Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
eDNA Survey

Land at The Hyde

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LIABILITIES:

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living animals and plants are capable of migration/establishing and whilst such species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date.

This report provides a snap shot of the species that were present at the time of the survey only and does not consider seasonal variation. Furthermore, where access is limited or the site supports habitats which are densely vegetated only dominant species maybe recorded.

The recommendations contained within this document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

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

1.0 Introduction

Background

1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Richardson Architects to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) assessment of the land at The Hyde, Rusper Road, Crawley, RH11 0LN, hereafter referred to as the 'site'.

1.2 The key objectives of a PEA (CIEEM 2017) are to:

- Identify the likely ecological constraints associated with a project;
- Identify any mitigation measures likely to be required, following the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' (CIEEM 2016; BSI 2013, Clause 5.2);
- Identify any additional surveys that may be required to inform an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA); and
- Identify the opportunities offered by a project to deliver ecological enhancement.

1.3 This report comprises the:

- Legislative and planning context (Section 1);
- Assessment methodologies (Section 2);
- Results (Section 3);
- Implications for development (Section 4);
- An impact assessment (Section 5); and
- Conclusions (Section 6).

Site Context and Status

1.4 The site is situated in the village of Ifield, in the north-west of Crawley (TQ 24177 36703). The site supports a single house and garage which are being retained and not subject to surveys. The gardens of the house support a large pond, a tennis court, ornamental and native tree planting. The Ifield Golf Course is located to the north and east of the site.

1.5 The aerial photography overleaf (Figure 1) shows the site and its immediate surroundings. The red line depicts the approximate site boundary and survey area.



Figure 1: Approximate location of the red line boundary

Proposed Development

1.6 The house and garage are being retained. However, additional units are being proposed on the tennis court and gardens.

Planning Policies

1.7 The site was surveyed to assess its ecological value and to ensure the proposals were compliant with relevant planning policy and legislation. Policy guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) as well as policies from the Horsham District Planning Framework (Adopted November 2015);

- Policy 25: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
- Policy 31: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

1.8 The Environment Bill (Environment Act 2021) received Royal Assent on 9th November 2021 and is now enacted as the Environment Act 2021. Part 6 (Nature and Biodiversity) and Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 insert a new section 90A and Schedule 7A into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA), which contain the provisions requiring mandatory biodiversity net gain for development granted

planning permission pursuant to the TCPA. These provisions require developments to provide a biodiversity value post-development that exceeds the predevelopment biodiversity value of the onsite habitats by at least 10%. This was adopted in February 2024 although there are a number of exemptions which may mean that biodiversity net gain is not required. These are listed under government guidance and are as follows:

- Development below a de minimis threshold;
- Householder applications;
- Small scale self-build and custom housebuilding;
- HS2; and
- Biodiversity net gain sites.

1.9 The site has therefore been surveyed to assess its ecological value and to ensure compliance with national and local plan policies and other relevant nature conservation legislation including; Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

1.10 The report has been produced with reference to current guidelines for PEA (CIEEM 2017) and in accordance with BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

2.0 Methodology

Desktop Study

2.1 A desktop study search was completed using an internet-based mapping service (www.magic.gov.uk) for statutory designated sites and an internet-based aerial mapping service (maps.google.co.uk) was used to understand the habitats present in and around the survey area including identifying habitat linkages and features (ponds, woodlands etc.) within the wider landscape. Records were requested from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) for protected species, non-statutory sites and invasive species within 2km of the site boundary.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

2.2 An extended preliminary ecological appraisal was undertaken on the 26th June 2025 by Alexia Tamblyn MA (Oxon) MSc Cecol CEnv MCIEEM FRGS and Natasha Wilson

BSc (Hons). The surveyors identified the habitats present, following the standard 'UK Hab' auditing method. The site was surveyed on foot and the existing habitats and land uses were recorded on an appropriately scaled map (JNCC 2010). In addition, the dominant plant species in each habitat were recorded. The potential for the site to support protected species was also assessed.

Protected Species Assessments

2.3 Any evidence of protected species was recorded. Standard methods of search and measures of presence or likely absence based on habitat suitability were used for bats in trees and buildings (Collins 2016), breeding birds[1], dormouse (Bright *et al.* 2006), great crested newt (ARG 2010), reptiles (Froglife 2015), [redacted] ([redacted]) and water vole (Strachan *et al*. 2011).

Limitations

2.4 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no single investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. The site was visited over the period of one site visit, as such seasonal variations cannot be observed and potentially only a selection of all species that potentially occur within the site have been recorded. Therefore, the survey provides a general assessment of potential nature conservation value of the site and does not include a definitive plant species list.

2.5 The protected species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on site, based on the suitability of the habitat and any direct evidence on site. It should not be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group. The assessment is only valid for the time when the survey was carried out. Additional surveys may be recommended if, on the basis of this assessment, it is considered reasonably likely that protected species may be present.

[1] https://www.bto.org/our-science/projects/birdatlas/methods/breeding-evidence

3.0 Results

Desktop Study

3.1 There is one internationally designated site located within 15km of the site boundary (Figure 2), this is Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located *c.* 14.8km north-west of site, designated for the areas of semi-natural dry grasslands, stable box scrub on steep chalk slopes, and *Taxus baccata* woodland.

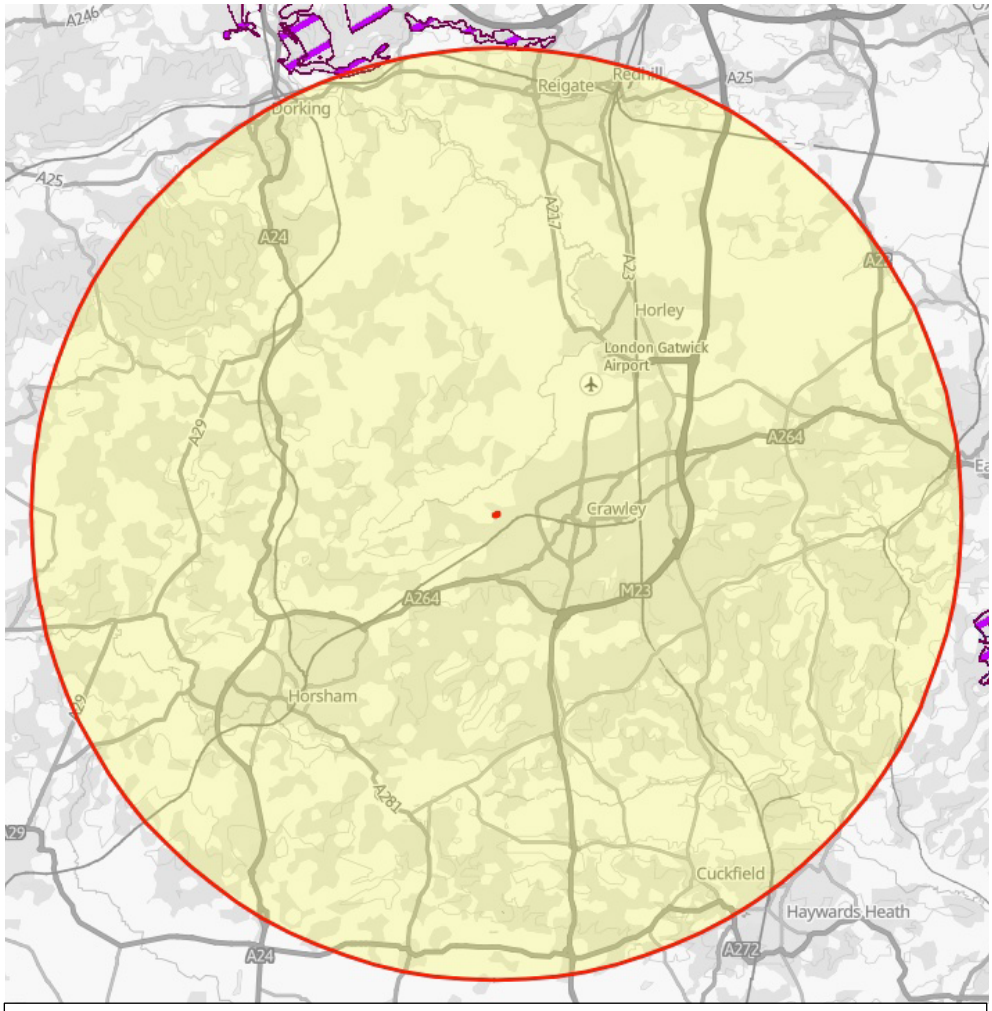

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Figure 2: Internationally designated sites within 15km of the site boundary

3.2 There are three nationally designated statutory sites located within 2km of the site boundary (Figure 3), these include:

- House Copse SSSI located *c.* 1.3km south-west, designated for the small isolated woodland;

- Buchan Hill Ponds SSSI located *c.* 1.9km south-east, designated for the ponds, wetlands, and woodland habitats, the site also supports rich dragonfly fauna;
- Willoughby Fields LNR located *c.* 1.9km north-east, designated for the large meadows, blackthorn hedges, and flower-rich grassland habitats.

3.3 The site lies within an SSSI impact risk zone, however, consultation with Natural England is only considered required if proposals include large scale changes in infrastructure, air pollution, waste, compost, or water supply.

