

## Extended Phase one survey report

**For:** JVN Architecture

**Site:** Land off Hill Street,  
Elsecar, Barnsley, S74

**Date:** November 2012

**Surveying Ecologist:**  
Natasha Estrada BSc (Hons), MRes, MIEEM

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## **Ecological Survey Report for: JVN Architecture**

**Site:** Land off Hill Street, Elsecar, Barnsley, S74

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### **Summary:**

Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this report and its contents in view of potential ecological constraints to development or the likely presence or absence of species it must only be viewed as a snap shot in time and therefore not be viewed as definitive. Due to external factors such as seasonality, weather etc having the potential to affect survey results no liability can be assumed for omissions or changes that may or may not occur after the date this report was produced.



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## **1.0 Introduction and Background to the Site**

- 1.1** Estrada Ecology Ltd was commissioned by JVN Architecture to complete an extended Phase I survey on land off Hill Street, Elsecar, Barnsley.
- 1.2** The survey site is located off Hill Street with the central OS grid reference as SE 38130 00375.
- 1.3** The survey was commissioned in order to assess the site for its ecological value and to identify any potential constraints to development.
- 1.4** The survey encompasses the site and a 1Km radius.

## **2.0 Relevant Legislation & approximate Policy**

**2.1** Relevant legislation includes the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which states that all birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law. Special considerations for Schedule 1 birds and European protected species should be made.

**2.2** The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 implement the European Habitats Directive on conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild fauna and flora.



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### **3.0 Survey and Site Assessment**

#### **3.1 Status of species in the local / regional area**

A record search was commissioned from Sheffield City Council Ecology Unit for archive data for designated sites and species of conservation concern and or legal protection at a national, regional and local level. The data search was conducted within a 1km radius of the site boundary.

#### **3.2 Objectives of the survey**

The objective of this survey was to establish the potential of the site to support species and habitats of ecological importance and or legal protection.

#### **3.3 Site description**

The survey site is a floristically diverse scrub filled former quarried area, with some piles of rubble and areas of hard standing. There is an escarpment on the southern side of the site, bounded on the north by a railway line and solid palisade fencing, and agricultural land to the south. The western and eastern boundaries are roads, and are not currently fenced.

Although there are no water bodies present on the site itself, a neighbouring private property has ponds within its boundary, within 500m of the site.

### **4.0 Survey Methodology**

**4.1** The survey area was investigated on foot to ascertain habitats on site and their potential to support ecological diversity. All habitats present were classified according to standard Phase 1 categories. Target notes were written where explanation of habitat features was deemed necessary and where potentially important features were identified using standard Phase 1 Habitat survey methodology (JNCC, 2003).

**4.2** In addition to general habitat classification a botanical species list was also compiled.



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**4.3 Habitats and features with potential to support protected and/or conservation priority faunal species, together with any field signs of such species, were recorded on the field map using target notes. A search was undertaken for the following key habitats and/ or field signs for protected or conservation priority species highlighted in Table 1.**

**Table 1:** Key habitats and field signs or protected and priority species

Taxon	Indicative habitats	Field signs
Bats	Roosts - Trees, buildings, bridges caves etc. Foraging areas - e.g. parkland, water bodies and streams, wetlands, woodland edge, hedgerow Commuting routes - linear features e.g. hedgerows	In or on potential roost sites: Droppings stuck to walls; urine spotting in roof spaces; oil from fur staining round roost entrances; feeding remains e.g. moth wing
Great crested newt	Ponds within 500 m of suitable habitat within the site boundary  Suitable(terrestrial) habitat includes rough grassland, scrub and woodland, log and rubble piles and other debris	Eggs, Individuals of all life stages  Egg rolled plants.
Reptiles	Rough grassland, log and rubble piles	Sloughed skins
Birds	Trees, scrub, hedgerow, field margins, grassland	Nests; droppings below nest sites (especially in buildings or trees); tree holes
Badger	Found in most rural and many urban habitats	Excavations and tracks: sett entrances, latrines, hairs, well worn paths; prints
Water Vole	Water bodies/water courses	Burrow entrances; prints; latrine areas; faeces; feeding stations

#### 4.4 Timing

The surveys were conducted on dates during November 2012.

