

Alcock Crest, Warminster

Ecological Impact Assessment Report

Final

1643/Version 1.0

Client: Selwood Housing

Date: 09 April 2025

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Report prepared for:

Selwood Housing

Main contributors:

Alice Wynne-Griffiths BSc (Hons)

Consultant Ecologist

Benjamin Hough BSc (Hons)

Assistant Ecologist

Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Principal Ecologist

Reviewed by:

Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Principal Ecologist

Issued by:

Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Principal Ecologist

Green Tree House, 11 St Margaret's St, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1DA
T: 01225 723652 E: info@johnsassociates.co.uk | W: www.johnsassociates.co.uk

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version	Details	Date
1.0 Draft	Draft Ecological Impact Assessment Report issued to Client for review	25 March 2025
1.0 Final	Final Ecological Impact Assessment Report issued to Client for submission	9 April 2025

Third party disclaimer

Any disclosure of this report to a third party is subject to this disclaimer. The report was prepared by Johns Associates at the instruction of, and for use by, our client named on the front of the report. It does not in any way constitute advice to any third party who is able to access it by any means. Johns Associates excludes to the fullest extent lawfully permitted all liability whatsoever for any loss or damage howsoever arising from reliance on the contents of this report. We do not however exclude our liability (if any) for personal injury or death resulting from our negligence, for fraud or any other matter in relation to which we cannot legally exclude liability.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Purpose of the Report	To provide the results of an extended UKHab Survey and an Ecological Impact Assessment conducted (EclA) at Alcock Crest, Warminster to inform the requirement for further ecological surveys and to identify the need for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and/or enhancement measures. This report is submitted in support of two planning applications for the Site, for the demolition and then a second for the re-development of the Site.
Surveys Undertaken	An extended UKHab survey was conducted of all areas within the red line planning boundary at the Sites to provide a habitat baseline. A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the buildings was also conducted, which comprised external and internal (where access to roof voids was possible) inspections for characteristic signs of bat use. A Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) has been conducted and the Metric is provided separately with the BNG Report provided in Appendix B to this report.
Summary of Results	No evidence of protected species was found. The buildings have negligible potential to support internally roosting bats and low to moderate potential for externally roosting bats. The buildings and trees on Site could support nesting birds. The Statutory BNG Metric assessment has calculated a 11.45% BNG with a 0.19 unit increase with the Trading Rules met.
Conclusions	The Site location is overall of moderate ecological value to foraging and commuting bats, and to nesting birds. The development plans were amended to avoid removal of woodland and the majority of individual trees. The Site is suitable for traversing badger and hedgehog.
Further Surveys Required	One to two emergence surveys for bats focusing on the gable walls and southern face of the building will be conducted in May/June 2025. A further third survey will be conducted if bats are found to be present. The Bat Survey Report will be submitted as an addendum to this EclA Report.
Avoidance	Vegetation clearance works will be avoided during the bird nesting season (March to August inclusive). If this is not possible, a suitably qualified ecologist will inspect for nesting birds prior to construction works commencing. Should nesting birds be present, works will need to be halted in proximity to the nest whilst it remains active and until young have fledged. The woodland and retained trees will be protected from accidental damage with heras fencing.
Mitigation	Ramps or soil ramps will be left in trenches over night during construction to allow fauna to escape should they fall in. A Bat Mitigation Licence may be required from Natural England for the demolition works should bats be found to be present roosting under the roof tiles.
Compensation	Additional area of modified grassland, garden and individual trees has been included within the post-development plan to compensate for the losses in these habitats. Compensation for bats may be required and would comprise the inclusion of permanent crevice roost features within the external walls/roof of the new buildings.
Enhancement	The post-development plan includes 8No. small trees, modified grassland and vegetated garden creation to generate a 11.45% BNG. There will be 4No. 1SP sparrow nest boxes installed within the new buildings
Data Valid Until	March 2026

