Eco-walkover Report

Site Address:	Land off Storrington Road, Thakeham, West Sussex RH20 3EF
Client Name:	James Lench
Reference:	Eco walkover
Date of survey:	28/10/2026

Background

Arbtech Consulting Limited was instructed by James Lench to undertake an eco-walkover at Land off Storrington Road, Thakeham, West Sussex RH20 3EF (hereafter referred to as "the site"). The survey was required to inform a planning application for the construction of 25 new residential units (hereafter referred to as "the proposed development").
A plan showing the proposed development is provided in Appendix 1.

The aim of the eco-walkover was to provide an update to the Phase 1 habitat survey, in order to see if the baseline conditions have changed since the previous visit by Arbtech Ltd in 2023.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was completed by Arbtech Ltd (Arbtech, 2016, 2020), in addition to full reptile surveys (Arbtech, 2017) and a great crested new eDNA survey (Arbtech 2017). Previous surveys have identified a low population of slow worms (peak count of 3) on site and have confirmed the presence of GCN in a nearby pond through eDNA. An update PEA was carried out in March 2020 (Arbtech, 2020) which has established that no changes have occurred on site. As such, a GCN and reptile non-licenced mitigation plan was recommended and produced by Arbtech for the above site (Arbtech, 2020). The council have confirmed that no updates to the previous surveys are required at this time.

Site Context

The site is located at National Grid Reference TQ 1002 1669 and has an area of approximately 0.9ha.

A plan showing the site location is provided in Appendix 2.

Survey Methodology

The ecological walkover was undertaken by Natalie Evans, Principal Consultant on 28/10/2026.
The site was subject to an ecological walkover only, to assess the current site conditions compared to previous surveys.
A full up to date habitat and protected species survey has not been undertaken.

Limitations

There were no specific limitations to the survey.

Survey Results and conclusions

A plan showing the survey results is provided in Appendix 3.
The only difference on site noted was that one of the trees in the southern boundary tree line is now dead and has woodpecker holes that could be exploited by roosting bats.

Other than the above, the site remains in the same condition and under the same management regime as identified in previous years. There has been no noticeable change to any habitats present, and no additional evidence of or habitat for protected species was noted.

Designated sites

The Arun Valley SPA and SAC is ~3.8km northwest of the site. The LPA may request a habitat regulation assessment (HRA) due to the net increase of 25 residential units.

Habitats & flora

The development will result in the loss of 0.9ha of modified grassland and 0.008ha of scrub. The LPA may request a biodiversity net gain assessment (BNG) or ecological mitigation and enhancement management plan (EMEMP) so that the site achieves BNG.

A small amount of variegated yellow archangel is located on the northern boundary of the site. The invasive plant species should be dug up, including roots, and disposed of in line with appropriate controlled waste measures.

Reptile & GCN

The baseline conditions to support common reptiles and GCN on site have not changed since the surveys carried out by Arbtech Ltd 2017. As such, the reptile and GCN mitigation plan produced is still an appropriate measure. The mitigation and enhancement measures will be implemented during and post-construction.

Birds

The trees and scrub are suitable for nesting birds. The scrub and trees should be removed out of the nesting bird season (March 1st – August 31st). If this period cannot be avoided, a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist will be required to determine the presence/absence of active nests. Any active nests must be left until the young have fledged.

Bats

Treelines are excellent for commuting and foraging bats. The treelines will be retained; however, an increased level of artificial lighting could deter bats from using these areas. The low-impact lighting strategy stipulated in the PEA (Arbtech, 2020) will be implemented.

A small group of hazel ash hawthorn and holly, and an individual goat willow and hazel situated close to the site access will need to be removed. These trees do not provide any suitable roosting features for bats, and their removal does not impact the value of the site boundaries as foraging and commuting habitat.

Several mature trees require crown lifting which will remove the lower branches. No suitable roosting features were visible from the ground and the works are unlikely to directly impact bat roosts. However, due to the age and condition of the trees, suitable roosting features can't be ruled out, therefore It is recommended that the crown lifting works are supervised by a bat and climbing licenced ecologist who will check the branches for any suitable roost sites before and after removal. This can be included in a suitably worded planning condition.

The dead tree with the woodpecker holes in the southern boundary should be retained if possible. If this requires removal, further investigation will be needed to rule out the presence of roosting bats.

No further surveys are required prior to planning determination providing dark corridors can be maintained and standing deadwood retained (see PEA 2020).