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## 4.5 Weather conditions

All surveys were carried out in suitable weather conditions as outlined by Natural England guidelines.

## 4.6 Personnel

The survey was carried out by ecologist Natasha Estrada BSc (hons), MRes, who is a full member of The Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MIEEM).

## 5.0 Results

### 5.1 Habitat Descriptions

#### 5.1.1 Overview

The site is situated off Hill Street, Elsecar, Barnsley, adjacent to a railway line, residential housing and agricultural land. The site comprises of a former quarried area with piles of rubble and some hard standing, surrounded by woodland, scrub and floristically diverse open areas.

**Figure 1:** The survey site highlighted in red.



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## 5.2 Habitats

### 5.2.1 Woodland and scrub

Parts of the site are dominated by hawthorn, *Cretageus monogyna*, elder, *Sambucus nigra*, silver birch *Betula pendula*, goat willow, *Salix caprea* and buddleia *Buddleja daviddii* scrub.

Other larger trees present are oak *Quercus spp.*, beech *Fagus sylvatica*, horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* and walnut *Juglans regia*. Bracken is present on the drier areas, and garden plants dominate the dumped rubble piles.

### 5.2.2 Open areas

In the open areas and escarpment floral diversity increases significantly and comprises regionally common species. The escarpment on the southern side in particular offers potential for basking reptile such as snakes.

Details of flora species recorded can be found in Appendix four.

### 5.2.3 Streams, ditches and ponds

There are no watercourses on the site, although a privately owned residence within 500m of the site has ponds within its boundary.

## 5.3 Designated sites

There are no designated sites within a 1km radius of the site.

## 5.4 Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife Trust Reserves:

One site was recorded within the search area at the extreme southern radius of 1km from the site: Elsecar Reservoir LNR. Only part of the LNR lies within the search area.

## 5.5 Non Statutory sites:

Local wildlife sites are known by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough as Natural Heritage Sites.

One was recorded within the search area at the extreme southern radius of 1km from the site: Elsecar Reservoir. Only part of the site lies within the search area.

## 5.6 Protected species:

Relevant protected and conservation priority taxa likely to present a constraint to development are listed in Table 2.

Inclusion in this table is based upon:

- 1, Presence of suitable habitat for a species and a national distribution which suggests its presence is likely;
- 2, Confirmed field evidence of individual species (e.g. badger setts)
- 3, Records returned during the desk study, which confirm the presence of the species in the local area (within a 1km radius).

It must be noted that the majority of records of protected species listed in the desk study are from Elsecar Reservoir, and therefore would have little impact on the development of this site.

**Table 2:** Protected species records within the vicinity of the site

Species	Legal Protection/ Conservation Priority Status	Present in Desk Study Results	Suitable Habitat Within or Near Site	Evidence in or near site	Notes
Kingfisher	WCA BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 1990, Elsecar Reservoir
Goldeneye	WCA BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 1997, Elsecar Reservoir

Black necked grebe	WCA BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 1989, Elsecar Reservoir
Great spotted woodpecker	BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 2009, 'Barnsley'
Lesser spotted woodpecker	BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 1998, Elsecar Reservoir
Swallow	BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 2001, Elsecar Reservoir
House martin	BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 2001, Elsecar reservoir
Red kite	WCA BERN	Yes	No	No	Record from 2012, Elsecar
Fieldfare	WCA	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 1996, Hoyland
Sparrowhawk	BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 2009, 'Barnsley'
Common tern	BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 2007, Elsecar Reservoir
Redwing	WCA	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 1996, Elsecar Reservoir
Daubentons bat	WCA BONN HD CNHR LBAP BERN	Yes	No	No	Record from 1985 Elsecar Reservoir
Leislars bat	WCA BONN HD CNHR LBAP BERN	Yes	No	No	Record from 1985 Elsecar Reservoir
Robin	BERN BD	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2009, Barnsley
Blackcap	BERN BD	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2009, 'Barnsley'
Wren	BERN BD	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2009, Barnsley
Marsh tit	BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 2009, Barnsley
Willow tit	BERN BD	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2005 Elsecar reservoir
Long tailed tit	BERN BD	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2009, Barnsley
Blue tit	BERN BD	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2009, Barnsley
Great tit	BERN BD	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2009, Barnsley
Coal tit	BERN BD	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2009, Barnsley
Lesser whitethroat	BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 1998, Elsecar
Lapwing	LBAP BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 1988, 1989, 2000, Elsecar Reservoir

