

LRP Ecology

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Habitats and Species

Stack View,
Lower Condurrow,
Camborne
Cornwall

March 2024

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CONTENTS PAGE

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY	3
Key Findings:	3
1 INTRODUCTION Background	12
Site Context	12
Legislation	13
2 METHODS	15
Desktop Study	15
Field Survey.....	15
The Valuation of Habitats	16
Survey Constraints	16
3 RESULTS.....	17
Desktop Study	17
Field Survey.....	17
4 ASSESSMENT FOR PROTECTED / NOTABLE SPECIES	21
Badgers	21
Bats	21
Birds	21
Hazel Dormouse.....	21
Reptiles	21
5 PROTECTED SITES ASSESMENT	22
6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MITIGATION AND FURTHER SURVEY	22
Badgers	22
Bats	22
Breeding Birds	23
Habitats	23
7 REFERENCES.....	23

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Sites Designated for Nature Conservation Value

Figure 3: Phase I Habitat Map

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

LRP Ecology was instructed in March 2024 by Laurence Associates to undertake a preliminary ecological appraisal of a land belonging to Stack view, Lower Condurrow Road, Camborne, Cornwall (Grid ref: SW 667 391), in support of a planning application. The survey was undertaken on the 16th of March 2024.

Key Findings:

- There were a limited number of habitats on site, amenity grassland, wooden fences and bare ground, all associated with human habitation, well maintained of low value to wildlife.
- One site designated for nature conservation value is located within 1km of the site, Newton Moor County wildlife site. No impacts are predicted upon the site from the proposals.
- No evidence of protected species was recorded however mitigation is recommended for badgers and bats.
- Open excavations should be covered at night, or a means of escape provided to prevent accidental capture. Any security fencing should be placed a minimum of 2m from the hedgerow.
- Suitable lighting should be used around the site and should be avoided in areas where it will spill onto the boundary and neighboring habitats.
- New nesting and roosting habitats for birds and bats could be incorporated into any buildings to be erected.

1 INTRODUCTION

Background

- 1.1 LRP Ecology was instructed in March 2024 by Laurence Associates to undertake a preliminary ecological appraisal of a land belonging to Stack view, Lower Condurrow Road, Camborne, Cornwall (Grid ref: SW 667 391), in support of a planning application. This report will give a preliminary appraisal of the local ecology of the site (including habitats and protected species) and whether the proposed development will have any potential impact on any designated nature conservation sites in the area.
- 1.2 Current proposals are for the creation of caravan pitches with associated facilities.
- 1.3 The results from this survey are valid for 12 months from the date of the survey. If work has not commenced within this period, an update to the survey will be required.

Survey Aims

- 1.4 The aims of the survey are to provide the local planning authority sufficient information to fully assess the potential ecological impacts by the proposed development and identify, if needed, what further information is required. The survey will:
- Identify and classify the habitats present,
 - Identify if any sites designated for nature conservation (statutory and non-statutory) are present in the area,
 - Assess any ecological constraints to the proposed development,
 - Provide evidence to propose further survey work or mitigation, if required.

Site Context

- 1.5 The site is located within a rural setting approx. 1km south-east of Camborne and 4 km south-west of Redruth in central Cornwall (Fig 1.). The immediate surrounds to the west and east include grazing land bound by well-maintained hedgerows. To the north lies a wooded area whilst to the south lies another area of grassland used for a campsite.
- 1.6 Further afield the landscape is similar, fields of grazing land bound by villages and well-maintained hedgerows, with a small watercourse Red River located 170m east. Evidence of Cambornes industrial past, including patches of lowland heath dotted around the landscape.