Other terrestrial mammals

The site is suitable for mammals such as hedgehogs [redacted] for commuting and foraging purposes. The treelines are also suitable for hazel dormice. As the treelines are being retained as dark corridors, no impacts are anticipated to dormice. The precautionary working method stated in the PEA (Arbtech, 2020) will protect other terrestrial mammals that could be using the site at the time of the development.

Author

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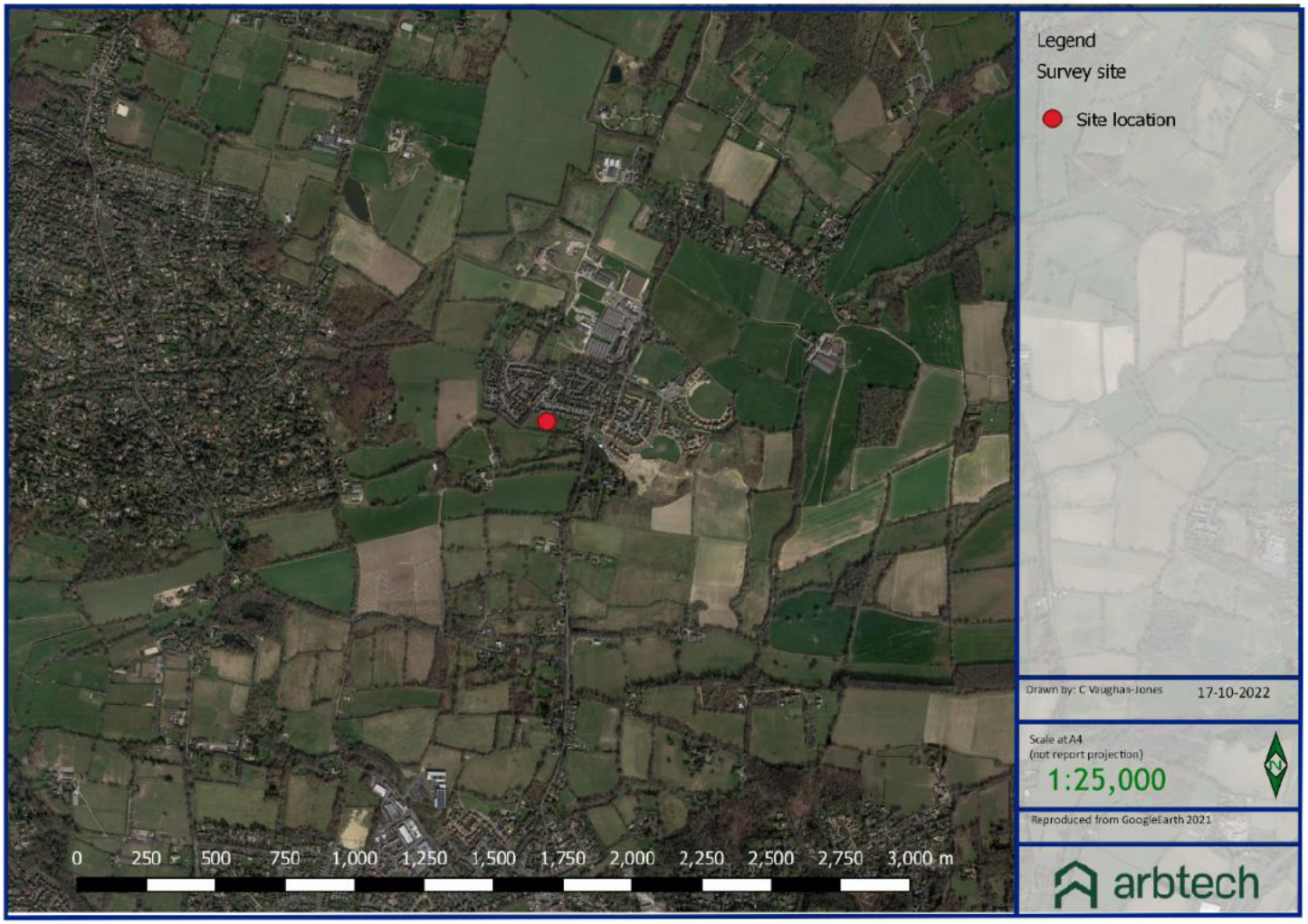
Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: Survey Plan



Appendix 4: Site Photos

Site access track	
Southern tree line	

Dead tree with woodpecker holes	

Field facing north east from south west corner	
Western tree line	

Northern and eastern boundary scrub	