Grasshopper warbler	LBAP BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 2012, Elsecar Reservoir
Reed bunting	LBAP BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 2000, 2001, 2005, Elsecar Reservoir
Yellow wagtail	LBAP BERN BD	Yes	No	No	Record from 1979, Elsecar Reservoir
House Sparrow	LBAP BERN	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 2008, 2009, 'Barnsley'
Cuckoo	LBAP BD UKBAP	Yes	Yes	No	Limited habitat. Record from 2007, Elsecar Reservoir
Harvest mouse	LBAP	Yes	No	No	Record from 2000 nr Kings Wood, 1995, Elsecar Reservoir
Hedgehog	LBAP	Yes	Yes	No	Record from 1984 nr Hoyland

HD- Habitats Directive

UK BAP- UK Biodiversity Action Plan

WCA- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

CNHR- The Conservation of natural habitats regulations

BERN- The Bern convention on biodiversity

BONN- The Bonn Convention on Biodiversity

BD- The Birds Directive

LBAP- Local Biodiversity Action Plan

## 6.0 Discussion and recommendations

### 6.1 Designated sites

The survey produced no evidence to suggest casual, infrequent or historical use of the site by species of conservation concern. No impact on statutory and non statutory sites is predicted under current proposals.

### 6.2 Habitats

The Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan lists 'Open mosaic habitats on Previously Developed Land' as part of the habitats to be conserved within the area (See Appendix eleven for further details), often supporting unusual assemblages of species. However, the habitats on this particular site were mainly common, containing plant species and assemblages which are widespread, with limited intrinsic conservation value.

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There is greater floristic diversity within the open grassland areas of the site.

Areas of scrub provide greater potential to support ecological diversity if they are managed.

Where retained the scrub should be actively managed to increase biodiversity via thinning of the canopy and opening up the under storey and field layers.

Retaining a buffer strip of scrub around the sites perimeter will aid the retention of local biodiversity. Any areas that cannot be retained should be replaced, in order to achieve 'no net loss' in the longer term. Such measures can include plantings of species of local provenance on other areas of the site.

### **6.3 Species**

#### **6.3.1 Amphibians**

There are no watercourses or ditches present on the site, although there are ponds with 500m of the site in an adjacent property. As a result it is recommended that further surveys for great crested newt and other amphibians are undertaken to determine the presence/absence of the species on the site.

#### **6.3.2 Reptiles**

Areas of tussocky grassland, particularly where located next to scrub or scattered woodland, have potential to support reptiles, namely adder *Vipera berus*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, and slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*. Basking sites include sunny open south facing slopes such as the escarpment found on the southern side of the site.

Throughout the surveys no field signs to indicate the presence of reptiles were recorded. However, the site has great potential to be used by reptiles, and further survey is recommended.

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### **6.3.3 Birds**

Many of the areas of scrub within the site provide potential nesting habitat for a range of birds. No Schedule one species were recorded during the surveys.

It is therefore recommended that site clearance works affecting vegetation are not undertaken during the main breeding bird season (typically March- August inclusive). If this is not possible due to development timescales it is recommended that a survey conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist is conducted immediately prior to vegetation removal. If any active nests are found these should be protected during activity and a suitable buffer zone left until the nesting attempt is complete.

### **6.3.4 Water vole**

No field signs to indicate the presence of the species were recorded during the survey. There are no ditches and ponds on the site thus failing to provide suitable Water vole habitat and no signs of occupation and or breeding were recorded.

