

Plot 4, Bramblefield, Carys Lane, Thakeham, RH20 3DZ

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



EHM Ltd

www.ehmltd.com

info@ehmltd.com

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AUTHOR, QUALITY ASSURANCE & VALIDITY

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

EHM Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Plot 4, Bramblefield, Crays Lane, Thakeham, RH20 3DZ. The assessment considers the habitats present, their potential to support protected and notable species, and the ecological effects of the proposed development.

The site is c.0.2ha and comprises previously disturbed and vacant land supporting colonising ruderal vegetation, extensive bramble scrub, young self-seeded trees, fencing, rubble and material piles, and five small structures.

The proposals comprise two hardstanding pitches for mobile homes with associated day rooms, access and landscaping. The site lies within a rural, mixed-use plot complex north of Thakeham, in a wider landscape containing agricultural land, hedgerows, woodland and scattered development.

Species	Sites potential to support
Bat roosts- buildings.	Low
Bat roosts- mature trees	Negligible
Bat foraging/ commuting areas	Low to moderate
██████	██████
Dormice	Low to moderate; further assessment required
Riparian Mammals	Negligible
Other Mammals	Low to moderate
Reptiles	Moderate
Common Amphibians	Low
Great Crested Newts	Negligible
Breeding birds	Moderate
Plants	Low
Invertebrates	Low to moderate

Recommendation	Action
Reptile survey and protection	Undertake a reptile survey or agree a precautionary clearance method statement. Use staged vegetation clearance and ecological supervision.
Hazel dormouse assessment	Confirm connectivity of boundary bramble and trees to offsite habitat. Survey connected habitat before clearance where required.
Nesting bird protection	Clear vegetation outside the main nesting season or complete a pre-clearance nesting-bird check and protect active nests.
Sensitive lighting	Prepare a lighting design that avoids illumination of retained and proposed boundary hedgerows, trees and other bat-sensitive habitat.

1 INTRODUCTION

EHM Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Plot 4, Bramblefield, Carys Lane, Thakeham, RH20 3DZ, 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 creation of two hardstanding pitches suitable for siting of mobile homes and associated day rooms, one of each per pitch.

1.2 Site Location and Description

The site is located to the north of the village of Thakeham in a mixed use of regular plots. The local landscape is best described as rural in nature with the immediate surrounding land a mix of uses whilst the wider area is more agricultural and wooded with pockets of development.

The proposed development encompasses the entire site which itself is c.40m by c.50m. As far back as 2020 the site has been used for housing of poultry and for storage of plant and materials which has led to varying levels of vegetation cover and composition with the later few years appearing to be a time of low usage and high vegetation growth.

Figure 1. Site location and access plan (red outlines)

