Preliminary Ecological Assessment

Site 1 at The Cabins

Faygate Lane

Lambs Green, West Sussex

RH12 4RF

NGR: TQ 21554 36689



23rd June 2025

Sylvatica Ecology Ltd

Company Registration Number: 07705793

www.sylvaticaecology.co.uk

Limitations and Liabilities 4

1.0 SUMMARY 5

2.0 INTRODUCTION 6

Site Location 6

Aim of this Study 6

3.0 METHODOLOGY 7

Ecological Survey 7

Designated Sites and Biological Records 9

Habitat Mapping and Pond Distance Calculation Methods 9

Qualification of Author 9

4.0 RESULTS 10

Statutory Designated Sites and Priority Habitats 10

Biological Records Search 11

Summary of Habitats Present on Site 13

Habitat Types 13

5.0 POTENTIAL FOR PROTECTED SPECIES 14

Birds 14

Bats 14

Reptiles and Amphibians 14

Terrestrial and Riparian Mammals 16

6.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 17

Designated Sites and Habitats 17

Birds 17

Low Bat Roost Potential 18

Bats and Lighting 18

Terrestrial and Riparian Mammals 19

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT 20

8.0 REFERENCES 22

APPENDIX A: PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL WALKOVER SURVEY HABITAT MAP **23**

APPENDIX B: PONDS WITHIN 500M **24**

APPENDIX C: PHOTOS OF THE SITE **25**

APPENDIX D: PROTECTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED SITE LEGISLATION SUMMARY (ENGLAND AND WALES) **27**

Tables and Figures

Figure 1: Site Survey Location (Red Line Boundary)

Table 1: Bat Roost and Foraging Potential of Buildings and Trees (BCT 2023)

Table 2: Statutory Designated Sites

Table 3: Bat Species Records

Table 4: Amphibian and Reptile Records

Table 5: Terrestrial and Riparian Mammal Records

Table 6: Natural England Mitigation Licences within 2.0km

Table 7: Ponds and Distance from Site

Table 8: Great Crested Newt Impact Rist Calculator

Table 9: List of Recommended Plant Species for Native Tree and Shrub Planting

Table 10: List of Recommended Plant Species for Native Herbaceous Species Planting

Limitations and Liabilities

Sylvatica Ecology Ltd retains the copyright of this report and its contents are for the sole use of the client (s). Copy of this document may only be undertaken in connection to the development works on of the property of Site 1, The Cabins, Faygate Lane, Lambs Green, West Sussex, RH12 4RF, NGR: TQ 21554 36689. and only once outstanding fees have been paid in full and only once all outstanding fees have been paid in full in relation to ecological surveys and reporting. Reproduction of the whole, or any part of the document, without written consent from Sylvatica Ecology Ltd is forbidden**.** It is not permitted to share this document or any part of this document on any social media platform without permission to do so from Sylvatica Ecology Ltd.

It should be borne in mind that the behaviour of animals can be unpredictable and may not conform to standard patterns recorded in scientific literature. Therefore, this report cannot predict with absolute certainty that animal species will occur in apparently suitable locations or habitats, or that they will not occur in locations or habitats that appear unsuitable.

In order to minimise the likelihood of adverse effects on protected animal species over time, it is accepted good practice, in accordance with Natural England (NE) (formerly English Nature) guidance for ecological surveys to be repeated should works be deferred for over 12 - 18 months from the date of initial survey.

It is the duty of the landowner, developer and operations managers to act responsibly and to comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to, or during works.

The recommendations and information contained within this report are based on the information provided on the development works prior to the surveys being carried out. Should the development proposals change then the findings and recommendations contained within would potentially require revision.

The findings within this report do not constitute legal advice. Should this be required, then a suitably qualified professional practitioner should be contacted.

Author	Signed	Contact
Richard Law BSc (Hons) MRes CEnv MCIEEM FLS		info@se-planning.com

1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 A Preliminary Ecological Assessment was undertaken on 19th June 2025 to inform proposals for redevelopment at Site 1, The Cabins. The site comprised a mix of hardstanding, modified grassland, deciduous woodland, and scattered trees, with several timber buildings arranged around a central open area. It lay within a rural landscape bordered by farmland and the River Mole. The site fell within a managed curtilage, with no direct ecological pathways to nearby designated sites. The closest statutory site was House Copse SSSI, located 1.7km southeast. Due to the contained nature of the works and the absence of hydrological or habitat linkages, no impacts to this SSSI or other surrounding habitats are anticipated.

1.2 Habitats within the site included sealed and unsealed developed surfaces (UKHab: u1b, u1c), closely mown modified grassland (UKHab: g4), a strip of deciduous woodland (UKHab: w1g), and a mix of recently planted and mature deciduous trees (UKHab: w1h). A managed treeline containing native and non-native species was also present. The buildings were well maintained with minimal access points, and while minor features such as lifted cladding and climbing vegetation could provide crevice opportunities for bats, overall roosting potential was assessed as low. A single dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey is therefore recommended.

