



THE
ENVIRONMENT
PARTNERSHIP



PICKERINGS FARM PENWORTHAM WATER VOLE SURVEY REPORT

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DRAWING

G5060.Eco.PickeringsFarm.002 - Water Vole Survey Plan

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 TEP was commissioned in June 2017 by Taylor Wimpey North West and Homes England to determine the presence or likely absence of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* within a network of ditches on land known as Pickerings Farm in Penwortham.
- 1.2 Taylor Wimpey and Homes England are proposing a joint venture for the construction of a large-scale housing development with associated infrastructure and community facilities at the site.

Description of Survey Area

- 1.3 The central grid reference of the survey area is SD 53329 25884 and the location of the survey area is shown in Figure 1 below. Hatched areas within the red line in Figure 1 represent land owned by third parties and these were not subject to surveys.
- 1.4 The survey area comprises pasture and arable fields bounded by hedgerows with residential housing and farm buildings and fragments of other habitats including woodland, scrub, grassland and water bodies. Existing residential development within Penwortham bounds the survey area to the north with Penwortham Way to the west, railway to the east and residential development along Chain House Lane to the south.

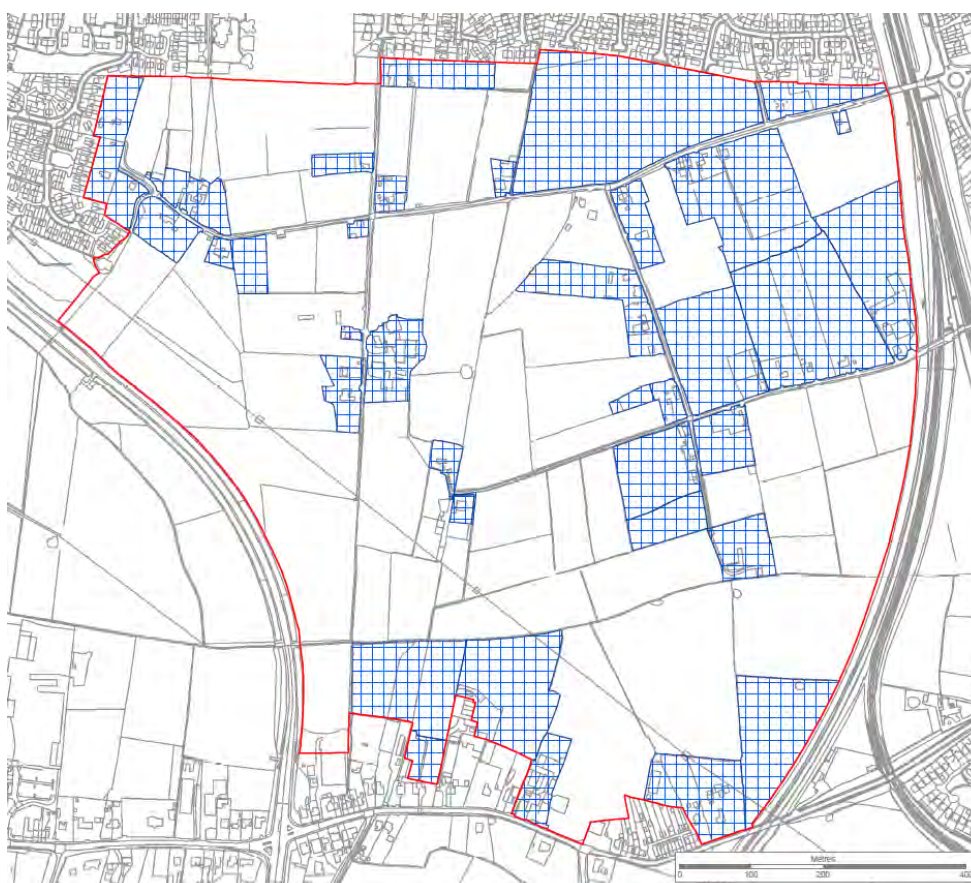


Figure 1: Survey Area Plan. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018.

Suitability for Water Voles

- 1.5 29 ditches have been identified within the survey area which could provide suitable foraging and burrowing habitat for water voles. The remaining habitats in the survey area 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 29 ditches identified within the survey area was undertaken by TEP Ecologist Lizi Langston, 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.
- 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

