

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Wychwood barn, Wychwood Lane, Brighton Road, Shermanbury, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 8HE

Client:

John Hilden

Survey date:

14/05/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Horsham District Council. Erection of two dwellings in the alternative to permission granted under DC/25/0219 for Change of Use of Agricultural Building to residential (Use Class C3) to form 2no dwellinghouses.

On the assumption that site conditions and habitats remain unchanged, the results of this assessment will remain valid for 18 months from the date of this survey i.e. until November 2027, in accordance with CIEEM guidance in the lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. This survey and report should be updated if a planning application has not been submitted within this timeframe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in the proceeding sections of this report.

Table 1: Summary of key findings arising from this survey.

Key Findings
▪ The habitats on site are of no specific conservation value but have value at the local level. These are to be partially destroyed. Loss or damage will contribute to net losses of biodiversity locally. There are no specific concerns relating to protected or otherwise Important Species or Assemblages of a scale warranting further investigation. ▪ The proposed works will result in a net loss of biodiversity on site. As the site does not meet one of the exemptions, a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment will be required to ensure the site delivers the net gain required by the local council. ▪ A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be requested by the LPA via condition. ▪ A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting¹. ▪ Environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys will be required on ponds within 100m radius of the site to determine the presence or absence of great crested newts (GCNs). This is because the site currently generates an amber risk score. ▪ Various precautionary working methods have been recommended which have been fully detailed within the fauna section of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development. The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

Methodology

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2026.](#)

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2026.](#)

Survey Details

The site survey was undertaken on 14/05/2026 by Rachel Cole BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist accredited on 2025-83880-CL18-BAT license.

Table 2: The weather conditions during the survey.

Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
9.4	79.0	40	14.8	None

Survey Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

2. SITE LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Site Location & Context

The site is centred at National Grid reference TQ 20776 18420 and has an area of approximately 0.66ha. The site comprises two agricultural buildings (B1 & B2), sparsely vegetated land, modified grassland, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface and scattered trees.

The site is located in a rural setting, surrounded by agricultural land and open grasslands. The site is located within a predominantly rural landscape characterised by agricultural fields, scattered farmsteads, hedgerows and pockets of woodland. The surrounding landscape provides good ecological connectivity through linear vegetated features, including hedgerows, tree lines and field margins. The site is well-connected to nearby habitats via field margins, hedgerows and tree lines.

A total of 12 ponds are located within 500m of the site. While the site is not considered hydrologically active, dry ditches are present along the site boundaries, which may provide some limited ecological connectivity. Additionally, the River Adur is situated approximately 225m south of the site. Medium, silt-loam but locally light, silt-rich, or sometimes heavy clay-rich soils and subsoils. Mildly Acidic to Neutral (pH: 6.0 - 7.0).

Priority Habitats

There are six priority habitats within 2km of the site. These comprise deciduous woodland, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, traditional orchard, wood pasture and parkland, ancient & semi-natural woodland and coastal saltmarsh. The closest priority habitat comprises deciduous woodland, located 35m S from the site.

Designated Sites

Statutory Designations within 2km

There are no statutory designations within 2km of the site.

SSSI Risk Zone

The site does fall within the impact risk zone for Horton Clay Pit SSSI however, the proposed development type is not listed as possible high risk with regard to this designation.

Non-Designated Sites

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the local records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.

2.2 Foreseen Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, due to the proximity of the site to deciduous woodland 35m south, and the possible presence of non-statutory designations in the vicinity, indirect effects such as pollution during construction, or increased recreational pressure, could occur.

2.3 Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution, damage to adjacent habitats must be implemented during construction. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be requested by the LPA via condition. This should include the following measures:

- Retained trees adjacent to the site will be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations' (BS 5837) (2012).
- Appropriate buffering between the development zone and retained habitats
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto adjacent habitats.

3. ONSITE HABITATS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

3.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Sparsely vegetated land (u1f) - Bare ground (510), Scattered scrub (10), Ruderal or ephemeral (81)

Areas of sparsely vegetated land were present across the site, comprising disturbed bare ground with patchy ruderal vegetation cover below 50%. The habitat appeared subject to previous disturbance and clearance, with localised rubble and waste materials evident throughout.

Table 3a: Species abundance for sparsely vegetated land.

Abundance	Species
Abundant	Perennial Rye-grass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>)
Frequent	Nettle sp. (<i>Urtica</i> sp.), Dock sp. (<i>Rumex</i> sp.), Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>), Lesser & Wood Burdock (<i>Arctium minus</i>)
Occasional	Weld (<i>Reseda luteola</i>), Thistle sp. (<i>Cirsium</i> sp.), Yorkshire fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>)
Rare	Cow Parsley (<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>), Cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>), Creeping Bent (<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>), Hedge Bedstraw (<i>Galium album</i>), Common Ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>)

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the sparsely vegetated land was assessed to have a moderate condition value.

Modified grassland (g4) - Scattered scrub (10)

Areas of modified grassland were present predominantly around the site margins and within less disturbed areas of the site. The habitat was dominated by common grass species with scattered ruderal herbs. The grassland was species-poor and appeared regularly disturbed, with limited structural diversity.

Table 3b: Species abundance for modified grassland.

Abundance	Species
Dominant	Perennial Rye-grass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>)
Abundant	Nettle sp. (<i>Urtica</i> sp.), Yorkshire fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>)

Frequent	Thistle sp. (<i>Cirsium</i> sp.), Lesser & Wood Burdock (<i>Arctium minus</i>), Bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>), Creeping Bent (<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>), Common Bent (<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>)
Occasional	Cow Parsley (<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>), Cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>), Common Ragwort (<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>), Buttercup sp. (<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.)
Rare	Bristly Oxtongue (<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>), Creeping Cinquefoil (<i>Potentilla reptans</i>), Weld (<i>Reseda luteola</i>), Yellow Pimpernel (<i>Lysimachia nemorum</i>), Hedge Bedstraw (<i>Galium album</i>)

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the modified grassland was assessed to have a poor condition value.

Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)

Areas of unsealed surface are present in the form of a gravel pathway

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment.

Scattered Trees (32)

17 scattered trees were recorded across the site, comprising three mature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and 14 mature Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*). The ash trees were all of a smaller stature, while the Lawson cypress varied from small to medium in height. These species are generally considered non-native to the UK, with the Lawson cypress being a common ornamental planting. No potential roosting features were identified. No evidence for bats was found.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the trees were assessed as follows:

Table 4: The condition assessment scores for the scattered trees on site.

Tree / Group	Common Name	Condition Score
T1	Ash (small)	Good
T2	Ash (small)	Good

T3	Ash (small)	Good
T4	Lawson Cypress (medium)	Moderate
T5	Lawson Cypress (medium)	Moderate
T6	Lawson Cypress (small)	Moderate
T7	Lawson Cypress (small)	Moderate
T8	Lawson Cypress (small)	Moderate
T9	Lawson Cypress (small)	Moderate
T10	Lawson Cypress (medium)	Moderate
T11	Lawson Cypress (small)	Moderate
T12	Lawson Cypress (medium)	Moderate
T13	Lawson Cypress (small)	Moderate
T14	Lawson Cypress (small)	Moderate
T15	Lawson Cypress (medium)	Moderate
T16	Lawson Cypress (medium)	Moderate
T17	Lawson Cypress (medium)	Moderate

Building (u1b5)

There are two buildings on site; both are agricultural buildings.

3.2 Foreseen Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of approximately 0.1ha of grassland and artificial surface. This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of these habitats. However, this could lead to a net loss in biodiversity at the site.

3.3 Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution must be implemented during construction. This should include the following measures:

- Remove only the minimum of habitat required to facilitate the development
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto retained habitats.
- Protect retained turf and soil resource from destruction and compaction using plastic matting and wooden boarding. Do not store skips and other heavy materials on retained turf.
- Grasscrete, cell web or any other porous surface treatment facilitating recovery of vegetation is preferred to hard standing.

The proposed development may require a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment, to calculate the value of habitats on site and ensure the delivery of a minimum of 10% measurable biodiversity net gain.

4. INVASIVE SPECIES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

4.1 Summary of Survey Findings

No non-native invasive or otherwise problematic plants were recorded on site or are considered likely to be on site, but, given seasonal limitations and the sites wider context, may be visible at other times of year.

4.2 Foreseen Impacts

None.

4.3 Recommendations

No further surveys but remain vigilant.

5. FAUNA: BATS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

5.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) applications within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are 4 EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site, as detailed below:

Table 5: EPSL survey returns for bats within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Bat Species Affected	Distance from Site (EPSL records are accurate to 100m)	Impacts Allowed by Licence
2019-38844-EPS-MIT	Brown Long Eared, Common pipistrelle, Serotine, Soprano pipistrelle, Whiskered bat	within close proximity <100m from site	Destruction of a resting place

2016-22238-EPS-MIT	Brown Long Eared, Common pipistrelle	650m northeast	Destruction of a resting place
2016-22440-EPS-MIT	Soprano pipistrelle,	1600m northwest	Destruction of a resting and breeding place
EPSM2013-6513	Common pipistrelle, Brown Long Eared, Whiskered bat, Natterer	1750m west	Destruction of a resting and breeding place

Foraging and commuting habitat

Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of modified grassland and scattered trees, and offsite within 2km including deciduous woodland, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, traditional orchard, wood pasture and parkland and ancient & semi-natural woodland. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations. Bats are well known to utilise linear features to aid navigation whilst travelling between foraging resources and roost sites.

Roosting habitat

Buildings and trees to be impacted by the proposed development were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. There are a total of two buildings on site. All buildings were surveyed as they will be impacted by the proposed development. There was no evidence of roosting bats identified.

Buildings

B1 : Agricultural building

A large agricultural building is present with a single skinned corrugated sheet metal roof which was pitched north to south. There was no ridge line present. The building had single skinned walls comprising concrete breeze blocks with corrugated sheet concrete fitted above. The building was open to the south and east. Gaps were also present at eaves at both gable ends where the corrugated sheet roof was raised up. No evidence of roosting bats or secondary signs including droppings, staining, or feeding remains were found anywhere within or external to the building during the preliminary roost assessment.

Overall, the building was considered to provide limited potential for roosting bats based on the open nature and overall design of the structure with no suitable features supported for void or crevice dwelling bats. The building was considered to provide **negligible value** for roosting bats.



Building B1



Building B1



Building B1

B2 : Agricultural building

A large agricultural building is present with a single skinned corrugated sheet metal roof which was pitched north to south with a sealed concrete ridge. The structure had single skinned corrugated concrete walls on the northern and western elevations. Internally, the structure had a concrete supporting frame and single concrete ridge line. Large gaps were present between the main concrete supporting frame and the sheet roofing above however, these were too large for use by bats. No evidence of roosting bats or secondary signs such as droppings, staining, or feeding remains were found anywhere within or external to the building during the preliminary roost assessment.

Overall, the building was considered to provide limited potential for roosting bats based on the open nature and overall design of the structure with no suitable features supported for void or crevice dwelling bats. The building was considered to provide **negligible potential** for roosting bats.



Building B2



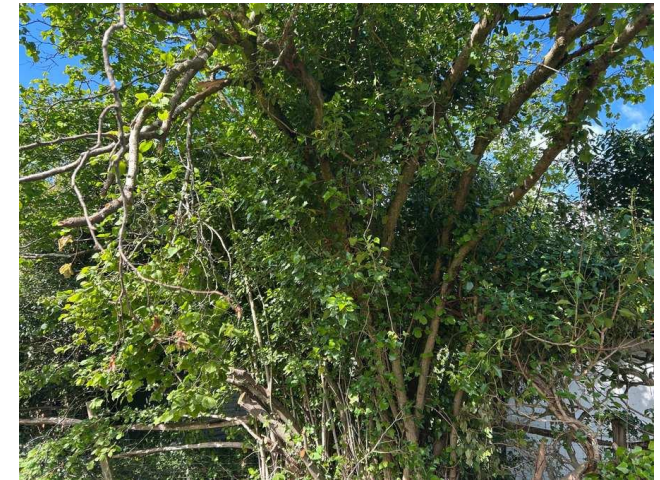
Building B2

Trees

T1, T2, T3 : Ash

T1, T2, and T3 are small ash trees located south of site. These trees have a DBH of 25cm.

No roosting features were identified for these trees.



Scattered trees; T1

T4 – T17 : Lawson Cypress

T4 – T17 are Lawson cypress trees located southeast of site.

No roosting features were identified for these trees.

Table 6: Tree sizes (dbh)

T4	T5	T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T12	T13	T14	T15	T16	T17
41	41	21	20	14	29	31	15	36	26	26	34	37	50



Scattered trees; T4 – T17

5.2 Foreseen Impacts

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within B1 and B2 and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in these locations as a result of the proposed development.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

T1 - T17 will be retained and therefore no impacts to roosting bats are anticipated.

Foraging and commuting habitat

The proposed development will result in the loss of small areas of sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland but given their low value and the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats.

Artificial lighting

The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the retained building without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.

5.3 Recommendations

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice.

Foraging and commuting habitat

No further surveys are required.

Artificial lighting

A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note-update-released>

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of two bat boxes at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats.

The bat boxes will be incorporated into the fabric of the new dwellings. Suitable bat boxes include Habibat Bat Box, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar alternative brand.

Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.

6. FAUNA: BIRDS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

6.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Buildings

No active bird nests or evidence of nesting birds were identified within B1 or B2 at the time of survey. However, due to the open nature of the buildings and the presence of suitable ledges and structural features, the buildings are considered suitable for nesting birds.

Trees and vegetation

No bird nests were identified within the vegetation on-site, however sparsely vegetated land offers foraging opportunities, and modified grassland and scattered trees offer both nesting and foraging opportunities.

Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.

Barn Owls

No evidence of barn owl was identified during the survey. Overall, the buildings are considered to provide negligible suitability for nesting barn owl due to the absence of suitable nesting features and limited sheltered internal areas.

6.2 Foreseen Impacts

Buildings / trees

The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.

Trees and vegetation

The proposed development will result in the removal of areas of sparsely vegetated land, modified grassland and associated vegetation. The loss of these habitats may reduce available nesting and foraging habitat for common and widespread bird species. In addition, vegetation clearance and construction activities undertaken during the nesting season have the potential to disturb nesting birds or result in the damage or destruction of active nests.

Barn Owls

None foreseen.

6.3 Recommendations

Buildings / trees

Any building or vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged or an ecologist has confirmed the nesting attempt has concluded.

Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged or an ecologist has confirmed the nesting attempt has concluded.

Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained habitats so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works.

Trees and vegetation

No additional surveys required.

Barn Owls

No further barn owl surveys required.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on retained trees around the site boundaries, or on retained buildings where appropriate, will provide additional nesting opportunities for common bird species. Suitable examples include Schwegler 1B Nest Boxes, Schwegler 2H Robin Boxes, Woodstone Nest Boxes, or similar alternative designs.

Tree-mounted boxes should be installed approximately 3m above ground level in locations sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and prolonged direct sunlight. Small-hole boxes should be positioned where vegetation will not obstruct the entrance.

Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.

7. FAUNA: REPTILES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

7.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site.

Habitat suitability

The site comprises a mosaic of sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland with localised ruderal vegetation and scattered boundary vegetation. The disturbed open areas provide opportunities for basking reptiles, while areas of taller grassland and ruderal vegetation offer limited sheltering and foraging habitat.

Although the habitats on site are generally disturbed and fragmented, the site is located within a rural landscape with surrounding fields, woodland, ditches and linear vegetated features which may facilitate reptile dispersal and connectivity within the wider landscape.

The majority of the site is considered to provide sub-optimal habitat for reptiles due to the limited extent of structurally diverse vegetation and refuge habitat. However, boundary vegetation and less disturbed vegetated areas provide some suitability for common reptile species such as slow worm and common lizard.

Wider landscape

The wider landscape surrounding the site comprises a mosaic of agricultural land, unmanaged hedgerows, drainage features and woodland habitat. These habitats provide opportunities for reptile dispersal and ecological connectivity throughout the wider landscape. Boundary ditches and vegetated linear features may facilitate movement of reptiles between suitable habitats in the local area.

7.2 Foreseen Impacts

Areas of sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of reptiles, if present.

7.3 Recommendations

A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures:

- Vegetation will be maintained at a short sward (5cm) to discourage reptiles. OR Grassland will be subject to a two-stage cut (if sward is >10cm) prior to removal in a directional manner, the first cut at 10cm and the second to ground level and maintained as a short sward (5cm) or bare ground throughout construction.
- Removal of any root systems / refugia will be undertaken outside the reptile hibernation season (November – February).
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
- In the unlikely event that a reptile is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The site could be enhanced for reptiles post-development with the inclusion of log piles (created from felled materials) and planting of areas of native shrubs, to provide sheltering opportunities.

8. FAUNA: AMPHIBIANS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

8.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL and survey data

A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for amphibians within 2km of the site. Further, no positive class survey licence return or DLL historic survey data (2017 – 2019) for great crested newts (GCN) were present within 2km of the site.

A review of MAGIC database found no granted EPSL for great crested newts (GCN) within 2km of the site.

Aquatic habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m)

Great crested newts (GCN) exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001).

There are no ponds located within the site. However, a review of aerial imagery (MAGIC and OS Maps) identified 12 ponds within 500m of the site.

The closest pond (P1) is located approximately 3m southwest of the site and is considered suitably connected via adjacent terrestrial habitat. Pond P2 is located approximately 88m northeast of the site and is also considered suitably connected through open grassland and hedgerow habitats.

Ponds P3–P8 are located within 250m of the site, additionally ponds P9–P12 located within 500m. Of these, P5, P7, P11 and P12 are considered suitably connected; however, due to the separation distance from the site, the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment identifies these ponds as generating a 'green' risk score, indicating that an offence is highly unlikely.

Ponds P3, P4, P6, P8 – P10 are not considered suitably connected to the site due to the presence of significant dispersal barriers, including residential development, rivers and busy roads.

A pond map showing approximate pond locations is provided in Appendix 6.

Terrestrial habitat suitability

Areas of shrubbery may provide foraging and sheltering opportunities for amphibians. No hibernation opportunities were identified on-site.

8.2 Foreseen Impacts

When georeferencing the proposed development plans over scaled mapping of the site, it is noted that the development area is likely to result in the loss or significant disturbance of approximately 0.1ha vegetated land. If great crested newts are present within the suitably connected ponds within 100m (P1 and P2), when completing the rapid risk assessment published by Natural England (Natural England 2015), the proposed development produces an amber risk score, which states: Offence likely. Without appropriate mitigation the proposed development would likely result in impacts to great crested newts.

Table 7: Great crested newt method statement

Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability score
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	0.01 - 0.1 ha lost or damaged	0.3
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
Maximum:		0.3
Rapid risk assessment result:	AMBER: OFFENCE LIKELY	

8.3 Recommendations

Environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys will be required of any ponds within 100m of the site (P1 and P2) (where accessible) to determine the presence or absence of great crested newts. This will comprise collecting water samples and sending them off for laboratory analysis and such surveys must be undertaken between mid-April and June, in accordance with current survey guidelines (Biggs et al, 2014).

The surveys are likely to be required before planning permission can be granted.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The site could be enhanced for amphibians post-development through creation of amphibian hibernacula using rubble and logs from site clearance. Information on how to construct a hibernaculum can be found here: <https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/hibernaculum>

9. FAUNA: RIPARIAN ANIMALS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

9.1 Summary of Survey Findings

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed for riparian animals (otters and water voles). No EPSLs relating to riparian animals are present within a 2km radius of the site.

Habitat suitability

There are no water courses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.

9.2 Foreseen Impacts

No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

9.3 Recommendations

No further surveys for riparian animals required.

10. FAUNA: HAZEL DORMOUSE

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

10.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed for hazel dormouse. No EPSLs relating to hazel dormouse are present within a 2km radius of the site.

Habitat suitability

Dormice typically utilise a three-dimensional habitat structure as to commute between feeding and breeding sites whilst avoiding predation. As such habitats on site are considered unsuitable for hazel dormice and therefore the likelihood of this species being present on site is considered acceptably low.

Furthermore, for isolated habitats in the UK, research indicates that dormice require 20ha of woodland habitat to support a viable population (Bright et al. 1994). Although 20ha of woodland is not present on or directly adjacent to the sites, the hedgerows present are connected to an extensive hedgerow network within the wider landscape, which in turn, are connected to multiple woodland pockets.

The site comprises predominantly disturbed sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland, which provide generally limited suitability for hazel dormouse. However, unmanaged hedgerows and boundary vegetation surrounding the site may provide some suitable commuting, foraging and nesting habitat within the wider landscape. The deciduous woodland located approximately 35m south of the site may provide suitable habitat for this species.

10.2 Foreseen Impacts

Areas of sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local dormouse populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of dormice, if present.

10.3 Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to dormice, further dormouse surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Site clearance will be undertaken outside of the dormouse hibernation season (November to March) insofar as is possible.

- Heras fencing will be erected around the working area to prevent encroachment into retained habitats where dormice could be present.

In the unlikely event that a dormouse or evidence of dormouse is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

11. FAUNA: BADGERS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

11.1 Summary of Survey Findings

The site comprises predominantly disturbed sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland which provide limited opportunities for sett establishment. However, unmanaged boundary vegetation, nearby ditches and adjacent habitats within the wider rural landscape may provide suitable commuting and foraging habitat for badger.

