

Ecological Impact Assessment

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Site	Well Cottage, Emms Lane, Brooks Green, Horsham, RH13 0JN
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The assessment and appraisal are considered relevant for a maximum of 18 months due to the possibility of changes in the habitats on-site and scope of proposals. Should alterations to the proposals or site occur, the ecologist should be consulted to confirm that the appraisal is still valid.

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Summary

Mr S. Caudill and Ms C. Bell have commissioned a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) for proposals at Well Cottage, Emms Lane, Brooks Green, Horsham (*grid refence: TQ12772495, hereafter referred to as 'the site'*).

The proposals are for the Change of Use of land from 'paddock' to 'residential' use.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and was carried out on 30th January 2026 by Alex Rosenfeld (Ecologist).

The site consists of a semi-attached domestic dwelling with driveway, patio, small patches of introduced shrubs, and paddock bound by hedgerow and garden. The wider landholding consists of the attached house to the west with associated garden, outbuildings and pond. The proposals are small in scale and only small areas of habitat are to be affected.

No ponds are noted onsite. One pond is noted within the wider landholding, C.25m south of the works site. Within a 500 meter radius of the site lies 15no. ponds.

The site lies within a Red Impact Zone for GCN. As such this report will assess the requirements for further surveys or mitigation with regards to amphibians. As the application only regards the paddock, the main focus of this report shall be GCN.

The wider site holds value for hedgehog, bats, birds, reptiles and badgers. As the proposals are for Change of Use, no protected species shall be affected by works.

When mitigation and enhancements have been taken into account, the proposals are not considered to have a negative impact upon designated sites, habitats or protected species in accordance with planning policy and once enhancements are considered, would result in a minor gain of onsite ecology. The proposals would therefore accord with the relevant Local Plan Policies.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Mr S. Caudill and Ms C. Bell have commissioned a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for proposals at Well Cottage, Emms Lane, Brooks Green, Horsham (*grid refence: TQ12772495, hereafter referred to as 'the site'*).
- 1.2 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was carried out on 30th January 2026 by Alex Rosenfeld (Ecologist)
- 1.3 The following Ecological Impact Assessment report has been completed by Alex Rosenfeld (6 years professional experience). The purpose of the assessment has been to identify whether any potential impacts upon protected species, habitats or designated sites might occur, and to propose mitigation or avoidance measures where necessary.
- 1.4 Based on the results of the appraisal, recommendations for potential ecological enhancements have been provided.

Site Description and Surrounding Area

- 1.5 The site area (red line boundary) consists of a semi-detached dwelling with driveway, patio, small patches of introduced shrubs and paddock bound by hedgerow and garden. The wider landholding (blue line boundary) consists of the attached house to the west with associated garden, outbuildings and pond.
- 1.6 The proposals only concern the paddock and entail the Change of Use of land from 'paddock' to 'residential' use.

Figure No. 01 – Site location



Figure No.02 – UKHabs Map



Produced on Land App, Feb 10, 2026.
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5m
Scale 1:300 (at A4)

- 1.7 The site is located on Emms Road in the village of Brooks Green, West Sussex. The site is bound by Emms lane to the north. Domestic dwellings with associated gardens bound the rest of the site.
- 1.8 The wider area consists of arable fields, woodland and hedgerows. The village of Coolham lies 2.3km south. The town of Southwater lies 2.5km east.
- 1.9 No ponds are located onsite. 16.no ponds are within a 500m radius. The closest lying within the wider land holding, C.25m south of the works area.

Proposals

- 1.10 The proposals are for the Change of Use of land from 'paddock' to 'residential' use.

2.0 Scope of Assessment

1. *Categorise habitats present on the site;*
 2. *Identify habitat which may have potential for protected species;*
 3. *Identify whether any signs of protected species are present on-site;*
 4. *Recommend whether further surveys are required, or whether there are any relevant constraints with regards to protected species;*
 5. *Identify impacts of the proposed development and set out appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures;*
 6. *Provide recommendations as to how the site and proposals could be enhanced with regards to protected species and habitats.*
- 2.1 The assessment and appraisal are considered relevant for a maximum of 18 months due to the possibility of changes in the habitats on-site and scope of proposals. Should alterations to the proposals or site occur, the ecologist should be consulted to confirm that the appraisal is still valid.