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background.....	1
1.2	Summary of Proposals.....	1
1.3	About This Ecological Impact Assessment	1
1.4	Personnel.....	2
1.5	Site Description and Location	2
1.6	Legislation and Policy.....	2
2	METHODOLOGY	4
2.1	Zone of Influence.....	4
2.2	Desk study.....	4
2.3	Data Search.....	5
2.4	field survey	5
2.5	UKHab Survey	5
2.5.1	ArcGIS Symbolology.....	6
2.5.2	Minimum Mapping Units.....	7
2.6	BNG	7
2.7	Species	7
2.7.1	Foraging and Community Habitat for Bats	7
2.7.2	Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)	8
2.7.3	Potential Roost Assessment.....	8
2.7.4	Limitations Constraints and Assumptions.....	9
3	RESULTS	10
3.1	Zone of Influence.....	10
3.2	Desk study.....	10
3.2.1	Statutory Designated Sites	10
3.2.2	Non-Statutory Designated Sites.....	11
3.2.3	Local Species Records.....	11
3.2.4	Granted Protected Species Licenses	12
3.2.5	Great Crested Newt (GCN) Pond Surveys 2017 to 2019	12
3.2.6	Ponds within 500 m of the Site	12
3.2.7	Priority Species.....	12
3.2.8	Priority Habitats.....	12
3.3	Field Survey Results – Habitats.....	12
3.3.1	On-Site Baseline Habitats	12
3.3.2	Adjacent Habitats	16
3.4	Field Survey Results – Species.....	19
3.4.1	Bats – Potential Roost Assessment (PRA)	19
3.4.2	Bats – Foraging and Commuting	21
3.4.3	Bats – Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)	21
3.4.4	Breeding Birds.....	22
3.4.5	Amphibians.....	22
3.4.6	Dormouse.....	22
3.4.7	Reptiles	22
3.4.8	Badger	22
3.4.9	Hedgehog	23
3.5	Summary BNG Results	23
3.6	Potential Ecological Receptors and Significant Effects.....	25
4	ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES INTEGRATED AND EMBEDDED INTO THE PROPOSALS	29
4.1	Introduction.....	29

5	ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS AND EMBEDDED MITIGATION MEASURES	32
5.1	Likely Significant Effects	32
5.2	Inter-Related Effects	32
5.3	Assessment of Residual Effects: Other broadleaved woodland	32
5.3.1	Damage/Harm to Flora from Construction	33
5.3.2	Pollution Incidents from Construction	33
5.3.3	Habitat Management from Operation.....	33
5.4	Assessment of Residual Effects: Individual Trees	34
5.4.1	Habitat Loss from Construction	34
5.4.2	Damage/Harm to Flora from Construction	34
5.4.3	Habitat Management from Operation.....	34
5.5	Assessment of Residual Effects: Bats.....	34
5.5.1	Loss of Potential Bat Roosting Habitat	34
5.5.2	Habitat Loss to Bats from Construction	35
5.5.3	Light Disturbance to Bats from Operation	35
5.5.4	Habitat Management from Operation.....	35
5.6	Assessment of Residual Effects: Breeding Birds.....	35
5.6.1	Habitat Loss from Construction	35
5.6.2	Damage/Harm to Flora and Fauna from Construction.....	36
5.6.3	Habitat Management from Operation.....	36
5.7	Assessment of Residual Effects: Badger.....	36
5.7.1	Damage to Fauna from Construction	36
5.7.2	Habitat Management from Operation.....	37
5.8	Assessment of Residual Effects: Reptiles, Hedgehog and Common Toad.....	37
5.8.1	Habitat Loss from Construction	37
5.8.2	Damage/Harm to Flora and Fauna from Construction.....	37
5.8.3	Habitat Management from Operation.....	38
6	CUMULATIVE EFFECTS	39
7	ADDITIONAL MITIGATION OR COMPENSATION REQUIREMENTS	40
8	IMPLEMENTATION OF BIODIVERSITY MEASURES & MONITORING	41
9	CONCLUSIONS OF SIGNIFICANCE EVALUATION	42
10	REFERENCES	43
	APPENDIX A – LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY	
	APPENDIX B – STATUTORY METRIC BNG REPORT	

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Selwood Housing commissioned Johns Associates Ltd to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment at Alcock Crest, Warminster in support of two planning applications; for the demolition of the existing buildings and for the proposed new buildings. The site is located at post code BA12 8ND (central Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference ST 86624 44512). Figure 1 provides the Site location plan. The Site currently consists of a block of flats and associated gardens, grassland and individual trees.

1.2 SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The existing blocks of flats at 43-60, 61-78 Alcock Crest are in need of renovation and are proposed to be demolished and replaced by new buildings on the same footprint as the existing structures.

1.3 ABOUT THIS ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The EclA assessment methodology used has been adapted from the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine (CIEEM, 2019). EclA is a process of identifying, quantifying, and evaluating potential effects of development-related or other proposed actions on habitats, species and ecosystems. The findings of this EclA will inform Wiltshire Council of the ecological issues when determining the planning application for the site.

