Land East of Spring Gardens, Washington, West Sussex

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

ecology&habitat management ltd

EHM Ltd
www.ehmltd.com
info@ehmltd.com

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Primary Author:	Adam Robbins BSc (Hons), MSc, AssocMCIWM, MCIEEM

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Life Span of Report

This report and survey data remains valid for 12 months from date of issue. The report, conclusions and recommendations are valid for current development plans only. Should these change, the report should be reviewed and, if necessary, further survey work and desk study review undertaken.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EHM Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of a Land East of Spring Gardens, Washington, West Sussex, RH20 3BP. This report will provide an assessment of the site reporting on the current conditions of the habitats present and their potential to support protected and notable species.

The site is roughly rectangular in shape, covering an area of approximately 0.4ha. It comprises of a gravel yard area with stables and a horse grazed grassland. The site is currently access from Spring Gardens.

The site is located to the north of Washington and south of Ashington within an area of mixed residential and commercial use.

The local landscape is best described as urban in nature, with residential dwellings and infrastructure surrounding the site.

Species	Sites potential to support
Bat roosts- buildings.	Negligible
Bat roosts- mature trees	Negligible
Bat foraging/ commuting areas	Negligible
[redacted]	[redacted]
Dormice	Negligible
Riparian Mammals	Negligible
Other Mammals	Negligible
Reptiles	Negligible
Common Amphibians	Negligible
Great Crested Newts	Negligible
Breeding birds	Negligible
Plants	Negligible
Invertebrates	Negligible

Recommendation	Action
General Recommendation	Proceed with care and attention to wildlife and contact a qualified ecologist should the need arise.

1 INTRODUCTION

EHM Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of a Land East of Spring Gardens, Washington, West Sussex, RH20 3BP, which is hereafter referred to as the 'site'. This report will provide an assessment of the site reporting on the current conditions of the habitats present and their potential to support protected and notable species.

1.1 Project Outline

At the time of the site visit and report write-up, EHM Ltd understand that the development will involve erecting a new house on the land East of Spring Gardens using the existing roadways and access to the existing residential dwelling.

1.2 Site Location and Description

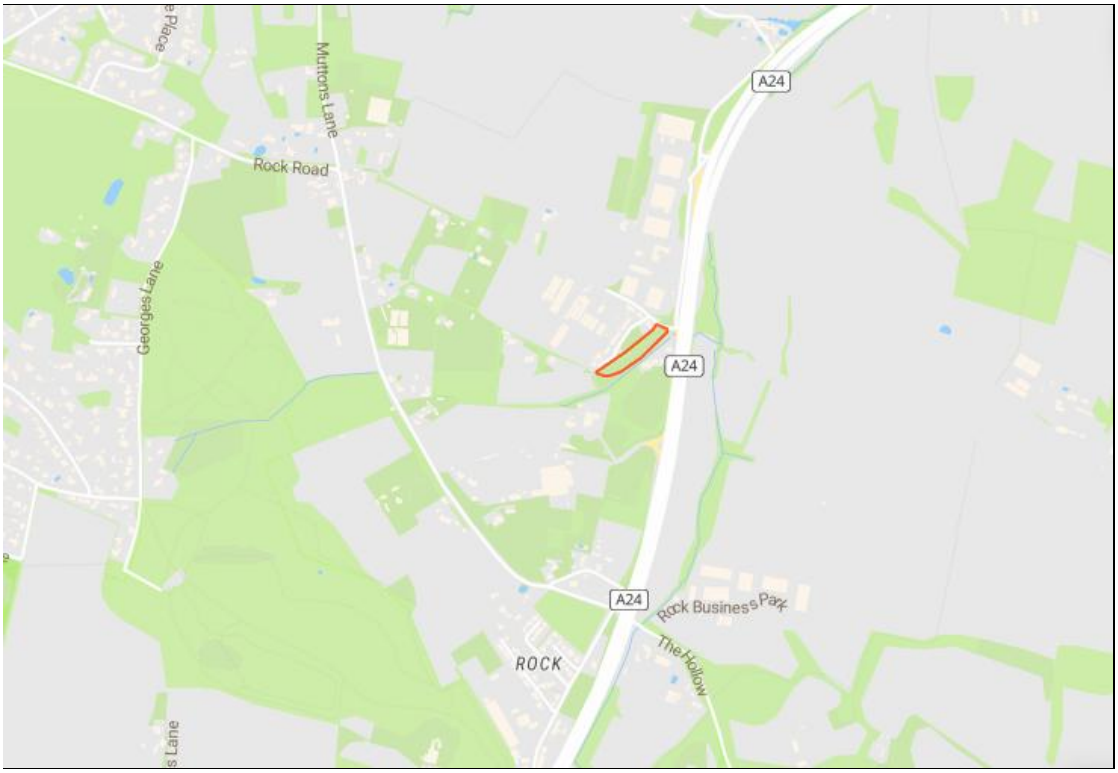
The site is roughly rectangular in shape, covering an area of approximately 0.4ha. It comprises of a gravel yard area with stables and a horse grazed grassland. The site is currently access from Spring Gardens.