1.3 The pond immediately north of the site was found to be of negligible value to great crested newts due to poor water quality, high turbidity, waterfowl disturbance, and the absence of suitable terrestrial habitat. Other ponds within 250m of the site, when assessed using Natural England's risk calculator, resulted in a "Green: Offence Highly Unlikely" score. Reptile and amphibian habitat was assessed as unsuitable due to the site's managed condition and isolation from suitable habitat. No evidence of badger was recorded within or adjacent to the site, and although hedgehog may occasionally use the site, its value was limited to low-level foraging and shelter within the woodland edge. Dormice were not considered likely to be impacted due to the absence of suitable habitat within the development area.

1.4 The report recommends a precautionary bat survey, seasonal avoidance of vegetation clearance during bird nesting periods, and biodiversity enhancement through the installation of bird and bat boxes and the planting of native trees, shrubs, and herbaceous species. These enhancements aim to support pollinators, birds, and small mammals and improve the site's overall ecological value post-development. The proposed works, being small in scale and confined within a residential setting, are not anticipated to result in any significant ecological impact.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report presents the findings of a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) survey of land at Site 1, The Cabins, Faygate Lane, Lambs Green, West Sussex, RH12 4RF, NGR: TQ 21554 36689. A planning application is to be made to install a new residential building which will involve the demolition of some existing buildings. The footprint will be within the previous building location and will be a self-build.

2.2 ***Figure 1: Site Survey Location (Red Line Boundary)***



Site Location

2.3 The site comprised a series of residential or agricultural buildings arranged around a central open area, set within a rural landscape. The ground within the boundary included a mix of hardstanding, maintained grass, and scattered trees, with several vehicles and storage areas visible. The site lay adjacent to arable land to the east and was bordered to the west by the River Mole and associated riparian vegetation, providing ecological connectivity. A pond was located just north of the site, and access appeared to be from the northwest via a track.

Aim of this Study

2.4 The aim of this habitat survey was to assess the habitats present on and adjacent to the property and to evaluate the potential for protected species to be present. Recommendations on any further survey requirements, actions to preserve the habitats present and enhancements have been made as a result of the findings of this habitat survey. These findings should be used within the design phase of the proposals, to minimise the impacts for

biodiversity, through careful design to avoid negative effects where possible. The survey findings then enable a prediction of the potential impacts of any ecological receptors present to be made in each specific case.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

Ecological Survey

3.1 A preliminary ecological survey walkover was carried out at the Site on the 19th June 2025. The habitats were assessed in accordance with BS 42020 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development and broadly followed the 'Extended Phase 1' methodology as set out in the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment and the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey. This method of survey provides information on the habitats in the survey area and assesses the potential for legally protected species to occur on or adjacent to the Site. The habitats were classified according to the UK Habitat Classification system (Butcher *et al*. 2023).

3.2 Any faunal species identified during the survey were noted. Any evidence for the presence of, or potential for, protected species was also noted. In particular: amphibians, bats, reptiles, mammals, and birds were included.

3.3 A search was carried out for evidence of the presence of invasive plants listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which are subject to strict legal control. The list of invasive plant species included on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is extensive and these plants are found in a range of different habitats.

3.4 An assessment of the potential of the building/ site to support roosting and foraging bats was made and categorised according to ***Table 1*** (BCT 2023).

3.5 ***Table 1: Bat Roost and Foraging Potential of Buildings and Trees (BCT 2023)***

Category	Roosting Habitat	Commuting and Foraging Habitat
Known Roost	Evidence of bat present (*e.g.*) droppings, live or dead bats and/ or desk study results	N/A
High	Building with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitats.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.
Moderate/ PRF-M	Building with one or more potential roosting features that could be used by several bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitats, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation concern.	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
Low	Building with one of more potential roost features that could be used by individual bats opportunistically.	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats for example, a fragmented hedgerow or

	However, there potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/ or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats. (*i.e.* unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation)	un-vegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Negligible	Building or tree with no potential to support any bats	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats

Designated Sites and Biological Records

3.6 A 2.0km radius biological records search was carried out using the National Biodiversity Network This checked for protected and notable species records within 2.0km of the application site.

3.7 Records of internationally designated statutory sites within the 5.0km of the Site and nationally designated statutory sites within 2.0km of the Site were searched for using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside website (MAGIC) http://www.magic.gov.uk.

3.8 MAGIC was also searched for previously granted Natural England licence applications, which may give an indication of the presence of protected species in the local area.

Habitat Mapping and Pond Distance Calculation Methods

3.9 The mapping was carried out using QGIS V 3.22.14-Bailowieza for MasOS 14.1. Habitat areas and waterbody distances from site were calculated using this QGIS software.

Qualification of Author

3.10 The survey work and reporting has been led by Richard Law BSc MRes CEnv MCIEEM FLS. Richard has been undertaking ecological survey work within the last 18 years on many different locations throughout the United Kingdom, for a variety of protected species, including bats (Class 2 2015-12576), reptiles, amphibians including great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (Class 1 2016-20290) and terrestrial mammals including dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius* (Class 1 2015-13188) and birds including barn owl *Tyto alb*a licence (CL29/00236). Richard is also

qualified in track and sign and trailing *via* an international system of assessment (www.trackercertification.com).

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 This section describes the results of the records searches and of the habitats identified during the walkover survey. All the plant species names follow the nomenclature of Stace 1997.

