

Billingshurst

784-B031362

Appendix 9.1F: Hazel Dormouse Report

Highwood Ventures 5 Limited and Vivid Housing Limited

January 2026

Document prepared on behalf of Tetra Tech Limited.



TETRA TECH

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Tetra Tech was commissioned by Highwood Ventures 5 Limited and Vivid Housing Limited, hereafter referred to as “the client” to undertake a hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* survey at Billingshurst, hereafter referred to as “the site”.

This report has been prepared by Katie Mazalova, MSc.

Hazel dormice are a European Protected Species listed in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 Schedule 2 (as amended). They and their habitats are fully protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended, schedules 5 & 6) and are listed in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities 2006 Section 41 as a species of principle importance.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this assessment is to:

- Determine the presence or likely absence of hazel dormice within the site;
- Determine if any potential impacts on hazel dormice are likely to arise from the proposed works; and
- Provide preliminary advice regarding any licensing requirements and outline strategies to avoid / mitigate / compensate for any likely impacts.

This report should be reviewed (and reassessed if necessary) should there be any changes to the red line boundary or development proposals which this report was based on.

Note that scientific names are provided at the first mention of species and common names (where appropriate) are then used throughout the rest of the report for ease of reading.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 DESK STUDY

The desktop study comprised two elements:

- A data search obtained from Sussex Biological Records Centre (SxBRC) in January 2026 of hazel dormouse records within 2 km of the site boundary; and
- Online element including a search using: Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk>) website and Ordnance Survey (OS) and Aerial Imagery (<https://www.bing.com/maps>). This included a search for any designated sites within 2 km supporting hazel dormouse or EPSML licenses. The search was conducted in January 2026.

2.2 PRESENCE / LIKELY ABSENCE NEST TUBE SURVEYS

The survey methods used were based on those described in The Dormouse Conservation Handbook (Bright, Morris, & Mitchell-Jones, 2006) and Surveying Dormice Using Nest Tubes (Chanin & Woods, 2003).

Nest tubes were deployed within the site and inspected monthly. Any evidence of hazel dormice, such as live or deceased individuals or their nests, were recorded along with their location.

The tubes used for the survey were the industry standard hazel dormouse nest tubes. These are constructed from a piece of folded, corrugated plastic sheet (5 x 5 cm in cross section and 25 cm long), with a sliding plywood insert. The insert blocks one end of the tube, leaving a 5 cm section which extends from the front of the tube. This provides access from the 'open end' into a sheltered tube at the 'closed end', where dormice can shelter and nest.

Tubes were fastened at a height of 1 to 2 m beneath above ground level in attached to a horizontal branch in appropriate vegetation using cable ties, plastic-coated garden wire, or Velcro strips. Tubes were positioned with the entrance of the tube orientated towards the center of the vegetation (or towards the side which is most sheltered), with the entrance angled slightly downwards to prevent water collecting in the tube.

The guidance recommended that survey effort to determine likely absence would include at least 50 nest tubes being inspected monthly during the active season, achieving at least 20 points from the index of probability (Error! Reference source not found.). For example, 50 nest tubes installed in March and left in situ until the end of November would score 25 points (the sum of probability indexes for each month).

Table 1. Index of Probability of Finding Hazel Dormice Present in Nest Tubes in Any One Month

Month	Apr	May	Jun / Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct / Nov	Total
Points	1	4	2	5	7	2	25

A total of 227 tubes were deployed in areas of suitable hazel dormouse habitats (woodland edge / hedgerow) within the site on the 25th of April 2023. Surveys were undertaken between May to November in 2023, equating to >20 points. Nest tube locations are provided in **Figure 1**. The tubes were positioned approximately 20 m apart, as per guidance (Bright, Morris, & Mitchell-Jones, 2006).

Surveys were led by Tetra Tech's Senior Ecologist Jon D'Arcy (Hazel Dormouse Class 1 Survey and Research Class Licence holder 2020-46946-CLS-CLS) who was assisted by members of the team.

Timings, weather conditions and personnel are included within **Table 2** below.