3.0 Planning Policy and Legislation

National Planning Policy

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in December 2024 and sets out the government planning policies for England and how they should be applied. 'Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' states that development should be 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'
- 3.2 The Government Circular 06/2005, which is referred to by the NPPF, provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system.
- 3.3 The current Local Plan is subject to Regulation 19. Therefore, The Horsham District Planning Framework (Horsham District Council, 2015 - 2031) was used to appraise the proposals.

Local Planning Policy

- 3.4 The site is within the Horsham District. As the existing local plan is at Regulation 19 stage, the proposals shall be assessed against existing Horsham District Planning Framework 2015.
- 3.5 Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity states:
 1. Development will be supported where it can demonstrate that it maintains or enhances the existing network of green infrastructure. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing green infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that mitigates or compensates for this loss, and ensures that the ecosystem services of the area are retained.
 2. Development proposals will be required to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity, and should create and manage new habitats where appropriate. The Council will support new development which retains and /or enhances significant features of nature conservation on development sites. The Council will also support development which makes a positive contribution to biodiversity through the creation of green spaces, and linkages between habitats to create local and regional ecological networks.
 3. Where felling of protected trees is necessary, replacement planting with a suitable species will be required.
 4. a) Particular consideration will be given to the hierarchy of sites and habitats in the district as follows:
 - i. Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)
 - ii. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs)

iii. Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and any areas of Ancient woodland, local geodiversity or other irreplaceable habitats not already identified in i & ii above.

b) Where development is anticipated to have a direct or indirect adverse impact on sites or features for biodiversity, development will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that:

i. The reason for the development clearly outweighs the need to protect the value of the site; and,

ii. That appropriate mitigation and compensation measures are provided.

5. Any development with the potential to impact Arun Valley SPA or the Mens SAC will be subject to a HRA to determine the need for an Appropriate Assessment. In addition, development will be required to be in accordance with the necessary mitigation measures for development set out in the HRA of this plan

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017;
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

- 3.6 All species of bat and their roosts are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or handle a bat, to possess a bat (live or dead), disturb a roosting bat, or sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not.
- 3.7 All UK bird species are protected against disturbance whilst occupying a nest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Developments that could predictably disturb, kill or injure nesting birds could result in an offence. Furthermore, a number of bird species are targets of UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plans and listed as Species of Principle Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. This obligates local authorities to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity with particular emphasis on targeted species.
- 3.8 All other mammals receive general protection against cruelty, inhumane killing or injuring under the Protection of Mammals Act 1996.

4.0 Methodology

Desktop Study

- 4.1 'Magic' Maps was consulted for information pertaining to priority habitats, statutory designated sites and permitted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSML's) within a potential zone of influence of the development site. The primary focus for this assessment is GCN.
- 4.2 The following potential zones of influence have been used when identifying designated sites in the local area: Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) were searched for within a 2.0km radius of the site, and internationally designated sites including Special Protection Areas (SPAs), potential Special Protection Areas (pSPAs), Ramsars (Wetlands of International Importance) and proposed Ramsars (pRamsar) within a 10km radius of the site. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and possible Special Areas of Conservation (pSACs) within a 12km radius of the site, to account for the potential presence of SAC's designated for their bat interest, in accordance with recent guidance (SDNP, 2020).
- 4.3 Due to the scale and scope of proposals, a biodiversity record centre search was not considered necessary.
- 4.4 A search was carried out to identify features of ecological interest in the area, such as water bodies, ancient woodland and any GCN suitable habitat.
- 4.5 The report is written based on the following guidance:
 - CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing 2017 (CIEEM, 2017)
 - CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018)
 - Surveys have been carried out following the guidance sources set out in CIEEM's Good Practice Guidance for Habitats and Species (CIEEM, 2021), which include:
 - o CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition (CIEEM, 2017)
 - o CIEEM Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. Second Edition (CIEEM, 2017)
 - o Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (BCT, 2023)

