



ALDHAM BRIDGE, WOMBWELL.

OS REF: SE 386 044.

**PHASE 1 HABITAT AND PROTECTED SPECIES
SURVEY.**

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1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. A planning application is being prepared by Riesholm Investments Ltd. to develop an area at Aldham Bridge, Wombwell.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a phase 1 habitat survey of the site to establish whether there are any issues that may affect the proposed works.

1.3. The initial site survey was carried out on 4th March 2014 and this report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations. A further site visit was undertaken on 14th January 2015 and this showed there had been n significant changes in site circumstances.

1.4. Appendices I to III of this report provide additional information on specific species and are designed to assist the reader to understand the contents of this report.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. Prior to visiting the site the survey area was cross referenced to maps and aerial photographs to give a general idea of the habitats and potential issues within the area and to identify potential access and walking routes.

2.2. The survey area and immediate surrounding area was thoroughly searched for evidence of badger (*Meles meles*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989). *Surveying Badgers*. Mammal Society:-

- * Badger setts.
- * Badger latrines or dung pits.
- * Badger snuffle holes and evidence of foraging.
- * Badger paths.
- * Badger prints in areas of soft mud.
- * Badger hairs caught on fencing.

2.3. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 50m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) activity by looking for the following signs, in line with Rob Strachan, Tom Moorhouse and Merryl Gelling (2011). *Water Vole Handbook: Third Edition*:-

- * Water vole burrows.
- * Water vole faeces and latrines.
- * Water vole feeding stations.
- * Water vole runs.
- * Water vole prints in areas of soft mud.
- * Water vole lawns.
- * Predator field signs.

2.4. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 50m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of otter (*Lutra lutra*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with the P Chanin (2003). *Monitoring the Otter and Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers: Monitoring Series No10 Guidelines*:-

- * Otter prints in soft mud.
- * Otter spraints.
- * Otter Holts.

2.5. The survey area was searched for mature trees and derelict buildings and where found these were checked for potential bat roosting sites in line with L Hundt (2012). *Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines* by looking for the following signs:-

- * Holes, cracks or crevices.
- * Bat Droppings.

2.6. The land immediately adjacent to the survey area was assessed for bat roosting potential and bat foraging potential. Connective routes and flight lines were also assessed whilst on site and using maps of the area.

2.7. The area within 500m of the survey site was cross referenced to maps to highlight all ponds close to the site. Where possible, all ponds identified were accessed using agreed access or public rights of way to assess the potential for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) to be present.

2.8. The survey area was searched for watercourses and waterbodies and where found all watercourses and waterbodies within the survey area and for approximately 50m in each direction were thoroughly searched for the presence of crayfish where safe to enter the water. The survey was carried out in accordance with the *Conserving Natural 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No 1, Protocol for Monitoring the White Clawed Crayfish*.

2.9. The survey area was assessed for the potential for reptiles and suitable reptile habitats. Where applicable the area was also searched for the presence of reptiles.

2.10. All surveys were carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) survey standards and advice.

2.11. This survey was carried out by Laura Hobbs BSc MRes. Since 2013 Laura has had experience in a professional capacity carrying out ecology, protected species and phase 1 habitat surveys. Laura holds degrees in Zoology (BSc) and Evolutionary Biology (MRes), and has completed numerous professional courses run by National Biodiversity Network (NBN), Field Studies Council, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (and others) in relation to protected species and phase 1 habitat survey methodologies and has completed a traineeship with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust focussing on conservation methods for water voles.

2.12. This survey was also carried out by Ruth Georgiou BSc MCIEEM. Since 2004 Ruth has had experience in a professional capacity as a Wildlife Consultant carrying out ecology surveys and phase I habitat surveys. As a full member of CIEEM Ruth is subject to peer review on an annual basis. Ruth holds Natural England survey licences in respect of bats, great crested newts, white clawed crayfish and barn owls and has held her own or has been

named ecologist on site specific licences for badgers, great crested newts and bats. She also holds a degree in Environmental Science (BSc) and has successfully completed a number of courses run by CIEEM, BCT and FSC in the relative protected species, carrying out phase I habitat surveys and BREEAM assessments.

3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. Barnsley Biological Records Centre was contacted for records of protected sites and species within 1km of the survey area.

3.1.2. The results show that there are records of a badger sett within 700m of the survey area and water voles within 900m of the survey area.

3.1.3. No bat roosts have been recorded within 1km of the survey area.

3.1.4. The MAGIC website shows that Stairfoot Brickworks is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) 550m to the northwest of the survey area and BAP priority habitat deciduous woodland was found within the survey area. This area includes the south corner of the site and the disused railway bank along the north east of the site.



Figure 1. Red outline shows survey area in relation to SSSI (black outline) and national BAP habitats (deciduous woodland depicted in green).

3.1.5. A copy of the desktop data search results are provided in Appendix V of this report.

3.2. The Surveyed Area.

3.2.1. The survey area is located on the northwest edge of Wombwell, on the north bank of the River Dove. The survey area is surrounded by a built up region with residential and business areas to the north and south; to the east is a local BAP habitat of deciduous woodland, past this and to the west are open arable and pastoral fields, areas of scrub and woodland. 550m to the northwest of the survey area is an SSSI (Stairfoot Brickworks).

