



Appendix 7.12
Water Vole Survey Report

August 2019

Document Title	The Lanes Water Vole Survey Report
Prepared for	Taylor Wimpey North West / Homes England
Prepared by	TEP - Warrington
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Amendment History					
Version	Date	Modified by	Check / Approved by	Reason(s) issue	Status
2.0	26/11/18	LP	AP	Amended site boundary	Superseded
3.0	01/03/19	LP	AP	Client amendments	Superseded
4.0	06/08/19	LP	AP	Updated survey and site description	Issued

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DRAWING

G6900.015 - Water Vole Survey Plan

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Taylor Wimpey and Homes England are seeking to obtain planning permission for residential-led mixed-use development on land to the east of Penwortham Way known as 'The Lanes, Penwortham' (hereafter referred to as 'the site').
- 1.2 TEP was commissioned in June 2017 to determine the presence or likely absence of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* within a network of ditches on the site. An updated survey was undertaken in July 2018.

Description of Survey Area

- 1.3 The central grid reference of the site is SD 53329 25884 and the location of the site is shown in Figure 1 below. Hatched areas within the red line site boundary in Figure 1 do not fall within the scope of the current planning application and these were not subject to surveys.
- 1.4 The site is irregular in shape and occupies approximately 53ha on land to the east of Penwortham Way to the south of the settlement of Penwortham.
- 1.5 The site is bound by Penwortham Way to the west, existing residential development south of Kingsfold Drive to the north, the West Coast mainline railway to the east and agricultural fields to the south.
- 1.6 The site comprises a mix of land uses including:
 - Agricultural land separated into a number of fields by fences, hedgerows and trees;
 - Pylon accommodation land;
 - Pylon corridor; and
 - Roads.
- 1.7 The site surrounds a number of residential dwellings and light industrial buildings which do not lie within the application boundary.

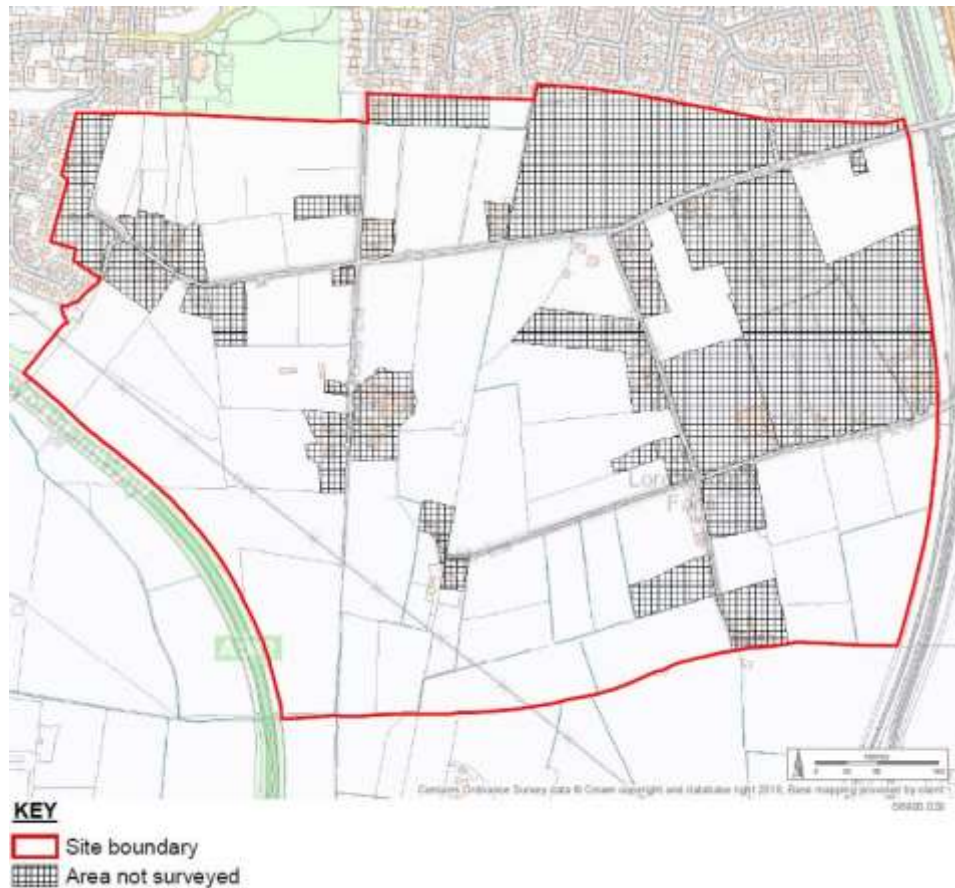


Figure 1: Site Plan. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018.