### **6.3.5 Badger**

No signs of badger were recorded during the survey. Whilst the species is highly mobile occupation and presence on site is largely eliminated by permanent palisade fencing surrounding the site. No signs to indicate Badger undermining this fencing were recorded during the survey. No records exist for Badger within the vicinity of the site.

### **6.3.6 Bats**

The woodland and scrub area contains limited roosting potential for bats but some suitable foraging potential. Where possible some scrub should be retained in order to provide foraging opportunities for bat species of local provenance.

The site is not deemed to be of importance for bat species of local provenance.

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## 7.0 Ecological constraints

**7.1** No ecological constraints prevented a thorough survey of the site.

## 8.0 Assessment of Impacts

**8.1** The proposed development of the survey site is unlikely to have a negative impact on species of concern and those afforded legal protection if recommendations are followed.

## 9.0 Summary

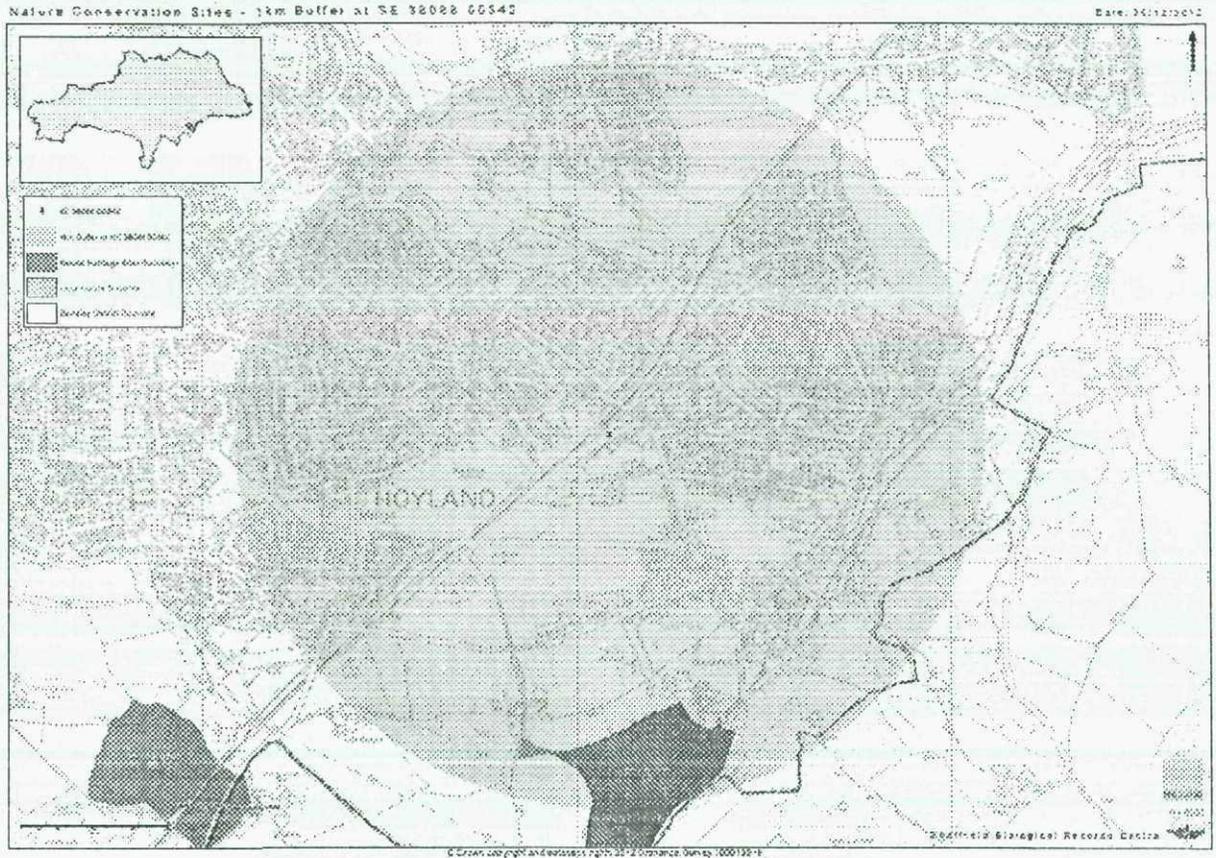
**9.1** The ecological issues pertaining to the proposed development and the associated recommendations for further survey and mitigation are summarised in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Ecological issues summary