Statutory Designated Sites and Priority Habitats

4.2 ***Table 2: Statutory Designated Sites***

Site Name	*Location*	*Nature Conservation Interest*
House Copse Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1.7km southeast	A small woodland SSSI with an unusual amount of small leaved lime. The trees seen on this visit were multi-stemed in clusters. None of the stems were as wide to be considered ancient of veterans but the base of the trees might reveal more of the age (with an expert opinion). The lime trees were coppiced and used in charcoal production within living memory. Remains of the burner are still visible and last used approx. 20 years ago. Oak and Ash are also part of the canopy (ash dieback is within the wider estate and the farm regular use the woods. They have a biomass burner on the estate). There are 2 rides that are maintained by the estate for access. The Weald clay means that tracks become impassable with high rainfall especially in winter. The Estate are very aware of the risks from run off and compaction and doing a good job.

4.3 The **House Copse Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** is located approximately 1.7km southeast of the site and comprises a small but ecologically valuable woodland. The woodland is notable for its unusually high proportion of small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*), which are present as multi-stemmed clusters. While individual stems were not of a diameter that would suggest ancient or veteran status, the basal structure of the trees may indicate greater age, potentially verifiable through expert assessment. Historically, the lime trees were coppiced and used for charcoal production, a practice that continued until around 20 years ago, with remnants of a burner still present.

4.4 The woodland canopy also includes oak (*Quercus* sp.) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), though ash dieback is present across the wider estate. The woodland remains under active management by the estate, which utilises a biomass burner and maintains access via two woodland rides.

These rides are carefully managed, especially considering the heavy clay soils of the Weald which render tracks impassable during periods of high rainfall. The estate demonstrates awareness of the ecological risks associated with run-off and compaction and is implementing good practice to mitigate these.

Biological Records Search

4.5 ***Table 3: Bat Species Records***

Latin Name	Common Name	Number of Records
Pipistrellus pygmaeus	Soprano Pipistrelle	3
Pipistrellus pipistrellus	Common Pipistrelle	4
Pipistrellus nathusii	Nathusius's Pipistrelle	1
Eptesicus serotinus	Serotine	1
Nyctalus noctula	Noctule	1

4.6 A total of five bat species have been recorded in the local area. The most frequently recorded species was the common pipistrelle with four records, followed by the soprano pipistrelle with three records. Single records were noted for Nathusius's pipistrelle, serotine, and noctule. These results indicate a moderate level of bat diversity in the surrounding area, with pipistrelle species being the most commonly recorded.

4.7 ***Table 4: Amphibian and Reptile Records***

Latin Name	Common Name	Number of Records
Bufo bufo	Common Toad	2
Rana temporaria	Common Frog	1
Triturus cristatus	Great Crested Newt	3
Lissotriton vulgaris	Smooth Newt	1

4.8 A total of four amphibian species have been recorded in the local area. Great crested newt was the most frequently recorded, with three records, indicating some potential presence in the wider landscape. Common toad was recorded twice, while both common frog and smooth newt were recorded on a single occasion each.

4.9 ***Table 5: Terrestrial and Riparian Mammal Records***

Latin Name	Common Name	Number of Records
Erinaceus europaeus	Hedgehog	2
Meles meles	Badger	7

4.10 Two mammal species have been recorded in the local area. Badger was the most frequently recorded, with seven records, indicating likely activity and presence within the wider landscape. Hedgehog was recorded on two occasions, suggesting occasional use of the area by this declining species. These records highlight the importance of maintaining connectivity and suitable foraging habitats in the surrounding environment.

Granted Mitigation Licences

4.11 ***Table 6: Natural England Mitigation Licences***

Licence Number	Distance and Direction	Species	Type	Date	NGR
EPSM2011-3197	1.9km south	Common Pipistrelle and Brown Long Eared Bat	Damage and Destruction of a Resting Place and Breeding Site	17/08/2011 to 30/09/2015	TQ 2150 3450

4.12 A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence was granted approximately 1.9km south of the site. The licence (EPSM2011-3197) permitted the damage and destruction of a resting place and breeding site for common pipistrelle and brown long eared bat. It was active from 17 August 2011 to 30 September 2015 and relates to a location recorded at National Grid Reference TQ 2150 3450. This confirms the presence of roosting and breeding bats within the wider landscape.

Summary of Habitats Present on Site

4.13 The site comprised a mix of developed land, modified grassland, scattered trees, and a linear strip of deciduous woodland. Buildings with pitched roofs were situated on a combination of sealed and unsealed hard surfaces (UKHab: u1b, u1c), with minimal potential for wildlife use. Surrounding these structures was regularly mown modified grassland (UKHab: g4), forming part of a garden area with low botanical diversity and limited ecological value. Scattered trees, including mature oak, silver birch, apple, and ornamental plum, were present throughout the grassland matrix, offering moderate ecological value through structural diversity (UKHab: w1h). Along the western boundary, a narrow strip of mature deciduous woodland (UKHab: w1g).

Habitat Types

4.14 **Developed Land – Sealed and Unsealed Surfaces (UKHab: u1b, u1c).** The site supported several single-storey buildings with pitched roofs, constructed from timber cladding and hanging tiles. The buildings were located on a combination of hard surfaces and gravel, classifiable as u1b – Developed land: sealed surface and u1c – Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface**.** Some minor gaps were visible beneath lifted cladding and tile edges. The surrounding infrastructure included decking, compacted gravel, and hardstanding used for seating and access.