A key consideration in scoping and subsequently assessing the impacts of any development is to define the habitats and species that need to be considered. The approach set out below follows the standard guidance published by CIEEM and is widely considered to be current best practice.

Ecological features (habitats, species and ecosystems) present within the site and its zone of influence are scoped through the desk study and field survey process and their ecological importance determined with reference to a geographical context. In identifying these 'features' or receptors, it is important to recognise that a development can affect habitats and species directly (e.g. the land-take required) and indirectly, (e.g. through noise generation or lighting).

The key elements of the assessment process are as follows:

- Identifying and characterising impacts which may be beneficial (positive) or adverse (negative);
- Incorporating measures to avoid and/or mitigate these impacts;
- Assessment of the significance of any residual effects after mitigation has been applied;
- Where there are significant residual effects, identification of appropriate compensation measures to offset these; and
- Identifying opportunities for ecological enhancement.

A key principle of EclA is to identify those impacts that are ecologically significant. A significant effect is an effect that is sufficiently important to require assessment and reporting so that the decision maker is adequately informed of the ecological consequences of permitting such a project (CIEEM, 2019).

Importantly, the design process has been iterative, drawing on ecological information from data search results and field surveys undertaken by Johns Associates in 2025, and making use of best practice design principals to ensure

that avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures have been formally incorporated into the final design taken forward for the planning submission.

The report also provides the results of a Statutory BNG assessment in Appendix B. A 10% BNG is required to be provided within a development under the Environment Act 2021 and implemented through the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. If 10% BNG cannot be met, an off-site compensation area or compensation payment to a habitat banking scheme may be required. This report will outline the results of the baseline habitats UKHab survey and provide the results of the BNG habitat condition assessments, the post-development habitat condition assessments and the BNG calculations.

The post-development plans produced by Planning Sphere Ltd have informed the post-development BNG calculations and the plans were designed with ecological advice and through consultation with Selwood Housing to avoid habitats of higher distinctiveness and to maximise the BNG through the proposed plans connecting habitats within the site to the wider landscape.

1.4 PERSONNEL

The UKHab survey, BNG Condition Assessments and BNG calculations were conducted by Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM, a Principal Ecologist at Johns Associates who has worked as an ecological consultant since 2005. Tessa has a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Studies and an MSc in Ecology and Management of the Natural Environment. Tessa is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and holds a Natural England Class 1 survey licence for bats (2019-40584-CLS-CLS-1). Tessa is proficient in botanical identification and is certified FISC Level 3.

Tessa was assisted by Benjamin Hough BSc (Hons), Assistant Ecologist at Johns Associates. Ben has a BSc (Hons) in Conservation Biology. Ben is a qualifying member of CIEEM and has one year's worth of experience in ecological consultancy, including conducting PEAs and protected species surveying.

1.5 SITE DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION

Alcock Crest, which hereafter is referred to as the 'Site', comprise residential blocks of flats and gardens located to the east of Warminster in Wiltshire. The area of the Site measures 0.4 ha. The Site is bordered to the north, east and west by residential buildings, gardens and hardstanding and to the south by parkland, scrub and woodland.

At the landscape level, the Site is surrounded mostly by residential buildings, gardens, with playing fields, areas of suburban woodland and parkland in close proximity. The A36 runs to the north, west and south of the Site, approximately 650 m southwest of the Site at its closest point. A railway line is situated 1.3 km northeast of the Site at its closest point.

The Site is located in an urban setting; connectivity to the wider landscape is suboptimal for mobile species due to lack of connectivity through linear features such as hedgerows, railway lines or waterways. Although small areas of woodland exist, these are typically isolated from the wider landscape, and walls and road present a barrier to dispersal for some mobile species, such as amphibians, small mammals, and reptiles.

1.6 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

The legislation and national and local planning policies which are relevant to this assessment are provided in Appendix A to this report.

Figure 1: Site Location Red Line Boundary Plan



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 ZONE OF INFLUENCE

The development proposals were reviewed by an ecologist, along with notable species records from the desk study and survey results. Based on these parameters, a zone of influence was determined for the development. The key issues relating to biodiversity receptors and the proposed development are as follows:

The effects of temporary and permanent habitat loss from land taken by construction areas;

- Damage/harm to fauna;
- The effects of pollution (construction dust and pollution from accidental spillage of fuels, lubricants etc. that may affect terrestrial habitats);
- Noise, visual or light disturbance to fauna;
- The positive effects of ecological enhancement from creation, enhancement and management of habitats within the Site boundary.

