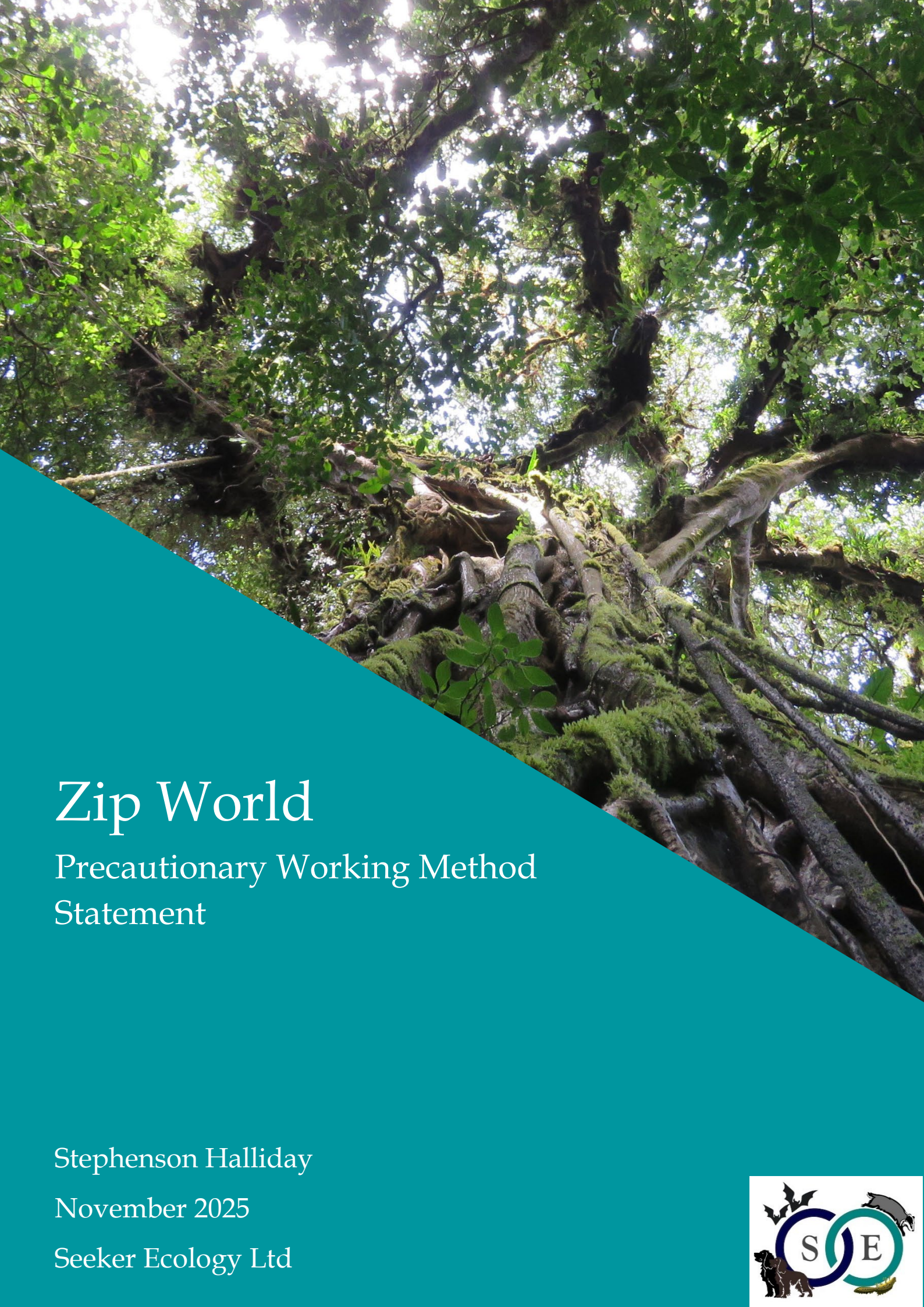




Zip World

Precautionary Working Method Statement

Stephenson Halliday

November 2025

Seeker Ecology Ltd



Quality Assurance

Report For:

Prepared for:	Prepared by:
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Table of Contents

1. Introduction1

1.1 Background1

1.2 Purpose of this Report1

1.3 Development1

1.4 Aims & Objectives.....1

1.5 Previous Ecology Reports and Surveys1

1.6 Existing Site Habitats and Species.2

2. Measures to Avoid or Reduce Impacts during Site Clearance Works.....3

3. Measures to Avoid or Reduce Impacts During Construction.....4

4. Ecology Survey Periods.....5

Appendix A - Figures7

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan7

Figure 2 – Proposed Development Plan.....7

Appendix B - PWMS Posters8

TABLES

- Table 4-1 – Ecology Survey Calendar
- Table 4-2 – Ecology Mitigation Calendar

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Seeker Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Stephenson Halliday (hereafter referred to as 'The Client'), to produce a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) for an area of land (hereafter referred to as 'the Site'), located in Heaton Park, St Margaret's Rd, Manchester M25 2GT, approximate central National Grid Reference (NGR): SD 82903 04495.