Site Visit

- 4.7 A site visit was conducted on 30th January 2026 during suitable conditions. Habitats were recorded broadly according to the UK-Hab Classification System as described within the UK Habitats Manual v2.01 (UKHab Ltd 2023). All habitats present on-site were recorded on a UKHab map (*Figure No. 01 – Site Habitat Plan*).
- 4.8 During the survey any constraints with regard to protected species were considered; potential for impacts upon protected species even when evidence of such was not noted at the time of survey.
- 4.9 Points of interest for protected species have been plotted into the Site Habitat Plan and within target notes. Protected and Notable Species considered as part of this assessment include but are not limited to:
- *Bats – foraging, commuting, roosting, swarming and hibernating;*
 - *Badgers Meles meles – setts, latrines, push-unders and trapped hairs to fences, snuffle holes, and tracks;*
 - *Dormice Muscardinus avellanarius – nesting and commuting;*
 - *Great Crested Newts Triturus cristatus and other Amphibians such as Common Toads Bufo bufo – terrestrial active and hibernation habitat and aquatic habitat, including commuting;*
 - *Birds – nesting, foraging and wintering;*
 - *Reptiles – terrestrial active and hibernation habitat;*
 - *Rare or Notable Invertebrates;*
 - *Rare or Notable Plants;*
 - *Water Voles Arvicola amphibius – foraging and shelter habitats;*
 - *Otters Lutra lutra – foraging and shelter habitats;*
 - *White-clawed Crayfish Austropotamobius pallipes;*
- 4.10 Due to the site visit being carried out over one day, it is possible that some signs of protected species may not be apparent within this short timeframe. This is a constraint recognised within the Survey Guidelines and all reasonable effort has been made to identify evidence of protected species. The further revisits added certainty to the original findings.

HSI Assessment

4.11 During the site visit, all accessible ponds were appraised for their value to support GCN. As such the following factors were assessed and quantified before being placed into the HSI calculator noted within the report below.

- Geographic Location
- Pond Area
- Pond Permanence
- Shade Cover
- Waterfowl Presence
- Fish Presence
- Surrounding Pond Density
- Terrestrial Habitat Quality
- Macrophyte Cover

4.12 The overall score obtained by the pond based on the results of the above factors creates a score showing the overall value of the pond of Excellent, Good, Average, Below Average, Poor.

Ecological Impact Assessment

4.13 The methodology for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) follows best practice guidelines set by the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM): 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment' (CIEEM, 2018). This includes identifying the baseline conditions on the site and subsequently rating the potential effects of the development based on the sensitivity and value of the resource affected, combined with the magnitude, duration and scale of the impact (or change). This is initially assessed without mitigation measures, and then assessed again after allowing for the proposed mitigation measures; this provides the residual effects. The assessment is divided into construction effects and longer-term operational effects.

4.14 Each ecological feature within the site has been considered within a defined Geographic context such as:

- International and European;
- National;
- Regional;
- County;
- District;
- Local;

- Site Level;
- Negligible.

4.15 Based upon CIEEM guidance, value was determined with reference to the following factors:

- Its inclusion as a Designated Site or other protected area;
- The presence of habitat types of conservation significance, e.g. Habitats of Principal Importance (NERC 2006);
- The presence (or potential presence) of species of conservation significance e.g. Species of Principal Importance (NERC 2006);
- The presence of other protected species e.g. those protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
- The sites social and economic value.

4.16 Specifically in the case of bats, the impact assessment has been conducted in accordance with the recently published Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray 2023). Other relevant guidelines such as the Dormouse Conservation Handbook, Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines and Froglife Advice Sheet for Reptiles were consulted as appropriate.

5.0 Constraints

5.1 No access was available to ponds in the surrounding area. However, it is not considered a major constraint and not affected the outcomes or findings of the survey.

6.0 Baseline Ecological Conditions

Desktop Study

6.1 The following Statutory Designated Sites are noted within a 12.0km radius of the site.

Table 1: Designated Sites within 12.0km

Site	Designation	Distance
The Mens (SSSI)	The Mens is an extensive area of mature beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> woodland rich in lichens, bryophytes, fungi and saproxylic invertebrates, and is one of the largest tracts of Atlantic acidophilous beech forests in the south-eastern part of the habitat's UK rang The site is also designated as it's a nationally important site for	9.6km west

	barbastelle <i>Barbastella barbastella</i> bats.	
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- 6.2 No non-statutory designated sites were noted within a 1.0km radius of the site.
- 6.3 Due to the nature of the proposals, the LPA will not have to consult with Natural England.

Habitats

Desk Study

- 6.4 Within 1.0km of the site there are pockets of Priority Habitat: Deciduous Woodland.

Site Assessment

- 6.5 The site is given over to the following habitats.