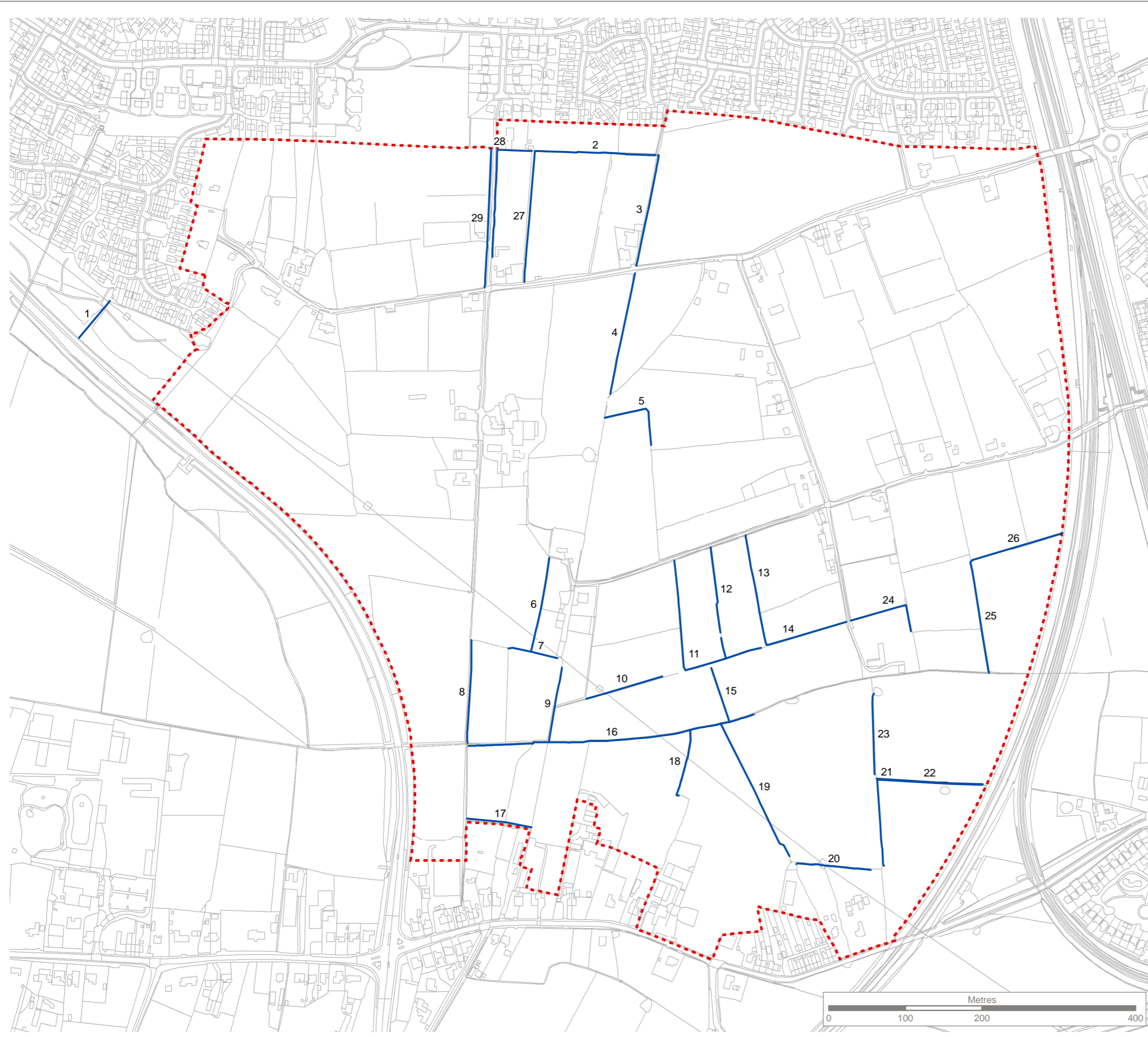
- 3.1 Records of water vole, most recently from 2001, were returned within the desk based assessment produced by TEP in June 2018 (Report Ref: 6900.007). These are all located to the south of the survey area beyond major road barriers with no connectivity to the survey area.
- 3.2 The 29 ditches are all associated with field boundaries and drainage. The location of these ditches are shown on Drawing G5060.Eco.PickeringsFarm.002. 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 28 of the ditches were found to be unsuitable for water voles due to the factors detailed above and were not subject to survey.
- 3.4 Ditch 27 was found to be suitable for water voles and was subject to a survey during which no evidence of water voles were found. 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 survey area but these records are over 15 years old and are located beyond major road barriers with no habitat connectivity to the survey area.
- 4.2 Only one ditch (Ditch 27) 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 survey area.

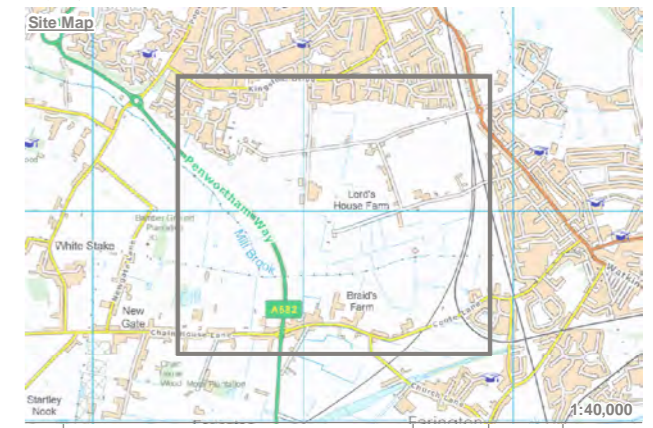
Drawing

G5060.Eco.PickeringsFarm.002 - Water Vole Survey Plan



KEY
 Site Boundary
 Ditch

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 Base Mapping Provided By Client.



Rev	Description	Drawn	Approved	Date

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Project
Pickerings Farm, Penwortham

Title
Water Vole Survey Plan

Drawing Number
G5060.Eco.PickeringsFarm.002

Drawn	Checked	Approved	Scale	Date
JO	JS	LL	1:5,000 @ A3	06/09/2017



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