1.2 Purpose of this Report

This PWMS has been produced to discharge Planning Condition 8 associated with the planning permission Ref: 2023/0195 for the development described below.

The Condition states:

"Condition 8) Prior to any earthworks or vegetation clearance, a precautionary working measures method statement for mammals and amphibians shall be submitted to and agreed in writing by the City Council as Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be implemented in accordance with the agreed details."

Reason - To ensure the protection of habitat of species that are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 or as subsequently amended and to comply with policy EN15 of the Manchester Core Strategy, policies JP-G6 and JP-G8 of Places for Everyone and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)."

1.3 Development

The development involves the expansion of the Zip World Attraction, which includes the creation/installation of slides that will run through the Site. See Figure 1, **Appendix A** for the Site location plan, alongside Figure 2, **Appendix A** for the proposed slide design.

1.4 Aims & Objectives

The primary purpose of this report is to outline a working methodology and timings for Site clearance works to protect amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals.

The document also provides protection measures to be undertaken both during the Site clearance works and the construction phase.

1.5 Previous Ecology Reports and Surveys

The following previous reports for the Site were reviewed to identify the ecological constraints to inform this document:

- Dave Bentley Entomological and Ecologist Services (2025) [Extended Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Statement on Biodiversity Net Gain and Biodiversity Net Gain Plan and Condition Assessment](#). Version 2.1

1.6 Existing Site Habitats and Species.

The Site habitats comprise woodland, individual trees and bare ground, with areas of invasive non-native plant species in certain areas of the Site and wider areas. The ground flora and some shrub species within the woodland, including two individual trees will be lost due to the development.

The Site was considered to provide some limited suitability for badgers, bats, birds, common and widespread species of invertebrates, hedgehogs, fox and rabbit, smooth newt, common frog, common toad, with other species potentially present within the wider areas including common reptiles.

The development proposals were considered to have the potential to impact as well as potential injury to nesting birds, small mammals and amphibians during the Site clearance and construction phases of the proposed development.

Mitigation measures recommended included good working practices during construction, a sensitive lighting scheme, a pre-works check for badger setts and the production of a Wildlife Mitigation and Ecological Enhancement Measures Plan¹ to detail all mitigation and enhancement measures.

No suitability for roosting bats was identified within the trees on-Site and therefore it is not considered necessary for measures regarding roosting bats to be provided within this method statement.

¹ Seeker Ecology Ltd (2025) *Wildlife Mitigation and Ecological Enhancement Measures Plan*. Zip World Ltd.

2. Measures to Avoid or Reduce Impacts during Site Clearance Works

The following impacts and associated mitigation measures are relevant for nesting birds, amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals which could be impacted by the Site clearance and vegetation clearance works.

A working methodology including measures to protect nesting birds, small mammals and amphibians during the vegetation and Site clearance phase of the development has been provided below.

All nesting bird species receive legal protection during nesting. It is therefore advised that all vegetation removal is undertaken outside of the active breeding bird season, generally considered to be between March and August (inclusive).

Prior to undertaking vegetation clearance works, within the breeding bird season, a nesting bird check would be undertaken 24 hours before the commencement of the works by a suitability qualified ecologist (SQE). Any active bird nests will be retained unaffected with a 5m exclusion zone installed until the chicks have fledged the nest.

Other habitats situated within the woodland, such as log piles, dense leaf litter, dead trees/standing monoliths etc. will be inspected by an SQE and in some cases hand searched and demolished prior to works commencing. These works will be undertaken within 24-hours prior to the works being undertaken during suitable day/nocturnal weather and temperatures. This is to enable any disturbed amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals present to disperse. Once the 24-hour period has elapsed, a further check may be necessary by the SQE prior to vegetation / material removal.

During the Site clearance works, all cuttings will be removed from the works footprint to prevent the creation of suitable refugia for amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals. Where accumulation of vegetation does occur, the vegetation will be hand searched by an SQE prior to removal from Site.

All cuttings and brash will be used to create refugia piles (outside of the works footprint) to encourage occupation by nesting birds, amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals. These refugia piles will be fenced off with barrier tape to ensure no disturbance occurs during the construction period and to prevent accidental interference by members of the public.