Table 2. Survey Dates and Weather Conditions

Date	Air Temperature (°C)	Wind Speed (Beaufort Scale)	Cloud Cover (%)	Precipitation (%)
18/05/2023	19	1 – Light air	0	None
22/06/2023	22	2 – Light breeze	20	
08/09/2023	20	0 – Calm		
25/10/2023	13	2 – Light breeze	40	
09/11/2023	11		80	

2.3 QUALITY AND HEALTH & SAFETY

Jon D’Arcy has full membership of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and holds a survey licence.

Our Ecologists follow CIEEM’s Code of Professional Conduct (2024), with all surveys completed in accordance with Tetra Tech’s Biosecurity Policy (Tetra Tech, 2023).

All staff have completed Health and Safety training. Risk Assessment Method Statements have been completed and verified prior to the site visit, with Dynamic Risk Assessments completed by all site staff upon arrival at site.

2.4 LIMITATIONS

Any absence of desk study records cannot be relied upon to infer absence of a species / habitat as the absence of records may be a result of under-recording within the given search area.

Although no definitive evidence of presence was recorded, three probable nests were attributed to hazel dormouse because they contained some green leaves and exhibited structural characteristics typical of dormouse nests within nest tubes. The site is located within suitable habitat, including adjacent woodland, and there are recent records from the same woodland returned by SxBRC. Additionally, southern England is known as a stronghold for the species. Based on our professional judgment, hazel dormice are likely present on site, albeit in low numbers due to the predominantly sub-optimal habitats available, which are mainly limited to hedgerows and woodland edges.

Notwithstanding the limitations highlighted above, the survey effort applied is considered sufficient to meet the aims of the survey and this report, in accordance with the aforementioned guidelines.

3.0 RESULTS

3.1 DESK STUDY

The SxBRC returned 14 hazel dormouse records within a 2 km radius of the site boundary. The result closest to site was the records from Tetra Tech’s 2023 presence/absence survey and therefore was recorded within the southern parcel of the site. The next closest, and most recent record was from 2024,

within the woodland to the west of the northern parcel of the site, within Pratt's Copse. This record was 130m from the site boundary, but with good habitat connectivity.

MAGIC returned six EPSMLs granted for hazel dormouse within a 10 km radius of the site boundary, as shown in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Hazel dormouse EPMSLs within 10 km radius of the site boundary

Reference	Indicative Distance and Direction	Licensable Actions
2019-42710- EPS-MIT-1	6.9 km east	Damage and destroy breeding and resting site
2020-48342- EPS-MIT	6.9 km east	Damage and destroy breeding and resting site
EPSM2012- 3955	7 km east	Destroy breeding and resting site
2016-23729- EPS-MIT	7 km south-east	Damage and destroy resting site
EPSM2010- 1997	7.5 km north-east	Destroy breeding and resting site
2018-33564- EPS-MIT-1	8.9 km south	Damage and destroy breeding and resting site

3.2 FIELD SURVEY

Three probable hazel dormouse nests were recorded during the surveys, located in the following locations:

- North: On the western hedgerow close to Pratt's Copse;
- South: On the eastern boundary of the field to the south of Newbridge Road; and
- West: On the northern boundary of the proposed country park.

Indicative locations are provided in **Figure 2**.