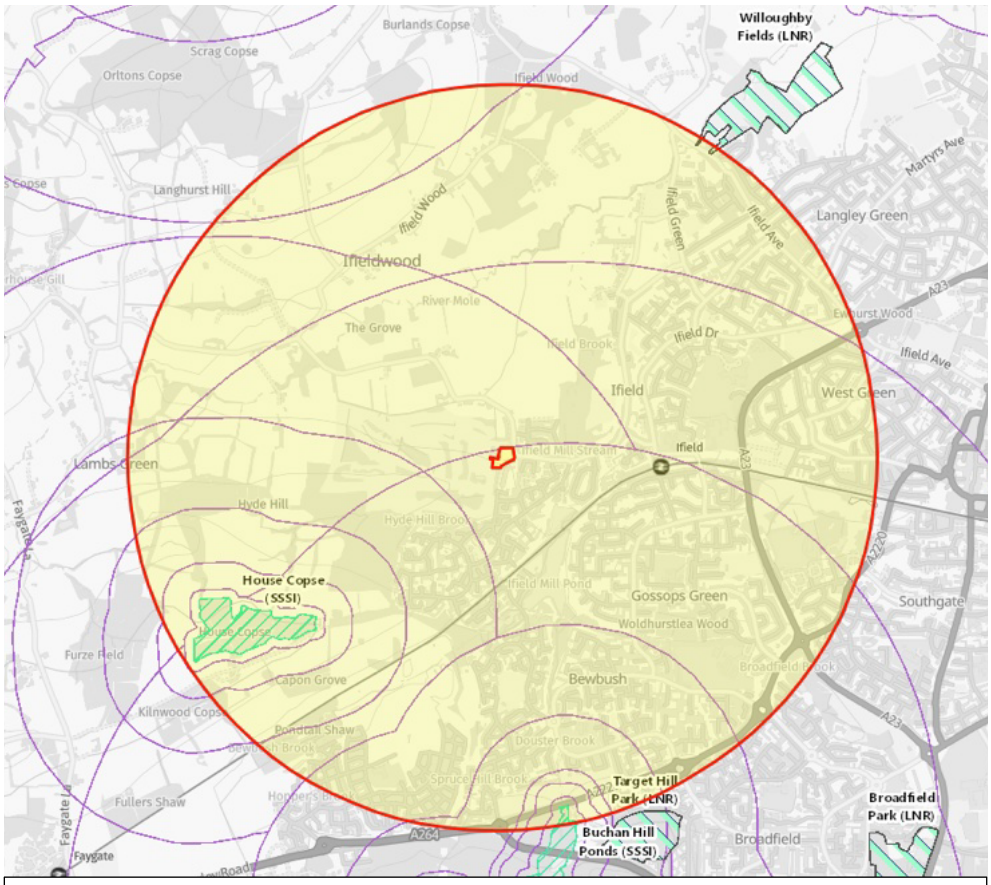

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Figure 3: Nationally designated statutory sites, purple lines indicate SSSI impact risk zones

3.4 There are eight non-statutory designated sits located within 2km of the site boundary; this includes the following Local Wildlife Sites (LWS):

- Ifield Brook Wood & Meadows LWS located *c.* 250m north-east, designated for the patchwork of grass fields surrounded by blocks and strips of scrub and semi-natural broadleaved woodland;

- Hyde Hill LWS located *c.* 280m south-west, designated for the ancient and semi-natural broadleaved woodland, with a number of notable butterfly species recorded including Dingy Skipper *Erynnis tages,* White Admiral *Limenitis Camilla*, and Brown Hairstreak *Thecla betulae*;
- Ifield Pond & surroundings LWS located *c.* 290m south-east, designated for the historic mill pond fringed by willows and alder, areas of lowland mixed deciduous woodland and wet woodland;
- Woldhurstlea Wood LWS located *c.* 1.1km south-east, designated for the semi-natural woodland, stream, and pond;
- Wood near Lower Prestwood Farm LWS located *c.* 1.7km north-west, designated for the lowland mixed deciduous woodland, some of which is also ancient and semi-natural;
- Ewhurst Wood LWS located *c.* 1.9km north-east, designated for the urban woodland made up of oak, ash, and birch;
- Orltons Copse LWS located *c.* 2km north-west, designated for the large areas of Oak/Hornbeam woodland separated by smaller areas of Oak/Hazel and Oak/Hazel/Ash woodland;
- Buchan Country Park LWS located *c.* 2km south-east, designated for the woodland with an increasing area of heathland, a small meadow, and three large lakes.

3.5 There are also several units of priority habitat within 2km of the site (Figure 4), the closest of each type include:

- Deciduous woodland running along the south of site;
- Ancient woodland located *c.* 280m north-east;
- Traditional orchard located *c.* 1.1km north-west;
- Woodpasture and parkland located *c.* 1.3km north.



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Figure 4: Priority habitat within 2km of the site including ancient and semi natural woodland (green vertical hatching), ancient replanted woodland (brown horizontal hatching), deciduous woodland (dark green), traditional orchards (lime green), and woodpasture and parkland (shrub symbol).

3.6 The desktop study revealed two European Protected Species (EPS) licences were granted within 2km of the site boundary (Figure 5):

- Destruction of a common pipistrelle resting place in 2013, located *c.* 1.3km north-east; and
- Destruction of a common pipistrelle and brown long-eared resting place in 2011, located *c.*1.4km north-east of the site boundary.

3.7 No positive GCN class survey licence returns were identified within 2km of the site red line boundary.

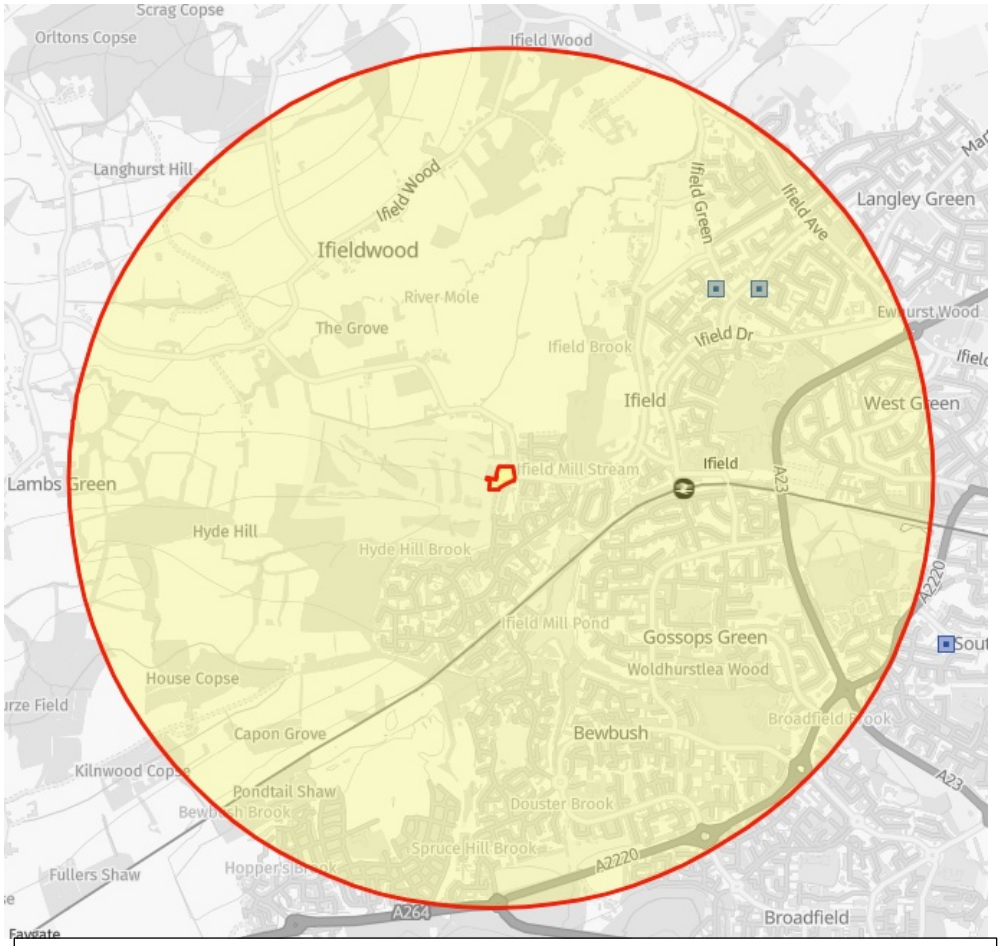

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Figure 5: Location of bat EPS licences (blue squares) within 2km of the site boundary

3.8 OS maps indicate there are two ponds located within 250m of the site (Figure 6), however, Pond P1, on site is not shown on OS Maps. Ponds P2 and P3 are located *c.* 65m and *c.* 220m south-west of site, respectively.