Under no circumstances will birds, amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals be chased or handled by inexperienced personnel, unless the animal is in immediate danger. Any instances of emergency handling or injury/fatalities should be reported to the SQE immediately.

Where birds, amphibians, hedgehogs or other small mammal is encountered or becomes entrapped in the working footprint/trenching etc. the SQE will be contacted in the first instance to provide advice.

If a hedgehog is found during works, it will be left in situ and recovered with vegetation, as dependant on the times of year, advice may differ. This is due to the risks associated with disturbance of hedgehogs during hibernation or when they have young, as disturbance during these periods can lead to mortality. If the SQE is uncontactable for any reason, the British Hedgehog Preservation Society should be contacted for further advice Tel: 01584 890 801.

3. Measures to Avoid or Reduce Impacts During Construction

The following impacts and associated mitigation measures are relevant to nesting birds, amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals which may be impacted by the construction works.

Construction workers will be made aware of the potential presence of nesting birds, amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals within the Site during the pre-start toolbox talk delivered during the Site induction. At this time, they will be asked to sign a register to show that they have attended and understood the methods to be deployed on-Site regarding nesting birds, amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals.

Good practice measures during construction will be implemented at the Site to prevent amphibians and reptiles becoming trapped within open excavations or injured as a result of the proposed works:

- mammal ladders (such as a wooden plank) or earth ramps to be placed in any open excavations at the end of each day;
- any open pipework to be capped overnight to prevent mammals from accessing the pipe work and becoming stuck;
- excavations to be checked each morning and evening for the presence of trapped animals;
- materials to be stored off the ground on pallets to prevent reptiles and amphibians utilising any materials as refuge;
- night work should be avoided where possible, and any flood lighting should face away from the designated wildlife corridor; and,
- any chemicals or machinery to be stored in a secure compound.

Where any amphibians, hedgehogs and other small mammals are encountered or become entrapped, the SQE will be contacted in the first instance to provide advice.

4. Ecology Survey Periods

Key periods to avoid or undertake specific tasks, such as vegetation clearance are best undertaken when outside of the key dates. Table 4-1 captures ecological survey periods, whereas Table 4-2 captures the ecological mitigation periods.

In terms of the works occurring on Site, the key elements to avoid is the nesting bird season, to reduce potential program delays, and undertaking destructive hand searches (by the SQE) of any refugia, log /brash piles etc.

Table 4-1 – Ecology Survey Calendar

Survey Timing	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Phase 1 Habitat survey												
Detailed botanical survey						Peak Botanical Season						
Badger												
Bats Survey Season												
Bat Roost Potential	Hibernation Roosts					Survey licence needed to disturb roosts					Hibernation Roosts	
Breeding birds												
Winter and Passage birds												
Reptiles												
Amphibians - eDNA					eDNA Sampling							
Amphibians - Traditional					Pond Surveys	Other less effective detection methods may be possible						
Water voles												
Hazel dormouse				Nest box & tube surveys ~ April to September					Nut search ~ August to November			
Otter												
Pine marten												
Red squirrel												

Table 4-2 – Ecology Mitigation Calendar

Mitigation Timing	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Badger (sett closure)		Licensed exclusion under extenuating circumstances						Badger exclusion licensing season				
Bats (works on Hibernation roosts)							Under Licence					
Bats (works on Maternity roosts)			Under Licence							Under Licence		
Reptiles					Habitat Manipulation ~ March to September							
					Translocation ~ April to September							
Hazel dormouse						Habitat Manipulation						
						Translocation under Licence						
Amphibians (newts)					Translocation under Licence							
Nesting birds	Vegetation Clearance									Vegetation Clearance		
Water vole			Displacement									
			Trapping under Licence							Trapping under Licence		



Appendices



Appendix A - Figures

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

Figure 2 – Proposed Development Plan

Appendix B - PWMS Posters

PWMS Poster: Badgers

What are Badgers and how do I recognise them?

A large mammal which can grow up to 1m in length, with a short stout body, with grey/black fur and characteristic black and white striped face.

Where would I find a badger sett?

Badgers live in group called a ‘clan’ and live in many different environments from woodland, farmland, railway and road embankments, mines/caves, refuse tips, earth embankments and hollow trees.

Badgers live within underground tunnel systems called ‘Setts’. The entrance holes of the sett are composed of a rounded ‘D’ shape entrance, often with significant soil heaps and well-worn paths.



Badger Sett Entrance



Badger

Legislation

Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes ‘It is an offence to wilfully kill, injury or take a badger, or recklessly damage or obstruct access to a badger sett or disturb a badger in its sett’.