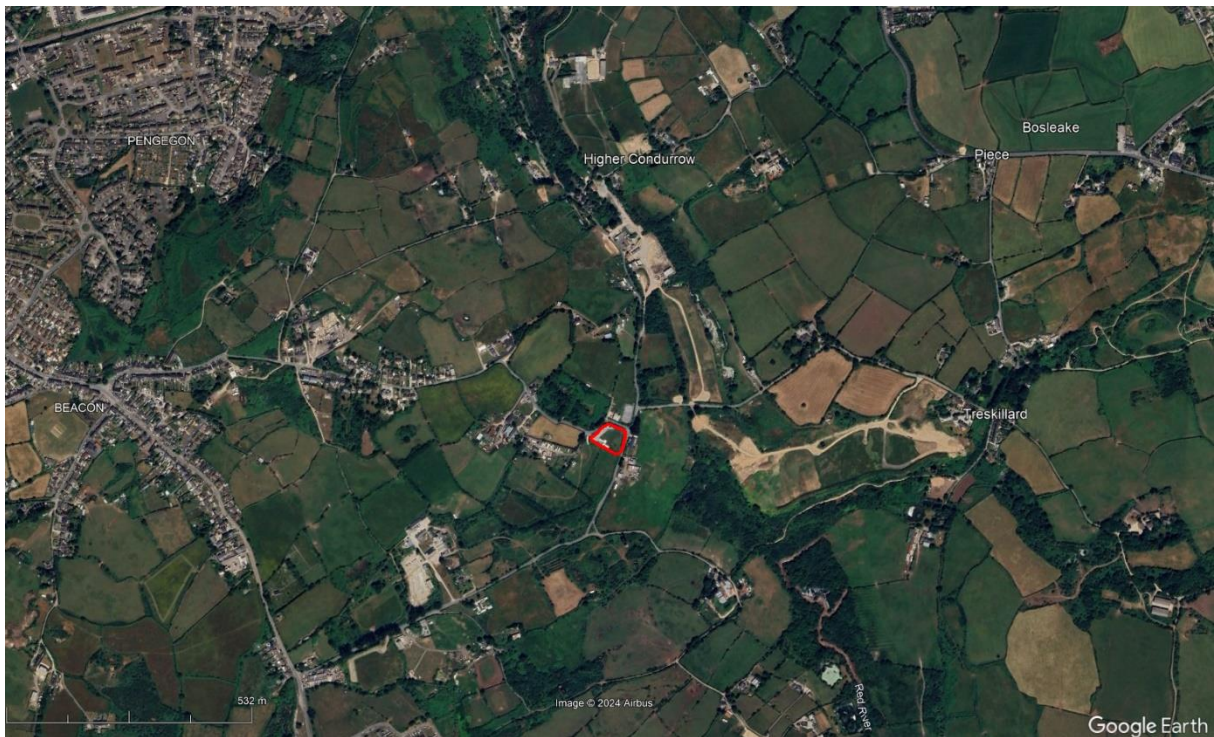


Figure 1. The location of the site surveyed (red line). © Google

Legislation

European Protected Species (EPS)

- 1.7 Protected Species such as the great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*, otter *Lutra lutra*, dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* and all species of British bat (*Vespertilionidae* and *Rhinolophidae*) are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and receive full protection under Section 9. These species are also all listed as European Protected Species (EPS) on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (which implements the EC Directive 92/43/EEC in the United Kingdom) which gives them full protection under Regulation 53.
- 1.8 As a result of this statutory legislation, it is an offence to:
- Deliberately capture, injure or kill an EPS;
 - Intentionally or recklessly disturb an EPS in its place of rest/ breeding Site;
 - Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a EPS place of rest/ breeding Site (even if the EPS is not occupying the resting / breeding place at the time);
 - Possess or sell or exchange an EPS (dead or alive) or part of an EPS.
- 1.9 The great crested newt, otter and seven species of British bat are included as priority

species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and as species of principal importance for the conservation of biological diversity in England the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. This places a requirement for these species to be taken into consideration during the planning process with a view to conserving biodiversity.

- 1.10 It is an offence for anyone intentionally to kill, injure or handle a EPS, to possess a EPS (whether live or dead), disturb the roosting or resting place of a EPS, or sell or offer a EPS for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by EPS for shelter, whether they are present or not.

Breeding birds

- 1.11 All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) from being killed, injured or captured whilst their nests and eggs are protected from being damaged, destroyed or taken. Some birds which are listed under Schedule 1 of the Act, such as barn owl *Tyto alba*, are given additional protection against disturbance.

Badgers

- 1.12 The Badger *Meles meles* is protected in Britain under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and Schedule 6 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The legislation protects Badgers and their setts. As a result it is an offence to:
- Purposely kill, injure or take a badger;
 - Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett;
 - Disturb a badger when occupying a sett.

Reptiles

- 1.13 Adder *Vipera berus*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and grass snake *Natrix Helvetica* are protected under Schedule 5 (section 9(1) and 9(5)) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it an offence to kill and/ or injure reptiles and sell or transport for the purpose of sale. The sand lizard *Lacerta agilis* and smooth snake *Coronella austriaca* are also EPS (see above legal protection of EPS).

