeboards. These are showing signs of age, however, are fitted flush to the exterior masonry.



Photograph 21 showing the flat roof

- 3.25 The internal space is heavily used for storage with equipment stacked up to the underside of the roof with no roof void space present (see Photograph 22). The internal masonry is in good condition, as is the associated mortar. No suitable bat roost habitat is present, nor any evidence of bat activity or occupancy found.



Photograph 22 showing the interior of the storage building

- 3.26 A small number of juvenile trees exist on site. These were inspected from the ground for Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) and were found to not support PRFs. Bats use linear landscape features to commute and forage along. The site does not support

linear features, such as hedgerows although it is possible that bats forage along the tree belts on the site boundaries and the area of continuous scrub.

Badger

- 3.27 Badgers *Meles meles* are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These Acts, for example, make it illegal to disturb a Badger whilst it is in a sett, to kill, injure or take a Badger and to obstruct the entrance to a Badger sett.
- 3.28 No Badger sett was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No evidence of Badger activity such as latrines or snuffle holes was located on site.

Nesting Birds

- 3.29 All bird species are protected at their nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 3.30 The trees, continuous scrub and shrub beds offer suitable nesting habitat for birds.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 3.31 Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* occurs on site, within an area of tall, ruderal herb on the southern boundary (see Photograph 23). This is an invasive, non-native species and is listed on Schedule 9 Part II (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it illegal to allow their spread in the wild. The staff on site informed that the Japanese Knotweed has been treated recently.



Photograph 23 showing the stand of Japanese Knotweed

PROTECTED SITES

- 3.32 No statutory protected sites lie on the site or within 2.5km of the site boundary. The nearest statutory protected site is Wyre Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Morecambe Bay and Duddon Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and Morecambe Bay RAMSAR, which is located over 3.5km from the site boundary.
- 3.33 The site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, which lists certain types of development that may have a deleterious impact on protected sites nearby. The type of development proposed is not listed as a concern at this location.
- 3.34 No non-statutory protected sites exist on or adjacent to the site. The nearest non-statutory protected site is Queen's Promenade Coastal Grassland – Blackpool North Shore Boating Pool to Little Bispham Biological Heritage Site (BHS), which lies approximately 270 metres south-west of the site boundary at its nearest point.

4.0 ASSESSMENT

HABITATS

- 4.1 The Phase 1 Habitats present on the site are common throughout the UK. No nationally rare or locally rare plant species were located during the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey.
- 4.2 The site offers moderate ecological value. The trees and dense shrub offer nesting bird habitat. The continuous scrub and ruderal vegetation offer cover and foraging habitat for small mammals and a source of pollen and nectar for invertebrates. The bare ground and amenity grassland offer negligible ecological value.

Development Context

- 4.3 The proposed development will involve the loss of amenity grassland, introduced shrub and tall, ruderal herb habitats. The areas of tall ruderal herb and continuous scrub in the western part of the site are proposed to be retained. It is recommended that species-rich habitats are designed into the scheme, to provide ecological enhancement/biodiversity gain to the site.

PROTECTED SPECIES

Great Crested Newt

- 4.4 No ponds are located on site or within 250 metres of the site boundary. The sites tall, ruderal herb, shrub beds and continuous scrub habitats offer suitable terrestrial habitat for Great Crested Newt. However, due to the lack of breeding habitat in the locality, it is considered Great Crested Newt is unlikely to be present on site. Therefore, Great Crested Newt is not considered to be a constraint on the development.

Bats

- 4.5 The buildings on site have been the subject of a daytime bat survey. The PFS was thoroughly surveyed internally and externally. The building is in good condition and well-sealed. Negligible opportunities were found for bats to enter or exit the building. The external roof and brickwork are intact, with no evidence of bat activity found nor any suitable cavities found. No inaccessible roof voids exist in building. The small storage building is also in good condition with no potential entry points or suitable bat roosting habitat found. It is considered the PFS building, and the small storage building offer negligible bat roost suitability and no further survey work or mitigation is required.
- 4.6 The trees on site do not support PRFs for bats. Therefore, the trees are considered to offer negligible suitability for a bat roost. The boundary tree belts and continuous scrub offer suitable bat foraging and commuting habitat. These habitats are largely proposed to be retained and are located away from any potential light sources.

Badger

- 4.7 No Badger sett or evidence of Badger activity was located on the site or immediately adjacent to the site. Badger is not considered to be a constraint on the proposals at this time.

Nesting Birds

- 4.8 The site supports suitable bird nesting habitat. Nesting birds can be mitigated for by allowing no works to potential nesting habitats to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March – August) unless a nesting bird survey is undertaken first.

INVASIVE SPECIES

- 4.9 Japanese Knotweed is located on site. This species must be removed from the site using a recognised methodology prior to or during site clearance work.

PROTECTED SITES

- 4.10 No statutory or non-statutory protected sites lie within the proposed development site or immediately adjacent to the site. No statutory protected sites lie within 2.5km of the site boundary. The nearest non-statutory protected site is Queen's Promenade Coastal Grassland – Blackpool North Shore Boating Pool to Little Bispham BHS lies 270 metres to the south-west. This does not have habitat connectivity to the site with residential development located between the two sites. It is considered that the proposed development will have no deleterious effect on protected sites.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Further Surveys

5.1 Protected species are a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a planning application. The presence of protected species, the effect of the proposed development and suitable mitigation, if required, must be established before planning permission can be granted. Following the findings from the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey, the following protected species survey is required:

5.2 Depending on the timing of the vegetation clearance, the following survey may be required:

- **Nesting Birds** - If any work to suitable bird nesting habitat needs to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March to August), then a nesting bird survey will be required immediately prior to work commencing.

Protected Species

5.3 If a protected species is found at any time during the development, work must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice.

Invasive Species

5.4 The Japanese Knotweed must be carefully removed from site, using a recognised methodology. This should be digging out and removal off-site to a licensed landfill or digging out and deep burial with a suitable barrier membrane on site.

Biodiversity Enhancement

5.5 During soft landscaping design, the following measures should be implemented to increase the biodiversity value of the site:

- Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.
- Grassland should be species-rich wherever it is created, e.g. wildflower amenity turf.
- Bird boxes and bat boxes should be erected/incorporated onto the new building or retained mature trees.

6.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A – PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP