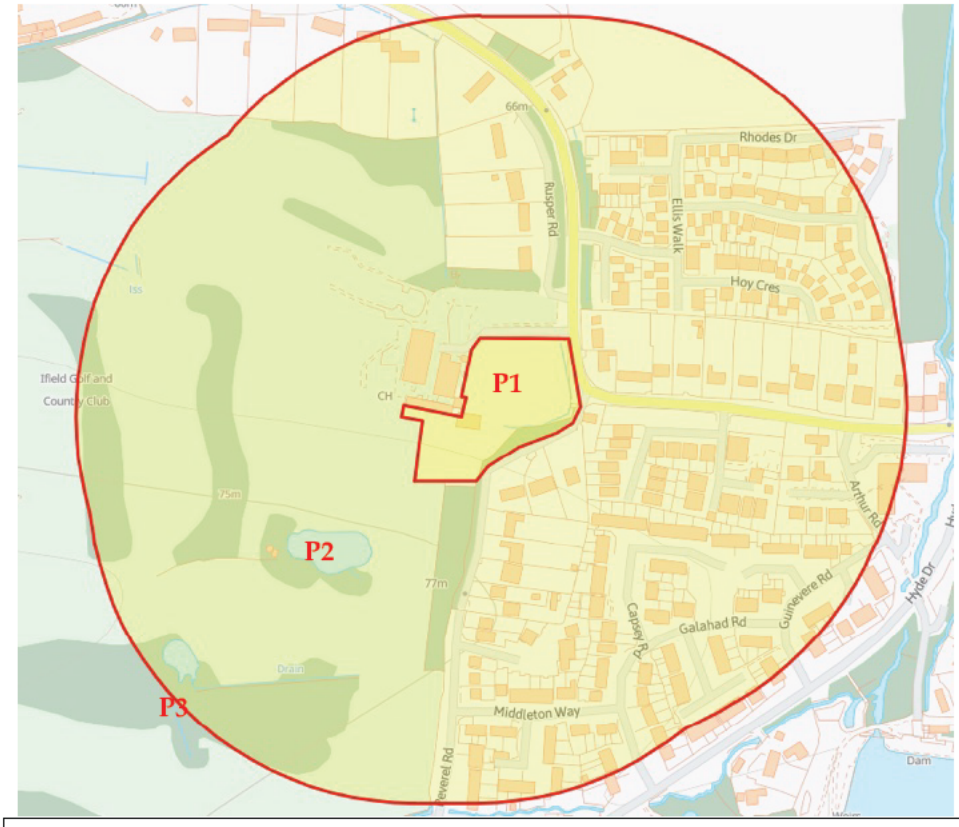

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Figure 6: Ponds located within 250m of the site boundary

3.9 A 2km radius data search was requested from Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC). Notable protected species from this search are outlined below (Table 1). Only records from within the last ten years and those closest to site have been included.

Table 1: Notable species recorded within 2km of the site in the last 10 years.

Species	Status	Distance of closest record to site	Date of most recent record
Stag Beetle *Lucanus cervus*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; Habitats Directive Annex 2; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	*c.* 1.9km south-west	01/07/2023
Common Toad *Bufo bufo*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	*c.* 530m south-west	08/04/2024
Common Frog *Rana temporaria*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5	*c.* 1.9km south-east	20/07/2023
Smooth Newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5	*c.* 90m south-west	05/11/2023
Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) Schedule 2; Wildlife and	*c.* 500m north-west	17/05/2023

	Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; Habitats Directive Annex 2 & 4		
Adder *Vipera berus*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	*c.* 680m south-east	21/04/2024
Slow Worm *Anguis fragilis*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c.750m north-west	17/10/2024
Common Lizard *Zootoca vivipara*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	Within 2km	20/04/2024
Grass Snake *Natrix natrix*	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); NERC Act (2006) Section 41	Within 2km	08/04/2024
Western Barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*)	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010) Schedule 2; Habitat and Species Directive (1992) Annex 4; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5	*c.* 540m south-west	06/06/2022
Bechstein's Bat *Myotis bechsteinii*	As above	*c.* 300m north-west	09/06/2022
Brandt's Bat *Myotis brandtii*	As above	*c.* 540m south-west	09/06/2022
Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii*	As above	*c.* 540m south-west	09/06/2022
Whiskered Bat *Myotis mystacinus*	As above	*c.* 540m south-west	09/06/2022
Natterer's Bat *Myotis nattereri*	As above	*c.* 540m south-west	09/06/2022
Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*	As above	*c.* 110m south-west	30/08/2022
Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*	As above	*c.* 520m north-east	27/07/2022
Nathusius's Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*	As above	*c.* 1.8km south-west	09/07/2018
Brown Long-eared Bat *Plecotus auritus*	As above	*c.* 350m north-east	27/07/2022
Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*	As above	*c.* 1.6km north-east	09/07/2018
Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*	As above	*c.* 190m south-west	06/06/2022
Red Kite *Milvus milvus*	Birds Directive Annex 1; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	*c.* 650m north-east	18/06/2024
White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	Within 1km	23/12/2020

Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*	Birds Directive Annex 1; NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Amber List	Within 2km	09/06/2015
Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	Within 2km	30/04/2017
Herring Gull *Larus argentatus*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	Within 2km	27/10/2020
Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*	Birds Directive Annex 1; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	Within 2km	28/07/2019
Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*	Birds Directive Annex 1	Within 2km	10/09/2020
Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*	NERC Act (2006); BoCC Red List	Within 2km	22/05/2022
Kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*	Birds Directive Annex 1; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	*c.* 490m south-east	27/03/2024
Hobby *Falco subbuteo*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	Within 2km	07/05/2023
Skylark *Alauda arvensis*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	*c.* 350m north-east	11/05/2024
Hawfinch *Coccothraustes coccothraustes*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	Within 1km	11/03/2018
Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	Within 2km	25/10/2018
Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Amber List	Within 2km	15/06/2017
Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	Within 2km	07/07/2018
Marsh Tit *Poecile palustris*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	Within 2km	01/04/2021
Dunnock *Prunella modularis*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Amber List	Within 2km	20/04/2018
Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	*c.* 1.3km north-east	05/05/2022
Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	*c.* 660m south-west	03/05/2016
Dartford Warbler *Curruca undata*	Birds Directive Annex 1; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1; BoCC Amber List	Within 2km	11/03/2016
Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Amber List	Within 1km	16/03/2023
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker *Dryobates minor*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; BoCC Red List	Within 1km	07/01/2021
Barn Owl *Tyto alba*	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	*c.* 1.3km north-west	28/07/2024
West European Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*	NERC Act (2006) Section 41	*c.* 800m east	16/08/2023

Habitat Survey

3.10 The site largely comprised of managed and mown grassland associated with a large house and garage, driveway and associated areas of hardstanding, including a tennis court. The site also supported a large pond, scattered trees, ornamental planting and woodland.

3.11 The habitat map is presented in **Appendix 1**, site photos in **Appendix 2,** a full species list in **Appendix 3,** biological records summary in **Appendix 4** and condition assessments in **Appendix 5**.

Modified Grassland (g4)

3.12 The grassland across the site was mown regularly to a short sward. Species present included abundant springy turf moss and perennial rye-grass, white clover, self heal, with creeping buttercup and species such as Yorkshire fog, sweet vernal grass, smooth meadow grass, birds foot trefoil. An average of 8 species/m^2 were present over five samples.

Scattered trees (g4 32)

3.13 Several scattered trees around the pond include; English oak, hornbeam, purple leaved sycamore, sycamore and leyland Cypress. Golden locust was located alongside the access road.

3.14 Scattered trees in the rear garden, to the south included silver birch, golden lawson cypress, purple leaved Norway maple, poplar species and pear species.

Other Woodland Mixed (w1h)

3.15 An area of woodland was located to the north and east of the site, north of the access road. Species present included numerous Leyland cypress with other species including lime, English oak, sycamore, Norway maple, other species along the northern edge included Montery cypress.

3.16 A mixed woodland was located south of the access road. Species present included Norway maple, sycamore, Scots pine, Leyland cypress, English oak, silver birch, Douglas fir and field maple.

Native hedgerow (h2a)

3.17 A small native hedgerow (H1 in Appendix 1) was located along the western boundary. Species present included abundant breech and bramble and hawthorn.

Pond

3.18 The pond supported biswort, bramble, common nettle, pendulous sedge, st Johns wort.

Protected Species

Roosting Bats

3.19 The house and garage are outside the application area and will not be impacted by the proposals. These were not reviewed for their suitability for bats. A single shed is present to the east of the pond. This was a standard garden shed and was considered to have negligible suitability for bats. A further shed / structure was present by the bins (along the access track). This was also considered to have negligible potential for bats.

3.20 The scattered trees within the front garden around the pond included; English oak, hornbeam, purple leaved sycamore, sycamore and leyland Cypress were assessed for Potential Roosting Features (PRFs). All of these trees were in reasonable condition and did not support any rot holes, woodpecker holes, dense ivy cover. As such none of these were considered to support any PRFs.

3.21 Within the rear garden, the silver birch supported some flaking bark, but was considered to provide PRF-I only. The other trees did not support any bat potential features.

3.22 The trees in the woodland to the south of the access road could not be fully investigated for PRFs, albeit it was considered the mature oaks were likely to provide some features due to their age and growth forms.

3.23 The woodland adjacent to Rusper Road, to the north of the access road and east of the tennis court supported a number of Leyland cypress in poor condition. It is considered likely these would be removed. No evidence of PRFs were identified on any of these trees.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

3.24 The site was dominated by short-sward modified grassland which provides limited foraging opportunities for bats. However, the pond and the woodland to the north, east and south provide some value for foraging and commuting opportunities for bats, albeit the small scale nature of the site and the ornamental species, is considered to be sub optimal for bats.

[redacted]

Great Crested Newt (GCN)

3.26 One seasonal pond was present on site. A Habitat Suitability Index for GCN was carried out on the on-site pond (P1). The remaining ponds were located within private ownership and were not accessible for survey. The HSI assessment calculates the mean of ten indices to identify a habitat suitability score for GCN. A map of the ponds is shown previously in Figure 6 and HSI scores are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: HSI scores for the on-site pond (P1)

		Ponds
Suitability Indices No.	**Feature**	**P1**
1	Geographic location	1
2	Pond area	1
3	Pond permanence	0.9
4	Water quality	0.33
5	Shading	0.9
6	Waterfowl effect	0.67
7	Fish presence	0.67
8	Pond density	0.9
9	Suitable newt habitat within 250m	0.67

10	Macrophyte cover	0.6
9th root - HSI score		0.73
Pond suitability		Good

3.27 The site itself was found to support some suitable terrestrial habitat for GCN with poor quality woodland and some ornamental shrubs with the dominance of short-sward grassland within the garden. The onsite pond (P1) scored 'good' in the GCN Habitat Suitability Index due to the lack of impact from waterfowl and only limited potential from fish predation.

3.28 The site falls within the NatureSpace Partnership red impact risk zone, which represents suitable habitat where GCN are "highly likely to be present" (Figure 8). As such, GCN presence on site cannot be ruled out, despite relatively poor condition terrestrial habitats.

3.29 EDNA was collected and submitted to SureScren Scientific. The results are detailed in full in appendix 6. No DNA from GCNS was identified within the pond, and the pond is therefore not considered to support this species.

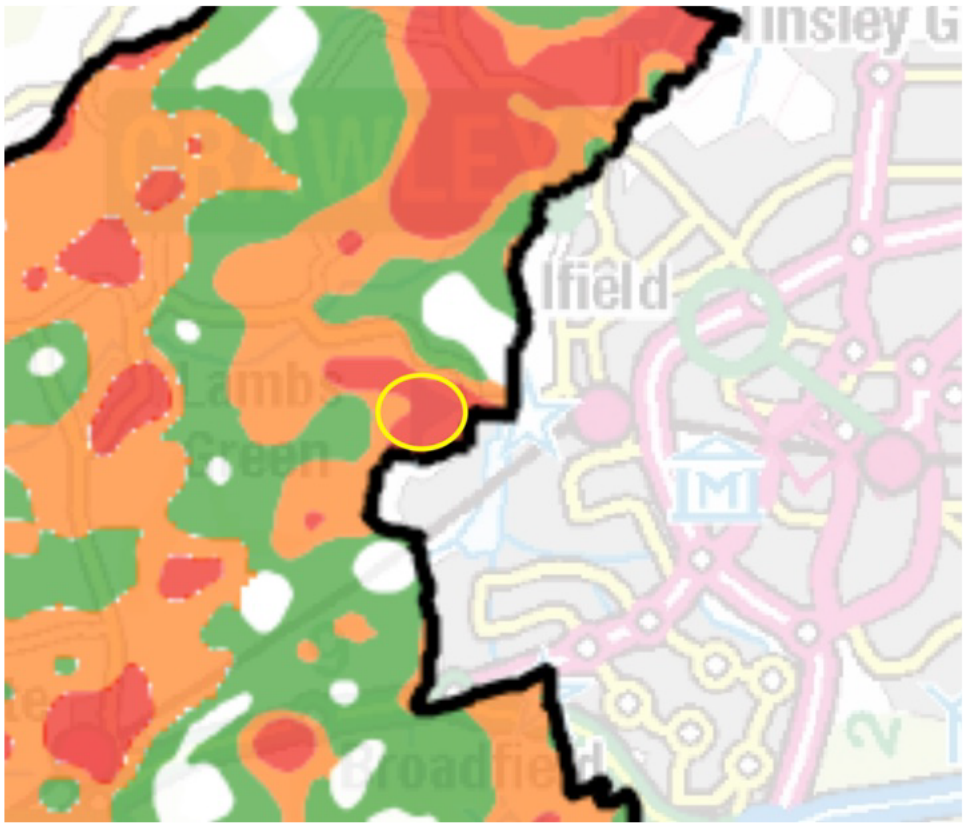

Figure 8: NatureSpace Partnership Impact Risk Zones, yellow circle represents approximate site location.

Hazel dormice

3.30 The site is dominated by short-sward horse-grazed grassland and garden lawn, which are considered unsuitable dormice habitat.

3.31 The small woodland areas are largely suboptimal for dormice, with a dominance of Leyland cypress and limited native understorey. Whilst there is some connectivity to woodland blocks further to the southwest (beyond the golf course), the small scale nature of the on site habitats and the sub optimal nature reduces the potential for dormice to be present on site.

3.32 Additionally, there are no biological records of dormice within 2km of the site in the last 10 years. Overall, it is considered unlikely dormouse would be present on site.

Reptiles

3.33 The site was considered unsuitable for reptile species due to the lack of any long-sward vegetation for foraging and refuge habitat and high levels of disturbance from regular grass management.

3.34 Additionally, there are very few records of reptile species within the surrounding area in the last 10 years; the nearest being an adder record, over 600m south east of the site. Other records are of greater distances.

Nesting Birds

3.35 The scattered trees, hedgerows, and woodland on site were considered to have potential to support nesting birds.

Other Species

3.36 Due to a lack of suitable habitat, the site was not considered suitable for other protected species, such as water voles and otters.

3.37 The boundary features of the site could offer limited potential to commuting and foraging hedgehogs. Given the open nature of the site, presence of hedgehogs using the site opportunistically cannot be ruled out.

4.0 Discussion

4.1 The following paragraphs consider the effects of the development on designated sites, priority habitats and protected and priority species. Where the desk study and habitat survey provide sufficient evidence for an assessment of effects on any of these groups to be taken through planning, these are detailed below, the need for additional surveys and when and how these should be completed are summarised, if required.

Effects on Designated Sites

4.2 The site does not fall within or adjacent to any statutory sites. The nearest internationally designated site Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located *c.* 14.8km north-west of site. The site lies outside the zone of influence of this SAC and no impacts on the integrity of the SAC are considered as a result of the development.

4.3 The site does lie within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone. Abstraction within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone may be harming biodiversity within internationally designated sites, notably the Arun Valley SPA, SAC and Ramsar site.

4.4 In October 2021, Natural England issued a Position Statement to the county council. The statement sets out that it cannot be concluded that the existing abstraction within the zone is not having an adverse impact on the Arun Valley sites and advises that development within the zone must not add to this impact.

4.5 As the site lies within the Sussex North Water Supply all new build developments must demonstrate water neutrality. Off setting measures are also available.

4.6 There are three nationally designated statutory sites located within 2km of the site boundary. The site lies within an SSSI impact risk zone, however, consultation with Natural England is only considered required if proposals include large scale changes in infrastructure, air pollution, waste, compost, or water supply. Considering the small scale nature of the development and the distances from the SSSI, no impacts on the integrity of these sites is anticipated.

4.7 There are numerous local wildlife sites within the local area. The three closest wildlife sites include Ifield Brook Wood & Meadows LWS located *c.* 250m north-east, Hyde Hill LWS located *c.* 280m south-west and Ifield Pond & surroundings LWS located *c.*

290m south-east. These are of sufficient distance from the site as to ensure there are no direct impacts resulting from construction. Furthermore, considering the small scale nature of the proposals, impacts with regards to recreational pressure are considered unlikely.

Effects on Priority Habitats

4.8 There is no priority habitat on site. There is woodland priority habitat to the south of the site, likely connected to the woodland on site. To ensure that landscape linkages are maintained and that priority habitat woodland is not impacted by the development, the mature oaks within the woodland, and other native trees, should be retained. Removal of non native trees and shrubs, and planting of native mixes, would provide some site level enhancements.

Effects on on-site habitats

4.9 The modified grassland dominates the site is common, widespread, and of low biodiversity value. As such, it is considered that the loss or removal of these habitats would result in site level impacts only. Other habitats likely impacted by proposals, include areas of ornamental planting, hardstanding areas and scattered trees.

4.10 The woodland adjacent to Rusper Road is also likely to be impacted by the proposals. The removal of the Leyland cypress and retention of some of the native trees, where possible, would not be ecologically significant. However, off setting would be required due to woodland removed.

4.11 Scattered trees carry relatively high net gain value. Where scattered trees are present, these should be retained where possible.

Protected Species

Roosting Bats

4.12 The house and garage units were outside the scope of this report. None of the remaining onsite buildings were deemed suitable for roosting bats due to their sealed structure, presence of excess daylight internally, and lacking loft voids and or potential roosting features (PRFs). As such, all buildings were deemed to have '**negligible'** potential for roosting bats and no further surveys would be recommended. It is

considered that development or removal of these structures would not be constrained by roosting bats.

Trees

4.13 All scattered trees were assessed for PRFs. All of these scattered trees were considered to be unsuitable for roosting bats, due to a lack of potential roosting features such as rot holes, broken limbs, complex growth forms and veteran features. As such, all trees on site were considered to support '**negligible'** potential for roosting bats.

4.14 The Leyland cypress trees in the woodland did not support any PRFs. As such, all trees on site were considered to support '**negligible'** potential for roosting bats.

