

**ELLENDALE**  
**ENVIRONMENTAL**

Land North of Tregunwith Wood, Mylor Bridge  
Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA)

*For Willis and Co.*

6<sup>th</sup> December 2021

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# Version

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CIC v1.0	05/12/21	Stewart Parsons	Emma Parsons	06/12/21

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# 1. Executive Summary

Ellendale Environmental Limited was commissioned by Willis & Co., on behalf of their client, to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) for an area of land north of Tregunwith Wood, Mylor Bridge ('the site'). It is proposed to erect an agricultural building (barn) and a temporary dwelling (mobile home) on the site ('the proposed development').

Surveys undertaken at the site as part of the PEA included an Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey and a Preliminary Protected Species walkover. The Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken to list the plant species associated with each habitat. The preliminary protected species walkover was conducted for the site and the surrounding area.

The site is located to the north of Mylor Bridge on the shore of Restronguet Creek. It is approximately 0.98 acres in size and broadly triangular in shape.

The main area of the site is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland with large areas of dense bramble scrub. This provides habitat for reptiles, amphibians, small mammals and ground nesting birds; however, no evidence of these species was found during the survey.

The boundaries of the site provide the most suitable habitat for protected species, namely nesting birds in the hedgerow and trees. No evidence of nesting was found during the survey; however, common passerine species were noted. No large nests suitable for birds of prey were noted in the mature trees along the eastern boundary of the site.

Mature trees along the eastern boundary of the site provide low roost suitability for bat species. Cracks and crevices were noted; however, the trees were also noted to be wet and several large limbs had broken off the main trees. The boundaries also provide suitable foraging habitat for bat species. It is understood the trees will not be impacted by the proposed development.



No evidence of otter or badger was noted during the survey.

Overall, the site is assessed as providing low suitability to support protected species.

Recommendations have been made for modest post-construction ecological enhancements at the site that are proportionate with the low level of environmental impact from the proposed development.



## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Commission

Ellendale Environmental Limited was commissioned by Willis & Co., on behalf of their client to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) for an area of land North of Tregunwith, Mylor Bridge ('the site'). It is proposed to erect an agricultural building (barn) and a temporary dwelling (mobile home) on the site ('the proposed development').

### 2.2 Site Details

The site is located to the north of Mylor Bridge on the shore of Restronguet Creek at OS grid reference SW 80709 37946.

*Figure 1: Site location*



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### 2.3 Survey Objectives

On the basis of the brief provided by the client, Ellendale Environmental conducted an ecological survey of the site and a 50m buffer (where accessible and appropriate) to fulfil the following needs:

- Obtain baseline information on the current habitats and ecological features in and around the site;
- Identify any further specialist surveys that may be required;
- Identify the presence (or potential presence) of any protected species whose disturbance may require consent under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) or the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended); and
- Identify any species or habitats which may require special mitigation during the development of the site.



## 3. Methodology

### 3.1 Data Search

Publicly available databases, including MAGIC and the NBN Atlas, were consulted for historical evidence of:

- Statutory land-based designations;
- Non-statutory land-based designations; and
- Protected and notable species.

The data search was conducted within a 2km radius of the site boundaries. This was extended to 5km for bat species.

### 3.2 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

An Extended Phase 1 Habitat survey of the site area was undertaken, and the habitats present on the site were mapped following the Phase 1 survey methodology (JNCC, 2010), listing the plant species associated with each habitat. This methodology was an extended Phase 1 habitat survey, whereby all habitats were surveyed and recorded onto a base plan, and any habitats that were considered to be of potential interest to nature conservation were recorded through the use of target notes to annotate a Phase 1 habitat map.

### 3.3 Preliminary Protected Species Walkover

The site and surrounding areas were examined for signs of protected species, particularly European badger *Meles meles* and nesting birds, as it was considered that the site had the greatest potential to support these species.

The presence/potential presence of protected or notable species of conservation concern was recorded using target notes, following the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management guidance (CIEEM, 2012).

### 3.4 Survey Area

The survey covered the entire site and areas within 50m (where accessible and appropriate).