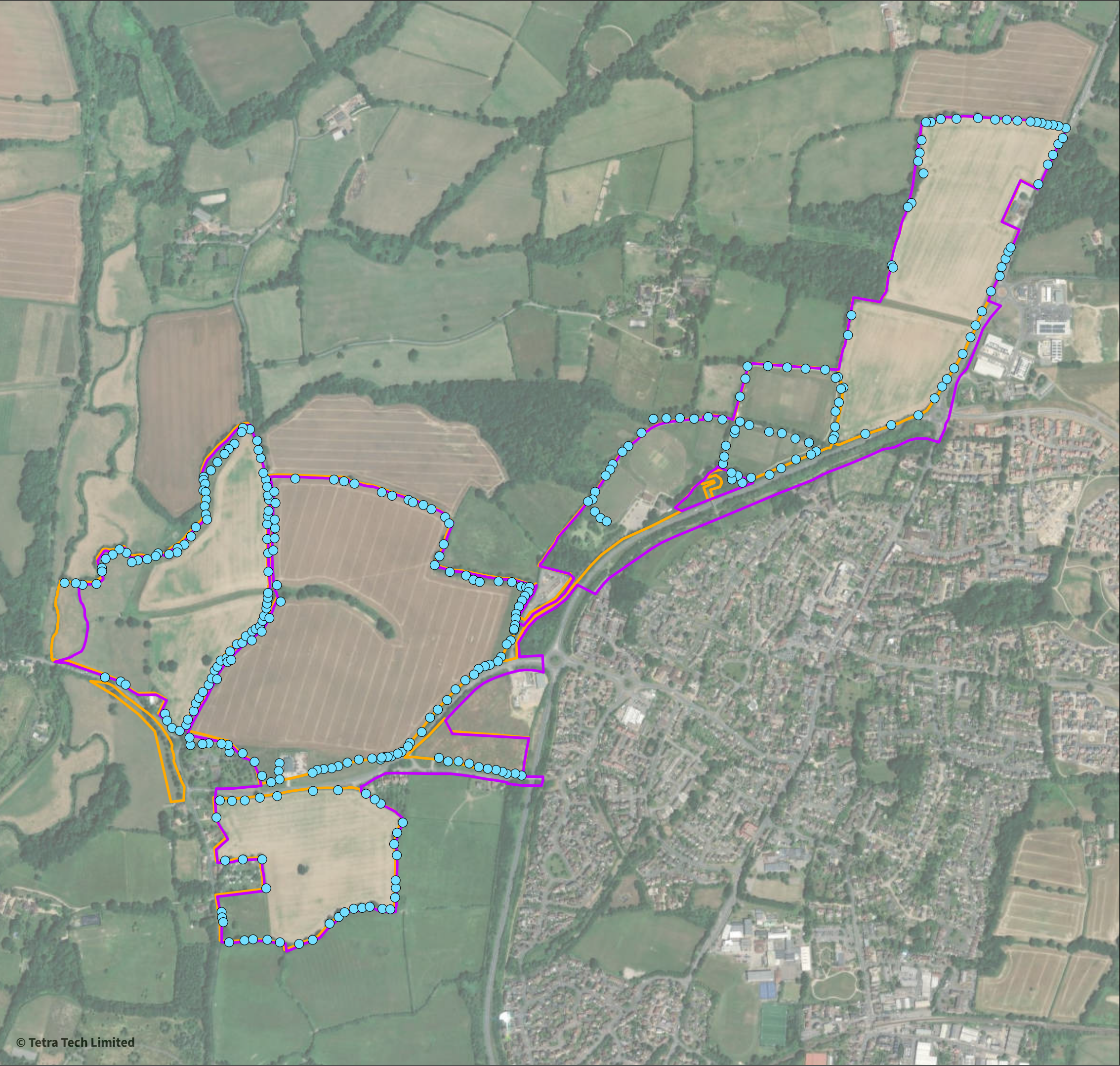
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FIGURES

Figure 1 – Nest Tube Locations

Figure 2 – Indicative Location of Probable Hazel Dormouse Nests



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Dormouse Nest Tube Location Plan

Billingshurst



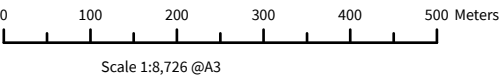
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Legend