4.15 Whilst trees, particularly higher value native trees, should be retained as far as possible within the design of any proposed scheme, removal of any trees assessed is not considered to be constrained by roosting bats.

4.16 The large oak trees set within the woodland could not be fully surveyed, and these may have potential for roosting bats. These are understood to be retained within the scheme.

4.17 Once the final tree removal plan has been identified, an update review of the trees should be made.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

4.18 According to Bat Conservation Trust guidelines it is important that proportionality is employed when recommending further survey work for bat species on a proposed development site. As stated within section 2.2.19 of the latest survey guidelines (2023), the following points need to be considered with regard to planning bat surveys:

- Likelihood of bats being present;
- Type of proposed activities;
- Scale of proposed activities;
- Size, nature and complexity of the site;
- Species concerned;
- Number of individuals.

4.19 The majority of the site is considered to be of limited value to foraging bats due to the dominance of heavily managed grassland and amenity value of the site. Suitable habitat was limited to the boundary features, including the woodland.

4.20 The proposals largely based on the hardstanding areas and the garden habitats. Whilst some trees are to be lost, these are largely restricted to Leyland cypress trees, which hold little value for bats. Retaining the native species would ensure there is landscape connectivity.

4.21 Due to the small scale nature of the development, and the retention of native trees / woodland areas, no further surveys are recommended.

4.22 Existing linear boundary features should always be designed into any proposed scheme as far as possible and should not be illuminated with additional street lighting as to create a dark corridor suitable for bats foraging and commuting along the feature. All bat species are nocturnal, resting in dark conditions in the day and emerging at night to feed. Bats are known to be affected by light levels, which can affect both their roosting and foraging behaviour. This needs to be considered with a sympathetic lighting scheme for the development. Recommendations include:

- Installing lighting only if there is a significant need;
- Using sodium lamps instead of mercury or metal halide lamps where glass glazing is preferred due to its UV filtration characteristics;
- Directing lighting to where it is needed and avoiding light spillage;
- Using baffled lighting where light is directed towards the ground and
- Avoid putting lighting near trees suitable for roosting bats, woodland, trees or hedgerows and angling light away from these linear features which are used by commuting and foraging bats.

[redacted]

[redacted]

4.24 [redacted]

Reptiles

4.16 The site was not considered to provide suitability for reptiles, with the dominance of short-sward modified grassland. It is recommended that the grassland habitats and maintained to a short sward height to prevent the site becoming suitable for these species. Currently no further survey work is required.

Nesting Birds

4.17 The scattered trees and woodland support suitable nesting opportunities for birds. It is recommended that any woody vegetation and buildings with potential to support nesting birds should be removed outside of the breeding bird season (March-September inclusive) or immediately after a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist. If active nests are identified, works in the vicinity of the nest must cease until the birds have fledged the nest.

Great Crested Newt (GCN)

4.18 The majority of the site, comprised of short-sward grassland, is considered unsuitable for GCN. One seasonal pond is present on site which scored 'good' on the GCN habitat suitability test. There are other ponds in the local landscape which were not surveyed.

4.19 Whilst the site fall within the red NatureSpace Impact Risk Zone, which suggests a high likelihood that GCN are present in this area the on site pond tested negative for GCNs. It is therefore considered that GCNs are not present within the pond and therefore unlikely to persist within the suboptimal terrestrial habitats which surround the pond.

4.20 Ponds P2 and P3 are located *c.* 65m and *c.* 220m south-west of site, respectively. These could not be tested for GCNs. However, these are separated from the site by mown grassland of the golf course. This habitat is sub optimal for CGNs.

4.21 Where present, great crested newts tend to remain in close proximity to their breeding pond and whilst a maximum routine migratory range has been estimated as approximately 250m from a breeding pond (Franklin, 1993; Oldham and Nicholson, 1986; Jehle, 2000), one study by Robert Jehle, (2000) demonstrated a 'terrestrial zone' of 63m, within which 95% of summer refuges were located. A further study (Jehle, R & Arntzen, JW. 2000) showed that after the breeding season 64% of newts were recorded within 20m of the pond edge.

4.22 Research has also found that newts can travel varying distances. Movement and activity of newts from ponds depends on the surrounding habitat. If local refuges and food are abundant in habitats close to the pond, then newts are likely to remain in this area exploiting such resources. In terms of the off-site ponds, it is considered likely that any GCNs that might be present would use the wooded areas surrounding the ponds as opposed to moving across well managed grassland habitats.

4.23 In addition to this, English Nature (now Natural England) published findings of a research report into the efficiency of capture techniques and the value of different habitats for great crested newts, which stated that '*The most comprehensive mitigation, in relation to avoiding disturbance, killing or injury is appropriate within 50m of a breeding pond. It will also almost always be necessary to actively capture newts 50-100m away. However, at distances greater than 100m, there should be careful consideration as to whether attempts to capture newts are necessary or the most effective option to avoid incidental mortality. At distances greater than 200-250m, capture operations will hardly ever be appropriate*.' This report also identified clear correlations between the number of newts captured and certain habitats where four habitats (woodland, arable land, post-industrial habitats and hedgerows) were found regularly to predict the number of newts captured. It can therefore be surmised that greater densities of great crested newts will be found within or in close proximity to areas of favourable terrestrial habitat such as woodland and boundary features, such as hedgerows.

4.24 Taking this into consideration, it is considered that no additional surveys are necessary and no further mitigation measures are required. However, it is recommended that Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) are carried out when undertaking ground works on site.

GCN Reasonable Avoidance Measures

4.25 Mitigation for GCN is as follows:

- Grassland be managed to short sward heigh as per current management regime.
- Any potential refugia, such as the stored items, within development areas will need to be dismantled by hand or using sensitive machine work under close supervision of an ecologist.
- The construction area should be checks prior to removal to ensure all potential refugia are sensitively removed.

4.26 During development work construction materials, as well as skips and pallets, should be stored on hardstanding / compacted land where possible and furthermore, should be elevated off the ground. This is so that no features are created that GCN could potentially use as refuge habitat.

4.27 Where trenches and holes are dug, these should not be left open overnight. GCN (and other amphibians, reptiles and small mammals) may get trapped in vertical-sided trenches. Therefore, where there is a risk of this occurring, the holes should be refilled, or planks of wood should be placed so that any trapped animals may use these to escape.

4.28 If a great crested newt is identified on site during works, then the following procedure must be followed;

- If a great crested newt is discovered at the site all works must cease immediately and Natural England and/or a great crested newt licenced ecologist must be contacted immediately to provide further advice.
- A licence might be required before works can recommence. If so, procedures will be followed to obtain a Natural England European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) or the district level licence for the works.

4.29 It is considered that if these methods are used on site then it is considered that no individual GCN would be harmed as a result of the proposals.

Dormice

4.30 The site is dominated by short-sward grassland, which is considered unsuitable dormouse habitat. The linear boundary features were considered to support limited suitability for dormice. Considering the suboptimal nature of the site and the extent and nature of proposed works, the development of this site is not considered to be constrained by this species.

Other species

4.31 The site has some limited potential to support hedgehog, within the hedgerows on site and given the biological records of their presence within the local area. As such, hedgehog highways (Figure 9) should be installed in any proposed fencing to ensure continued movement of this and other species across the site opportunistically.



Figure 9: Hedgehog highway sign for fences (hedgehogstreet.org)

4.32 No potential for any other species, such as otters or water voles was identified within the site boundary and so are not considered to form a constraint on any potential development.

Ecological Enhancements

4.33 The lack of existing proposals gives an opportunity to integrate a number of ecological enhancements into the development from an early stage.

4.34 The enhancement of hedgerows around the boundaries of the site is recommended to provide suitable foraging habitat and shelter for a range of species in addition to improving ecological connectivity across the site post-development. Suitable native

species of value to wildlife include hazel, beech, elder, hawthorn, wild cherry, apple, yew, spindle and holly. These could be planted around the site boundaries and within shared open areas.

4.35 Bird boxes can be hung on mature trees within the site. The boxes should be hung a minimum of 2m off the ground, but preferably higher with potential presence of predation by domestic pets. Vivara Pro Seville 32mm WoodStone Nest Boxes and Vivara Pro Barcelona WoodStone Open Nest Boxes (Figure 10) are recommended and are suitable for a range of smaller bird species including tree sparrows, wrens and robins.



Figure 10: Vivara Pro WoodStone Nest Boxes

4.36 Bat boxes can also be integrated into the structure of the development (Figure 11). These provide good opportunities for crevice-dwelling species such as pipistrelles. The opening of the bat box/tube will be the only section visible, and they are designed so that they require little to no maintenance. Several of these tubes can be established in a row together providing a good-sized roost space. The bat tubes should be inserted in the brickwork at least 4m from ground level in a location not illuminated by artificial lighting. Habibat, in association with the Bat Conservation Trust, provide a range of boxes which are unfaced for render or designed to match the brickwork of the building.

