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**BASELINE ECOLOGICAL AUDIT OF LAND ASSOCIATED  
WITH KETTLE LAND OFF  
MILL LANE  
HAWKINGE  
KENT  
OCTOBER 2012**



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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This report contains the results of a baseline ecological audit of The Kettle land off Mill Lane, Hawkinge in Kent. The survey and report was commissioned by Pentland Homes Ltd, Folkestone.

The site walkover/ecological survey was carried out by Sean McMinn from Marsh Environmental on the 19th October 2012, a suitably qualified ecologist who is licensed by Natural England for the following, protected species:

- Birds
- Bats
- Great Crested Newts

## **2. SITE DESCRIPTION**

The Kettle land is located just off Mill Lane in Hawkinge and is bounded by The Street to the North and Denys Road to the south west.

The site is an area of approximately 2 acres and consists mostly of amenity grassland bordered by some mature hedgerow and areas of overgrown scrub. There is also a pond at the northwest sector of the site that is dry and overgrown with bramble and nettle scrub. There are three derelict buildings on site an area of woodland at the northern boundary (outside the boundary line). The site is surrounded by dwellings and gardens along the boundary lines to the south, east and west.

The site is located at grid reference: TR 621616 140033

### **SCHEME DESCRIPTION**

The proposal is for a new housing development.