Species	Potential development impacts	Further survey requirements	Timing of survey	Conclusions
Trees/ Scrub	Removing habitats of potential conservation value	NVC	N/A	Features that cannot be retained should be replaced in landscape plans.
Reptiles	Removal of habitats and basking areas, disturbance to reptiles such as snakes	Reptile survey	March - Sept	Retain suitable habitat for reptiles identified to be using the site.
Amphibians	Disturbance and harm to amphibians including great crested newts.	Presence/absence survey of ponds and area needed due to presence of ponds on adjacent land within 500m of site	March - June	Retain suitable habitat if amphibians identified to be using the site, or if cannot be retained, should be provided in landscape plans.

Birds	Disturbance of breeding birds and destruction of nests.	Breeding bird survey needed and check immediately prior to work if development occurring between March-Sept	March - August	Provide a buffer zone around active nests until the breeding attempt is complete.
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## Appendix two: wildlife sites within a 1km radius of the site.





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**Appendix four: Plant species recorded on site**

<b>Species list, Hill Street, Elsecar, Barnsley Grid ref: SE38130 00375</b>	
Common name	Latin name
<b>Trees</b>	
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>
Common Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Common Walnut	<i>Juglans regia</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Horse Chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Oak	<i>Quercus spp.</i>
Goat willow (Pussy Willow)	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
<b>Flora</b>	
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>
Broom	<i>Sarothamnus scoparius</i>
Burdock	<i>Arctium minus</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Common Chamomile	<i>Chamaemelum nobile</i>
Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster spp.</i>
Silverweed	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale agg.</i>
Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Dog Rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Fat Hen	<i>Chenopodium album</i>
Golden Rod	<i>Solidago virgaurea</i>
Gorse	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>
Large Bindweed	<i>Calystegia sylvatica</i>
Greater Plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
Lady Fern	<i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>
Long headed Poppy	<i>Papaver dubium</i>
Lungwort	<i>Pulmonaria officinalis</i>

Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Poppy	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>
Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobea</i>
Red Clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Red Valerian	<i>Centranthus ruber</i>
Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Rosebay Willow Herb	<i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>
Sneezewort	<i>Achillea ptarmica</i>
Spurge	<i>Euphorbia spp.</i>
Spear Thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Teasel	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>
Thistle	<i>Cirsium spp.</i>
White Bryony	<i>Bryonia dioica</i>
Scented Mayweed	<i>Matricaria recutita</i>
Groundsel	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>
<b>Spoil Pile-Common Garden Plants</b>	
Antirrhinum	
Nicotiana	
Poppy	
Sedum	



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**Appendix Five: Bird species recorded on site**

<b>Common name</b>	<b>Latin name</b>
European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>



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**Appendix six:** view of escarpment with suitable basking sites for reptiles



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**Appendix seven:** an example of the many rubble piles spread around the site