4.15 ***Modified Grassland*** (UKHab: g4): The grassland corresponded to g4 – Modified grassland under the UKHab classification. It appeared as a regularly mown lawn or amenity grassland with a short, even sward and low botanical diversity. Dominant species included perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne* and white clover *Trifolium repens*, both tolerant of frequent cutting and nutrient enrichment. The grassland formed part of a garden or semi-managed landscape, bordered by deciduous trees and containing features such as greenhouses and seating areas. The habitat provided limited ecological value due to its intensive management.

4.16 **Recently Plant Trees (w1h), Mature Deciduous Trees and Medium Sized Deciduous Trees:** The site area supported a mixture of mature and young scattered trees set within a closely mown modified grassland matrix. Species visible included mature English oak *Quercus robur*, ornamental plum *Prunus cerasifera*, apple *Malus domestica*, and silver birch *Betula pendula*, with trees varying in age and structure. The ground beneath the trees was regularly maintained and lacked significant shrub or herbaceous understorey, though some natural regeneration and wildflowers may have occurred around tree bases and along less disturbed margins.

4.17 ***Deciduous Woodland (w1g):*** Along the western edge of the site was a strip of deciduous woodland. The canopy was dominated by oak *Quercus robur* and common lime *Tilia × europaea*, with trunks showing signs of previous management such as coppicing or pollarding.

Ivy *Hedera helix* was abundant, climbing many of the tree trunks and contributing to the structural complexity of the habitat. The canopy provided moderate shade, limiting the development of ground flora, although some low-growing herbaceous species and leaf litter were present at the base of the trees.

5.0 POTENTIAL FOR PROTECTED SPECIES

Birds

5.1 The time of year the survey was carried out was within the main bird breeding season. There were birds that were observed within the immediate vicinity of the site survey area, wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, crow Corvus corone, magpie *Pica pica*, blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus,* robin *Erithacus rubecula,* wren *Troglodytes troglodytes,* thrush *Turdus philomelos*, blackbird *Turdus merula*, and great tit *Parus major*.

Bats

5.2 The buildings present were single-storey, timber-clad structures with corrugated metal or tiled roofing, and featured a combination of open verandas, external fixtures, and areas of dense vegetation. The external walls included horizontal timber cladding with some visible lifted or warped boards and minor gaps beneath features such as vents and wall junctions. While the buildings were generally well maintained, these minor crevices could offer limited potential roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bat species such as common pipistrelle.

5.3 However, no obvious loft voids, large cracks, or dedicated bat access points were visible, and the corrugated roofing is unlikely to support internal roosting without additional access. Dense climbing vegetation covering parts of the walls could increase habitat suitability by providing cover near potential roosting features. Taken together, the building complex offered *low* bat roost potential, primarily through external crevice features and vegetation, but likely limited by internal inaccessibility and human activity. A further survey would be recommended to determine presence/ likely absence.

Reptiles and Amphibians

5.4 ***Table 7: Ponds and Distance from Site (See Map in Appendices)***

Pond Number	Distance from Site
1	20m
2	220m
3	471m

4	464m
5	390m
6	240m
7	294m
8	427m
9	377m
10	195m
11	262m
12	325m
13	439m
14	526m
15	536m
16	430m

5.5 Pond 1 is a medium-sized, artificially created waterbody located within a landscaped setting. The margins are dominated by mown grass and ornamental planting, with scattered emergent vegetation including stands of iris and grasses, particularly at the water's edge. The water is turbid and has a uniform, muddy colour, suggesting high levels of suspended sediment and poor water clarity. The presence of several ducks, including ducklings, indicates that the pond supports a resident waterfowl population.

5.6 This pond is considered unsuitable for great crested newt breeding for several reasons. Firstly, the high turbidity and poor water quality reduce the suitability for egg-laying and larval development. Secondly, the presence of a large and active waterfowl population can significantly reduce newt habitat suitability through disturbance, predation, and nutrient enrichment, which can lead to algal blooms and oxygen depletion. Thirdly, although some emergent vegetation is present, the coverage is sparse and lacks the dense submerged and marginal plant communities typically preferred by great crested newts for shelter, foraging, and egg-laying. Additionally, the surrounding area appears heavily managed and lacks rough grassland, scrub, or woodland edge habitat that would provide suitable terrestrial refuge and foraging opportunities for newts during their terrestrial life stages. Taken together, these factors suggest that the pond has negligible potential to support this species**.**

5.7 The next closest pond was 195m away (Pond 10). Using the great crested newt risk calculator (***Table 8***) and making an assumption that Pond 10 could potentially support a breeding population of great crested newt, with the size of the proposed development footprint which falls within the 0.01ha – 0.1ha lost or damaged category, this gives a National Offence Probability Score of 0.01, which means the result of GREEN: OFFECNCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY

5.8 ***Table 8: Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Calculator (from Natural England)***

Component	***Likely Effect***	***Notional Offence Probability Score***
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.01 – 0.1ha lost or damaged	0.01
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
	Maximum:	0.01
Rapid risk assessment result:	GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY	

5.9 The habitats present within the site boundary, notably the modified grassland was heavily managed and did not present any suitability for reptile species to be present. Furthermore, the site was heavily isolated within an area of intensive agricultural operations which would severely limit the ability of reptile to colonise this location from any nearby suitable habitat.