No evidence of badger, including setts, latrines, paths, hair, snuffle holes or footprints, was identified during the survey.

11.2 Foreseen Impacts

No impacts are anticipated on badgers as a result of the proposed development.

11.3 Recommendations

No further badger surveys required.

12. FAUNA: INVERTEBRATES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

12.1 Summary of Survey Findings

The site comprises a mosaic of sparsely vegetated land, modified grassland and ruderal vegetation with localised areas of bare ground and debris piles. These habitats provide some opportunities for common invertebrate species, particularly within transitional habitat edges and less disturbed vegetated areas.

Boundary ditches, unmanaged hedgerows and areas of dead wood may provide additional refuge and foraging opportunities for invertebrates within the wider landscape. However, the site is generally disturbed and lacks the structural diversity, botanical interest and specialist habitat features typically associated with notable invertebrate assemblages.

12.2 Foreseen Impacts

The proposed development is unlikely to significantly affect local invertebrate populations owing to the limited ecological value of the habitats present, the retention of boundary habitats, and the widespread availability of similar habitat within the wider landscape.

12.3 Recommendations

No further surveys.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The incorporation of bee bricks (e.g. Ibstock BeeHabitat or similar alternative brand) into the fabric of the new buildings would provide sheltering opportunities for pollinators. These should be installed 0.5m above ground level on a south-facing elevation with no obscuring vegetation. The site could be further enhanced via the provision of native wildflowers or wildflower turf, which would provide foraging opportunities for invertebrates.

13. FAUNA: OTHER NOTABLE SPECIES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

13.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Hedgehogs

The ruderal herb onsite provides limited foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs, with woodland habitat nearby.

Hares

The site comprises predominantly disturbed sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland within a wider rural landscape. While the habitats present are generally of limited suitability for brown hare, the surrounding agricultural land may provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for this species.

Rabbit burrows were noted within the site during the survey. However, no evidence of brown hare, such as forms or sightings, was identified.

13.2 Foreseen Impacts

Hedgehogs

The sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.

Hares

Areas of sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of these habitats is considered unlikely to significantly affect local hare populations owing to their relatively low suitability and the widespread availability of similar habitat within the wider rural landscape. Construction activities may temporarily disturb any commuting or foraging individuals using the site; however, retained boundary habitats and adjacent agricultural land will continue to provide habitat connectivity and refuge opportunities.

13.3 Recommendations

Hedgehogs

A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

Hares

A precautionary working method (PWM) should be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Any excavations left overnight should be covered or fitted with a suitable escape ramp to prevent animals becoming trapped.
- Night-time lighting should be avoided where possible. Where lighting is required, sensitive lighting design should be implemented to minimise light spill onto retained habitats and commuting corridors.
- Any chemicals, fuels or pollutants associated with the development should be stored and disposed of appropriately in accordance with COSHH regulations.
- Vegetation clearance should be undertaken progressively and sensitively to allow mobile fauna to disperse naturally from the site.

If any hares are encountered within the working area, they should be allowed to disperse naturally where possible. Any individuals at immediate risk of harm should be carefully moved by hand to a suitable sheltered vegetated area away from construction activities.