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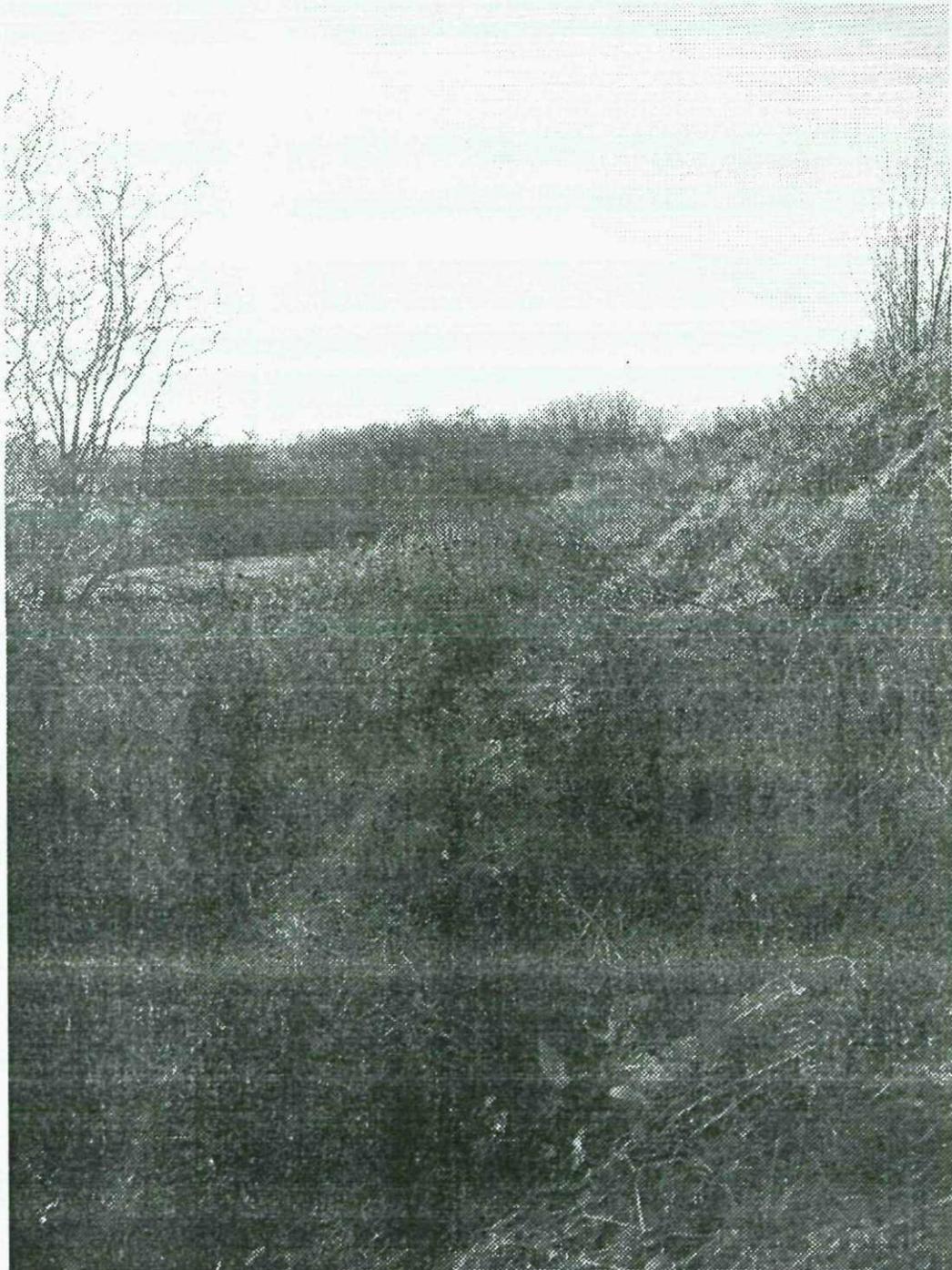
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**Appendix eight:** Dense scrub cover on the site



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**Appendix nine: view to the north of the site**