3.2.2. Below is an aerial map of the survey area and some of its surrounding area, with the limits of the survey area indicated by the red line. The buildings within the survey area have been allocated letter references for the purpose of this report.

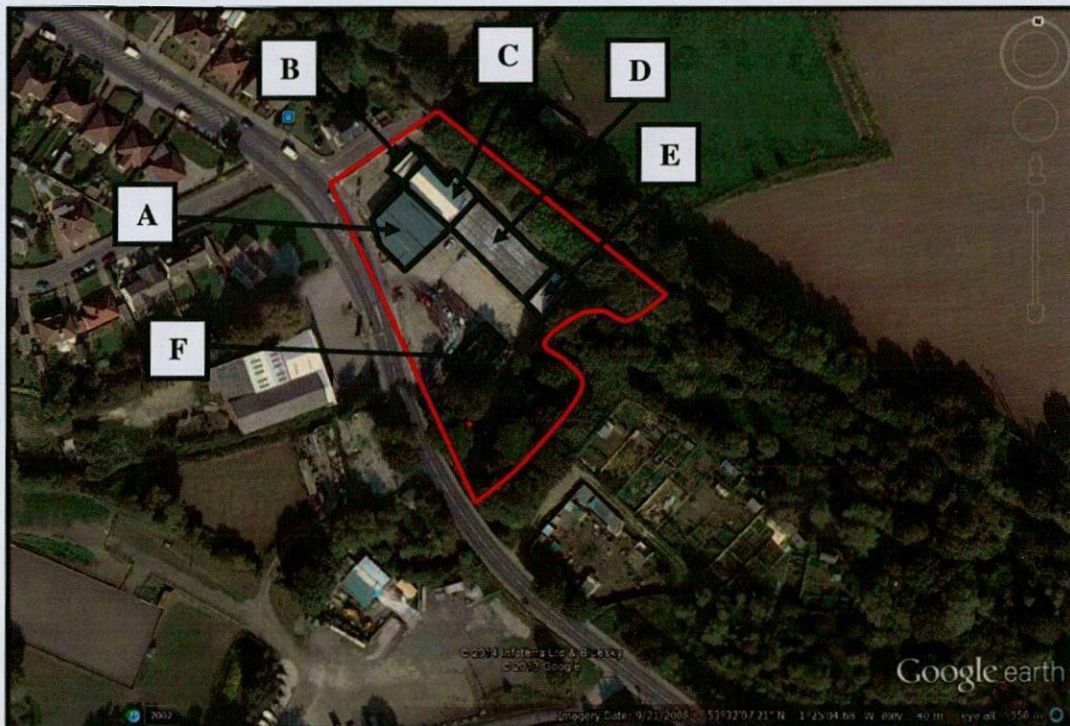


Figure 2. Map of survey site and surrounding area.

3.2.3. The site is predominately hard standing bare ground with two brick buildings, one porta- cabin and a canopy over the northern section of the forecourt. The eastern and southern boundaries are boarded by deciduous woodland, with the River Dove running alongside the southern boundary.

3.3. Description of Habitats.

3.3.1. Appendix IV of this report contains annotated maps with the various habitats found within and adjacent to the survey area. These include:

- Buildings
- Amenity Grassland
- Dense Scrub
- Broad Leaved Deciduous Woodland
- Improved Grassland
- Running Water

3.3.2. Buildings and Hard Standing

3.3.2.1. Building A is located on the northern boundary of the site and consists of brick walls lined with corrugated sheets, a breeze block back wall and the front facing wall comprises mesh gates, wooden doors and brick. It had a flat corrugated roof with clear panels visible. All walls appear to be tightly sealed.

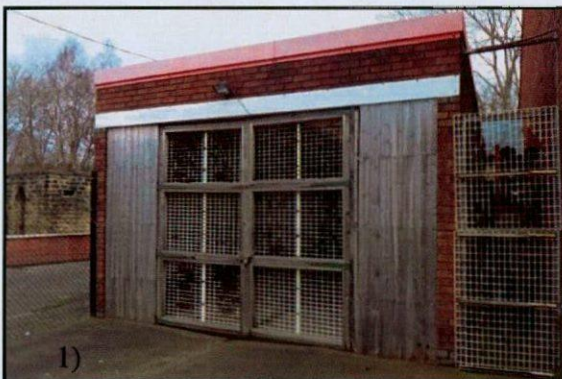
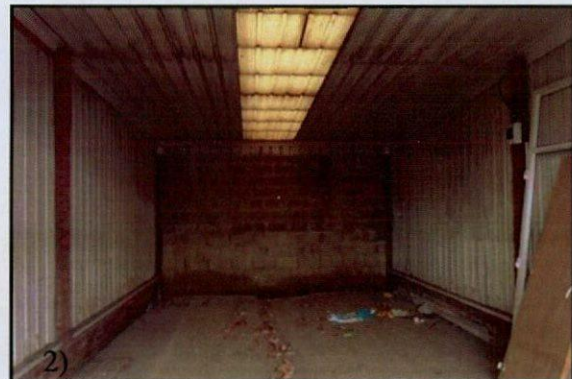


Figure 3. 1) External and 2) Internal features of Building A.

3.3.2.2. Building B is a single story brick/breeze block building with cavity walls, a pitched corrugated roof with a metal ridge and a large roof space containing supporting wooden beams. All windows are boarded up securely. Internal features include a suspended ceiling with small welfare rooms containing plastered ceilings.