The site is located to the north of Washington and south of Ashington within an area of mixed residential and commercial use.

The local landscape is best described as urban in nature, with residential dwellings and infrastructure surrounding the site.

The site (as shown on figure 1) is in centred on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference TQ 12408 14568.

Figure 1. Approximate Boundary of the site (red outline)



2 METHODOLOGY & LIMITATIONS

2.1 Scope and Assessment

2.1.1 Zone of Influence

The 'zone of influence' of a project is the area within which ecological features may be impacted by the proposed works. This may often extend beyond the site boundary due to the distance that certain species travel, the nature of the potentially affected habitats and the site's location in relation to important ecological sites.

For this assessment the following zones have been considered:

- 5km surrounding Statutory Conservation Designations relating to bats (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).
- 1km surrounding other Statutory Conservation Designations and Non-Statutory sites of importance to biodiversity (e.g. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).
- 1km surrounding known records of protected and notable species.
- The site and its immediate surroundings.

2.1.2 Impact Assessment

Impact assessment has been carried out based on the outline proposals provided (detailed in Section 1.1) using the findings of the desk study and field survey.

Ecological features have been scoped in and out as appropriate based on the baseline conditions of the site; i.e. what ecological features the site is likely to support, and as appropriate to the scale of the proposals.

An assessment of the potential project impacts on each ecological receptor (i.e. designated sites, protected and notable habitats and species) is provided, including the magnitude, duration and significance of the anticipated effects to each receptor. An assessment of significance has been undertaken considering the local, national and international value to ecological features as informed by the desk study.

Table 1 below includes details on how the significance has been determined.

Table 1 – General criteria for significance

Significance	Criteria
Major	Change resulting in breaches of legislation or exceeding statutory objectives.
	Likely to impact on sites designated for national or international importance.
	Likely to affect a large-scale area or a large number of species or populations on frequent or permanent basis.
	May result in an irreversible decline or rise.
Moderate	Unlikely to cause a breach of legislation but likely to impact on a site of regional or local importance.
	Likely to affect a small number of species or populations on a permanent basis.
Minor	Likely to impact an area or feature of local interest or importance.
	Likely to have a temporary impact on a small number of species or populations or be a recoverable impact.
Negligible	Indiscernible impact predicted.

Where possible significant ecological effects will be avoided through careful design and application of the mitigation hierarchy:

- Avoidance
  Seek options that avoid harm to ecological features.
- Mitigation
  Adverse effects should be avoided or minimised through mitigation measures, either through the design of the project or subsequent measures that can be guaranteed. Mitigation is relevant for negative impacts assessed as being potentially significant (before mitigation) or where required to ensure compliance with legislation.
- Compensation
  Where there are significant adverse ecological effects despite the mitigation proposed, these should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures. Compensation is relevant for negative impacts assessed as being significant or where required to ensure compliance with legislation.
- Enhancements
  Seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation or compensation.

2.2 Desk Study

Biological records from the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) were obtained comprising protected and notable species records and Statutory and Non-Statutory Nature Conservation Designations within a 1km radius of the site.

Data search results only give an indication of species presence in a location. The absence of recent records for certain species in an area may be due to low levels of biological recording or the non-submission of records, rather than absence. Many species records are also at low geographical resolution and do not indicate their exact location and often provide little detail about abundance.

Web-based DEFRA resource Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) was consulted to identify Statutory Nature Conservation Designations within a 1km radius of the site surveyed, and for Statutory sites designated for bats within a 10km radius of the site. A search for granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) within a 1km radius relating to great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*, 2km radius relating to hazel dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius* and 5km radius relating to bats was also undertaken.