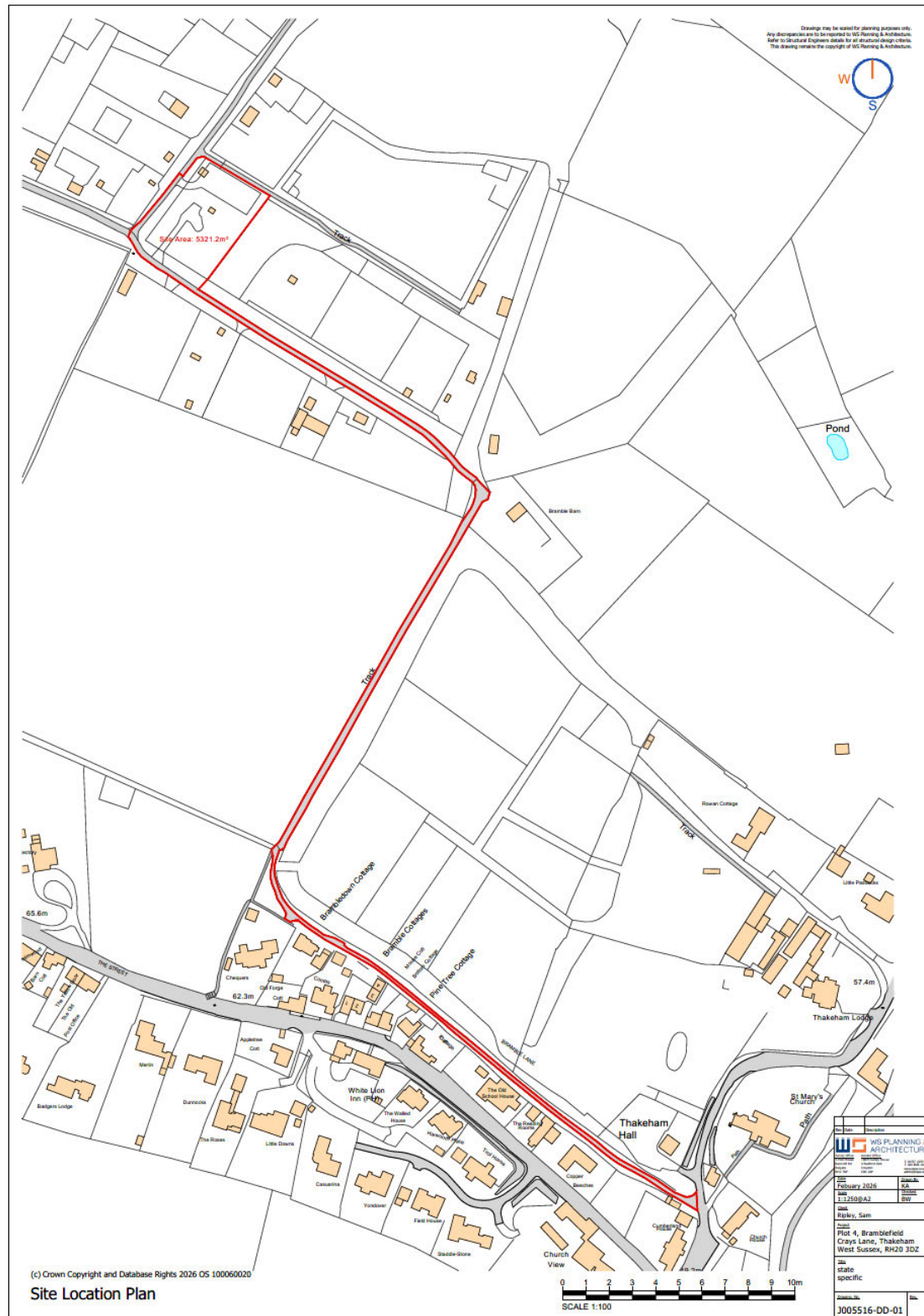
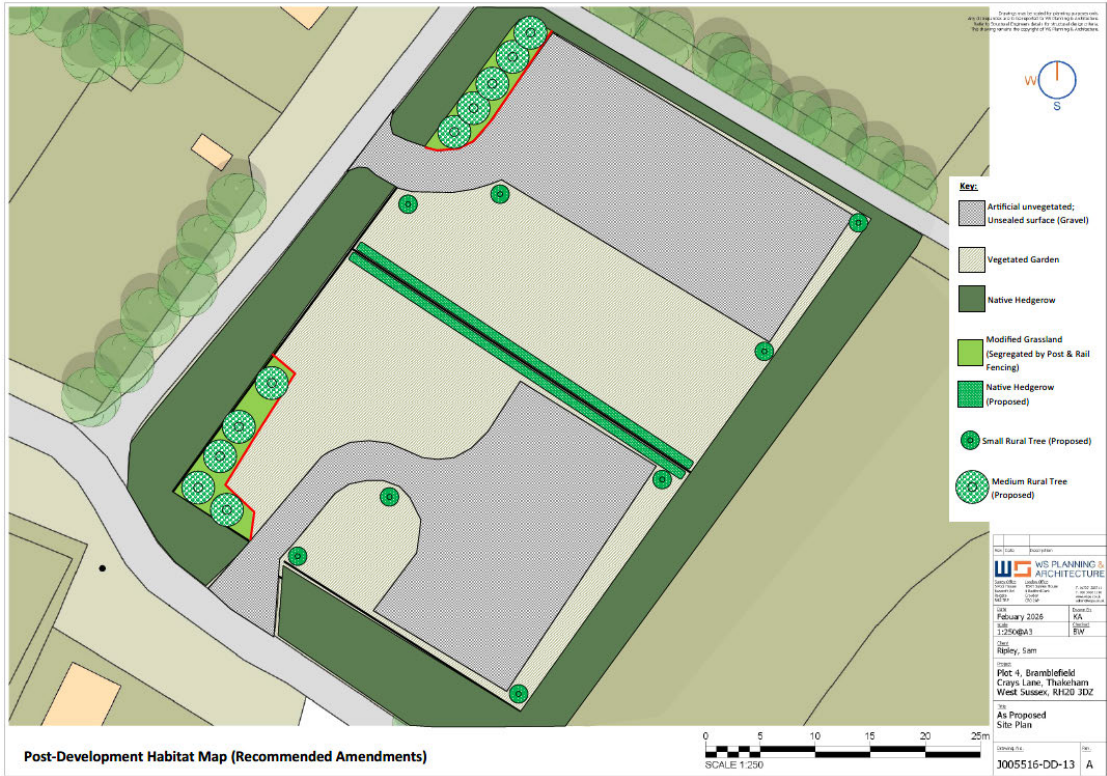


Figure 2. Proposed site development.



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 25m² 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 03 July 2026.

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

There are no statutory designated sites within a 2 km 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 is one Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and four Local Geological Sites (LGS) within 2 km.

Cattlestone Farm LWS (H54) is a 9.8 ha site comprising traditionally managed unimproved meadow and pasture divided by old hedgerows. Its citation describes species-rich and wet grassland, a plum orchard, native scrub and uncommon plants, including chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile*.

The Local Geological Sites are Jacket's Hill, Abingworth (TQ11/04), Warminghurst Road Cutting, Ashington (TQ11/108), B2139 Road Cutting, Thakeham (TQ11/126) and Laybrook Brickworks, Thakeham (TQ11/32).

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 c.40m by c.50m. As far back as 2020 the site has been used for housing of poultry and for storage of plant and materials which has led to varying levels of vegetation cover and composition with the later few years appearing to be a time of low usage and high vegetation growth.

At the time of survey there were 5 habitat types on site:

- u1, 612 Fence
- u1,200 Tree
- u1b6, 82 Other developed land: Vacant
- u1b5 Buildings
- h3d Bramble scrub

3.2.1 u1, 612 Fence

Surrounding the site is a post and wire fence, largely covered with bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. and common nettle *Urtica dioica*. There are two visible breaks in the fence on the southern and western boundaries these are the access points to the site and comprise wooden 5-bar gates. Gates are marked TN1 and TN2 on the Target Note Map in Appendix B

3.2.2 u1,200 Tree

Across the site are a mix of trees that appear to have self-seeded and are relatively young in age with limited features of interest but hold some bird nesting potential.

3.2.3 u1b6, 82 Other developed land: Vacant

The site shows clear signs of former use for material storage and agricultural activities, but these activities have not been undertaken fully on site for at least 2 years or greater. This has allowed vegetation to colonise previously unvegetated areas and for species such as bramble to dominate.

Access to the site from the south is possible as the colonising vegetation has not grown too dense within a small area, which appears to have been the main site access and vehicle parking area.

Immediate to the west of the site access are three piles of building rubble, Target Note TN9, which are being colonised by surrounding vegetation.

Towards the centre of the site a small area which is either a location where material has been historically burned on site or a former building that has burned down, target note TN8.

On the western boundary of the site, outside of the fenceline are mounds of earth covered in tall ruderal vegetation, Target Note TN10. It is unclear when these were created but from the positioning and vegetation growth it would suggest that material was placed here to be removed or use later and has been left in place.