**FIGURE 1: KETTLE LAND LOCATION AND SURVEY AREA BOUNDARY**



### **3. METHODOLOGY**

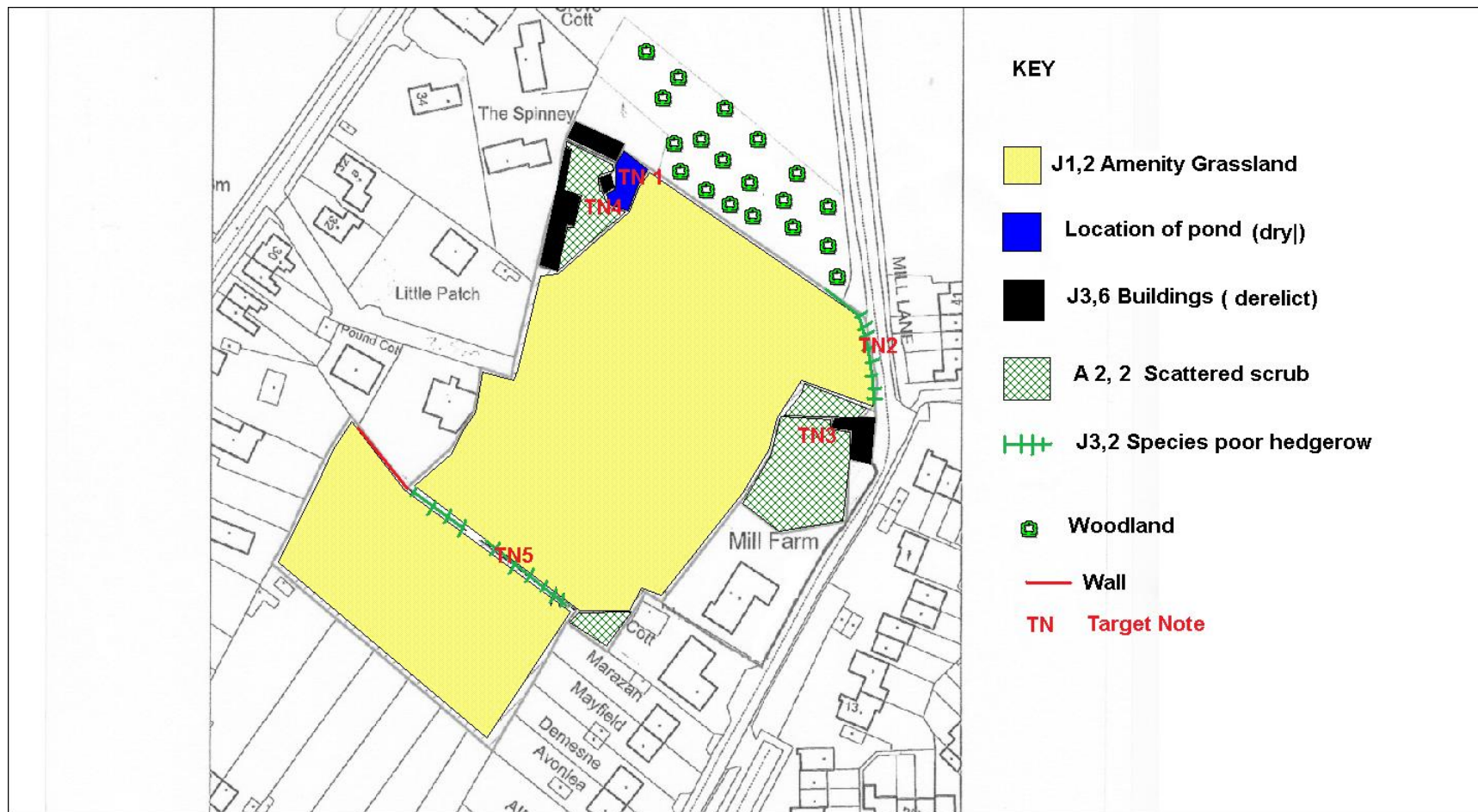
#### **Site Survey**

A Phase 1 ecological audit of The Kettle land off Mill Lane, Hawkinge, Kent was undertaken on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2012. The survey area concentrated on the land as defined in red on figure 1.

All habitats were described as standard Phase 1 classification (Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 2010, Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey). A basic habitat plan illustrates the results in figure 2.



**FIGURE 2: PHASE 1 SURVEY HABITAT MAP**



## 4. RESULTS – WHAT WE FOUND

### Objectives

The objectives of this commission were to:

1. Conduct a baseline ecological survey and appraisal of the above site and identify notable factors/features;
2. prepare a 'Phase 1' Habitat Map with Target Notes to recognised standards;
3. produce a written summary of results;
4. provide appropriate recommendations for mitigation, biodiversity protection/ enhancement, etc.

### Limitations

It should be noted that, whilst the investigation of the site was appropriately intensive within the intended framework of the commission, and we feel it is unlikely that significant matters have been overlooked, a single visit will inevitably miss species not apparent on the date of survey by reason of seasonality, mobility, habits or chance. The month of October is within the sub-optimal survey period for many taxa of nature conservation interest in this part of the United Kingdom

ITEM	OBSERVATIONS
<b>Habitats &amp; vegetation</b> (NB. Please be aware that several designated habitat types and many plants enjoy legal protection in Britain.)	
General description	The site is an area of approximately 2 acres and consists mostly of amenity grassland (perennial ryegrass) bordered by some mature hedgerow (hawthorn) and areas of overgrown scrub (bramble/nettle). There is also a pond at the northwest sector of the site that is dry and overgrown with bramble and nettle scrub. There are three derelict buildings on site an area of woodland at the northern boundary (outside the boundary line). The site is surrounded by dwellings and gardens along the boundary lines to the south, east and west.
Target Note (TN) 1 (for location of TNs please see plan above)	Location of pond that is overgrown with bramble and nettle scrub. The pond is dry and is thought to have been dry for some years
TN 2 & 5	Hawthorn dominated hedgerow at TN2. The hedgerow at TN5 is fragmented. Both are species poor, however there is breeding bird potential, particularly in the hedge at TN2.
TN 3 & 4	Areas of scattered bramble and nettle scrub that have some potential to support breeding birds