2.3 Extended UK Habitat Classification Survey

A field survey identifying the habitats, legally protected and notable species and the site's potential for supporting these species was undertaken. The potential for habitats to support legally protected species is important as legal protection of some species extends to the habitats they depend on, as well as the individuals themselves.

The field survey used UK Habitat Classifications (UKHab, 2023) combined with species specific field observation techniques. The UKHab Professional edition was used with a Minimum Mapping Unit (MMU) of 25m^2 and habitats were classified to level 5 where possible with all secondary codes reported as necessary. Where given, habitat measurements are appropriate and based on satellite/georeferenced maps.

The nature conservation value of ecological features that may be affected by development (ecological receptors) is adapted from the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).

This report records the habitats, flora and fauna evident on the day of the site visit. It does not record any flora or fauna that may appear at other times of the year, and as such, were not evident at the time of the field survey. The process is not intended to produce a comprehensive list of plants and animals but to evaluate the ecological resources within the site and thus identify potential issues of ecological relevance to the proposed works.

2.4 Personnel

The site survey was undertaken by on 31 October 2025.

Adam Robbins, Ecologist, MCIEEM, Natural England Bat Class Licence CL18 (Level 2) 2016-24143-CLS-CLS, Natural England Great Crested Newt Class Licence CL08 (Level 1) 2015-3839-CLS-CLS.

2.5 Limitations

The contents of this report are based on a single site visit and a search of the local records centre and available online resources. Though the survey and interpretations of the data were carried out by a competent assessor there may be things that have been overlooked, missed, or not present at the time of the visit.

3 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

3.1 Designated Sites

3.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

South Downs National Park is located c.600m south of the site. This SSSI, which lies over Sandgate Beds and Lower Greensand, supports a range of heathland habitats including both wet and dry heath, grassland, scrub and woodland. The woodland carries a rich community of breeding birds.

There are no other statutory designated sites within a 1km radius of the site.

A map, provided by SxBRC, of the Statutory Nature Conservation Designations in relation to the site is shown at Appendix E.

3.1.2 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

There are two no non-statutory designated sites within a 1km radius of the site.

- Rock common Sand Quarry is located c.700m south of the site and is designated as a local geological site.
- The Hollow is located c.950m south of the site and is a designated road verge.

A map, provided by SxBRC, of the Non-Statutory Nature Conservation Designations in relation to the site is shown at Appendix E.

3.2 Habitats

The site is approximately 0.4ha in size and comprises four UK Habitat Classification type (secondary codes have been added where applicable):

u1	Building
u1e	Built linear feature
g4,103	Improved grassland, horse grazed
u1b6	Other developed land

A map of the habitats within the site is provided in Figure B1, Appendix B.

3.2.1 u1e – Built linear feature

Surrounding the site is a wooden post and rail fence. This runs the perimeter of the site with a few small exceptions, these being a small section of brick wall and gate on the northeast boundary and a few areas of the northern boundary where the fence has been broken and replaced with fabric fencing.

3.2.2 g4, 103 – Improved grassland, horse grazed

The main body of the site is improved grassland which shows signs of grazing by horses. The species present are common and comprise a mix of, but are not limited to White clover *Trifolium repens*, Creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, Broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, Dove's-foot cranesbill *Geranium molle*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, Silverweed *Argentina anserina*, Daisy *Bellis perennis*, Lanceolate plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, Prickly sowthistle *Sonchus asper*, Wild carrot *Daucus carota*, Common mallow *Malva sylvestris*, Black medic *Medicago lupulina*, Greater plantain *Plantago major*, Ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, Thyme-leaved speedwell *Veronica serpyllifolia*, Wood sedge *Carex sylvatica*, Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., Red clover *Trifolium pratense*.

3.2.3 u1b6 – Other developed land

To the northeast of the site is an area of gravel. On this site is a small wooden stable and a small amount of material storage along with a few parked vehicles.

The gravel has some colonisation by plants found within the horse grazed grassland.

3.2.4 u1 – Building

A small wooden stable that has been well maintained.

3.3 Flora and Invertebrates

A total of 274 records of notable plant and invertebrate species were identified within a 1km radius of the site.

No notable invertebrate or plant species were identified within the site. The site is considered to support common and widespread flora and invertebrate species.

3.4 Amphibians – including Great Crested Newt

16 records of great crested newt (GCN) or other amphibians were identified within a 1km radius of the site.

The site is not considered likely to support GCN or amphibians due to a lack of waterbodies on site, lack of nearby waterbodies and land management of the site.