The vegetation within this area comprises but is not limited to

Ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Black medic *Medicago lupulina*, Bramble, Broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, Browntop bent *Agrostis capillaris*, Common hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, Common mallow *Malva sylvestris*, Common poppy *Papaver rhoeas*, Common ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, Common wheat *Triticum aestivum*, Creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., Greater burdock *Arctium lappa*, Greater plantain *Plantago major*, Hedge bindweed *Calystegia sepium*, Knotgrass *Polygonum aviculare*, Lentil vetch *Vicia tetrasperma*, Perennial rye-grass

Lolium perenne, Prickly sow-thistle *Sonchus asper*, Red dead-nettle *Lamium purpureum*, Rosebay willowherb, *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, Scented mayweed *Matricaria chamomilla*, Smooth sow-thistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, White clover *Trifolium repens* and Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*.

3.2.4 u1b5 Buildings

There are five visible buildings and building like structures, located to the north of the site these are:

- TN3
Metal shipping container, rusting with collapsed floor, covering in
bramble
- TN4
Wooden workshop c.2.5m by c.3.0m. Flat roof comprising woodchip and felt
surrounded by bramble and nettle
- TN5
Small wooden shed surrounded by bramble and nettle
- TN6
Metal shipping container, covering in bramble
- TN7
Small wooden shed surrounded by vegetation

See Appendix B target note map.

Except for buildings TN6 and TN7 all were internally inspected for bats and birds and no presence was found. TN6 and TN7 were not internally inspected as access was not possible due to the vegetation growth.

3.2.5 h3d Bramble scrub

Covering a large section of the site bramble has taken hold covering many features of the site including the fenceline, plant, machinery and structures.

3.3 Flora and Invertebrates

The SxBRC desk study returned 36 notable higher-plant taxa represented by 113 records, five lichen taxa (seven records), two moss taxa (two records) and 67 notable invertebrate taxa represented by 215 records within 1 km of the site (SxBRC, 2026). Examples included green-winged orchid *Anacamptis morio*, stinking chamomile *Anthemis cotula*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*, brown hairstreak *Thecla betulae*, white admiral *Limenitis camilla* and cinnabar *Tyria jacobaeae*.

No protected or otherwise notable plant species were recorded during the field survey. The flora comprised common species associated with disturbed ground, tall ruderal vegetation and scrub, as listed in Section 3.2. The mosaic of bramble, flower-rich ruderal vegetation, bare or sparsely vegetated ground, rubble piles and weathered structures provides nectar, shelter, basking and nesting opportunities for common invertebrates, including solitary bees, beetles, butterflies and moths.

No specialist invertebrate survey was undertaken. Taking account of the site's small size, previous disturbance and the absence of notable species during the walkover, the site is considered to be of low to moderate value for flora and invertebrates at the site level.

3.4 Amphibians – including Great Crested Newt

The SxBRC desk study returned 24 records of four common amphibian species within 1 km: common toad *Bufo bufo* (one record), palmate newt *Lissotriton helveticus* (four records), smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* (10 records) and common frog *Rana temporaria* (nine records). No records of great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* were returned (SxBRC, 2026).

No waterbody is present within the site, and none are known or recorded within 250m. The site is therefore considered to have low suitability for common amphibians.

3.5 Reptiles

The SxBRC desk study returned two records of slow-worm *Anguis fragilis* and seven records of grass snake *Natrix helvetica* within 1 km of the site (SxBRC, 2026). No reptiles were observed during the field survey.

The combination of dense bramble, tall ruderal vegetation, rubble piles, disturbed ground and a varied vegetation structure provides foraging, basking and refuge opportunities for common reptiles. The site's boundaries also provide potential links to habitats in the surrounding plot complex. The site is considered to have moderate suitability for common reptiles.

A precautionary clearance method statement is sufficient for the scale and condition of the site. Should the local planning authority not agree with this then a targeted reptile presence or likely-absence survey should be undertaken before extensive vegetation and rubble clearance. The survey would confirm whether a reptile mitigation strategy is necessary.

3.6 Birds

The SxBRC desk study returned 138 bird taxa represented by 17,134 records within 1 km of the site (SxBRC, 2026). Notable species recorded in the wider area included swift *Apus apus*, skylark *Alauda arvensis*, turtle dove *Streptopelia turtur*, house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, starling *Sturnus vulgaris*, greenfinch *Chloris chloris*, linnet *Linaria cannabina*, yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*, song thrush *Turdus philomelos* and dunnoek *Prunella modularis*.

No active nests were recorded in the structures that could be inspected during the survey; however, this was not a dedicated breeding-bird survey. The extensive bramble, young trees, boundary vegetation and sheds provide suitable nesting and foraging habitat for common birds. The site is considered to have moderate suitability for breeding birds at the site level.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

3.8 Hazel Dormice

The SxBRC desk study returned 16 records of hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* within 1 km, with records dating to 2021 (SxBRC, 2026).

The site supports extensive bramble scrub and a number of young trees, which provide seasonal foraging resources, nesting opportunities and cover for hazel dormice. The habitat is relatively small and is partly enclosed by access roads, which reduce connectivity with the wider landscape. However, limited links are present to nearby hedgerow and scrub habitats that connect with a larger area of woodland to the north. On this basis, the site is considered to have low to moderate suitability for hazel dormice.

As there are local records the project should either consider undertaking a targeted presence-absence survey to confirm if a licence is required for works or apply for a suitable mitigation licence with precautionary working practices using the existing

records of local presence. The former should be done before planning determination whilst the latter can be conditioned.

3.9 Otters

Otter *Lutra lutra* records are not currently included in SxBRC data-search reports. No watercourse, ditch or other riparian habitat is present within the site, and no evidence of otter was recorded. The site is considered to have negligible suitability for otters.