Invasive Plants

- 1.14 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 states that if any person plants or otherwise causes to grow in the wild any plant which is included in Part II of Schedule 9, they shall be guilty of an offence. Anyone convicted of an offence under Section 14 of the WCA 1981 may face a fine of £5,000 and/or 6 months imprisonment, or 2 years and/or unlimited fine or indictment.

2 METHODS

Desktop Study

- 2.1 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) comprised of a desk study and a site survey. The desk study is a search of all ecological records and site designations held by the Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS, to 2024) within a 1km radius of the site. These are shown in Figure 2.
- 2.2 In this case, given the small size of the site, the limited impact by proposals and the habitats present, a data search for ecological records was not considered appropriate.
- 2.3 The distance between the site boundary and nearby European and Nationally important sites for nature conservation was measured using MAGIC <http://www.magic.gov.uk> and the Cornwall Council Interactive Map <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/mapping> was used to determine if the site falls within a European site Zone of Influence or close to a County Wildlife Site.

Field Survey

- 2.4 The survey comprised a UK Habitat (UK HAB) Classification Survey and extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the site and wider survey area. The site is defined as all land within the red boundary shown on Figure 1 - 3.
- 2.5 The UK HAB Classification Survey and Phase 1 Habitat Survey identifies the habitats present and their associated plant species (Butcher et al., 2020; JNCC, 2010), and assesses the potential of the site to support protected species. The surveyor also noted down the presence of invasive plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981, as amended) within the site and within c.7m of the site boundary (where access was available), and evidence of badger and otter within the site and within c.30m of the site boundary (where access was available) but a detailed survey for these species/ species groups was not undertaken. Plants were identified according to Stace (1997).
- 2.6 The preliminary visual assessment survey was undertaken on 16th March 2024. There was a light breeze (2 Beaufort Scale), dry and a temperature between 10 - 11°C. Table 1 gives a summary of the surveyor's experience.

Table 1. Surveyor experience

Surveyor	Experience
John Blackburn BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIEEM	Thirteen years' experience in ecological consultancy, undertaking ecological surveys across the UK and abroad. Holds Natural England licences for Bats (level 2) great crested newt, barn owl, hazel dormice and white clawed crayfish. Has prepared and delivered mitigation licences for a wide variety of species and undertaken ECoW projects when required.

The Valuation of Habitats

- 2.7 The ecological value of habitats present is provided in line with Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (CIEEM, 2018), and those which are important in terms of legislation or policy are identified.
- 2.8 The nature conservation value, or potential value, of the habitat is determined within the following geographic context:
- **International** importance (e.g. internationally designated sites such as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar sites);
 - **National** importance (e.g. nationally designated sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or species populations of importance in the UK context);
 - **County** importance (e.g. Sites of Nature Conservation Value, habitats and species populations of importance in the context of Cornwall);
 - **Local** importance (e.g. important ecological features such as old hedges, woodlands, ponds);
 - **Site** importance (e.g. habitat mosaic of grassland and scrub which may support a diversity of common wildlife species);
 - **Negligible** importance. Usually applied to areas such as built development or areas of intensive agricultural land.

Survey Constraints

- 2.9 All areas of the site were readily accessible. Although some plant species would have not been visible during the survey period, within such a small, simple site comprising common and widespread habitat types, the timing of this survey is not a significant constraint to a robust initial site assessment.

3 RESULTS

Desktop Study

Sites of Nature Conservation Value

- 3.1 Within 1 km of the site there are no statutory sites of nature conservation value. The site does not lie within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone.
- 3.2 There is one non-statutory site of nature conservation value within 1 km of the site. This is the Newton Moor County Wildlife Site 160m east of the site. The location of this site is shown on Figure 2.

Field Survey

Site Overview

- 3.3 The site comprises of a single grassland field bound by wooden fencing. Hard standing is present in the north-west corner which serves as a driveway. Two small buildings (a small wooden shed and a caravan) is present onsite, these are to be retained.

Habitats Recorded

- 3.4 A total of three habitats were recorded on-site. These are listed below, with both the Phase I classification and the UK Habitats classification. A species list for each habitat is provided in appendix 1. The location of the habitats are shown on Figure 3.

Amenity Grassland (J1.2 / UK Hab: g3c, Secondary code: 66)

- 3.5 The site is dominated by short amenity grassland dominated by Yorkshire fog, red fescue and perennial ryegrass, at the time of survey there were some areas of bare earth. Vegetation was limited and restricted to ruderal plant species such as broad-leaved dock which was abundant in the sward. This habitat is of **Site** value.