3.5 Reptiles

There are 22 records of reptiles within a 1km radius of the site.

The site does not contain habitat suitable for reptiles.

3.6 Birds

A total of 1172 records of birds were identified within a 1km radius of the site.

There are no habitats on site suitable for breeding or nesting birds and due to current land management, the site is not suitable for ground nesting birds.

[redacted]

3.8 Hazel Dormice

No records of hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* were identified within a 1km radius of the site.

The site does not contain suitable habitat for dormice, and no evidence was identified during the survey undertaken.

3.9 Otters

No records of otter *Lutra lutra* were recorded within 1km of the site.

The site does not contain suitable habitat for otters, and no evidence of otters was identified during the survey undertaken.

3.10 Water Voles

No records of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* were identified within a 1km radius of the site.

The site does not contain suitable habitat for water vole, and no evidence of water vole was identified during the survey undertaken.

3.11 Bats

A total of 120 records of bats were identified within a 1km radius of the site. Species recorded include Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, Natterer *Myotis nattereri*, Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus,* Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus,* Lesislers *Nyctalus leisleri* whiskered *Myotis mystacinus* Daubenton *Myotis daubentonii* and Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*

Further records of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for bats were identified within a 5km radius, these did not add any new species to the above records.

There are no suitable roost features on site.

3.12 Other Notable Mammals

No records of other notable mammals were recorded within 1km of the site.

3.13 Invasive Species

A total of 227 records of invasive species were identified within a 1km radius of the site. No invasive species were found on site.

4 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS, MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION MEASURES

The mitigation and compensation recommendations provided are based on the principles of established best practice guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), the local planning authority and other relevant organisations. Where applicable, the cumulative effects potentially arising from other developments are discussed in this section.

4.1 Designated Sites

Site proposal is not considered likely to impact any designated sites.

4.2 Habitats

Site proposal is not considered likely to impact habitats of significant ecological value.

4.3 Flora and Invertebrates

The site is considered likely to support common and widespread flora and invertebrate species. There are no anticipated impacts to these species.

4.4 Amphibians (including Great Crested Newt)

Proposals are not anticipated to impact great crested newts or other common and widespread amphibian species.

4.5 Reptiles

Proposals are not anticipated to impact reptiles.

4.6 Birds

Proposals are not anticipated to impact birds.

[redacted]

4.8 Bats

The proposal will not affect roosting bats as there are no suitable features found on site.

4.9 Hazel Dormice

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon dormice.

4.10 Otters

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon otters.

4.11 Water Voles

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon water voles.

4.12 Other Notable Mammals

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon other notable mammals.

4.13 Invasive Species

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact or support spread of Invasive species.

5 CONCLUSIONS TABLE

Table 2. Summary of ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures for the site.

Ecological Feature	Potential Effect	Significance in the absence of mitigation	Mitigation/Compensation and Enhancement	Residual Effect
Statutory Designated Sites	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Non-Statutory Designated Sites	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Habitats	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Flora and Invertebrates	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Amphibians (including GCN)	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Reptiles	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Birds	None.	-	-	Negligible.
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Bats	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Hazel Dormice	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Otters	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Water Voles	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Other Notable Mammals	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Invasive Species	None.	-	-	Negligible.