3.10 Water Voles

The SxBRC desk study returned three records of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* within 1 km, the latest dating from 2008 (SxBRC, 2026). No watercourse, ditch, pond bank or other suitable aquatic habitat is present within the site. The site is considered to have negligible suitability for water voles.

3.11 Bats

The SxBRC desk study returned 12 bat taxa or taxonomic groups represented by 50 records within 2 km of the site (SxBRC, 2026). Recorded species included serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, Alcaethoe bat *Myotis alcathoe*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*.

The metal containers are considered to offer negligible roosting suitability. The accessible wooden structures were inspected, and no bats or evidence of use was found. The young self-seeded trees did not display potential roost features and are considered to have negligible roosting suitability.

The bramble, young trees and boundary vegetation provide low to moderate value for bat foraging and commuting, particularly where they connect to the wider rural network. Artificial lighting or complete removal of boundary vegetation could reduce this value.

3.12 Other Notable Mammals

The SxBRC desk study returned five records of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, one record of polecat *Mustela putorius*, five records of rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* and one record of red squirrel *Sciurus vulgaris* within 1 km (SxBRC, 2026).

The bramble scrub, rubble piles and stored materials provide potential shelter and foraging habitat for hedgehogs and may be used by other common mammals. No evidence of notable mammals was recorded during the survey. The site is considered

to have low to moderate suitability for other notable mammals, with hedgehog the most likely species to occur.

3.13 Invasive Species

The SxBRC desk study returned 27 invasive non-native taxa represented by 319 records within 1 km of the site (SxBRC, 2026). Plant records included Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*, giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, three-cornered garlic *Allium triquetrum*, wall cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis*, cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* and rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*.

No invasive non-native plant species were recorded during the field survey. Dense vegetation limited visibility in small areas, so a final pre-clearance check is recommended. The current risk of an invasive plant being present onsite is considered low, but the risk of introducing or spreading species through imported soil, machinery or green waste remains relevant.

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*

4.1.1 *Potential Impacts*

No statutory designated sites occur within 2 km. One Local Wildlife Site, Cattlestone Farm LWS, and four Local Geological Sites occur within 2 km. The proposals will not result in direct habitat loss within any designated site. Given the small scale of the development and the separation from the designated sites, no likely pathway for a significant effect has been identified. Without normal construction controls, minor indirect effects could arise from dust, contaminated runoff, noise or unnecessary offsite lighting.

4.1.2 *Mitigation and Compensation Measures*

- Keep all construction activity, storage, spoil and vehicle movements within the agreed site and access areas.
- Apply proportionate pollution-prevention measures, including spill kits, controlled refuelling, dust suppression and prevention of silty or cement-contaminated runoff leaving the site.
- Direct external lighting into the site and avoid unnecessary illumination of offsite hedgerows, trees and rural habitats.

4.1.3 *Residual Effects*

With standard construction controls in place, no significant effect on statutory or non-statutory designated sites is anticipated. The residual effect is considered negligible.

4.2 *Habitats*

4.2.1 *Potential Impacts*

The proposals are expected to remove a substantial proportion of the bramble scrub, colonised vacant ground, young trees, rubble refuges and small structures within the site and replace them with hardstanding, buildings and managed landscaping. These habitats are common and previously disturbed but collectively provide structural

diversity and local ecological connectivity. In the absence of mitigation, the effect is considered minor adverse at the site level.

4.2.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

- Retain existing boundary vegetation and trees wherever compatible with the final layout, and protect retained features from machinery, storage, root compaction and accidental damage.
- Undertake vegetation clearance in stages and coordinate clearance with the species measures in Sections 4.4 to 4.12.
- Implement the proposed native hedgerows, native trees, vegetated gardens and grassland using locally appropriate, non-invasive species with a varied flowering and fruiting season.
- Where safe and appropriate, retain clean rubble, logs and deadwood within landscaped areas as habitat piles rather than removing all structural features.
- Use the statutory biodiversity metric to demonstrate the required biodiversity net gain and secure the management of significant created or enhanced habitats.

4.2.3 Residual Effects

Following retention and protection of boundary features and delivery of the landscaping the residual habitat effect is expected to be negligible, with potential for a minor beneficial effect once the new habitats are established.

4.3 Flora and Invertebrates

4.3.1 Potential Impacts

Clearance will remove common ruderal plants, scrub and associated invertebrate habitat. No protected or notable flora or invertebrates were recorded onsite, but the loss of flowering vegetation, bare ground, rubble and deadwood will temporarily reduce opportunities for common species. The unmitigated effect is considered minor adverse at the site level.

4.3.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

- Complete a final walkover before clearance to check for newly established notable or invasive plants.
- Use native and wildlife-beneficial flowering plants, including species suitable for local soils, and avoid unnecessary pesticide and herbicide use.
- Provide a range of invertebrate features, such as retained deadwood, log and stone piles, small areas of open ground and integrated insect bricks or equivalent features.

- Use sensitive lighting to retain dark conditions around boundary planting and invertebrate habitat.

4.3.3 Residual Effects

With the above measures, the residual effect on flora and invertebrates is considered negligible, with potential for a minor beneficial effect from diverse native planting and retained habitat features.

4.4 Amphibians (including Great Crested Newt)

4.4.1 Potential Impacts

Vegetation and rubble clearance, soil stripping and open excavations could injure or kill common amphibians using terrestrial refuges. There are no ponds on site, and none known within 250m of the site. The potential effect is minor adverse for common amphibians.

4.4.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

- Maintain vegetation at a short sward immediately before soil stripping and dismantle rubble, timber and stored materials carefully under an ecological method statement.
- Cover excavations overnight or provide escape ramps, and cap open pipes when unattended.

4.4.3 Residual Effects

With the above measures, the residual effect is considered negligible.

4.5 Reptiles

4.5.1 Potential Impacts

The proposed clearance of bramble, tall vegetation, rubble and disturbed ground could kill or injure reptiles and remove foraging and refuge habitat. Given the local records and moderate habitat suitability, the unmitigated effect is considered minor to moderate adverse at the site level and may result in a legal offence if reptiles are present.