U1b5 – Building

- 6.6 The domestic dwelling is of redbrick construction with clay tiled roof and chimneys. The building is divided into two properties. The second is to the west of the site but within the same landholding. Several outbuildings lie along the western boundary of the wider land holding. These are away from the works area and not to be affected in any way. Overall, the site is of **negligible ecological value**. The buildings potential to support protected species is highlighted in Section 7.0

U1b6, 847 – Other Developed Land with introduced shrub

- 6.7 To the north of the building lies a small area of gravel driveway. A small flagstone patio is noted to the south of the building.
- 6.8 To the north of the dwelling is a small flowerbed with a range of non-native species. Overall this habitat is of **Negligible / low ecological value**.

G3c, 32, 41, 10 – Modified Grassland with Scattered Trees, Pond and Scattered Scrub

- 6.9 The eastern side of the site consists of a 'paddock'. This area comprises unmown grass measuring approximately 100mm in length. Species comprise of perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, and annual meadow grass *Poa annua*.
- 6.10 To the south of the site, within the wider landholding lies a large garden. This area appears to be managed frequently with low sward height and of low species diversity with few forbs noted.
- 6.11 In the south of the wider landholding lies a large oval pond. Measuring approximately 30 meters long and 25 meters wide. Some emergent vegetation such as great reed mace *Typha latifoli* was noted.
- 6.12 Surrounding the pond are several semi-mature willow trees *Salix sp.* 2no. beech trees *Fagus sylvatica* were also noted.

- 6.13 Small pockets of scattered scrub are noted within the paddock. Species comprise bramble *Rubus fruticosus agg.* and dog rose *Rosa canina*. Overall this habitat is of **site ecological value**.

H2b – Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow

- 6.14 The Hedgerow running along the northern and eastern boundary of the site comprises predominantly barberry *Berberis sp.* It measures approximately 2.5 meters in height and running along the entire length of the northern boundary of the wider site. Overall, this habitat is of **site ecological value**.

7.0 Protected Species Assessment

Amphibians

Desk Study

- 7.1 There are no records of GCN within a 500m radius of the site.
- 7.2 No ponds are noted onsite. 16no. ponds are within a 500 meter radius of site. The closest to the works area is within the wider landholding, C. 25 meters south of the works area.
- 7.3 MAGIC MAPS states that a previous GCN survey undertaken of the pond within the wider landholding returned as negative absence for the species.

Site Assessment

- 7.4 The pond within the wider landholding is murky with waterfowl noted using the pond and little emergent vegetation present. The below HSI assessment shows the suitability to support GCN.

Figure No. 03 – HSI Calculation

		Pond Name
		Pond 1
		Grid Ref TQ12742490
SI No	SI Description	SI Value
1	Geographic location	1
2	Pond area	0.2
3	Pond permanence	0.9
4	Water quality	0.33
5	Shade	1
6	Water fowl effect	0.67
7	Fish presence	1
8	Pond Density	1
9	Terrestrial habitat	0.33
10	Macrophyte cover	0.3
HSI Score		0.57
Pond suitability (see below)		Below Average
HIS Score		Pond Suitability
< 0.50		Poor
0.50 - 0.59		Below average
0.60 - 0.69		Average
0.70 - 0.79		Good
> 0.80		Excellent

Terrestrial Habitat

- 7.5 The wider landholding offers very limited value for GCN due to the short sward height of the grassland surrounding the pond. The surrounding gardens appear to be well maintained with low sward length grass. The surrounding fields appear to be horse pasture fields. Both these habitats are not conducive to supporting GCN.
- 7.6 The hedgerow long the northern boundary of the paddock is of some value to GCN and connects to other hedgerows across the wider area.
- 7.7 The southern boundary of the wider landholding is bound by wood panelled fencing a low mound of earth along the base, which further stops entry from GCN.
- 7.8 Emms Lane and Coolham Road to the north and east respectively also adds a minor barrier to the species ability to access the site.
- 7.9 The paddock again has short sward height, of little value to GCN.
- 7.10 The potential for GCN to be present is **low/negligible**.

Bats

Desk Study

- 7.11 No granted EPSML granted within the last 10 years are present within a 2.0km radius of the site.

There are records of common and nathusius's pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and *Pipistrellus nathusii*), serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Bechstein's (*Myotis bechsteinii*) and western barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*) within a 2.0km radius.

The site lies within a 12.0km radius of The Mens SAC and 14.00km radius of Ebernoe Common designated for supporting maternity colonies of barbastelle and Bechstein bats.

Site Assessment

- 7.12 No signs of bat were noted during the assessment.
- 7.13 No structures are located within the paddock and no trees with bat roost suitability are noted with the paddock. Overall, the paddock is of **negligible suitability** to roosting bats.