6 REFERENCES

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7 SITE PHOTOS

Plate 1. Site Access

Plate 2. Stable in yard area

Plate 3. Site grassland and boundary fence

Plate 4. Site grassland and boundary fence

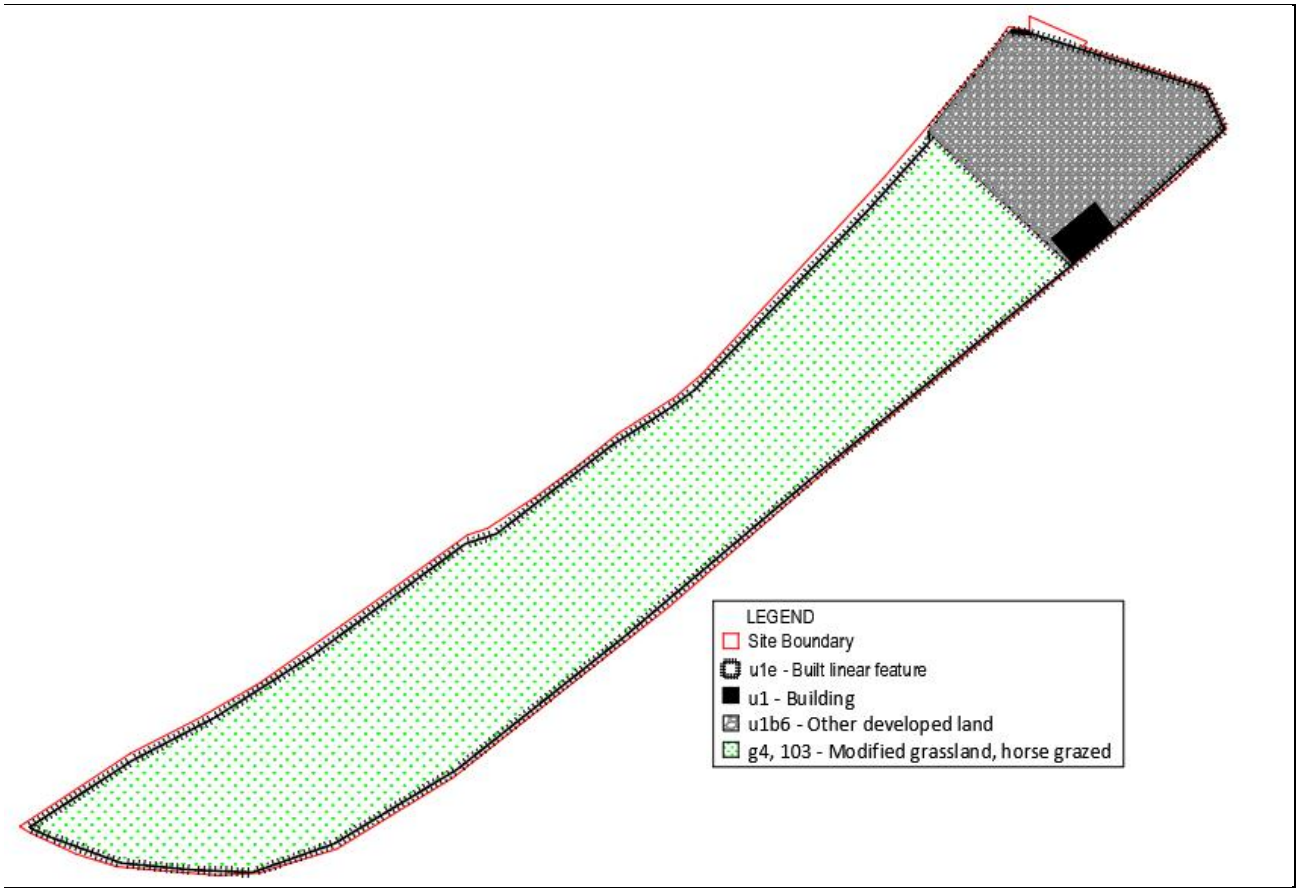
APPENDIX A - RELEVANT WILDLIFE LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Ecological Feature	Legislation / Policy
Great crested newts	Great crested newts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure great crested newts or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of great crested newts which could affect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive or breed may also result in an offence.
Reptiles	Reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill or injure reptiles.
Birds	Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is illegal to take, damage or destroy the nests of wild birds whilst being built or in use. Bird species also listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) receive additional protection including protection from intentional or reckless disturbance when they are nesting or rearing dependant young.
Badgers	Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under this legislation, it is an offence to kill or injure a badger, damage or destroy a sett or disturb a badger whilst it occupies a sett.
Bats	British bat species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure bats or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of bats which could affect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young may also result in an offence.
Hazel Dormice	Dormice are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure dormice or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection used by this species. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of dormice which could affect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive or breed may also result in an offence.

Ecological Feature	Legislation / Policy
Otters	Otters are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure otters or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of otters which could affect the ability of animals to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young may also result in an offence.
Water voles	Water voles are protected on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to kill or injure a water vole, intentionally or recklessly disturb, destroy or obstruct a water voles place of shelter or protection.
Invasive non-native species	Invasive, non-native species are those listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to plant or cause the spread of these species in the wild.
UK Priority Species/ Habitats	UK Priority Species/Habitats are those that have been identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action.
Biodiversity Net Gain	The Environment Act 2022 and the National Planning Policy Framework require all developments to show a net gain for biodiversity.