-  Survey area
-  EclA boundary
-  Dormouse tube location

Drawn by: CHRIS.DAWE
Checked by: Katie Mazalova

Figure No. 1
Revision No. A
23 January 2026



British National Grid
NGR: 508054E 126260N

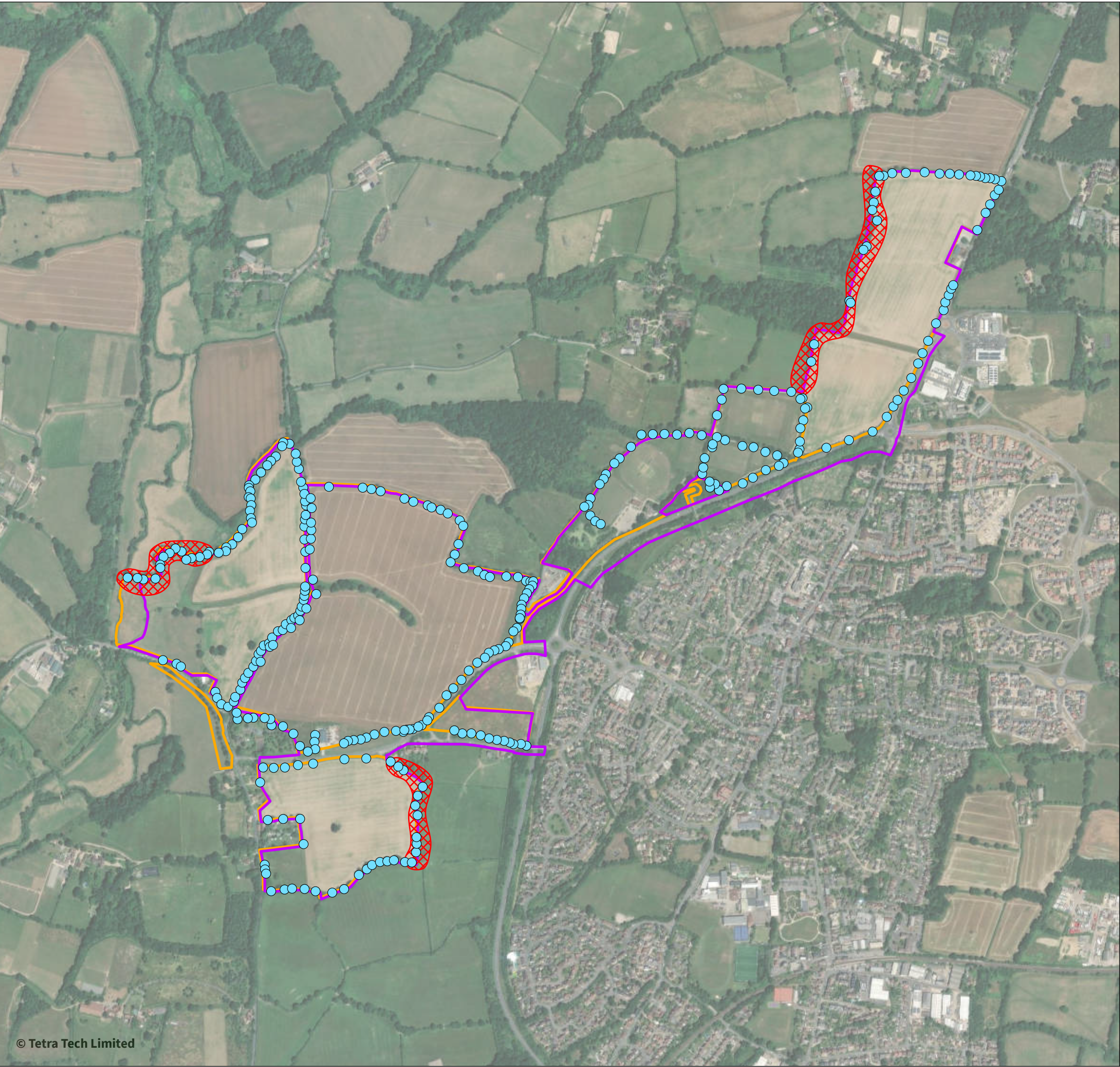
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Tetra Tech Limited.
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Customer: Highwood Homes Ltd, Project: Billingshurst, File Name: Billingshurst_Dormouse_Nest_Tube_Location_Plan_2026, Figure 1: Dormouse Nest Tube Location Plan



Indicative Probable Dormouse Nest Locations

Billingshurst

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Legend

-  EclA boundary
-  Survey area
-  Probable dormouse nests
-  Dormouse tube location



Drawn by: CHRIS.DAWE

Checked by: Katie Mazalova

Figure No. 2

Revision No. A

23 January 2026

0 100 200 300 400 500 Meters
Scale 1:10,000 @A3

British National Grid
NGR: 508054E 126260N

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