### 3.5 Survey Limitations

The aim of the survey was not to record every species present on the site, as one survey acts as a snap-shot, recording only those species which are present at the time or whose presence can be indicated through the occurrence of field signs, such as feeding remains, droppings or places used for shelter or foraging.

Evidence collected has been used to draw conclusions about the flora and fauna within the boundary of the site and to provide an assessment of their ecological and nature conservation value.

Weather was not a limiting factor to the survey. The prevailing conditions at the time of the survey are summarised in Table 1.

*Table 1: Survey weather conditions*

SURVEY DATE	TEMPERATURE (°C)	WIND SPEED (MPH)	CLOUD COVER / PRECIPITATION
18/10/21	17.7	1.8 Avg. 5.1 Max.	100% overcast, humid and warm with a light breeze

### 3.6 Surveyor

The survey was undertaken by Stewart Parsons, Director and Principal Ecologist of Ellendale Environmental, who is a full member of CIEEM and a Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv). Stewart has over 18 years' professional experience of undertaking ecological surveys across the UK.



## 4. Results

### 4.1 Desk Study

A 2km data search for existing designated sites and biological records was undertaken from MAGIC and the NBN Atlas.

#### Statutory and non- statutory designated sites

The following statutory designated sites have been identified within 2km of the site boundaries:

- The site is located in the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
- The Fal & Helford Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located 1.3km to the south-east of the site boundary; and
- Restronguet Creek, located on the western boundary of the site, is designated as a County Wildlife site.

These sites and their qualifying features are not considered to be at risk from the proposed development.

#### Protected and Notable Species

The following terrestrial protected species were identified within 2km of the site boundaries by the data search:

- European otter *Lutra lutra*;
- Common pipistrelle bat *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*;
- Grey seal *Halichoerus grypus*;
- Slow worm *Anguis fragilis*;
- Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*;
- Whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*;
- Brant's bat *Myotis brandti*;
- Noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula*;
- Soprano pipistrelle bat *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*;



- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*;
- Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*; and
- Greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*.

### Bird Species

Approximately 144 bird species have been recorded within 2km of the site and are shown on the NBN Atlas; however, none of these records are within the site boundaries.

### 4.2 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

The site is located to the north of Mylor Bridge on the shore of Restronguet Creek. It is approximately 0.98 acres in size and broadly triangular in shape. To the north of the site boundary there is arable farmland and to the east there is Restronguet Creek. To the south and west there is farmland, and an access track is present along the western boundary of the site.

*Photograph 1: showing a view of the site*





The main area of the site is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland that does not appear to be managed. Species present include willow herb *Epilobium hirsutum*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, broadleaf dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, cock's-foot grass *Dactylis glomerata*, clover *Trifolium sp.*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*.

The site slopes to the east and was noted to be wet with soft rush *Juncus effusus* present and large areas of bramble *Rubus fruticosus sp.* scrub. Saplings of oak *Quercus robur*, willow *Salix sp.*, and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* were also present.

*Photograph 2: showing a view of the poor semi-improved grassland*





Along the eastern boundary of the site there is a tree line along the shore of Restronguet Creek. The bank drops approximately 10m and is comprised mostly of rock. Tree species present along the boundary include oak, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hazel *Corylus avellana* and holly *Ilex aquifolium*. Bramble, common nettle and ivy *Hedera helix* dominate the ground flora. Blackthorn forms a dense boundary with runner noted to be extending into the site.

*Photograph 3: showing a view of the northern boundary of the site*



Along the western boundary of the site there are a series of rectangular plots that have been divided using hedgerows. The hedgerows are mostly overgrown and include blackthorn, beech *Fagus sylvatica*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, buddleia *Buddleia davidii* and ash *Fraxinus excelsior*. Inside the rectangular plots is poor semi-improved grassland with species similar to the those found in the main site. Dense bramble and bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* are present and entirely dominate several of the plots.



*Photograph 4: showing a view inside the rectangular plots*



Along the northern boundary of the site there is a hedgerow that is unmanaged (on its southern side); however, it has been flailed on the northside. The hedgerow is dominated by blackthorn, with hazel and ash also present. Dense bracken and bramble are present that extend into the site through a lack of management.

#### 4.3 Preliminary Protected Species Walkover

The main area of the site is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland that was noted to be wet during the survey. The grassland provides suitable habitat for reptile and amphibian species, although no evidence was found.