Terrestrial and Riparian Mammals

5.10 Specific location records of badger are always confidential. While potential badger foraging habitat was present within the survey area, no badger setts were found within the locations that were likely to have the pitches installed or within a 30m zone around these.

5.11 Records of hedgehog were present within the 2.0km search area and there was hedgehog habitat present within the deciduous woodland.

5.12 The woodland habitat to the west could offer potential habitat for dormice, but these habitats are not considered likely to be impacted by any development at this location.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Designated Sites and Habitats

6.1 The designated site, House Copse SSSI, is located approximately 1.7km southeast of the proposed development area. Given this distance, there is no direct physical connection or ecological pathway between the development site and the SSSI. The works proposed at the site are confined to a residential plot with no hydrological link, habitat corridor, or functional dependency on the woodland habitat within the SSSI. Furthermore, the scale of the proposed development is small and entirely within an existing managed residential curtilage, meaning that it will not generate significant noise, light, or disturbance capable of affecting sensitive features within the SSSI.

6.2 There will be no emissions, surface run-off, or habitat loss that could extend beyond the immediate site boundary. As such, the proposed works are not anticipated to result in any direct or indirect impacts on the notified features of House Copse SSSI, and no further assessment under designated site impact guidance is considered necessary.

6.3 The woodland blocks and hedgerows visible in the wider landscape, including those shown near ponds and field boundaries, are not expected to be impacted by any works on the site due to the contained nature of the proposed development. All works are confined within the boundary of a residential property, which is located within a managed and already developed area, separated from the surrounding semi-natural habitats by gardens, roads, and other built infrastructure.

6.4 There is no requirement for tree removal, hedgerow clearance, or access through adjacent woodland or field margin habitats. No construction footprint, machinery access, or material storage is proposed beyond the immediate curtilage of the site. Additionally, the site does not share a direct ecological corridor with these features, and no alterations to existing hedgerows or connectivity routes are proposed. As such, the integrity, structure, and ecological function of the surrounding woodland blocks and hedgerows will remain unaffected by the planned works.

Birds

6.5 Breeding birds are protected, making it an offence to intentionally (or recklessly) kill, injure or take any wild bird, and to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built, or take or destroy an egg of any wild bird. As a result, any vegetation clearance (notably ground level vegetation clearance) should avoid the breeding season (March to August inclusive). Nests are protected throughout the year, not just within the

specified nesting season and it is possible for ground nesting birds to be present within the less heavily grazed vegetation.

6.6 If this were not possible, a suitably experienced ecologist would be required to check areas of vegetation, immediately prior to works being carried out (within 24hrs). If birds were found to be breeding at this time in these locations, clearance works would not be permitted to proceed until the young had fledged the nest and at least a 10m works exclusion zone be placed around the nest. If any vegetation is cleared outside of the bird nesting season, then all resultant brash should be removed from site to ensure that it does not provide suitable nesting habitat.

Low Bat Roost Potential

6.7 For a building assessed as having low bat roost potential, the Bat Conservation Trust's Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition) recommend a single dusk emergence or dawn re-entry survey. This survey should be carried out during the main bat activity season, which spans from May to August. The survey must be undertaken in suitable weather conditions, ideally dry, with temperatures above 10°C and light wind (Beaufort scale 2 or below).

6.8 A suitably experienced ecologist should conduct the survey, with observers positioned to view all potential access points such as lifted cladding, gaps under eaves, or ventilation slats. The use of heterodyne or full-spectrum bat detectors is essential to support accurate detection and species identification. If no bats are recorded and no evidence of roosting is found, no further survey is typically required. However, if bats are observed entering or exiting the building, additional surveys may be necessary to determine species, numbers, and roost status. In such cases where bats are present, the works would then need to proceed under a Natural England mitigation licence.

Bats and Lighting

6.9 Bat species have been recorded within the 2.0km historical records search and the habitats present onsite and in the immediate surroundings can be considered as moderate value foraging habitat. Any lighting installed, as a result, of this development will conform to the specifications which are outlined within BCT Guidance Note (2023). This will reduce any light pollution that could impact nocturnal activity of fauna, namely bat species, some of which are extremely sensitive to light pollution. Light spill into adjacent habitats will be reduced and avoided by the following:

- *All luminaries will lack UV elements; metal halide and fluorescent sources will be avoided,*

- *A warm white light spectrum on external lighting will be adopted (<2700kelvin) to reduce the blue light component,*
- *LED luminaries will be used where a sharp cut off is required to avoid light spill into adjacent habitat,*
- *External luminaries will feature wavelengths higher that 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats,*
- *Column heights of external lighting will be limited,*
- *Luminaries will be mounted on the horizontal plane, with no upwards tilt,*
- *Security lighting will be set on motion sensors and on short timers (<1min).*

Terrestrial and Riparian Mammals

6.10 Hedgehog have seen their number decline significantly over the last 13 years by around 66%. There were records for hedgehog within 2.0km. The hedgerow may provide suitable refuge for hedgehogs and the habitat had some potential to support foraging hedgehogs if they are present in the local area.