Bare Ground (J4 / UK Hab: Secondary code: 89)

- 3.6 In the north-western extent of the site lies a small area of hard standing comprising of loose stone. This was sparsely vegetated. This habitat is considered to be of **Site** value.

Fence (J2.4 / UK Hab: 69)

- 3.7 High wooden fencing forms the borders of the site. No vegetation is present. This habitat is considered to be of **Site** value.



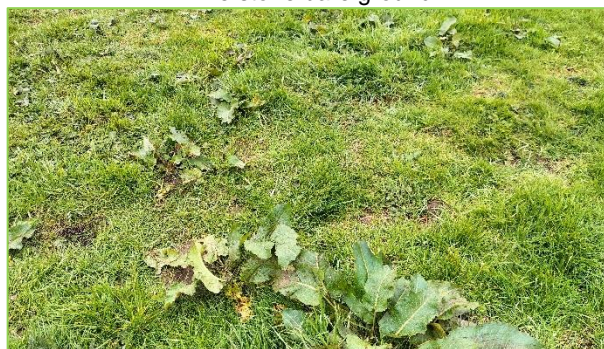
The site viewed from the north



The stone bare ground



The site looking south.



The amenity grassland that covers the site.



 **Site Boundary**

 **Newton Moor County Wildlife Site**

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Stack View, Lower Condurrow Road
Camborne, Cornwall

SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION VALUE

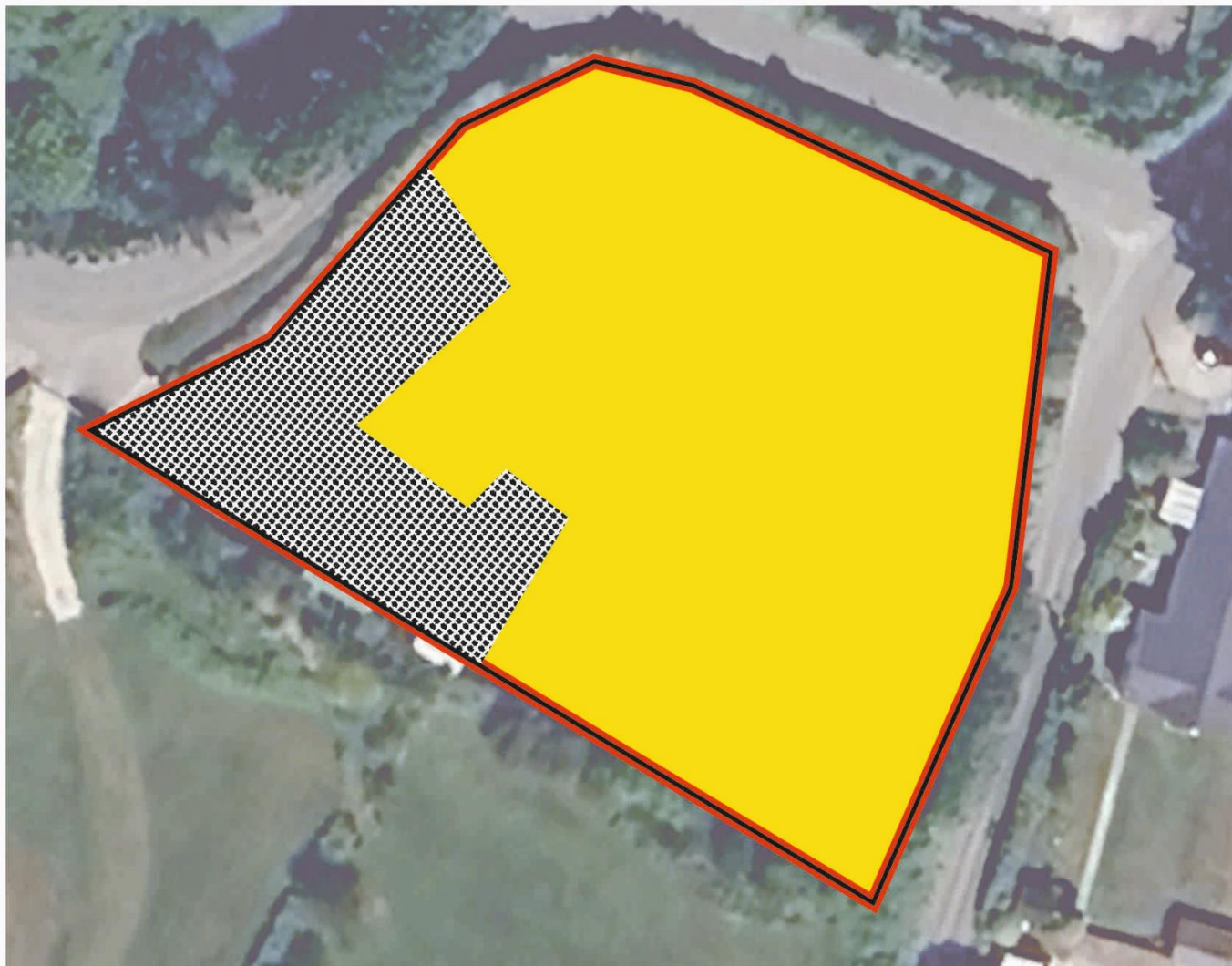
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JWB /