Dense patches of bramble scrub in the grassland provide suitable foraging habitat for nesting bird species and the poor semi-improved grassland may provide some habitat for ground nesting bird species, although no evidence was found during the survey.

The boundaries of the site, including the hedgerow to the north and west and treeline along the western boundary, provide the most suitable habitat to support protected species, namely nesting birds. No evidence of nests suitable for larger bird species, such as birds of prey, were noted in the trees during the survey.

*Photograph 5: showing a view of the hedgerow along the north of the site*



The mature trees present along the western boundary of the site provide low roost suitability for bat species and some cracks and crevices were noted. Several large branches were noted to have broken off the trees and were lying in the site,



and trees were noted to have fallen into Restronguet Creek. The trees and hedgerow boundaries of the site are also suitable for foraging and commuting bat species.

No evidence of badger was found during the survey and no evidence of runs or digging was found during the walkover. The site is isolated with managed farmland and arable land either side which may restrict the movement of badgers and the wet ground makes it unsuitable for sett digging.

No evidence of otter was found within the site or along the shore of Restronguet Creek, although otter are known to be present in the wider area. The bank of the creek is steep and was noted to consist mostly of rock, which would be flooded at high tide. This may limit the suitability for otter as any holts or resting sites would be flooded regularly.

*Photograph 6: showing a view of the shore of Restronguet Creek (low tide)*



Overall, the site is assessed as providing low suitability to support protected species and no evidence of protected species was identified during the survey.





## 5. Conclusions

### 5.1 Conclusion

The site is located to the north of Mylor Bridge on the shore of Restronguet Creek. It is approximately 0.98 acres in size and broadly triangular in shape.

The main area of the site is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland with areas of dense bramble scrub. The grassland provides suitable habitat for reptile and amphibian species, although no evidence was found. The grassland may also provide suitable habitat for ground nesting birds; however, no evidence was found.

The trees and hedgerows present along the boundaries of the site provide suitable nesting habitat for a range of common bird species. However, no nests were recorded at the time of survey. No nests for larger bird species, such as hawks and kestrels, were noted during the survey.

The mature trees present along the western boundary of the site provide low roost suitability for bat species and some cracks and crevices were noted. Several large branches were noted to have broken off the trees and were lying in the site, and trees were also noted to have fallen into Restronguet Creek. The trees and hedgerow boundaries of the site are also suitable for foraging and commuting bat species.

There was no evidence of mammal species, such as badger, present within the site or immediate surroundings during the survey. No evidence of runs, latrines or digging was found and the wet ground may limit the suitability of the site to support these species.

No evidence of otter was found along the boundary of the site with Restronguet Creek during the survey. The bank of the creek is steep and was noted to consist mostly of rock, which would be flooded at high tide. This may limit the suitability for otter, as any holts or resting sites would be flooded regularly.



Overall, the site is assessed as providing low suitability to support protected species and no evidence was found during the survey.

## 5.2 Main Recommendations

### Mitigation

As part of any eventual construction, it is recommended that tree and vegetation clearance is undertaken outside of the bird breeding season, i.e. March to July, as all nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). If nesting birds are found, these areas of the site will need to be protected from disturbance until the young have fledged naturally.

There is potential for a small population of reptiles and amphibians to be present within the grassland on site. Prior to construction, or formation of working areas and access tracks, the site should be hand-searched by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist to remove any discrete refugia habitats during an appropriate time of year (April to mid-October inclusive) and then progressively mown through a phased vegetation clearance to encourage reptiles and amphibians to disperse into areas of open space within the site. The short grassland areas should be maintained at a sward height below 15cm, through either strimming or mowing so that it remains unsuitable for reptiles and amphibians.

### Enhancements

The following recommendations are made for modest post-construction ecological enhancements at the site that are proportionate with the low level of environmental impact from the proposed development:

- As part of the design and layout considered, bird nesting boxes (both small-hole and open-fronted) should be placed within the site if possible. This will create nesting opportunities for small bird species as part of the overall design.