APPENDIX B – FIGURES

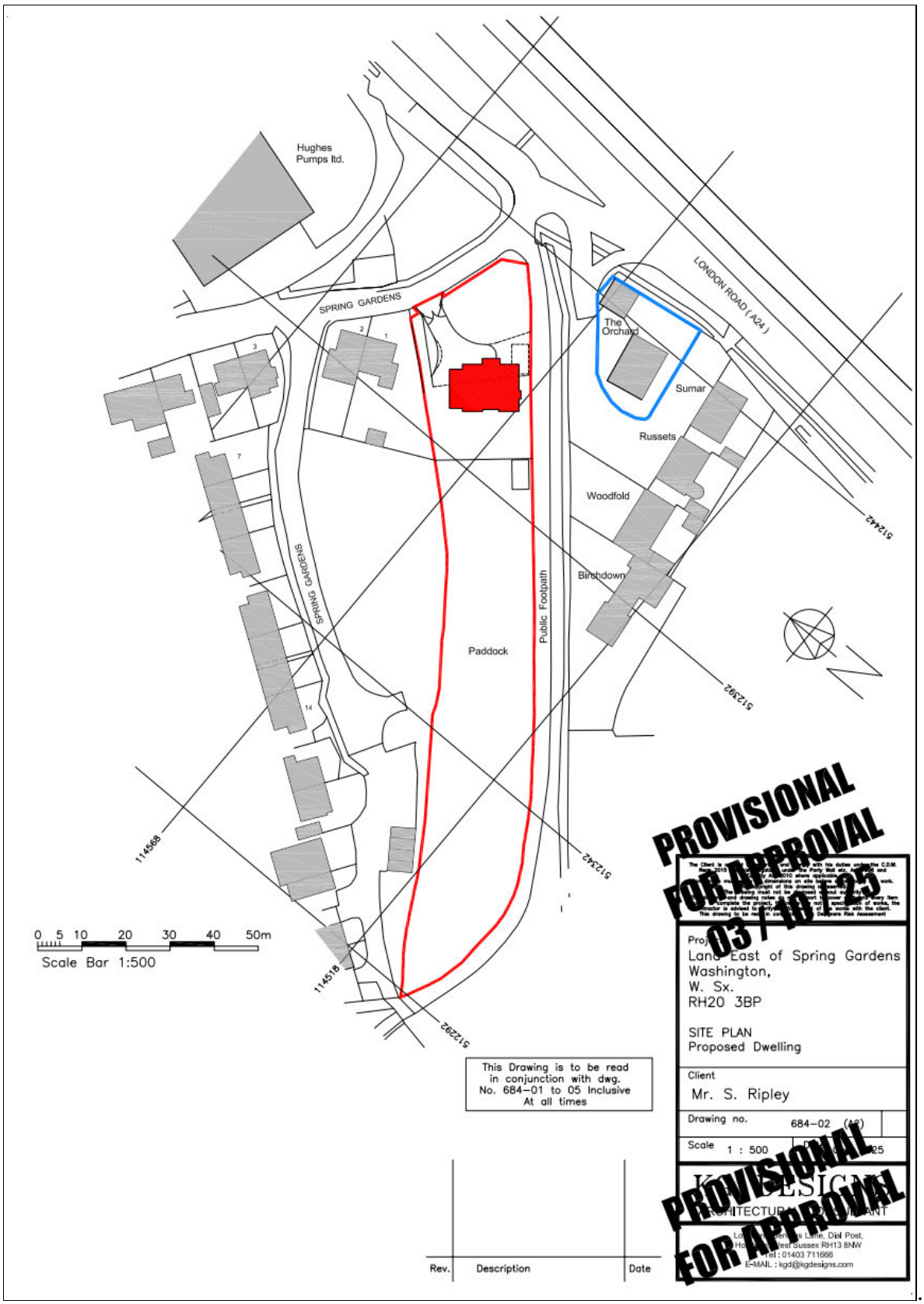
Figure B1 – Habitat Plan



Not to scale. North is page up.

Red outline is site boundary

APPENDIX C – PROPOSED PLANS



APPENDIX D - SURVEY DETAILS AND RESULTS DATA

Table D1. Details of the Personnel, Dates and Types of Survey Undertaken at the Site