Suitability for Water Voles

- 1.8 22 ditches have been identified within the site, during a review of OS and aerial imagery, which could provide suitable foraging and burrowing habitat for water voles. This includes a small onsite stream. The remaining habitats in the site are considered to be unsuitable for this species as water voles tend to inhabit riparian or marshy areas.

2.0 Methods

- 2.1 A water vole survey of the 22 ditches identified within the site was undertaken by TEP Senior Ecologist Lizi Pimlott (ACIEEM), assisted by Damian Young on the 31st July 2017. This survey was undertaken in line with the current guidelines for water vole surveys taken from *The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook (2016)*¹. An updated water vole survey was undertaken by TEP Ecologist Damian Young on 29th July 2019.
- 2.2 The survey involved scoping out potentially suitable ditches and searching their banks from within the channel, looking for evidence of water vole activity such as burrows, runs, tracks, latrines and feeding remains.
- 2.3 The water vole survey was carried out in dry weather conditions with no rain for 48 hours prior to the survey.

¹ Dean, M., Strachan, R., Gow, D. and Andrews, R. (2016). *The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook (The Mammal Society Mitigation Guidance Series)*. Eds Fiona Mathews and Paul Chanin. The Mammal Society, London.

3.0 Results

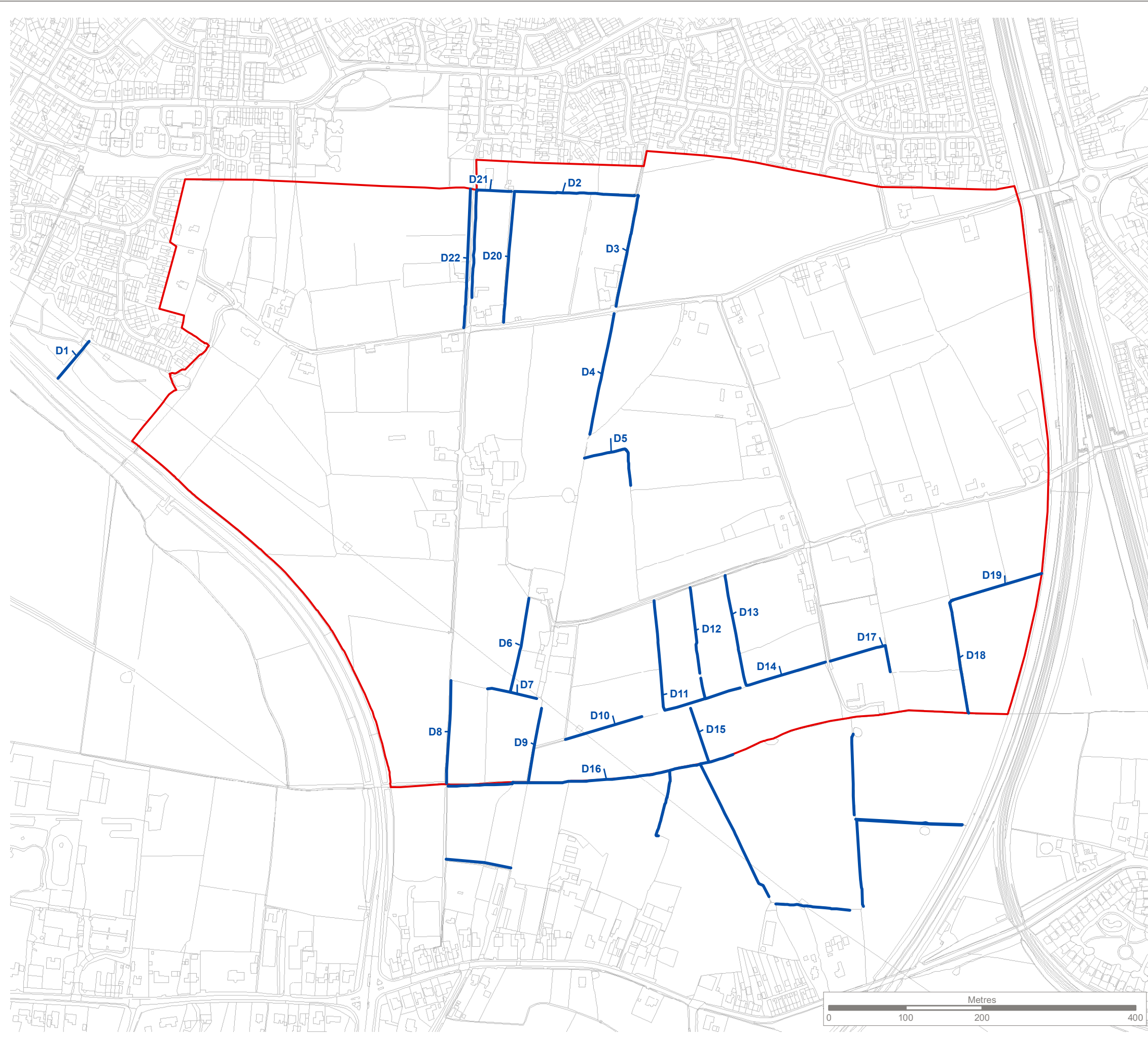
- 3.1 Records of water vole, most recently from 2001, were returned within the desk based assessment produced by TEP in June 2018 (Report Ref: 6900.007). These are all located to the south of the site beyond major road barriers with no connectivity to the survey area.
- 3.2 The 22 ditches are all associated with field boundaries and drainage. The location of these ditches are shown on Drawing G6900.015. The majority of the ditches were adjacent to hedgerows and were found to be heavily vegetated, shaded, significantly impacted by cattle and/or completely dry or with shallow stagnant pools of water.