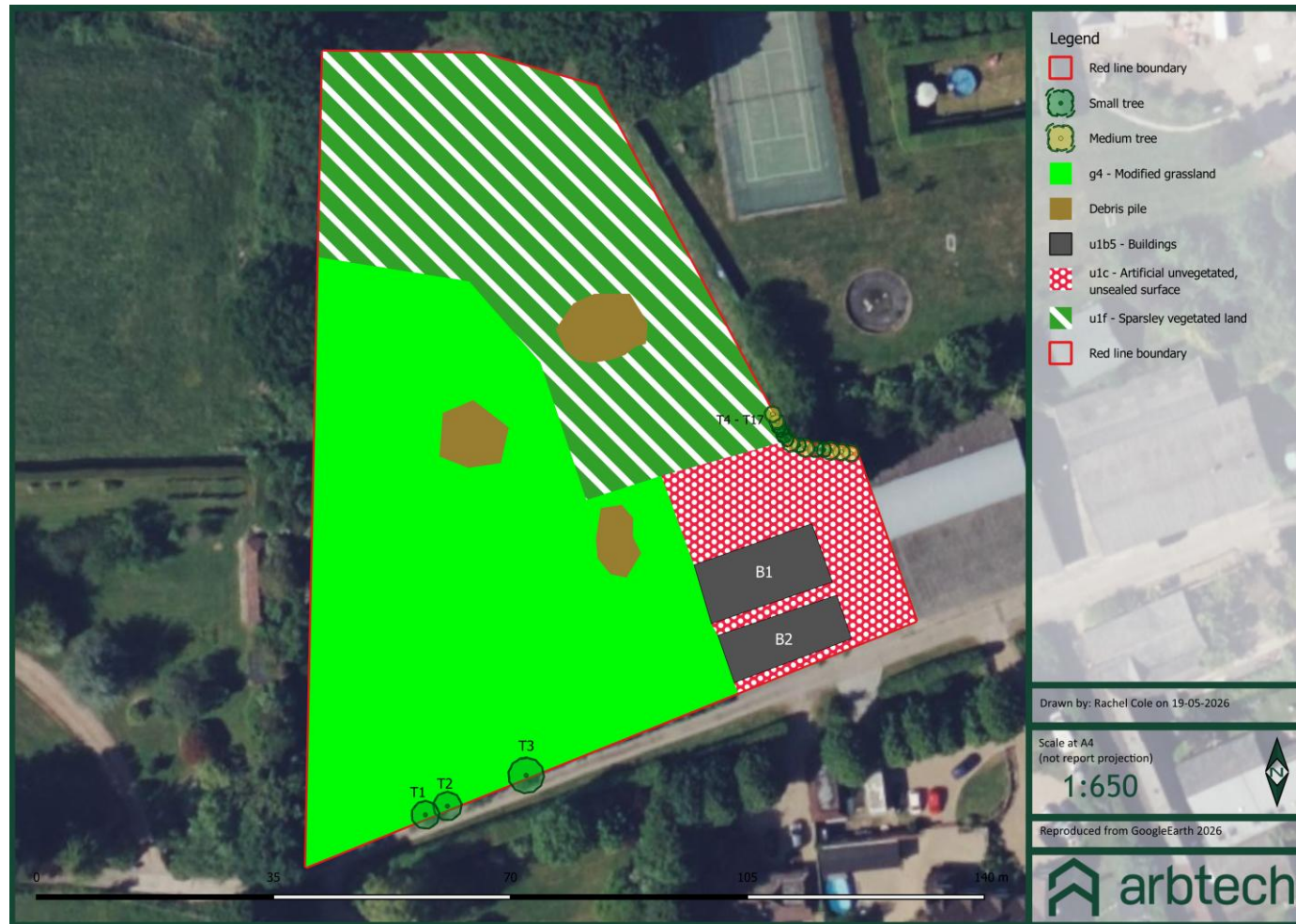
13.4 Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements

Hedgehogs

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs:

- Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities.
- Creation of brash piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.
- Installation of gaps under boundary fencing to enable hedgehogs to move freely through the site.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY/HABITAT MAP



APPENDIX 2: LOCATION MAP



APPENDIX 3: PROPOSED PLAN



APPENDIX 4: HABITAT IMAGES



Sparsely vegetated land



Sparsely vegetated land



Sparsely vegetated land



Modified grassland



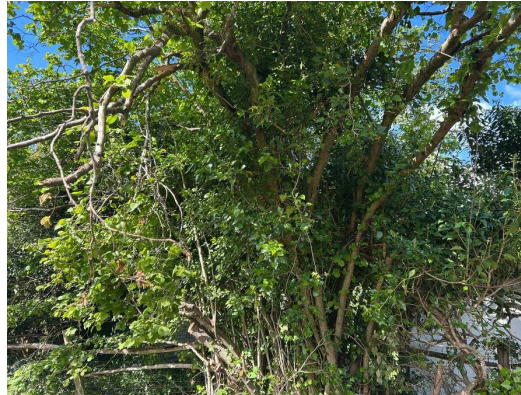
Modified grassland



Modified grassland



Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface



Scattered trees; T1



Scattered trees; T4

APPENDIX 5: BASELINE CONDITION SCORE TABLES

Sparsely vegetated land (u1f) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	N
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Y
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area.	Y
B O N U S	There is a complete absence of invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement).	Y
		Total 3/4
	Condition moderate due to passing 3 of 4 criteria.	

Modified grassland (g4) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m2 present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include Creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>). 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 m2 (excluding those listed in the previous sentence), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland.	N
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.	Y
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y
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.	Y
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens). For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.	N
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	Y
		Total 5/7
	Condition poor due to passing 5 of 7 criteria. Essential criteria (A) not met; condition capped at poor.	