17/03/24



Figure 2.



-  Site Boundary
-  Amenity Grassland
-  Bare Ground
-  Wooden Fence

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Stack View, Lower Condurrow Road
Camborne, Cornwall

PHASE I HABITAT PLAN



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JWB /

17/03/24

Figure 3.

4 ASSESSMENT FOR PROTECTED / NOTABLE SPECIES

- 4.1 No evidence of protected or notable species was recorded during the survey. Their presence or absence are discussed below.

Badgers

- 4.2 No evidence of badgers nor setts were recorded within the site nor within 30m of the site. The site offers limited foraging habitat to badgers. It is possible they are present in the local landscape however the tall fencing prevents access onto the site.

Bats

- 4.3 The site does not provide any suitable roost sites (such as buildings or trees) therefore are not considered to be roosting on site.
- 4.4 The grassland field is of limited value to bats. More suitable foraging and commuting habitat is present in the wider area to the north.
- 4.5 In accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023) the site was assessed as being of 'negligible' suitability for foraging and commuting bats.

Birds

- 4.6 No evidence of nesting birds was recorded, including ground nesting species such as skylark. There is very little vegetation to support a nest – the grassland is well maintained and too short for ground nesting species. No nesting birds are expected on site.

Hazel Dormouse

- 4.7 No hedgerows or woodland is present on site, therefore this species is considered absent.

Reptiles

- 4.8 The site offers no habitat to reptiles. The grassland sward is too short, leaving any reptiles open to predation. The fence is also likely to prevent reptiles coming onto the

site. Reptiles are considered to be absent from the site.

5 PROTECTED SITES ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 One site of nature conservation value is present in the local area – Newton Moor County Wildlife Site. The proposals may lead to a small increase footfall into the area however there is no direct access from the site to the County Wildlife Site. Likewise the County Wildlife Site has existing public trails through it that will be used by the new residents. No impacts are predicted on the county wildlife site from the proposed development.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MITIGATION AND FURTHER SURVEY

Badgers

- 6.1 The site is secure against badgers wandering onto the site however it is recommended that any open excavations are covered at night, or a means of escape provided to prevent accidental capture.

Bats

- 6.2 As the site has no roosting features for bats, no further survey work is required. The site was classified as having 'negligible' value to bats, the loss of the grassland field is unlikely to impact the local bat population given more suitable habitat in the area. Therefore, bat activity transects are not considered proportionate to the very low level of risk to foraging and commuting bats posed by this small development.
- 6.3 It is possible that light adverse bats may use the site occasionally therefore precautionary lighting measures are recommended. This should include:
- Motion sensor security lighting with a time limit switch
 - The use of directional hoods to prevent light spill onto the boundary habitats.
 - Avoid the use of lighting close to the boundaries.
 - Low pressure sodium or warm white LED lights.
- 6.4 The biodiversity value of the site for roosting bats post-development could be enhanced by installing bat boxes onto the built fabric of the development.
- 6.5 Suitable products are available from www.nhbs.com, www.wildcareshop.com and www.greenandblue.co.uk

Breeding Birds

- 6.6 New bird nesting opportunities could be provided through the inclusion of bird boxes around the site.

Habitats

- 6.7 No protected or notable habitats were recorded however the site could be improved for wildlife. Any ornamental beds should use native species, ideally flowering or berry/fruit bearing species.

7 REFERENCES

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