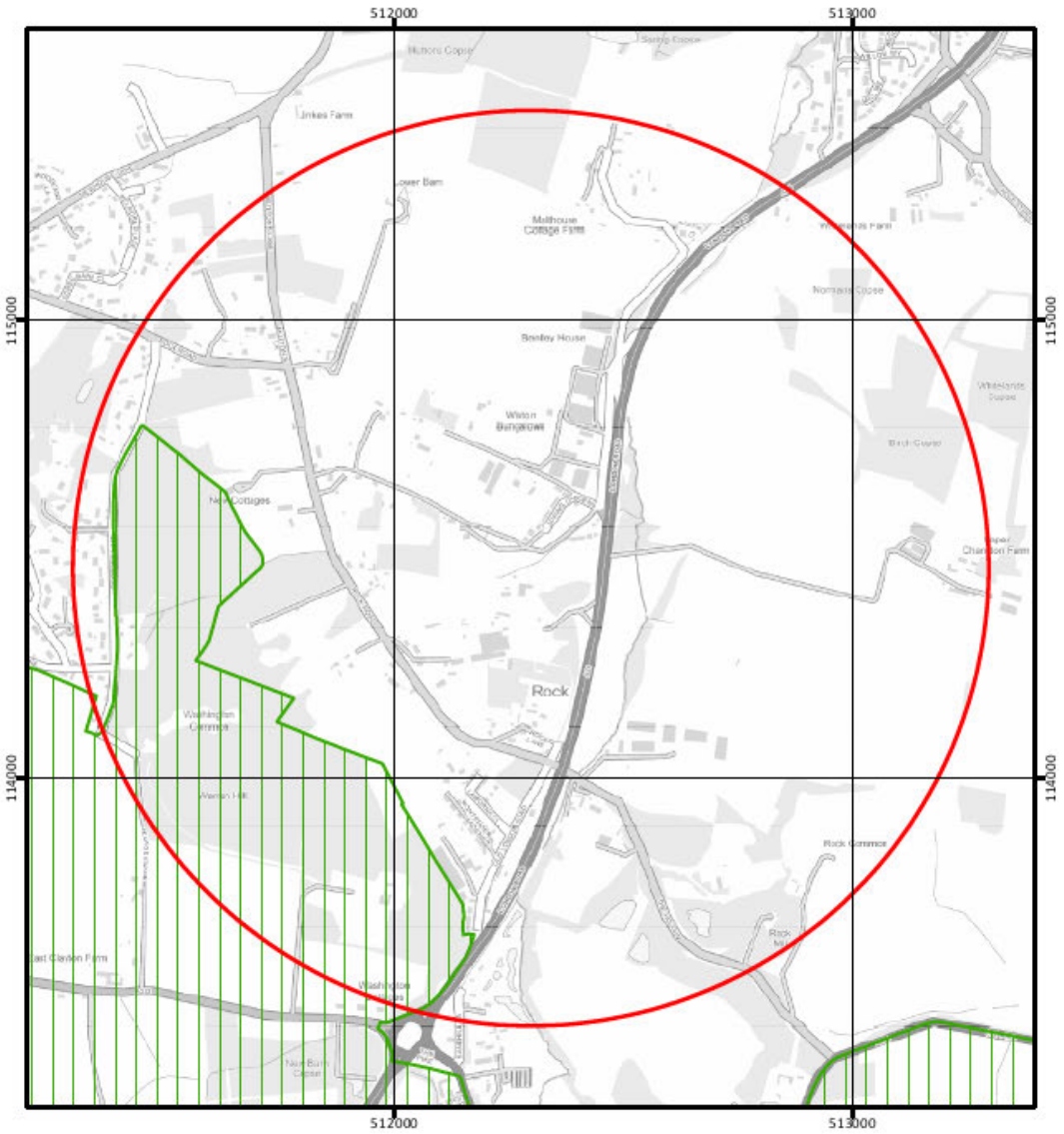
SURVEY	DATE	PERSONNEL
Extended UK Habitat Classification Survey & Daytime Bat Walkover Survey (DBW)	31 October 2025	Adam Robbins (Ecologist) MCIEEM, Natural England Bat Class Licence CL18 (Level 2) 2016-24143-CLS-CLS, Natural England Great Crested Newt Class Licence CL08 (Level 1) 2015-3839-CLS-CLS.