4.5.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

Undertake works using a precautionary method statement or complete a targeted reptile presence or likely-absence survey during the appropriate season. If working under a precautionary method statement or after reptiles have been confirmed present the clearance and mitigation must follow the following:

- Reduce vegetation in stages, initially to approximately 150 mm and subsequently to ground level, directing animals towards retained habitat.
- Hand-search and carefully dismantle rubble, timber and other refuges under ecological supervision. Do not track machinery over unsearched habitat.
- Retain a suitable receptor habitat on site for any necessary capture and translocation.
- Incorporate log, stone or rubble refuges and rough grassland margins within the final landscaping.

If a survey is undertaken and reptiles are confirmed absent, then works can commence and complete without further reptile consideration.

4.5.3 Residual Effects

The residual effect is expected to be negligible.

4.6 Birds

4.6.1 Potential Impacts

Removal of bramble, young trees and sheds during the breeding season could damage or destroy active nests, eggs or young. Permanent habitat loss would also reduce local nesting and foraging opportunities. In the absence of mitigation, the effect is considered minor adverse at the site level and could result in an offence.

4.6.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

- Undertake vegetation and structure clearance outside the main nesting season, generally March to August inclusive, where practicable.
- If clearance is required during the nesting season, a competent ecologist must check the affected habitat no more than 48 hours before work. Active nests must be retained with an appropriate exclusion zone until no longer in use.
- Retain boundary vegetation where possible and deliver the proposed native hedgerows, berry-bearing shrubs and trees.
- Install a proportionate range of bird nesting features suitable for common garden birds.

4.6.3 Residual Effects

With nesting-bird protection and replacement planting, the residual effect is considered negligible, with potential for a minor beneficial effect once nesting features and landscaping mature.

cut-off fittings, timers or motion controls, and avoid light spill onto boundary vegetation.

- Aim to maintain boundary vegetation and other bat-sensitive habitat at or below 0.5 lux where practicable.

4.8.3 Residual Effects

The residual effect is expected to be negligible.

4.9 Hazel Dormice

4.9.1 Potential Impacts

Clearance of extensive bramble and young trees could remove nesting and foraging habitat, fragment a local movement route and harm dormice if they are present. Given the local records and low connectivity, the effect is considered low adverse.

4.9.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

- Obtain a dormouse mitigation licence based on the historic evidence of dormouse within 1km or undertake dormouse survey work to confirm presence or absence. If the presence confirmed obtain a dormouse mitigation licence. If absence confirmed continue to develop the project with no further consideration for dormouse.
- Retain boundary scrub and trees wherever possible and design the proposed native hedgerow to form a continuous, species-rich connection around and beyond the site.

4.9.3 Residual Effects

The residual effect is expected to be negligible.

4.10 Otters

The site contains no watercourse or suitable resting habitat for otters. No direct or indirect effect is anticipated, provided normal pollution-prevention measures are implemented. The unmitigated and residual effects are considered negligible.

4.11 Water Voles

No watercourse, ditch or suitable bank habitat occurs within the site. The proposals will not affect water vole habitat, and the potential effect is considered negligible.

4.12 Other Notable Mammals

4.12.1 Potential Impacts

Vegetation clearance, dismantling of rubble or structures, open excavations and construction traffic could injure, trap or displace hedgehogs and other common mammals. The loss of bramble and refuge habitat would have a minor adverse effect at the site level in the absence of mitigation.

4.12.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

- Hand-search dense vegetation, rubble, timber and stored materials immediately before removal, working from open ground towards retained cover.
- Cover excavations overnight or provide escape ramps, cap pipes, and check stored materials before movement.
- Do not light bonfires without dismantling and rebuilding them immediately before ignition.

4.12.3 Residual Effects

With precautionary working and habitat enhancements, the residual effect is considered negligible, with potential for a minor beneficial effect for hedgehogs.

4.13 Invasive Species

4.13.1 Potential Impacts

No invasive non-native plants were recorded, but dense vegetation and soil disturbance create a risk that an unrecorded plant could be spread during clearance or that invasive species could be introduced in imported soil or landscape material. In the absence of controls, the effect is considered minor adverse.

4.13.2 Mitigation and Compensation Measures

- Complete a pre-start invasive-species check when vegetation is accessible and before soil is moved.
- If a controlled invasive plant is found, clearly demarcate it, stop disturbing the affected soil and prepare a species-specific management and disposal plan.
- Use clean machinery and certified clean soil or growing media. Prevent viable plant material or contaminated soil from being transferred offsite or into retained habitat.

4.13.3 Residual Effects

With the above biosecurity measures, the residual effect is considered negligible..

5 CONCLUSIONS TABLE

Table 3. Summary of ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures for the site: Sunnyside.

Ecological Feature	Potential Effect	Significance in the absence of mitigation	Mitigation/Compensation and Enhancement	Residual Effect
Statutory designated sites	No pathway for a significant effect.	Negligible	Standard pollution, dust and lighting controls.	Negligible
Cattlestone Farm LWS and Local Geological Sites	Minor indirect construction effects only.	Minor	Keep works within the site; control runoff, dust and lighting.	Negligible
Habitats	Loss of bramble scrub, colonised vacant land, young trees and refuges.	Minor	Retain boundaries where possible; native planting and habitat piles.	Negligible / minor beneficial
Flora and invertebrates	Loss of common flowering and structural habitat.	Minor	Native flowering planting, deadwood, stone, bare-ground and insect features.	Negligible / minor beneficial
Amphibians	Potential harm during clearance	Minor	use precautionary clearance.	Negligible
CGN	No suitable onsite habitat or impact pathway.	Negligible		
Reptiles	Potential killing or injury and loss of suitable habitat.	Minor to moderate	Survey or agreed method statement; staged clearance, supervision and refuges.	Negligible