Please Note: It is not illegal to carry out disturbance activities in the vicinity of setts that are not occupied.

If a badger or a new badger sett is found on Site, all works must cease in that area and advice should be obtained from one of the following ecologists:	
Point of contact whilst on Site:	Martin Cooling-Green – 07566 790076
Alternatively, please contact:	Steph Cooling-Green – 07759 3580511

Precautionary Method of Working

No works can occur within 30m of a badger sett / badger couch and/or any new sett that may be found during the pre-commencement checks, without the supervision/advise of an ecologist.

Immediately prior to the commencement of works on Site, a suitably qualified ecologist will undertake a walkover of the working footprint to check for the presence of any setts that may have been excavated since the completion of the previous badger survey.

Assuming no new badger setts are located within or adjacent (within 30m) to the works area then works can proceed. If an unrecorded badger sett is discovered within or adjacent to the area of works, further advice as to how best to proceed shall be provided.

To safeguard any badgers, and any other small mammals (hedgehogs, stoats, weasels etc.) should they enter the site during the excavation works, the following measures will be implemented:

- Any trenches or deep pits within the site that are to be left open overnight, will be provided with a means of escape in the form of a battered edge or rough plank of wood placed in the trench to act as a ramp to the surface.
- Any trenches/pits will be inspected each morning to ensure no badgers/mammals have become trapped overnight. Should a badger become trapped in a trench it will likely attempt to dig itself into the side of the trench, forming a temporary sett. Should a trapped badger be encountered, a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted immediately for further advice.
- Unsecured food and litter will not be left within the working area overnight as this will attract mammals to the area.

Penalties

Breaking the law can lead to fines of up to £5000 per offence and potential prison sentences of up to six months.

If a badger or a sett is discovered after works have started, works in the area must stop immediately to avoid breaking the law, and advice sought from a suitably experienced ecologist.



PWMS Poster: Common Amphibians and Reptiles

Amphibian and Reptile Ecology

Common amphibians and reptiles such as smooth newts, palmate newts, common toad, common frog, common lizard, slow worms, grass snakes and adders are relatively widespread and have very limited legal protection.

Common amphibians breed in ponds during the spring and spend most of the remaining year feeding on invertebrates in areas of pond edges, woodland, hedgerows, marshes and tussocky grassland. Amphibians are usually active at night, emerging from their refuges to forage for food, whilst common reptiles spend most of the summer period within grassland, heathland, woodland edges, hedgerows, and marshes basking and foraging during the day.

These species hibernate underground, among tree roots, log/rubble piles, compost piles and in old walls typically between November to February.



Palmate Newt



Smooth Newt



Common Toad



Common lizard

Precautionary Method of Working

Immediately prior to the commencement of works on Site, a suitably qualified ecologist (SQE) will undertake a walkover of the working footprint to check for the presence of any log/brush/rubble piles that may be present and if safe to do so undertake a destructive search. If there is a risk of encountering hibernating amphibian/reptiles works will cease in these areas until after the hibernation period.

Any grassland, scrub and areas of high vegetation should be managed through a two-stage cut, whereby, the area is checked by the SQE prior to the first cut which is undertaken to a height of 150mm from the ground, the area is then re-checked by the SQE before cutting to ground level.

Any trenches or deep pits within the site that are to be left open overnight will be provided with a means of escape should a reptile enter. This could simply be in the form of a battered edge or roughened plank of wood placed in the trench as a ramp to the surface.

Any trenches/pits will be inspected each morning by a nominated site operative to ensure no reptiles have become trapped overnight. Should a trapped reptile be encountered, a suitably qualified ecologist will be contacted immediately for further advice.



Grass snake



Slow worm

Legislation

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.9(1) and S.9(5) *'It is an offence to intentionally kill or injure any common reptile species'*.

If an amphibian or reptile is discovered after works have started, works in the area must stop immediately to avoid breaking the law, and advice sought from a suitably experienced ecologist.

If a snake is encountered do not handle in case it is an adder, which is a venomous species.

If a reptile or amphibian is found on Site, all works must cease in that area and advice should be obtained from one of the following ecologists:

Point of contact whilst on Site:	Martin Cooling-Green – 07566 790076
Alternatively, please contact:	Steph Cooling-Green – 07759 3580511

PWMS Poster: Small Mammals

What are small mammals?

Small mammals include hedgehogs, stoats, weasels, polecats, wood mouse, yellow necked mouse, shrews, voles, harvest mouse, which are a vital part of the ecosystem ,are present across the UK.