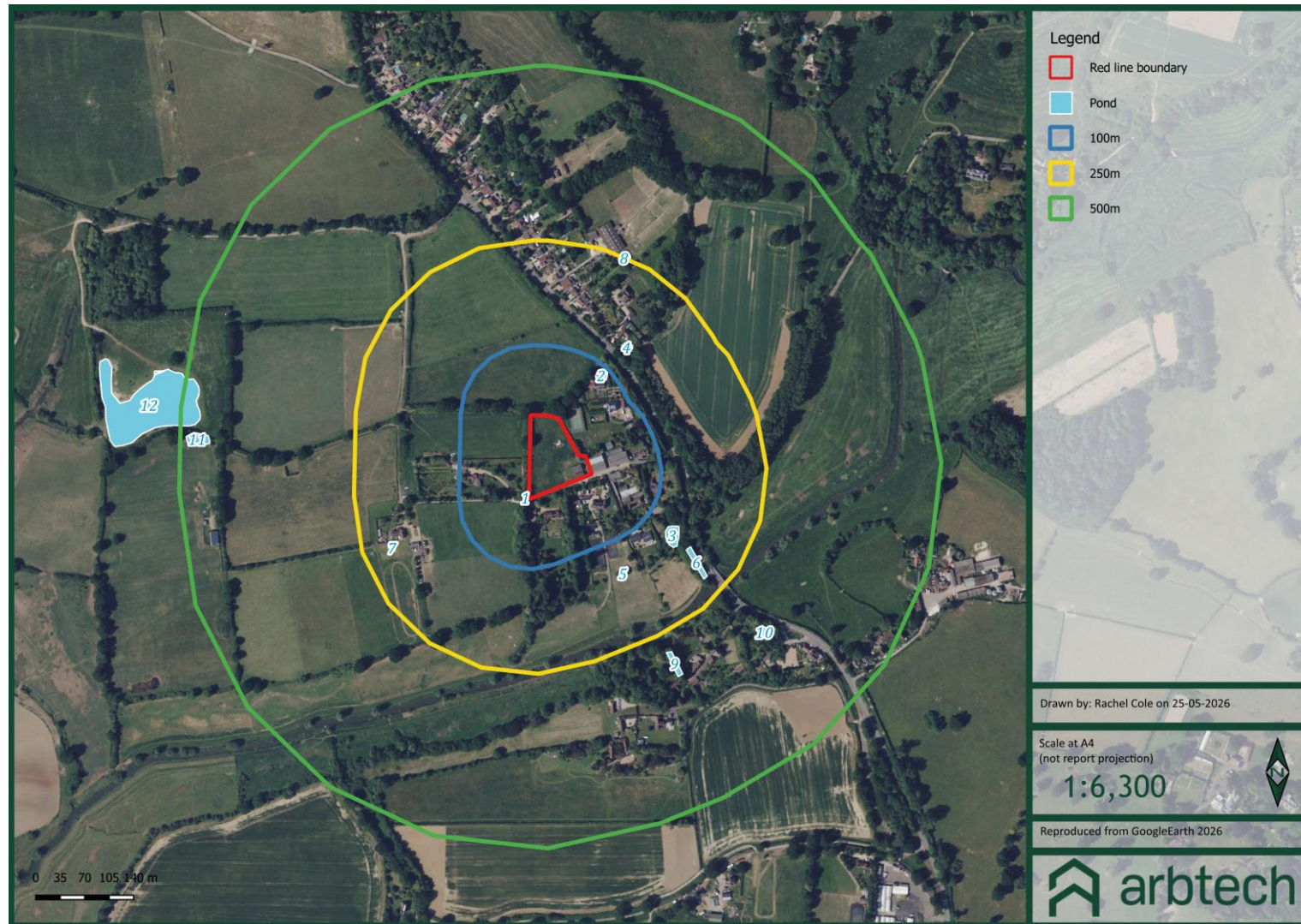
Scattered trees (T1, T2, T3) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y
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).	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	Y
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.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y
		Total 5/6
	Condition good due to passing 5 of 6 criteria.	

Scattered trees (T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T11, T12, T13, T14, T15, T16, T17) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	N
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).	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	Y
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.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y
		Total 4/6
	Condition moderate due to passing 4 of 6 criteria.	

APPENDIX 6: PONDS



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VERSION CONTROL

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