Ecological Feature	Potential Effect	Significance in the absence of mitigation	Mitigation/Compensation and Enhancement	Residual Effect
Birds	Damage to active nests and loss of nesting habitat.	Minor	Seasonal timing or nest check; native planting and bird boxes.	Negligible / minor beneficial
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Bats	lighting of foraging habitat.	Minor	Retain dark boundary.	Negligible
Hazel dormice	Loss and fragmentation of potential connected bramble and tree habitat.	Minor	Survey or obtain mitigation licence based on local records	Negligible
Otters	No suitable onsite habitat or impact pathway.	Negligible		
Water voles	No suitable onsite habitat.	Negligible		
Other notable mammals	Potential injury, trapping and loss of hedgehog shelter.	Minor	Hand-search clearance, safe excavations and habitat piles.	Negligible / minor beneficial
Invasive species	Potential spread or introduction through soil and machinery.	Minor	Pre-start check, biosecurity and species-specific management if found.	Negligible

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7 SITE PHOTOS



Plate 1. Southern access (TN1)



Plate 2. Western access (TN2)



Plate 3. Vegetation covered soil on west boundary (TN10)



Plate 4. Rubble piles to west of access (TN9)



Plate 5. Shipping container (TN3)



Plate 6. Burning area (TN8)



Plate 7. Wooden Workshop (TN4)



Plate 8. Inside of workshop (TN4)



Plate 9. Small wood shed (TN5)