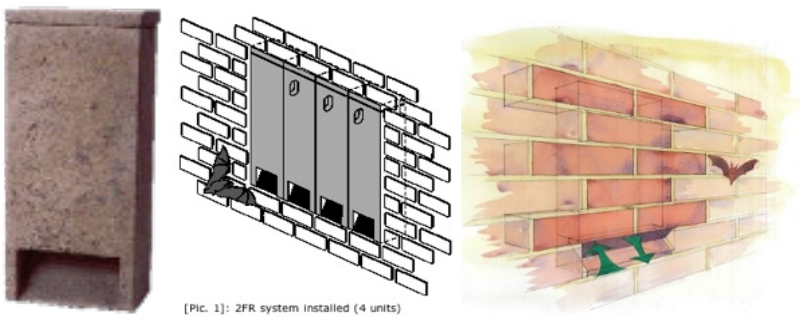

Figure 11: Bat tubes incorporated into the wall of a building to provide roosting space

4.37 To encourage invertebrates and bees, Bee Bricks (Figure 12) can be incorporated into the buildings. The Bee Brick can be used in place of a standard brick or block in construction to create a habitat for solitary bees. Bee Bricks need to be placed in a warm sunny spot on a south-facing wall at a minimum height of 1m, with no vegetation obstructing the holes. No cleaning or management of the Bee Bricks is required.



Figure 12: Bee bricks to be incorporated into the development.

4.38 It is also recommended that log piles are created along the northern/ eastern boundary of the site adjacent to the native tree line. Log piles offer shelter for hibernating small mammals and insects, as well as a foraging area for some birds. Recommended structures for the log piles are shown in Figure 13 below.



Figure 13: Examples of log piles that can be made on site.

5.0 Impact Assessment

5.1 This section of the report forms an EcIA (Ecological Impact Assessment) and is designed to quantify and evaluate the potential impacts of the development on habitats and species present on site or within the local area.

5.2 The approach to this assessment accords with guidance presented within the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM 2018). In essence, an EcIA assesses the activities associated with a proposed scheme that are likely to generate changes within identified zone of influences, on identified ecological features and receptors. The proposals are subsequently reviewed, and mitigation and compensation measures are outlined which help to reduce negative impacts.

5.3 Table 3 summarises the impacts and required mitigation for each receptor as previously detailed in the discussion.

Table 3: Assessment of effects from the proposal after mitigation and compensation

Feature	Scale of Importance	Mitigation/Compensation Required	Residual Effect
Arun Valley SPA SAC Ramsar / Sussex North Water Supply Zone	National	Water neutrality Off setting	Undetermined
National Statutory Designated Sites	National	None required – sufficient distance from sites. No related habitat to be lost.	Not significant
Non-Statutory Sites	County	None required – sufficient distance from site.	Not significant

Priority habitats	Site	None present on site. Retain mature oaks to retain linkage to off site woodland	Not significant
Bats (commuting and foraging)	Up to local	Boundary habitat on site should be largely retained and enhanced. Sensitive lighting measures to be implemented.	Not significant
[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]	[redacted]
Breeding birds	Site	Mitigating direct harm to nests by removal of any suitable nesting habitat outside of nesting bird season or after a check by a suitably qualified ecologist.	Not significant
GCN	Site	eDNA of on site pond negative. Habitat on site considered suboptimal. RAM recommended on a precautionary approach	Not significant
Reptiles	N/A	Unlikely to be present lack of suitable habitat. Grassland should be manage to ensure it does not becomes suitable.	Not significant
Dormice	N/A	Lack of suitable habitat on site. Scoped out of the assessment	Not significant

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The site does not lie within or adjacent to any designated sites. A number of statutory sites and non-statutory sites are located within the surrounding area; however, no residual negative impacts are anticipated due to the distances between the site and all designated sites, and the lack of any related habitat to be lost.

6.2 The site lies within the Sussex North Water Supply Zone and as such the development will need to be provide water neutrality measures or off set potential impacts.

6.3 There are no priority habitats on site. There are off site woodland habitats which show some linkages. However, the retention of edge habitats and the mature oak trees, will ensure that no impacts on these habitats would occur.

6.4 The majority of the site is comprised of modified grassland, mown to a short sward, and ornamental planting, which are not considered to be ecologically significant. The pond, individual trees, native hedgerows, and woodland habitats are of higher ecological value and should be retained and enhanced during development as much as is reasonably possible.

6.5 No bat roost potential features were identified on the out buildings and these were considered to have negligible potential for roosting bats. The house and garage were outside the scope of the survey. The scattered trees and Leyland cypress trees in the woodland, were considered to have negligible opportunities for roosting bats.

6.6 The edge habitats were considered to be of limited interest for foraging and commuting bats. They are recommended to be retained and enhanced and a bat sensitive lighting strategy should be followed to prevent impacts to opportunistic commuting/foraging bats and suitable offsite woodland. No further survey is required.

6.7 [redacted].

6.8 Limited suitability of onsite habitats and lack of biological records locally suggest that presence of dormice on site is highly unlikely. Any future development is not considered to be constrained by this species.

6.9 Despite presence of largely unsuitable aquatic and terrestrial GCN habitat on site and lack of GCN DNA within the on site pond, its proximity to suitable offsite habitat and location within the 'red' NatureSpace impact risk zone mean GCN would have to be considered as part of any proposed development. However, a district licence is not considered necessary, but reasonable avoidance measures are recommended.

6.10 Any clearance of suitable nesting bird habitat, including trees, hedgerows, and the stable building, should be undertaken outside nesting bird season after a nesting bird check by a qualified ecologist.

6.11 Hedgehog highways should be installed as part of any proposed development to ensure no residual impact to commuting hedgehogs and other wildlife.

6.12 Recommendations for enhancements have been made within this report, aimed at improving the ecological value of the site post-development.

7.0 References

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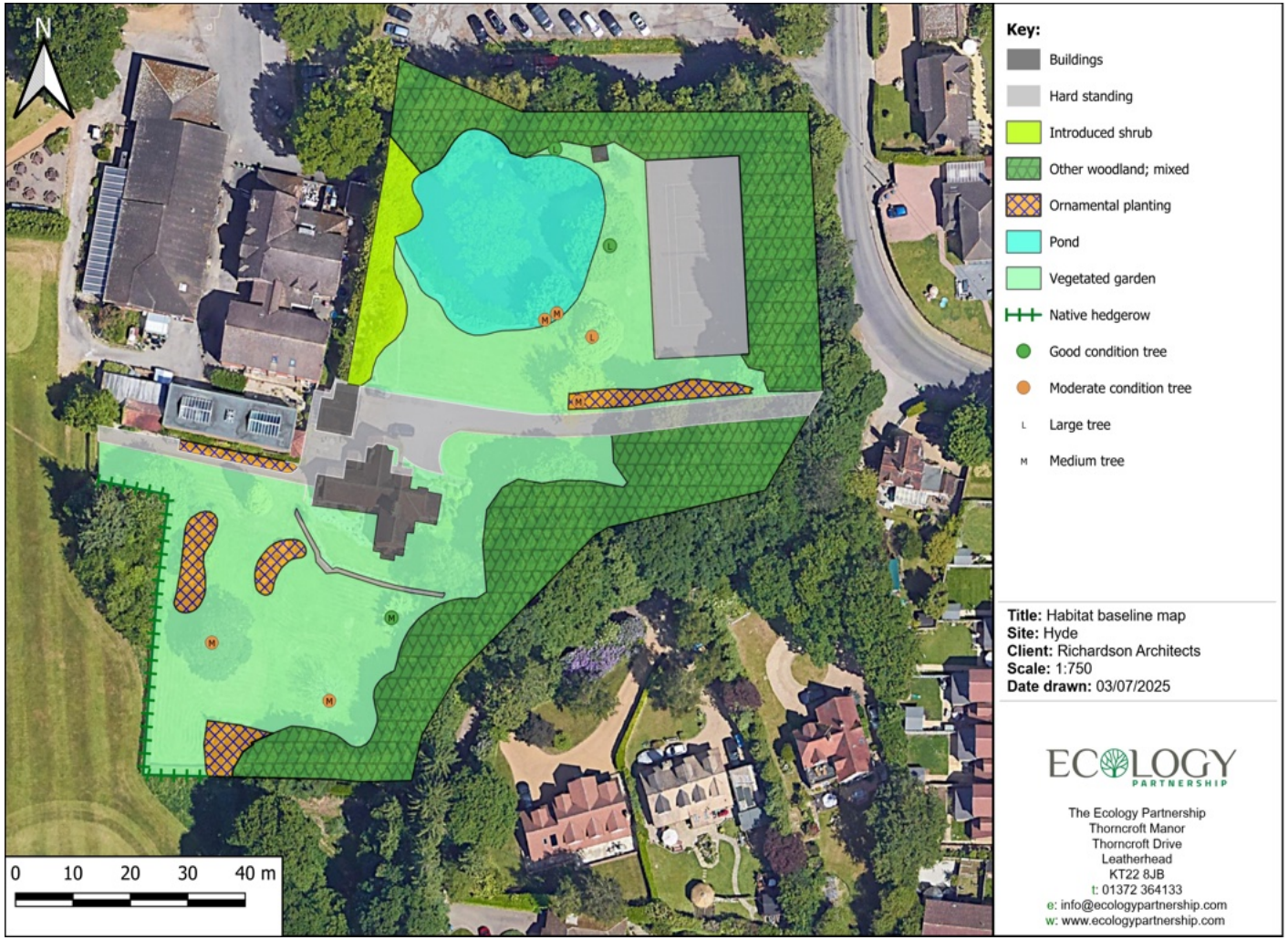
[redacted]

Internet resources:

Google Maps: www.google.co.uk/maps

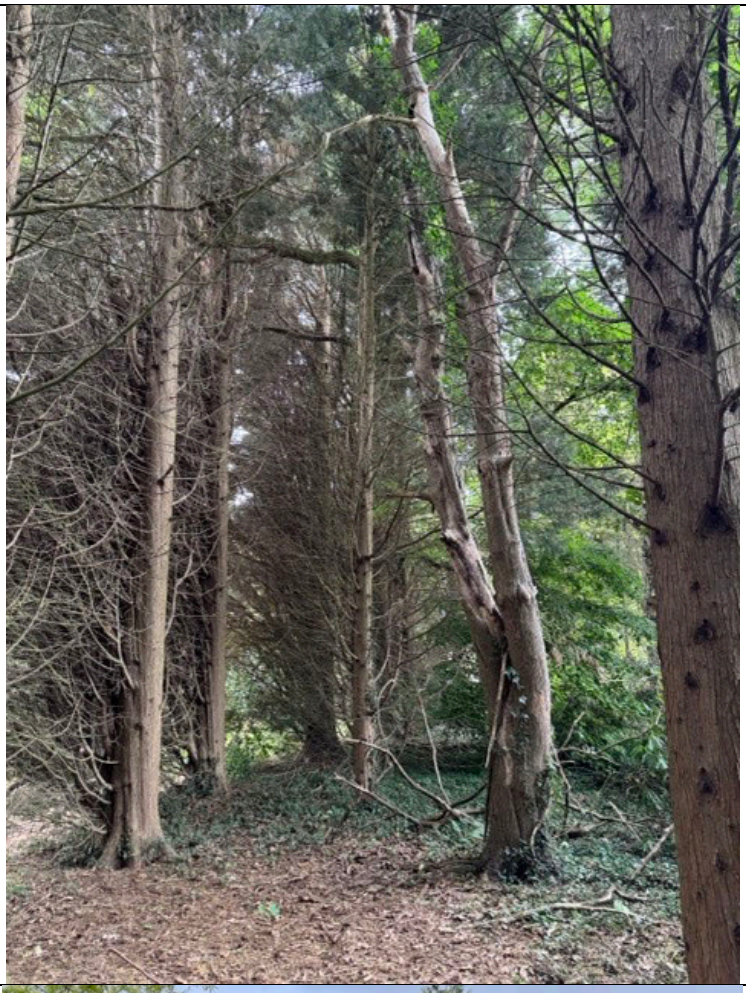
Magic Interactive Map: www.magic.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Habitat Map



Appendix 2: Photos

Photograph 1: Access road to the house. Mown grassland on either side	
Photograph 2: The pond.	
Photograph 3: The tennis court	

Photograph 4: Leyland cypress in the woodland. Likely to be removed	
Photograph 5: Scattered trees in the front garden	

Photograph 6: Rear garden	
Photograph 7: Mature oak set within the woodland	
Photograph 8: Non native understorey	

Photograph 9: Hedgerow located adjacent to the golf course.	
Photograph 10: Ornamental planting	

Appendix 3: Species List

Common Name	Latin Name
Springy turf moss	*Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*
Cleavers	*Galium aparine*
Common ivy	*Hedera helix*
Perennial rye-grass	*Lolium perenne*
Sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*
Yorkshire fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Smooth meadow grass	*Poa pratensis*
White clover	*Trifolium repens*
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
Dandelion	*Taraxacum sp.*
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
Common self heal	*Prunella vulgaris*
Birds foot trefoil	*Lotus corniculatus*
Pear	*Pyrus sp.*
Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
Ash	*Fraxinus excelsior*
Douglas fir	*Pseudotsuga menziesii*
Poplar	*Populus sp*
Purple leaved Norway maple	*Acer platanoidies*
Goat willow	*Salix caprea*
Golden lawson	*Chamaecyparis*
Scots pine	*Pinus sylvestrus*
Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*
Oak	*Quercus robur*
Beech	*Fagus sylvatica*
Leyland Cypress	*Cupressus x leylandii*
Gold locust	*Robinia pseudoacicia*
Purple leaved sycmaore	*Acer psuedoplatanus atropurprea*
Montery cypress	*Hesperocyparis macrocarpa*
Hornbeam	*Carpinus betulus*
Common limes	*Tilia europaeae*
Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus*
Ivy	*Hedera helix*
Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
Norway maple	*Acer platanoides*
Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus*
Common nettle	*Urtica dioica*

Field maple	*Acer campestre*
Pendular sedge	*Carex pendula*
Willowherb sp.	*Epilobium sp.*
St Johns wort	*Hypericum perforatum*
Biswort	*Bistorta officinalis*

Appendix 4: Biological Records

Ecological Data Search SxBRC/25/289 - Summary Report

An ecological data search was carried out for land at The Hyde, Ifield on behalf of Sophie Baker (The Ecology Partnership) on 11/07/2025.

The following datasets were consulted for this report:

	Requested	Radius/buffer size
Designated sites, habitats & ownership maps	Yes	2km
Protected, designated and invasive species	Yes	2km

Summary of results

Sites and habitats

Statutory sites	2 SSSIs / 1 Country Park
Non-statutory sites	8 LWS
Section 41 habitats	2 habitats
Ancient and/or ghyll woodland	Present

Protected and designated species

International designations	49 species	979 records
National designations	125 species	7,061 records
Other designations	261 species	15,650 records
Total	**282 species**	**16,452 records**
Invasive non-native	43 species	1,606 records

The report is compiled using data held by Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) at the time of the request. SxBRC does not hold comprehensive species data for all areas. Even where data are held, a lack of records for a species in a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that the species does not occur there – the area may simply not have been surveyed.

This summary page may be published.
The full report and maps may not be published or otherwise shared.

The data search report is valid until 11/07/2026 for the site named above.

Appendix 5: Condition Assessments

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Grassland - Modified grassland		
Condition Assessment Criteria		**Grassland**
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m present, including at least 2 forbs (this may include those listed in Footnote 1). **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition.** Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m~ (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	Pass 8species / meter squared
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Fail
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. may be present). Note – patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90% cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Pass
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Pass
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens?).	Fail
F	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20%.	Pass
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species? (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA*).	Pass
	Condition	**Moderate**
Condition Assessment Result		

Good	Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including essential criterion A
Moderate	Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A
Poor	Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR 4-6 of criteria but failing criterion A

Condition Sheet: Ponds		
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Lakes - Ponds (priority habitat)/Ponds (non-priority habitat)/Temporary ponds and pools/ Ornamental pond [Use Lake condition sheet for lakes]		
Condition Assessment Criteria		**Pond 1**
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	Fail
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) complete surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	Fail
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed *Lemna spp.* or filamentous algae.	Pass
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Fail
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams[2], pumps or pipework.	Pass
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species[2]	Pass
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Pass
Additional Criteria – must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:		
G	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed)[4] cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3m deep.	Fail
H	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	Pass
	Condition	**Poor**
Condition Assessment Result		
Good	Passes **7 of 7** criteria for woodland ponds or **9 of 9** for non-woodland ponds	
Moderate	Passes **5 or 6 of 7** criteria for woodland ponds or **6 - 8 of 9** for non-woodland ponds	
Poor	Passes **<5 of 7** criteria for woodland ponds or **<6 of 7** for non-woodland ponds	

Condition Sheet: WOODLAND Habitat Type						
UKHab Habitat Type(s): All woodlands (except wood pasture)						
Condition Assessment Criteria						
Indicator		**Good (3 points)**	**Moderate (2 points)**	**Poor (1 point)**	**Score per indicator**	
					W1 Adjacent to Rusper Road / tennis court	**W2 South of access road**
A	**Age distribution of trees Footnote 1**	Three age-classes[1] present	Two age-classes[1] present	One age-class[1] present	1	2
B	**Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage Footnote 2**	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland[2]	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or less of whole woodland[2]	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland[2]	3	3
C	**Invasive plant species Footnote 3**	No invasive species[3] present in woodland	Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* or cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* not present, other invasive species[3] < 10% cover	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species[3] > 10% cover	1	2
D	**Number of native tree species Footnote 4**	Five or more native tree or shrub species[4] found across woodland parcel	Three to four native tree or shrub species[4] found across woodland parcel	None to two native tree or shrub species[4] across woodland parcel	2	2
E	**Cover of native tree and shrub species Footnote 5**	> 80% of canopy trees and > 80% of understory shrubs are native[5]	50-80% of canopy trees and 50-80% of understory shrubs are native[5]	< 50% of canopy trees and < 50% of understory shrubs are native[5]	2	2

F	**Open space within woodland Footnote 6 and 7**	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space[6]. Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted[7]	21- 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space[6]	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space[6]. But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category[7].	1	1
G	**Woodland regeneration Footnote 8**	All three classes present in woodland[8]; trees 4-7cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth	One or two classes only present in woodland[8]	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland[8]	1	1
H	**Tree health Footnote 9**	Tree mortality less than 10%, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback[9]	11% to 25% mortality and/or crown dieback or low risk pest or disease present[9]	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high risk pest or disease present[9]	2	3
I	**Vegetation and ground flora Footnote 10**	Recognisable NVC plant community[10] at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community[10] present at ground layer present	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community[10] at ground layer present	1	1
J	**Woodland vertical structure Footnote 11**	Three or more storeys across all survey plots or a complex woodland[11]	Two storeys across all survey plots[11]	One or less storey across all survey plots[11]	1	2
K	**Veteran trees Footnote 12**	Two or more veteran trees[12] per hectare	One veteran tree[12] per hectare	No veteran trees[12] present in woodland	1	1
L	**Amount of deadwood Footnote 13**	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen	2	2

		branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities[13].	deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities[13].	deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities[13].		
M	**Woodland disturbance Footnote 14**	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident[14]	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area and/or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground[14]	More than 1 hectare of nutrient enrichment and/or more than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground[14]	1	1
				Total score (out of a possible 39)	**19 Poor**	**23 Poor**

Condition Assessment Score	
Good	Total score >32 (33 to 39)
Moderate	Total score 26 to 32
Poor	Total score <26 (13 to 25)

Footnotes below refer to the EWBG woodland condition assessment details: EWBG (No date). *Assessing your Woodland's Condition* [online]. Available from: Woodland Wildlife Toolkit (sylva.org.uk)
The woodland condition assessment survey methodology is outlined in the EWBG toolkit. However the criteria on this sheet are those specific to the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and must be used when assessing woodland condition.