Consideration of potential disturbance to ecological receptors from noise, vibration, visual or light was extended across the application Site and adjacent habitats.

2.2 DESK STUDY

A desk study was undertaken to collate all relevant existing information relating to the Site and its surrounding area. The data was used to inform the scope of the Site survey and to enable a full assessment of the likely effects of any development at the Site on any sites, habitats, or species of conservation interest to be carried out. The Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was used to conduct the following desk study searches on 12 February 2025:

- Records and citations to a 2 km radius for national statutory designated wildlife sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and National Nature Reserves (NNRs).
- Records and citations to a 5 km radius of international statutory designated wildlife sites including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which are designated for habitats, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar Sites which are designated for supporting bird species and assemblages of bird species.
- Records and citations to a 10 km radius of SACs designated for supporting species of bat.
- Records of European Protected Species (EPS) Licenses to a 2 km for e.g. bats, dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius* and great crested newts (GCN) *Triturus cristatus*.
- Records to a 1 km radius of pond surveys conducted by Natural England from 2017 to 2019 for GCN.
- Locations of ponds within a 500 m radius of the Site.
- Records within a 250 m radius of Priority Habitats listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) Act 2006

Google Maps aerial images were used to assess habitats at a landscape level (www.maps.google.com) in proximity to the Site.

2.3 DATA SEARCH

A data search was conducted with the Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) on 4 March 2024 to identify the presence of legally protected and/or notable species and non-statutory designated wildlife sites within 2 km of the proposed Site.

2.4 FIELD SURVEY

An extended UKHab survey of the Site and BNG habitat condition assessments were undertaken on 12 March 2025 by experienced surveyors Principal ecologist Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM from Johns Associates Ltd. The weather was 10 °C dry and bright with good visibility. This survey was completed in accordance with Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017) and BS42020:2013 Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development (British Standards Institute, 2013).

2.5 UKHAB SURVEY

The on-Site and off-Site (where accessible) habitats were classified following the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Version 2.01 (2023) guidelines, which provides a more detailed interpretation of baseline habitat survey data than previous habitat classifications systems, such as Phase 1 Habitat Assessments. The professional edition of UKHab "UK Habitat Classification –Professional Edition1" (UKHab-P) was used which includes Priority Habitat Types, all Annex 1 Habitats and the habitats listed in EUNIS.

The classification of primary habitats is hierarchical with five levels with a list of Secondary Codes, the latter is sub-divided into Essential codes and Additional codes. It is mandatory that each recorded habitat parcel is allocated single primary Habitat Code and to record the presence of all Essential Secondary Code features associated with that habitat parcel. Additional Secondary Codes can also be associated with habitat parcels, where it is relevant to the whole parcel. Up to six Secondary Codes can be allocated to a single habitat.

UKHab v2.01 has a total of 268 Secondary Codes, sub-divided into 15 major groupings. Secondary codes are added to habitat parcels to:

- Confirm the identity of habitat mosaic and complexes.
- Add information about habitat origin and modifications.
- Add information on environmental context, management and land use in a consistent manner.

Essential Secondary Codes are identified as 2-digit numbers (10 – 90). Additional Secondary Codes (100 – 853) are 3-digit numbers and cover features including land management, land use (incorporating green infrastructure), environmental qualifiers, species features and hydrological regime descriptors. The UK Habitat Classification v2.01 Secondary Code Groupings are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: The UK Habitat Classification v2.0 Secondary Code Groupings

UKHab v2.0 Secondary Code Grouping	Description	UKHab v2.0 Codes
Secondary Essentials – Grasslands and Heathland	Habitat mosaic types and complexes that occur in the grassland, heathlands, hedgerows and scrub habitat	10 – 19
Secondary Essentials – Woodlands and Trees	Habitat complexes, origins and mosaic types that principally occur in woods associated with trees	25 – 34
Secondary Essentials – Freshwater	Habitat complexes and origins that principally occur in freshwater habitats	40 – 51
Secondary Essentials – Wetlands	Habitat complexes and environmental qualifiers that principally occur in wetlands	55 – 57
Secondary Essentials – All habitats	Habitat descriptors that can occur on any habitat	60 – 63