These species are found in most environments from rural farmland to highly urban areas. They can live in burrows, log and brash piles, under sheds and buildings and along ditches, hedgerows and woodlands.



Hedgehog



Stoat



Polecat

Legislation

Small mammals such as hedgehogs, shrews (all species) and water voles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) *making it illegal to kill or injure these species*, whilst all mammals are protected under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 making it *‘an offence to intentionally inflict unnecessary suffering to any wild mammal’*.

If a small mammal is found is found on Site, all works must cease in that area and advice should be obtained from one of the following ecologists:	
Point of contact whilst on Site:	Martin Cooling-Green – 07566 790076
Alternatively, please contact:	Steph Cooling-Green – 07759 3580511

Precautionary Method of Working

Immediately prior to the commencement of works on Site, a suitably qualified ecologist (SQE) will undertake a walkover of the working footprint to check for the presence of any log/brash/rubble piles that may present and if safe to do so undertake a destructive search.

Any trenches or deep pits within the site that are to be left open overnight will be provided with a means of escape should a small mammals enter/become trapped. This could simply be in the form of a battered edge or roughened plank of wood placed in the trench as a ramp to the surface.

Any trenches/pits will be inspected each morning by a nominated site operative to ensure that small mammals have become trapped overnight. Should a trapped mammal be encountered, a suitably qualified ecologist will be contacted immediately for further advice.

Any log piles/hibernaculum/exposed root systems with crevices/cavities should not be impacted during the winter period (November to March) and as such an appropriate buffer zone implemented around these areas to prevent disturbance upon any hibernating species that may be present.

Penalties
Breaking the law can lead to fines of up to £5000 per offence and potential prison sentences of up to six months.

Caution these animals will bite if grabbed/handled.

PWMS Poster: Bats

Bat Ecology

There are 18 resident bat species with an additional 7 migratory species present within the UK. They are all small with the largest species being no more than 82mm in length. All bats have brown, grey or black fur on their backs with large leathery wings that fold up against the body when roosting. They use holes, crevices and cavities in trees, buildings, structures, caves and tunnels. They are found in both rural and urban areas, including woodland, parks, gardens, old buildings, near watercourses and farmland.

Bats are active at night (after sunset) where they emerge from their roosts and forage for insects (food) before returning to their roosts before sunrise during the spring, summer and autumn. In the winter (hibernation period) bats are stationary for long periods of time and sleep to preserve their energy/fat reserves until the spring when food is present. Bats will often swap roosts frequently during the season dependant on the weather and conditions of the roost, particularly during the maternity period when a bat will give birth to a single ‘pup’.



Natterers bat



Hibernating bat



Noctule bat

Legislation

Bats are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2017 (as amended) ‘It is an offence to deliberately capture, injure, or kill a bat; deliberate disturbance of bats; or damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by a bat’ and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.9 which makes ‘It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection or disturb a bat in such a place’.

If a bat or a bat roost is found on Site, all works must cease in that area and advice should be obtained from one of the following ecologists:

Point of contact whilst on Site: Martin Cooling-Green – 07566 790076

Alternatively, please contact: Steph Cooling-Green – 07759 3580511

Precautionary Method of Working

All trees, buildings and structures will be systematically searched/inspected by a suitability qualified/licenced ecologist prior to any demolition, felling or construction works taking place, to look for signs of or physical presence of bat species which may have occupied these buildings/structures/trees between the surveys and construction.

If bats or evidence of a bat roost is encountered within the works Site then a suitability qualified/licenced ecologist should be sought and works stopped until appropriate survey and mitigation can be implemented.

All works in vicinity of a known bat roost should only be conducted under the supervision of an ecologist, during the suitable time of year and at an appropriate distance to not cause disturbance/damage/destruction or displacement to the known roost.

The illumination of features that have the potential to support roosting bat species should be avoided, any security lighting should be cowled and directional to avoid light spill onto adjacent trees/woodland, buildings and structures.

You must not enter a known roost or handle a bat if you do not have a valid survey Licence from Natural England/ Natural Resources for Wales or Scottish Government (dependent on the geography of the roost) and no bats should be disturbed or handled during the hibernation period. No works to a known roost can be conducted without the appropriate licensing being in place and not during the maternity period when bats are giving birth (unless the roost is deemed not a maternity roost by a suitably qualified ecologist)

Penalties

Breaking the law can lead to fines of up to £5000 per offence and potential prison sentences of up to six months.

Felling a tree or demolishing a building/structure that contains a bat roost – even if not in use at the time, can lead to prosecution. Any vehicle used to commit the offence may be forfeited.

Both the company and/or individuals can be held liable for a breach of legislation.