Footnote 1 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 1 for more information. If tree species is not a birch *Betula* sp., cherry *Prunus* sp. or *Sorbus* sp.: 0 - 20 years (Young); 21 - 150 years (Intermediate); and >150 years (Old). For birch, cherry or *Sorbus* species; 0 - 20 years = Young; 21 - 60 years =Intermediate; >60 years = Old. A recognisable age-class should be a consistent recognisable layer across the woodland or stand being assessed. Presence of a few saplings would not indicate that the woodland has an 'age-class' of young trees.

Footnote 2 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 2 for more information. Browsing pressure is considered to be significant where >20% of vegetation visible within each survey plot shows damage from any type of browsing pressure listed.

Footnote 3 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 3 for more information. Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly.

Check for the presence of all plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), particularly the following invasive non-native species: American skunk cabbage *Lysichiton americanus*; Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*; Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*; cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*; shallon *Gaultheria shallon*; snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*; variegated yellow archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon subsp. argentatum*; rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*; and tree-of-heaven *Alianthus altissima*.

Footnote 4 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 4 and Table 2 for more information. The number of different native tree or shrub species including young trees and shrubs. A list of commonly found native tree and shrub species is provided in Table 2. Not all species listed are native to all parts of the UK. Note a list of commonly found non-native tree species are also included and should be recorded if present.

Footnote 5 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 5 and for more information. The abundance of native tree species in upper (>5 m) and understorey (up to 5 m) layers including young trees and shrubs.

Footnote 6 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 6 for more information. Open space within woodland in this context is temporary open space in which trees can be expected to regenerate (for example, glades, rides, footpaths, areas of clear-fell). This differs from permanent open space where tree regeneration is not possible or desirable (for example, tarmac, buildings, rivers). Area is at least 10 m wide with less than 20% covered by shrubs or trees.

Footnote 7 – Given the increased ratio of edge habitat to woodland where the woodland is <10ha.

Footnote 8 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 8 for more information. This indicator measures regeneration potential of the woodland by considering three classes: seedlings; saplings; and young trees of 4-7 cm DBH. All three classes would fall in the 'young' category of the 'age distribution of trees' indicator, but the regeneration indicator gathers additional information by considering regeneration potential - if seedlings, saplings and young trees are all present that means natural regeneration processes are happening.

Footnote 9 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 9 for more information and Table 3 for a list of diseases and pests and their risk level.

Footnote 10 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 10 directing to NVC key for more information. The 'UKHab to NVC translation table' in the UK Habitat Classification resources may also be useful to assess this.
Footnote 11 – This criterion looks at structural diversity and is useful to understand in conjunction with the age of trees in a woodland. Vertical structure is defined as the number of canopy storeys present. Possible storey values are: 1) Upper; 2) Complex: recorded when the stand is composed of multiple tree heights that cannot easily be stratified into broad height bands (such as upper, middle or lower); 3) Middle; 4) Lower; and 5) Shrub layer. There might be no storeys where the woodland has been felled. See EWBG INDICATOR 11 for more information.

Footnote 12 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from:
Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)
and:

Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
EWBG INDICATOR 12 is the relevant indicator.

Footnote 13 – See EWBG method INDICATOR 13 for more information. This includes logs, large dead branches on the forest floor and stumps (<1 m tall) >20 cm diameter at narrowest point and >50 cm long. Also includes standing dead trees (>1 m tall) and also deadwood on standing live trees. Diameter is measured at the narrowest point on the stem. Minimum diameter of 20 cm.

Footnote 14 - See EWBG method INDICATOR 15 for more information. Examples of disturbance are: significant nutrient enrichment; soil compaction from trampling, machinery, animal poaching or litter.

Individual trees										
UKHab Habitat Type(s): Urban tree: Covers the following topographical formations most commonly found in urban areas[1]: **Individual Trees (urban or rural):** Young trees over 75mm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching. **Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only):** Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies must overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.									
Condition Assessment Criteria		**T2**	**T5**	**T6**	**T7**	**T8**	**T16**	**T30**	**T36**	**T37**
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass	Fail	Pass
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail	Pass	Fail
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature)[1].	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass	Pass
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain > 75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Pass	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail	Pass	Fail	Fail
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
	Condition	**G**	**G**	**M**	**M**	**M**	**M**	**M**	**M**	**M**
Condition Assessment Result										

Good	Passes 5 or 6 criteria
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 criteria
Poor	Passes 2 or fewer criteria

Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and: Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.

Appendix 6: eDNA

Folio No:	3161-2025
Purchase Order:	MSUS 7115
Contact:	The Ecology Partnership
Issue Date:	11.07.2025
Received Date:	27.06.2025

GCN Report

Technical Report

SureScreen Scientifics

Folio No: 3161-2025
Purchase Order: MSUS 7115
Contact: The Ecology Partnership
ssue Date: 11.07.2025
Received Date: 27.06.2025

SureScreen Scientifics

GCN eDNA Analysis

Summary

When great crested newts (GCN), *T c* , inhabit a pond, they continuously release small amounts of their DNA into the environment. By collecting and analyzing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
GCN25 8983	The Hyde	TQ 2419 3672	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12

Matters affecting result: none

Reported by: Amy Bermudez

Approved by: Vanessa Hind

Folio No: 3161-2025
Purchase Order: MSUS 7115
Contact: The Ecology Partnership
ssue Date: 11.07.2025
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SureScreen Scientifics

Methodology

The samples detailed above have been analyzed for the presence of GCN eDNA following the protocol stated in DEFRA WC1067 'Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt, Appendix 5.' (Biggs et al. 2014). Each of the 6 sub-sample tubes are first centrifuged and pooled together into a single sample tube which then undergoes DNA extraction. The extracted sample is then analyzed using real-time PCR (qPCR), which uses species-specific molecular markers to amplify GCN DNA within a sample. These markers are unique to GCN DNA, meaning that there should be no detection of closely related species.

If GCN DNA is present, the DNA is amplified up to a detectable level, resulting in positive species detection. If GCN DNA is not present then amplification does not occur, and a negative result is recorded. Analysis of eDNA requires attention to detail to prevent the risk of contamination. True positive controls, negative controls, and spiked synthetic DNA are included in every analysis and these have to be correct before any result is declared and reported. Stages of the DNA analysis are also conducted in different buildings at our premises for added analytical security.

SureScreen Scientifics Ltd is ISO9001 accredited and participates in Natural England's proficiency testing scheme for GCN eDNA testing.

Interpretation of Results

Sample Integrity Check: When samples are received in the laboratory, they are inspected for any tube leakage, suitability of sample (not too much mud or weed etc.) and absence of any factors that could potentially lead to inconclusive results. Any samples which fail this test are rejected and eliminated before analysis.

Degradation Check: **Pass/Fail**. Analysis of the spiked DNA marker to see if there has been degradation of the kit or sample between the date it was made to the date of analysis. Degradation of the spiked DNA marker may lead indicate a risk of false negative results.

Inhibition Check: **Pass/Fail.** The presence of inhibitors within a sample is assessed using a DNA marker. If inhibition is detected, samples are purified and re-analyzed. Inhibitors cannot always be removed, if the inhibition check fails, the sample should be re-collected.

Result: **Presence of GCN eDNA (Positive/Negative/Inconclusive)**
Positive: GCN DNA was identified within the sample, indicative of GCN presence within the sampling location at the time the sample was taken or within the recent past at the sampling location.
Positive Replicates: Number of positive qPCR replicates out of a series of 12. If one or more of these are found to be positive the pond is declared positive for GCN presence. It may be assumed that small fractions of positive analyses suggest low level presence, but this cannot currently be used for population studies. In accordance with the WC1067 Natural England protocol, even a score of 1/12 is declared positive. 0/12 indicates negative GCN presence.
Negative: GCN eDNA was not detected or is below the threshold detection level and the test result should be considered as evidence of GCN absence, however, does not exclude the potential for GCN presence below the limit of detection.
Inconclusive: Controls indicate inhibition or degradation of the sample, resulting in the inability to provide conclusive evidence for GCN presence or absence.

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Date 19/07/2025