6.11 During any construction phase any deep trenches or excavations should be covered overnight to ensure any animals including hedgehogs, do not become trapped. This measure would also be pertinent for all mammals, including badger.

6.12 To enhance the site for hedgehog post-development the planting of native trees and hedgerows and the provision of gaps of at least 15cm by 15cm under any installed fences will ensure this species continues to have access to the site and can use the site for foraging, commuting and shelter.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT

7.1 Development plans should maximise opportunities for enhancement, in order, to achieve a net increase in biodiversity. The measures outlined below provide the means to achieve this enhancement. Additional measures may be required as a result, of the further survey findings, which could potentially form part of species mitigation.

7.2 As part of the scheme, it is recommended to install bird and bat boxes around the site periphery. These would provide an ecological enhancement by providing suitable roosting and nesting locations for these protected species. Two bird boxes and two bat boxes could be installed. These would all be installed at a minimum of 3m height, on a southwestern or southeastern aspect within a tree.

7.3 Tree and shrub planting of native species would provide and contribute to the improvement of the scrub habitat present replacing some of the less ecologically viable habitat currently present within the site. Native herbaceous and grassland species could also be planted into newly landscape areas, providing a valuable nectar source for invertebrate species. These would enable an improved score on the habitat condition assessment criteria to be achieved.

7.4 ***Table 9: List of Recommended Plant Species for Native Tree and Shrub Planting***

Species Name	Common Name
Carpinus betula	Hornbeam
Corylus avellana	Hazel
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn
Prunus avium	Bird cherry
Quercus robur	Oak
Sambucus nigra	Elder
Sorbus aucuparia	Rowan

7.5 ***Table 10: List of Recommended Plant Species for Native Herbaceous Species Planting***

Species Name	Common Name
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Bluebell
Digitalis purpurea	Foxglove
Myosotis arvensis	Field forget-me-not
Lavandula angustifolia	English lavender
Leucanthemum vulgare	Oxeye daisy
Origanum vulgare	Wild marjoram
Potentilla erecta	Tormentil
Primula veris	Cowslip
Silene dioica	Red campion
Silene latifolia	White campion
Siline noctiflora	Night-flowering catchfly
Succisa pratensis	Devil's-bit scabious

8.0 REFERENCES

BCT (2023a) Bat Survey Guidelines for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition.

BCT (2023b) Guidance Note 08/18. Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK – Bats and the Built Environment Series.

Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. (2023) The UK Habitat Classification User Manual version 2.1 at https://ukhab.org/

JNCC (2016) Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey: A technique for environmental audit. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

Mitchell-Jones, A.J. & McLeish, A.P. (Eds) (2004). Bat Workers' Manual (3rd Ed.). JNNC, Peterborough.

Stace C. (1997) New Flora of the British Isles (2nd edition). Cambridge University Press.

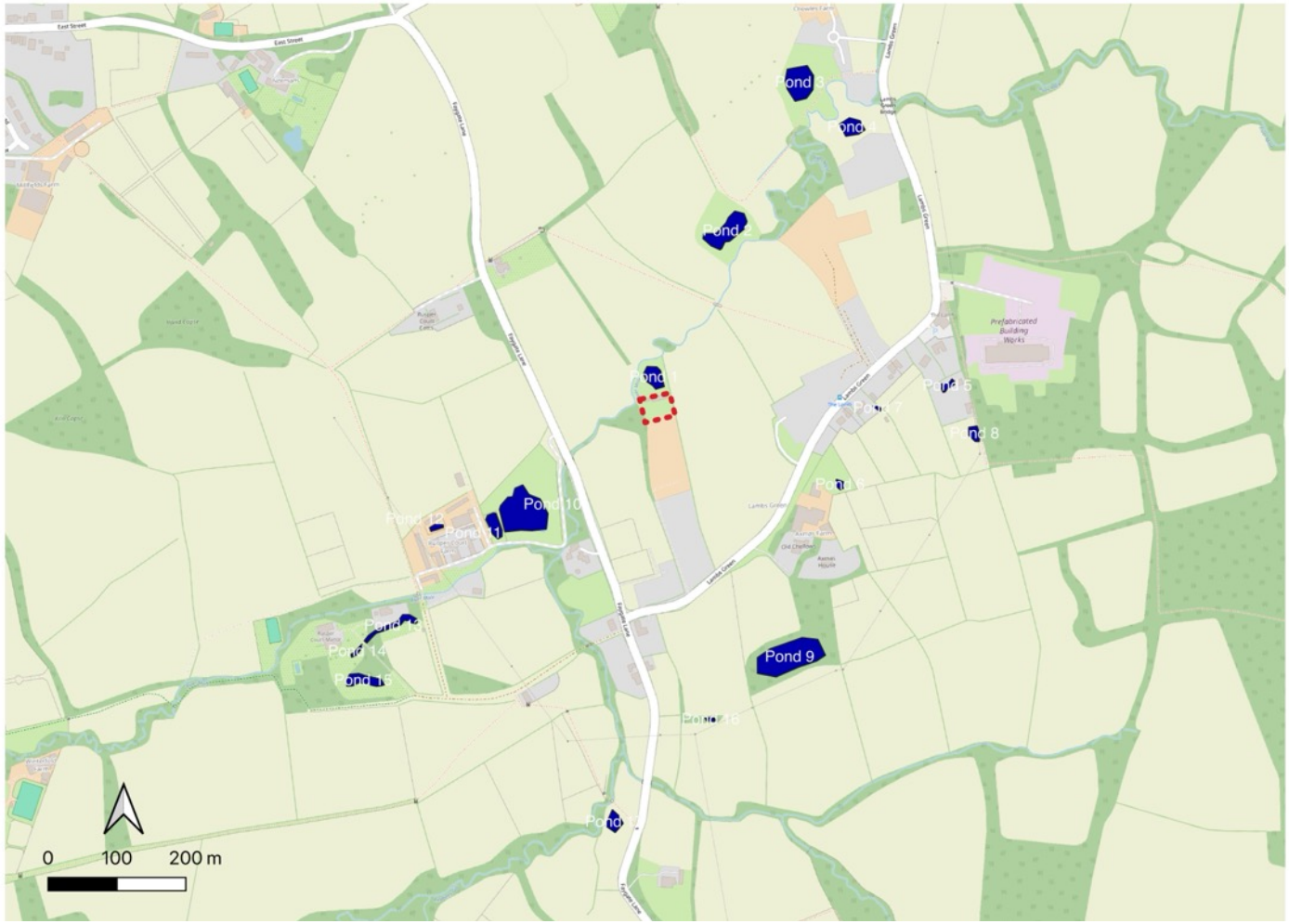
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) The Stationary Office, Norwich