ITEM	OBSERVATIONS
Statutory designations (on/near)	<p><u>Information from MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside)</u></p> <p>Information on this site from MAGIC (<a href="http://www.magic.gov.uk">www.magic.gov.uk</a>) is as follows:</p> <p>There are no Statutory designated site within 1km of the Kettle Land.</p>
Non-statutory designations (on/near)	<p><u>Information from MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside)</u></p> <p>Information on this site from MAGIC (<a href="http://www.magic.gov.uk">www.magic.gov.uk</a>) is as follows:</p> <p>There are no Non Statutory sites within 1km of the Kettle Land.</p>
Notable hedgerows, woodland or scrub	None present on site.
Ecologically notable trees (e.g. veteran, wildlife significant) <sup>1</sup>	No veteran or wildlife significant trees on site. However there are some veteran / wildlife significant trees in adjacent woodland
Ponds/water courses	There is a single pond in the northwest corner of the site that is currently dry and overgrown with bramble scrub. The pond appears to have been dry and overgrown for a number of years.
Notable communities	None observed on site.
Notable vascular plants	None observed on site.
Notable bryophytes	None present on site.
Notable lichens	None present on site.
Notable fungi	None present on site.
Other notable habitats/vegetation	None.
Features that should be retained	N/A
<b>Mammals</b> (NB. Several species and their habitats have very strict protection in British/European law.)	
Badger	None observed on site and no field signs. However they are considered likely to occur in the general area
Otter	None observed: No suitable habitat exists.

<sup>1</sup> Please note that we do not check TPO status as this is a landscape/amenity planning classification.

ITEM	OBSERVATIONS
Other mustelids	None observed.
Bats	No trees or buildings on site were identified as having the potential to support roosting bats. Incidental foraging over the site by bats may occur.
Water vole	None present on site, no suitable habitats.
Common or hazel dormouse	None present on site, no suitable habitats.
Deer	None observed, no suitable habitat.
Hedgehog	May use the site for foraging as suitable habitat exists.
Shrews	May use the site for foraging/breeding as suitable habitat exists.
Others	Other small mammals such as voles, rats and mice may use the site for foraging/breeding as suitable habitat exists. Evidence of fox was found during the survey.
<b>Birds</b> (NB. With the exception of eleven derogated pest or very common species, the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 and amendments) gives protection to all wild birds in Britain from killing, injuring or taking as well as taking, damaging or destroying nests in use or being built, and taking or destroying eggs. Many species are also protected by European and international statutes. <sup>2</sup> )	
Red list	Song thrush a red list species were observed on the site during the survey.
Amber list	Dunnock was recorded on site.
Active nests	No active nests found. However it is thought that a few of the common garden species may use the site to breed as suitable breeding bird habitat is present along hedgerow and scrub present on site.
Other	Woodpigeon, blackbird, blue tit, long tailed tit magpie, and chaffinch present on site. There are likely to be a greater range of bird species in the general area.
<b>Herpetofauna</b> (NB. The grass snake, slow-worm, viviparous (common) lizard and adder (viper) are all protected from intentional killing and injury under Schedule 5, Section 9(1), of the Wildlife and Countryside Act as amended/reinforced by the CROW Act 2000. They are also protected under Schedule 5, Section 9(5) which prohibits selling, offering for sale, possessing or transporting for the purpose of sale, or advertising for sale, any live or dead animal, or any part of, or anything derived from the species. Other species and their habitats have stricter protection at national and European levels. )	
Adder	None, however they may occur as they are known in the general area.
Grass snake	None observed, however likely as suitable habitat exists.

<sup>2</sup> Please also see [http://www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/birdguide/status\\_explained.aspx](http://www.rspb.org.uk/wildlife/birdguide/status_explained.aspx) and <http://www.bto.org/sites/default/files/u38/downloads/home-news/2011-11/SUKB%202011%20final.pdf> for red and amber lists etc., and explanations.

ITEM	OBSERVATIONS
Slow-worm	None observed , however likely as suitable habitat exists
Common lizard	None observed although suitable habitat exists
Rarer reptiles	None (not found in this area).
Great crested newt	None observed and considered unlikely as no suitable ponds exist.
Natterjack toad	No (not found in this area).
Other amphibia	Likely as there is suitable habitat on site
<b>Fish</b>	
Significant fishery	None present on site.
Bullhead	None.
Shad	None.
Lampreys	None.
Salmonids	None.
Other notable fish	None.
<b>Macro-invertebrates</b> (NB. Several species enjoy legal protection.)	
Notable assemblage (terrestrial)	None present or indicated on site.
Notable assemblage (aquatic)	None.
Crayfish	None present as there are no suitable aquatic habitats.
Roman snail	None observed.
Lesser silver water-beetle	None.
Stag beetle	None.
Mining bees	None observed on site or signs of them.