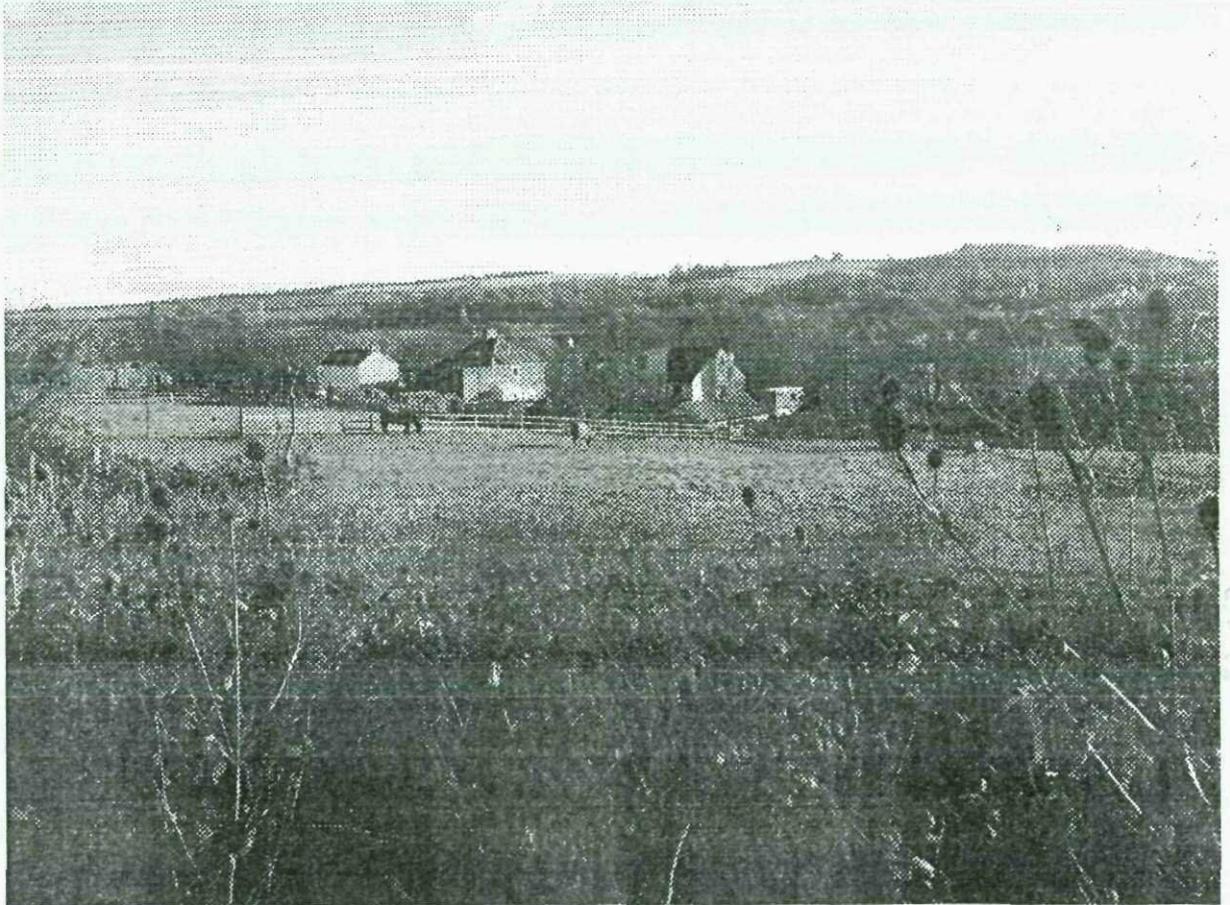


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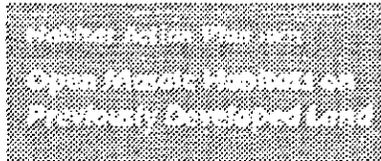
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**Appendix ten: view of land surrounding the site**



## Appendix eleven: Extract from Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan



### Present pattern

This habitat includes former industrial land such as former colliery sites, closed railways, mineral and slag dumps, urban gardens, allotments, road verges and public open spaces which form a very specific non-use for wildlife. Individual areas are small, but cumulatively provide an area far in excess of that of nature reserves. Indeed the combined area for building and mining areas is greater than the area of agricultural habitats in Barnsley.

Post-industrial land, such as spoil heaps, is barren and nutrient deficient. Colonising vegetation is therefore often sparse and monotonous. Natural opportunities of both natural and introduced plants occur on some sites, and often in surprising locations, due to the introduction of alien soils and other materials by railway ballast. This habitat is important for Brambling Fleets and also for other invertebrates.