APPENDIX A: PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL WALKOVER SURVEY HABITAT MAP



APPENDIX B: PONDS WITHIN 500M



APPENDIX C: PHOTOS OF THE SITE

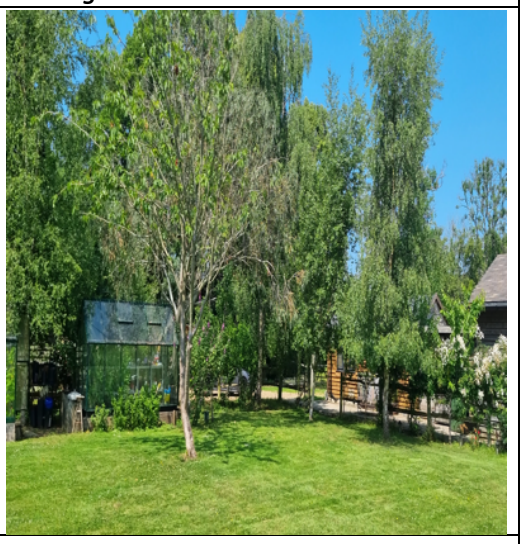
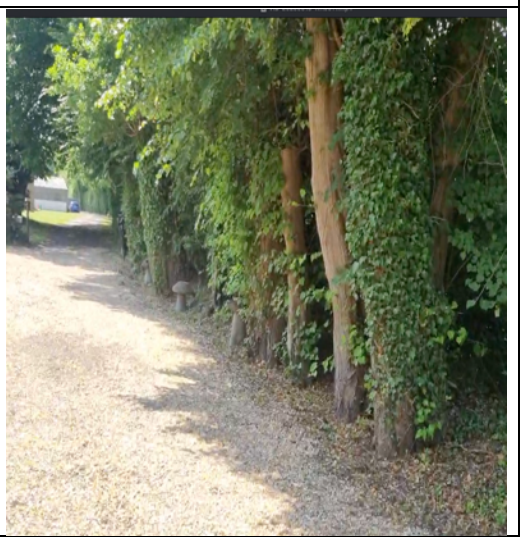
Plate 1: Southern Face of Buildings	***Plate 2: Modified Grassland and Tree Planting***
	
Plate 3: Modified Grassland	***Plate 4: Shed***
	
Plate 5: Pond to the North	***Plate 6: Cladding on Eastern Face***
	

Plate 7: Adjacent Arable Field	*Plate 8: Decidious Woodland to the West*
	

APPENDIX D: PROTECTED SPECIES AND DESIGNATED SITE LEGISLATION SUMMARY (ENGLAND AND WALES)

Species	Legislation (England & Wales)	Offences	Licensing procedures (England & Wales)
Bats European protected species	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	Deliberately[1] capture, injure or kill a bat; deliberate disturbance[2] of bats; or damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by a bat. [The protection of bat roosts is considered to apply regardless of whether bats are present.]	A Natural England (NE) licence in respect of development is required in England. European Protected Species: Mitigation Licensing- How to get a licence (NE 2010) Bat Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature 2004) Bat Workers Manual (JNCC 2004) BCT Survey Guidelines (2016)
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.9	Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection or disturb a bat in such a place.	Licence from NE is required for surveys (scientific purposes) that would involve disturbance of bats or entering a known or suspected roost site.
Great Crested Newt European protected species	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	Deliberately[1] capture, injure or kill a great crested newt; deliberate disturbance[2] of a great crested newt; deliberately take or destroy its eggs; or damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by a great crested newt.	Licences issued for development by Natural England. European Protected Species: Mitigation Licensing- How to get a licence (NE 2010) Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature 2001)
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.9	Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection or disturb a great crested newt in such a place.	Licences issued for science (survey), education and conservation by Natural England.
Dormice European protected species	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	Deliberately[1] capture, injure or kill a dormouse; deliberate disturbance[2] of dormouse; or damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by a dormouse.	A Natural England (NE) licence in respect of development is required in England. European Protected Species: Mitigation Licensing- How to get a licence (NE 2010)
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.9	Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection or disturb a bat in such a place.	Licence from NE is required for surveys (scientific purposes) that would involve disturbance of bats or entering a known or suspected roost site.