ITEM	OBSERVATIONS
Other notable spp or groups	None present on site.
Notable invertebrate habitat	None present on site.
<b>“Invasive” species</b> (There are an increasing number of these being listed by authorities, some subject to regulatory control.)	
Japanese knotweed (or related <i>Fallopia</i> spp.)	None present on site.
Giant hogweed	None present on site.
Himalayan balsam	None present on site.
Tree-of-heaven	None present on site.
New Zealand pigmyweed	None present on site.
Floating pennywort	None present on site.
Parrot’s feather	None present on site.
Water fern ( <i>Azolla</i> )	None present on site.
Weeds Act natives (common ragwort, creeping and spear thistles, curled and broad-leaved docks)	Spear thistles and broad leaved dock present on site.
Other exotics that may cause problems such as <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> , <i>Buddleia davidii</i> .	None present on site.
Invasive animals (signal crayfish, killer shrimp, oak processionary moth, harlequin ladybird, zebra mussel, grey squirrel <i>etc.</i> )	None.
<i>Phytophthora ramorum</i> and other serious plant diseases (sudden oak death, <i>etc.</i> )	None observed on site.
<b>Policy</b>	

ITEM	OBSERVATIONS
Are there any known conflicts with local planning biodiversity policy	N/A
Are there any known conflicts with national planning biodiversity policy	N/A
Are there any known conflicts with European or international biodiversity policy	N/A

GEOLOGICAL CONSERVATION (Geodiversity is a material planning consideration)	YES/NO	ACTION REQUIRED IF "YES"
Are there any features of geological importance on the development site?	No	
Are there any features of geological importance adjacent to the development site or that might be affected by the development (during or post construction)?	No	

### FIGURE 3: PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF KETTLE LAND HAWKINGE

**View northwest**



**View north**



**View southwest**



**Overgrown pond**



**Southwest boundary**



**View west and wall**



**Wall and species poor hedge**



**Fragmented hedge (at TN5 )**



**View eastwards**





## 5.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reptiles/Amphibians - The site is identified as having high potential to support reptiles and amphibians. Therefore it is recommended that to comply with wildlife law and current best practice a reptile survey be undertaken to assess the population at the site, and to inform a mitigation strategy should significant populations be found. Surveys should be undertaken at the optimum time of the year, March- May and August – October.
2. Birds – The site has a medium-high potential to support breeding and feeding birds and as such tree or scrub clearance should be undertaken outside the bird breeding season (March – August). If this is not possible then it is recommended that a suitable qualified ecologist checks the site for any active nests before commencement of site clearance.
3. Formally instruct contractors and site personnel on agreed policies, recommendations and requirements to maintain environmental quality and minimise impacts during any proposed construction, generally avoiding unnecessary disturbance and pollution.
4. Provide all Construction personnel with relevant Ecological Tool Box Talks prior to the commencement of any works on the site.
5. If possible, use native planting (preferably of local origin) in all landscaping. Where exotic species are planted, always avoid invasive species and choose those with wildlife value such as for nectar or shelter.
6. In compliance with National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 125, avoid unnecessary negative impacts of new lighting at night, *e.g.* on bats, invertebrates, plants, astronomy. Minimise the hours when lighting is used, avoid "spillage" by using directional down-lighting, reduce brightness of necessary illumination and keep light from shining on bat roost entries, mammal holes, *etc.*

### CONCLUSION

Providing the recommendations noted herein are fully implemented, there are no obvious ecological counter indications to the proposed project at this stage.

## 6. REFERENCES

Kent Biodiversity Action Plan.

IEEM (2006). Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the United Kingdom.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A Technique for Environmental Audit. JNCC, Peterborough.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2003) *Herpetofauna Worker Manual*, JNCC, Peterborough.

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