APPENDIX E – RECORD CENTRE MAPS

Map 1: Statutory site designations

Spring Gardens, Washington + 1km radius
SxBRC/25/627 - 31/10/2025

Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre



Key to Map:

- Search area
- Special Area of Conservation
- Special Protection Area
- Ramsar
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- National Nature Reserve
- Local Nature Reserve
- National Park
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Country Park
- Marine Conservation Zone

Statutory designated site boundaries supplied by Natural England. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database rights 2025

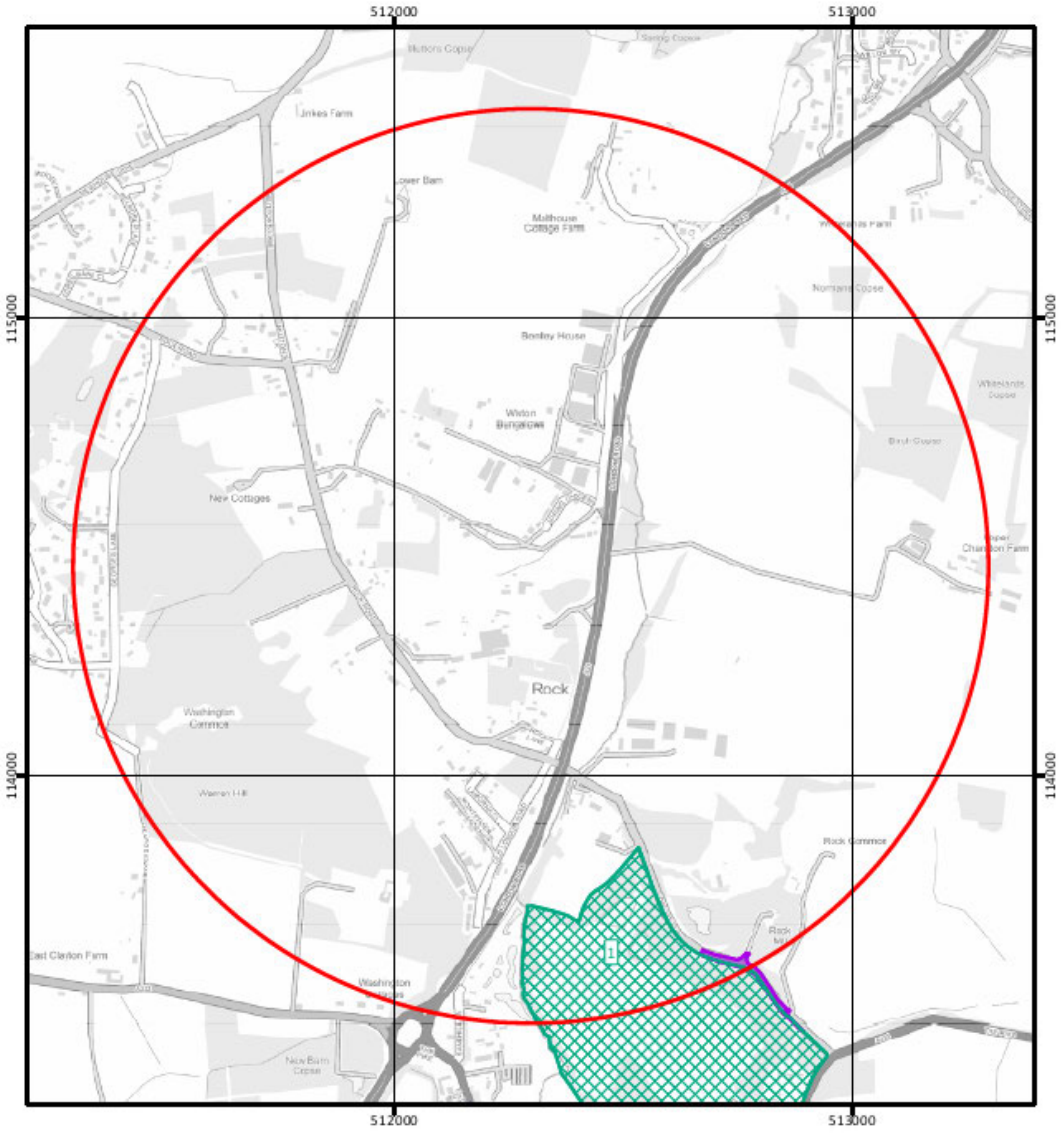
0 0.25 0.5 km

N

Map 2: Non-statutory site designations

Spring Gardens, Washington + 1km radius
SxBRC/25/627 - 31/10/2025

Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre



Key to Map:

- Search area
- Local Wildlife Site
- Local Geological Site
- Designated Road Verge
- Marine SNCI

Local Wildlife Site boundaries maintained by Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) on behalf of Sussex Local Wildlife Sites Initiative. Notable Road Verge data provided by local authorities. Local Geological Site data created by SxBRC in partnership with Sussex Geodiversity Group.

0 0.25 0.5 km

N