Species	Legislation (England & Wales)	Offences	Licensing procedures (England & Wales)
Badger	Protection of Badgers Act 1992	Wilfully kill, injure or take a badger; or intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett or disturb a badger in its sett. [It is not illegal to carry out disturbance activities in the vicinity of setts that are not occupied.]	Where required, licences for development activities involving disturbance or sett interference or closure are issued by Natural England (NE). Licences for activities involving watercourse maintenance, drainage works or flood defences are issued under a separate process. Licences are normally not granted from December to June inclusive because cubs may be present within setts. Badgers & Development (NE 2007)
Birds	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.1	Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird; intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; intentionally take or destroy the nest or eggs of any wild bird. [Special penalties are liable for these offences involving birds on Schedule 1 (e.g. most birds of prey, kingfisher, barn owl, black redstart, and little ringed plover).] Intentionally or recklessly disturb a Schedule 1 species while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; intentionally or recklessly disturb dependent young of such a species.	No licences are available to disturb any birds in regard to development. Licences are available in certain circumstances to damage or destroy nests, but these only apply to the list of licensable activities in the Act and do not cover development. General licences are available in respect of 'pest species' but only for certain very specific purposes e.g. public health, public safety, air safety.
Adder **Common lizard** **Grass snake** **Slow worm**	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 S.9(1) (part); S.9(5)	Intentionally kill or injure any common reptile species.	No licence is required in England. However, an assessment for the potential of a site to support reptiles should be undertaken prior to any development works which have potential to affect these animals.
Rabbits, foxes and other wild mammals	Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996	Intentionally inflict unnecessary suffering to any wild mammal.	Natural England provides guidance in relation to rabbits (TIN003, Rabbits- management options for preventing damage, July 2007) and foxes (which are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 from live baits and decoys, see TAN43 April 2005 and TAN08 April 2005) as well as other wild mammals; see Natural England's website for the list of 'Regulatory Guidance, Best Practice and Information'.

Site Designation	Legislation (England & Wales)	Protection	Guidance
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	It is an offence to carry out or permit to be carried out any potentially damaging operation. SSSIs are given protection through policies in the Local Development Plan.	Owners, occupiers, public bodies and statutory undertakers must give notice and obtain the appropriate consent under S.28 before undertaking operations likely to damage a SSSI. S.28G places a duty on all public bodies to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs. Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (ODPM 2005) for England or Technical Advice Note 5 in Wales.
Locally Designated Sites	There is no statutory designation for these	Sites are given protection through policies in the Local Development Plan.	Development proposals that would potentially affect these would need to provide a detailed justification for the work, an assessment of likely impacts, together with proposals for mitigation and restoration of habitats lost or damaged.

Site Designation	Legislation (England & Wales)	Protection	Guidance
Special Area of Conservation (SAC) **Special Protection Area (SPA)** **Wetland of International Importance (Ramsar site)**	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 EC Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (92/42/EEC). EC Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC). Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat 1971 (the Ramsar Convention).	Planning controls are effected through Part 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species regulations 2010 (Reg 21) and Part 6 (Regs 61-67). The legislation for the Site of Special Scientific Interest which will underpin each designation also applies. These sites are given protection through policies in the Local Development Plan.	Formal Appropriate Assessment is required before undertaking, or giving consent, permission or other authorisation for a plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on such a site. Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (ODPM 2005) and the accompanying joint Circular (ODPM Circular 6/2005 & Defra Circular 01/2005) for England or Technical Advice Note 5 in Wales.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	It is an offence to carry out or permit to be carried out any potentially damaging operation. SSSIs are given protection through policies in the Local Development Plan.	Owners, occupiers, public bodies and statutory undertakers must give notice and obtain the appropriate consent under S.28 before undertaking operations likely to damage a SSSI. S.28G places a duty on all public bodies to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs. Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (ODPM 2005) for England or Technical Advice Note 5 in Wales.
Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 S.21	LNRs are given protection through policies in the Local Development Plan.	LNRs are generally owned and managed by local authorities. Development proposals that would potentially affect a LNR would need to provide a detailed justification for the work, an assessment of likely impacts, together with proposals for mitigation and restoration of habitats lost or damaged. Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (ODPM 2005) for England or Technical Advice Note 5 in Wales.
Locally Designated Sites	There is no statutory designation for these	Sites are given protection through policies in the Local Development Plan.	Development proposals that would potentially affect these would need to provide a detailed justification for the work, an assessment of likely impacts, together with proposals for mitigation and restoration of habitats lost or damaged.