- As part of the design and layout considered, bat boxes should be placed within site boundaries if possible. This could create roosting opportunities for bat species as part of the overall design.
- As part of the design and layout, the BCT guidance on bats and artificial lighting should be considered to create dark corridors and avoid lighting on the boundaries of the site.



## Appendix A – Target Notes

### Target Notes (TN)

TN1 – Along the northern boundary of the site there is a hedgerow that is unmanaged (at its southern side); however, it has been flailed on the northside. The hedgerow is dominated by blackthorn with hazel and ash also present.

TN2 – Dense bracken and bramble are present that extend into the site through a lack of management.

TN3 – The main area of the site is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland that does not appear to be managed. Species present include willow herb, Yorkshire fog, broadleaf dock, creeping thistle, common nettle, spear thistle, cock’s-foot grass, clover, creeping buttercup and ragwort. The site slopes to the east and was noted to be wet with soft rush present and large areas of bramble scrub. Saplings of oak, willow, and sycamore were also present.

TN4 – Along the eastern boundary of the site there is a tree line along the shore of Restronguet Creek. The bank drops approximately 10m and is comprised mostly of rock. Tree species present along the boundary include oak, blackthorn, hazel and holly. Bramble, common nettle and ivy dominate the ground flora. Blackthorn forms a dense boundary with runner noted to be extending into the site.

TN5 – Restronguet Creek.

TN6 – Blackthorn and bramble scrub extending into the field from the adjacent tree line.

TN7 – Along the western boundary of the site there are a series of rectangular plots that have been divided using hedgerows. The hedgerows are mostly overgrown and include blackthorn, beech, dogwood, buddleia and ash.



TN8 – Inside the rectangular plots there is poor semi-improved grassland with species similar to the those found in the main site. Dense bramble and bracken are present and entirely dominates several of the plots.

#### Animal Notes (AN)

AN1 – Suitable habitat for nesting birds in the hedgerow along the northern boundary of the site.

AN2 – Bramble and bracken scrub extending into the site provides suitable habitat for nesting birds.

AN3 – The mature trees present along the western boundary of the site provide low roost suitability for bat species and some cracks and crevices were noted. Several large branches were noted to have broken off the trees and were lying in the site, and trees were noted to have fallen into Restronguet Creek. The trees and hedgerow boundaries of the site are also suitable for foraging and commuting bat species.

AN4 – Bramble and blackthorn scrub extending into the site provides suitable habitat for nesting birds.

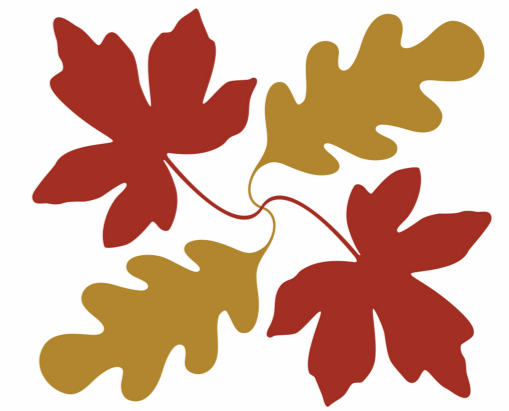
AN5 – The main area of the site is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland with areas of dense bramble scrub. The grassland provides suitable habitat for reptile and amphibian species, although no evidence was found. The grassland may also provide suitable habitat for ground nesting birds; however, no evidence was found.

AN6 – The trees and hedgerows present along the boundaries of the site provides suitable nesting habitat for a range of common bird species. However, no nests were recorded at the time of survey.

AN7 – Grassland and scrub on the rectangular plots provides suitable habitat for nesting birds.



# Appendix B - Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map



**ELLEDALE**  
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**Drawing Title;**  
Land North of Treginwith Wood  
Extended Phase 1 Map

**Client;**  
Willis & Co.

**Date;**  
23/11/21

**Drawn By;**  
SP

**Project Number;**  
EEL426

**Version Number;**  
v1.0

- Animal Note**  
● AN
- Target Note**  
● TN
- Water**  
■ Restronguet Creek
- Boundaries**  
— Hedgerow
- Woodland and Scrub**  
× Scattered Scrub  
■ Dense Scrub  
■ Tree Line
- Built-up Area**  
■ Hard Standing / Access Track