- 3.3 21 of the ditches were found to be unsuitable for water voles due to the factors detailed above and were not subject to survey in 2017 or 2019. This includes Ditches D3 and D4 which form part of the small onsite stream. Ditch D3 was heavily shaded with shallow pools of stagnant water. Ditch D4 was completely dry.
- 3.4 Ditch D20 was found to be suitable for water voles and was subject to a survey during which no evidence of water voles were found in 2017 or 2019. The ditch is isolated from other suitable water courses as a bund separates it from Ditch 2 to the north which was found to be dry. Therefore it was considered highly unlikely that water voles would be present in this ditch.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 There are records of water vole to the south of the site but these records are over 15 years old and are located beyond major road barriers with no habitat connectivity to the site.
- 4.2 Only one ditch (Ditch 20) on the site was considered to be suitable for water voles but this is isolated from other habitat.
- 4.3 It is therefore highly unlikely that water voles are present in the site and as such no impacts are anticipated on water voles as a result of the proposed development.

Drawing

G6900.015 - Water Vole Survey Plan

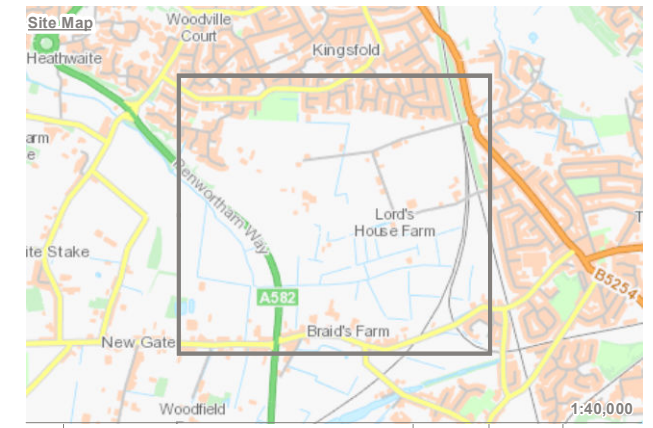


KEY

- Site boundary
- Ditch



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 Base mapping provided by client



Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date
A	Ditch IDs re-numbered.	MK	LP	10/12/2018



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Project
The Lanes, Penwortham

Title
Water Vole Survey Plan

Drawing Number
G6900.015A

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LP	1:5,000 @ A3	10/12/2018



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