Within built-up areas there are important natural sites, such as ancient woodland or meadows. It is increasingly apparent that there are also recognisable natural urban habitats which develop on waste ground and derelict sites. Often these contain a mix of native and alien introduced species such as *Rudbeckia*, creating a very diverse vegetation. However, even within these sites many people think only opportunistly in regard to the importance of biodiversity.

### National Status

The local significance of this habitat, when reproduced at national level, must be of a very great importance. Demand for nature building land is high so that increasing pressure on the countryside and wider garden communities could in any way replace lost habitats, it can provide a very significant resource for many common and numerous species.

### List of Status

Barnsley has a total area of 21,825ha and from one third of built-up and mining land is 7,250ha, being that the total for all the semi-natural habitats in Barnsley but vegetation.

Although semi-natural areas comprise only a landscape equivalent to a very small percentage of the total area, habitats within these areas do comprise species such as Little Ringed Plover and other species. Due to agricultural intensification, these habitats also offer the last remaining habitat for many species such as Brambling Fleets and others.

### Legal Status

Some species within this habitat have legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 that listed in the Nature Conservation Act 1994 as National Heritage Sites (NHS) have a protection against development but have no protection against operations which do not require planning consent.

Some areas will be protected by Town and Country Planning (TCPA) or policies relating to Green Infrastructure.

### Links with other Action Plans

Many of the species within this habitat are found in urban areas. These include:

- SAC1: Hedgehog
- SAC2: Bat
- SAC3: Water Vole
- SAC4: Grey Heron
- SAC5: Kestrel
- SAC6: Little Ringed Plover
- SAC7: Lapwing
- SAC8: Barn Owl
- SAC9: Sparrow
- SAC10: Tree Sparrow
- SAC11: Great Crested Newt
- SAC12: Otter
- SAC13: Grey Sturgeon

Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan



clarity in development plan. Local Development Frameworks  
 ensure that new developments from a new release to targeted  
 development usually contribute to biodiversity issues that  
 are appropriate to the standing of the relevant biodiversity  
 it is as a direct consequence of development opportunity  
 nature should be provided.

Where development is to be carried out in a location that is of  
 biodiversity value, the following measures should be taken:  
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provision and operational arrangements are reviewed at the  
 instance and importance of brown field land being developed  
 and not developed sites.

**BABC Development Control Actions**

• Through planning controls, ensure that viable networks of  
 wildlife sites and corridors are maintained to all urban areas.  
 Such opportunities as arise should be taken to enhance  
 improved development.

• Maximize the biodiversity value of existing standing and  
 developing schemes by using locally native species and  
 incorporating measures such as tall trees, where possible.

• Ensure that new developments review the management of existing  
 urban green spaces - this to include Council owned public  
 open space, highway and churchyards and land in private  
 ownership such as business parks and factory grounds.

• Where appropriate, improve site management to  
 retain suitable habitats for wildlife.

• Review management of public green space, industrial sites  
 and facilities to provide suitable undisturbed grassland  
 habitat for relevant BAP species.

**BABC Building Control Actions**

• Review the impact proposals will have on wildlife before any  
 work is undertaken and where necessary forward building  
 Control regulations.

**BABC Land Ownership and Management Actions**

• Review specifications for ground maintenance works in the  
 interests of successful conservation.

• Plan to the street and roadside an appropriate public open  
 space and in the urban fringe.

• Ensure Local Authority takes an onward contract to  
 take habitat management actions.

• Prepare a strategy for the management of allotments and  
 their integration with nature conservation.

• In appropriate areas of woodland provide open space, develop  
 areas for recreation and recreation to reduce the area of  
 woodland of grassland area of primary forest habitats  
 to encourage the creation of biodiversity rich and pocket  
 wildlife sites in existing urban industrial grounds etc.

• Include biodiversity and sustainable practice in all public  
 management plans by 2014.

• Provide guidance on the management of domestic and rural  
 gardens.

• Review management of public green space, industrial sites  
 and facilities to provide suitable undisturbed grassland  
 habitat for wildlife.

• Continue to work in partnership with Council Housing and  
 Property to maintain biodiversity potential of existing BABC  
 managed local authority sites etc.

Biodiversity Action Plan 2014-2020



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