Foraging and Commuting

- 7.14 The low species diversity and lack of inflorescence within the grass sward limits the value for foraging bats. The wider surrounding area consists of ponds, woodland and hedgerows with minimal night time lighting creates prime foraging and commuting habitat.
- 7.15 It is considered that bats in the local area are most likely to use the area of woodland to the north and scattered trees and pond to the south of the site (within the wider landholding) to move across the local area and forage.

- 7.16 The onsite hedgerow along the northern boundary would provide some value to bats. Overall, the site is of **low value** to foraging bats. The wider landholding with pond and scattered trees is of **low/moderate value** to foraging and commuting bats.

Birds

Desk Study

- 7.17 Numerous bird species are present in the local area, including those which utilise farmland, woodland and hedgerow habitats.

Site Assessment

- 7.18 The site and wider landholding provides some nesting habitat within hedgerows and trees and scrub.
- 7.19 The entire site provides foraging opportunities for a range of species such as blackbird *Turdus merula*, goldfinch *carduelis carduelis* and robin *Erithacus rubecula*. Overall, the site is of **low** value to nesting birds and **low** value to foraging birds.

Reptiles

Desk Study

- 7.20 There are multiple records of reptiles within a 2.0 km radius of the site.

Site Assessment

- 7.21 The generally well kept nature of the grass within the wider site is not conducive to supporting reptiles. The paddock provides some value for foraging and commuting individuals due to the higher sward length. Overall the site and wider landholding are of **low** value to reptiles.

Badger

Desk Study

- 7.22 Badger (*Meles meles*) records are confidential, but they are likely present nearby.

Site Assessment

- 7.23 No evidence of badger such as setts, snuffle holes or latrines were noted. The site is bound by hedgerow and fencing. Due to the connectivity of woodland, hedgerows and scrub in the surrounding area, there is potential that badger would be present locally and use the site on occasion. Overall, this site is of **low** value for badger.

Other

- 7.24 No potential for or evidence of any other protected species such as rare plants was recorded. There is good potential for hedgehogs *Erinaceus europaeus* to forage in the grass

garden given its size and the surroundings. No impacts upon other protected species are considered likely and have not been assessed further.

8.0 Evaluation of Impacts and Mitigation

Designated Sites

Potential Impacts

8.1 None foreseen due to application being solely for Change of Use.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

8.2 None required.

Habitats

Potential Impacts

8.3 None foreseen due to application being solely for Change of Use.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

8.4 None required.

Bats

Potential Impacts

8.5 None foreseen due to application being solely for Change of Use.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

8.6 None foreseen.

Nesting Birds

Potential Impacts

8.7 None foreseen due to application being solely for Change of Use.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

8.8 None foreseen.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Potential Impacts

8.9 None foreseen due to application being solely for Change of Use.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

8.10 None foreseen.

Badger

Potential Impacts

8.11 None foreseen due to application being solely for Change of Use.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

8.12 None required.

Other

Potential Impacts

8.13 None foreseen due to application being solely for Change of Use.

Mitigation and Compensation

8.14 None required.

Residual Impacts

8.15 The overall impact of the scheme will be negligible.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 The proposals area consists of a domestic dwelling with driveway, patio, small patches introduced shrubs, paddock bound by hedgerow and garden. The wider landholding consists of the attached house to the west with associated garden, outbuildings and pond. The proposals are small in scale and only small areas of habitat are to be affected.
- 9.2 No impacts upon any protected species are foreseen due to the application being for the change of use of land from 'Paddock' to 'Residential' use.
- 9.3 No significant effects are anticipated upon designated sites, provided the avoidance and mitigation measures stated within this report are followed.
- 9.4 When mitigation has been taken into account, the proposals are not considered to have a negative impact upon designated sites, habitats or protected species. Enhancements and a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment are included to confirm how ecological gains will be achieved.

10.0 References

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11.0 Appendix A - Site Photos

Photo 1 – View of the paddock in the east of the site with hedgerow to north. The site of the Change of Use application.



Photo 2 –View of dwelling from south, from the wider landholding.



Photo 3 - View of dwelling from north showing introduced shrubs.



Photo 4 - View of the house from the south.



Photo 5 – View of the lawn in the wider land holding.



Photo 6 – View of the pond in the wider landholding. The presence of waterfowl obvious.



12.0 Appendix B - Pond Locations