Plate 10. Site main vegetation body

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

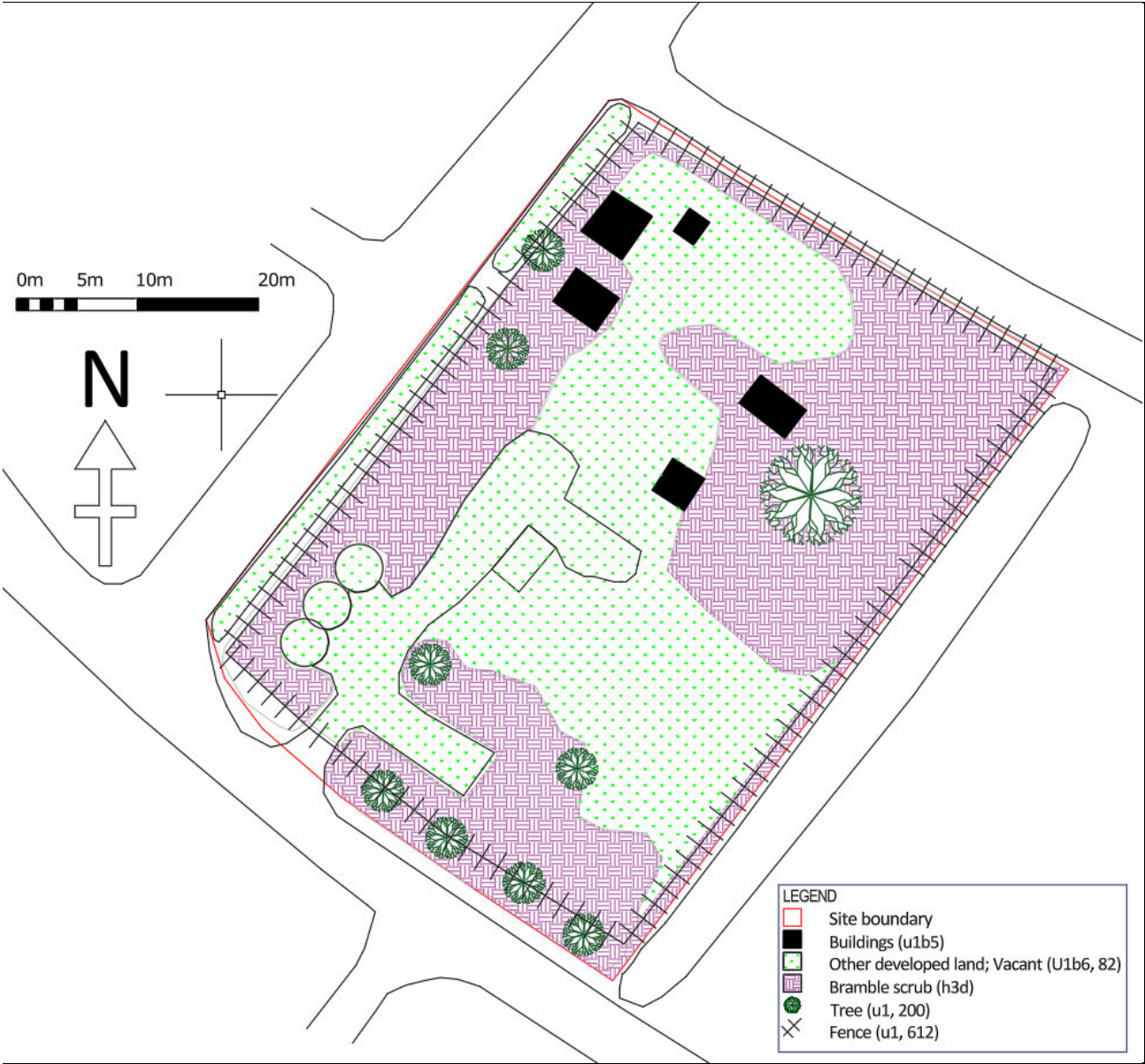
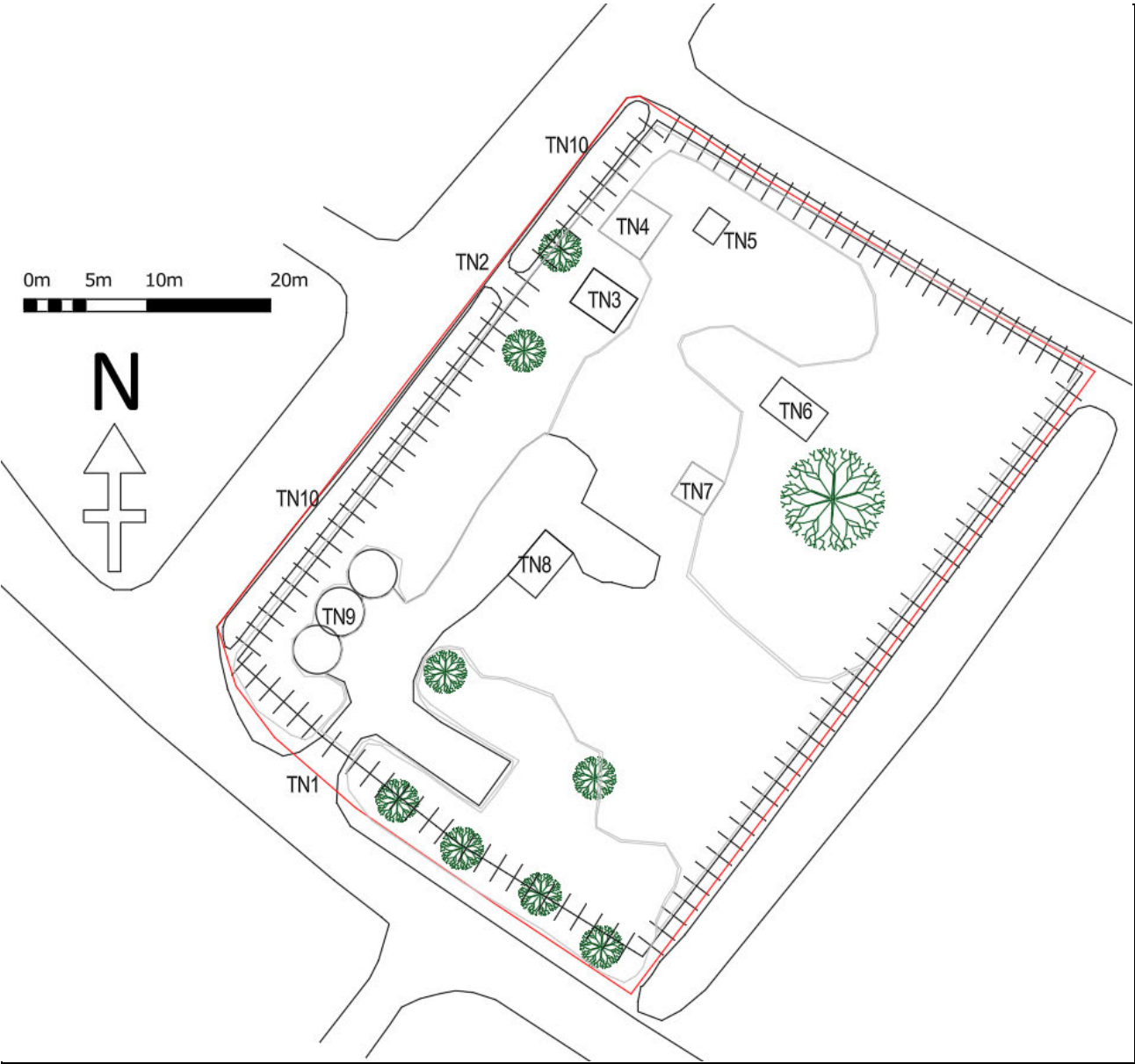
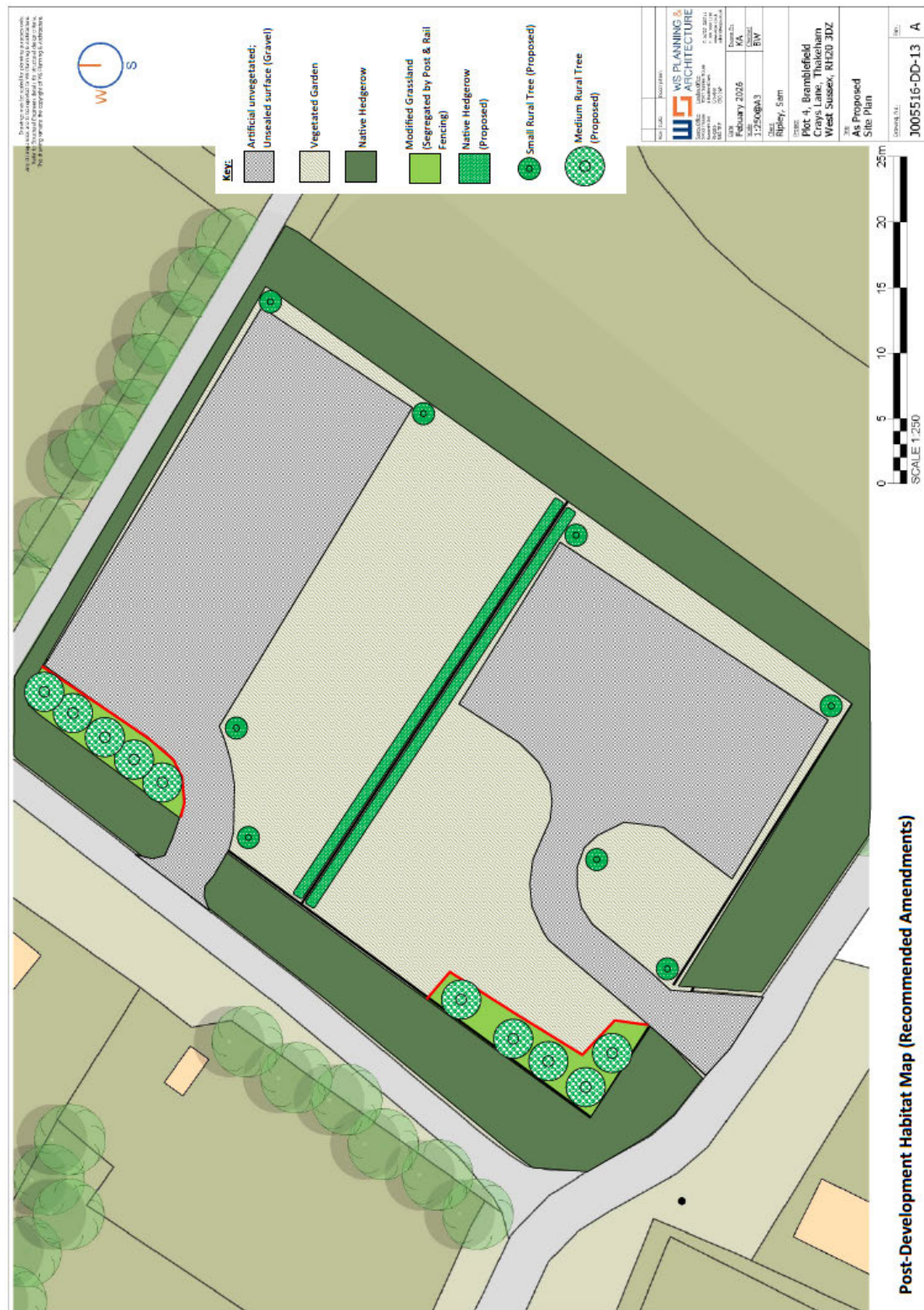


Figure B2 – Target Note Plan



APPENDIX C – PROPOSED PLANS



APPENDIX D - SURVEY DETAILS AND RESULTS DATA

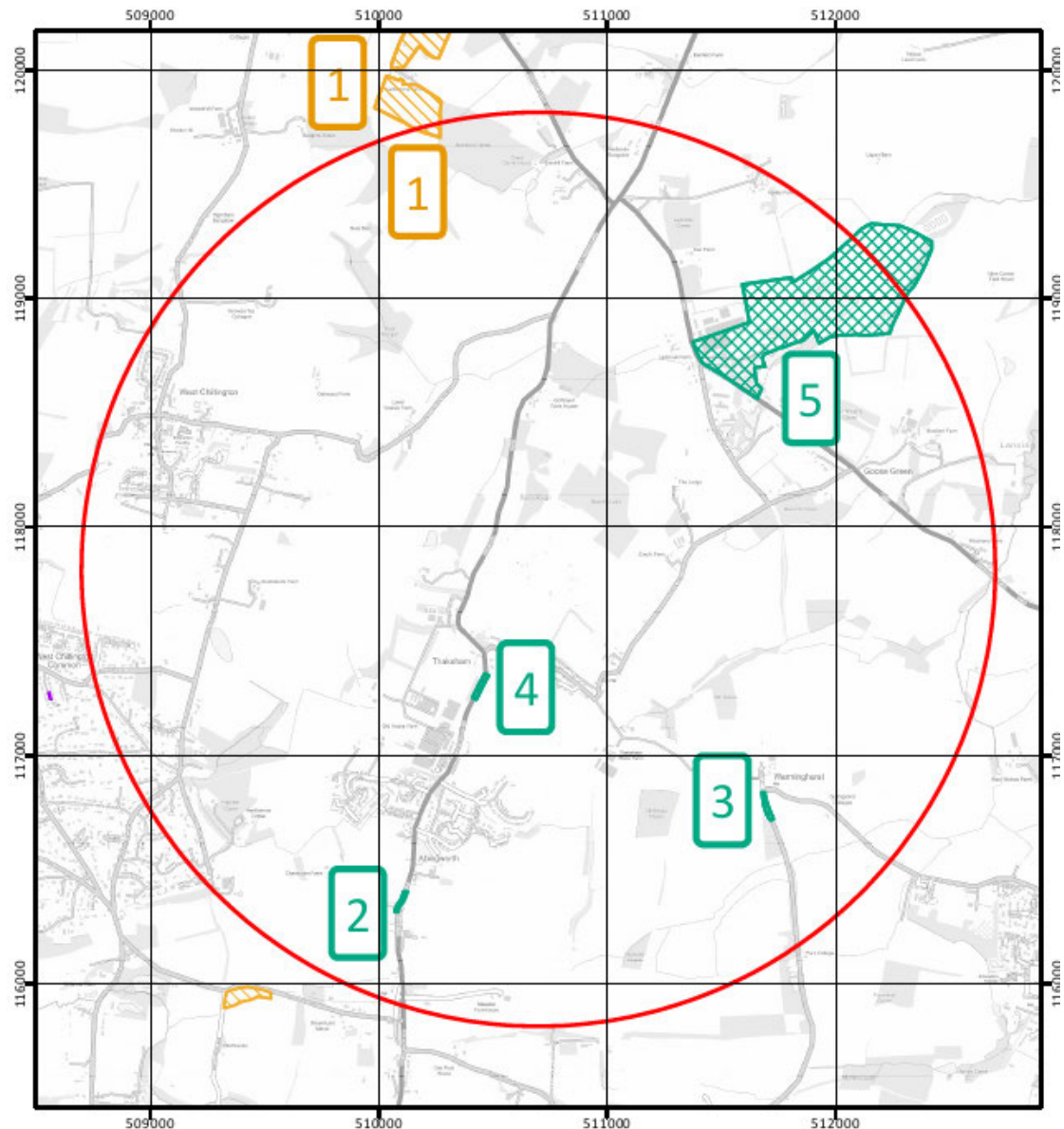
Table D1. Details of the Personnel, Dates and Types of Survey Undertaken at the Site

SURVEY	DATE	PERSONNEL
Extended UK Habitat Classification Survey & Daytime Bat Walkover Survey (DBW)	03 July 2026	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 2: Non-statutory site designations

Plot 4, Bramblefield, Crays Lane, Thakeham + 2km radius
SxBRC/26/345 - 17/07/2026



Key to Map:

- Search area
- Local Wildlife Site
- Candidate Local Wildlife Site
- Local Geological Site
- Designated Road Verge
- Marine SSSI

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.

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