Secondary Essentials – Coast	Habitat complexes that principally occur on the coast	70 – 77
Secondary Essentials – Built environment	Habitat complexes, mosaics, land uses and green infrastructure principally associated with the built environment	80 – 90
Additional Secondary Codes – Grasslands and Heathlands	Habitat management, land use, environmental qualifier and species features principally associated with grassland, heathlands, hedgerows and scrub habitat	100 – 131
Additional Secondary Codes – Woodlands and Trees	Habitat management, land use, environmental qualifiers and species features principally associated with woods and trees	200 – 217
Additional Secondary Codes – Freshwater	Habitat management, land use, environmental qualifiers and species features principally associated with freshwater habitats	300 – 323
Additional Secondary Codes – Wetlands	Hydrological regime, habitat management and species features principally associated with wetlands	400 – 425
Additional Secondary Codes – All habitats	Additional habitat descriptors that can occur on any habitat	500 – 532
Additional Secondary Codes – Farming	Habitat management and land uses principally associated with farmlands	600 – 618
Additional Secondary Codes – Coast	Land use and environmental qualifiers principally associated with coastal areas	700 – 703
Additional Secondary Codes – Built environment	Land use and green infrastructure descriptors principally associated with the built environment	800 – 853

Where appropriate, maps were supplemented with target notes which provided specific information on habitats present that were too limited in extent to map at the scale at which data is presented, or the presence of species and habitats of ecological interest.

An annotated habitat map together with descriptions of the recorded habitat types was produced, which was subsequently digitised using a geographical information system (ArcGIS). The survey also included identification of any non-native invasive plant species. Flora taxonomy follows the nomenclature detailed in New Flora of the British Isles (4th Edition) (Stace C., 2019). Flora, where appropriate, are given a descriptive score of abundance using the DAFOR scale, as follows:

- D – Dominant
- A – Abundant
- F – Frequent
- O – Occasional
- R – Rare
- L – Locally (to be used as a prefix for any of the above)
- V – Very (to be used as a prefix for any of the above)

2.5.1 ArcGIS Symbolology

At the time of production, a complete symbolology for all habitats in the UK Habitat Classification Professional Edition (UKHab-P) was not available. The UK Habitat Classification Basic Edition (UKHab-B) symbolology has therefore been

used, and where necessary to add in habitats not included in UKHab-B we have designed our own hatching system within the Level 2 colours for those habitats – following the guidance provided in the UK Habitat Classification Basic Edition: Suggested Symbolology for Maps document (UKHab, 2020).

2.5.2 Minimum Mapping Units

UKHab guidance indicated that UKHab has 3 Minimal Mapping Units (MMU's):

- 25 m² and 5 m length for urban and small-scale development projects, fine scale mapping of designated sites
- 400 m² and 20 m length for landscape scale surveys
- 2500 m² for larger unenclosed upland habitats.

Large scale, simple habitats or feasibility surveys should use a larger MMU. For this project, given the size of the site and the scale of the map the 25 m² and 5 m length MMU has been applied. This will allow all habitats to be clearly visible on the map whilst enabling enough fine detail to remain to clearly show all habitats present.

2.6 BNG

The Statutory BNG Metric methodology is provided in the BNG Report Appendix B to this Report.

2.7 SPECIES

The survey was 'extended' to assess the suitability of the Site and immediately adjacent habitats to support legally protected and/or notable species, including (but not limited to) plants, badger *Meles meles*, bats, dormouse, amphibians, reptiles and breeding birds. This included recording visible signs of species presence and/or features that may indicate likely presence. Hedgerows/corridors were assessed for likely value for dormice, trees on Site were assessed for their suitability for roosting bats and waterbodies/ watercourses assessed for suitability for great crested newt, otter and water vole. A search for Invasive Non-Native Species e.g. Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* was also conducted within the Site and immediately adjacent areas.

2.7.1 Foraging and Community Habitat for Bats

The overall suitability of the Site and adjacent habitats for foraging and commuting bats was also assessed to determine its importance within the wider local context, particularly with reference to the location of known roosts obtained through the Desk Study. The assessment was conducted using the criteria described in Table 2.

Table 2: Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023)

Suitability	Commuting and Foraging Habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.

Suitability	Commuting and Foraging Habitats
High	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.
a. Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute). b. For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance. c. Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten <i>et al.</i>, 2016 and Jansen <i>et al.</i>, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlison, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.	

2.7.2 Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)

A survey of the trees was carried out on 12 March 2025 by Tessa Pepler (class licence registration number: 2019-40584-CLS-CLS-1 replacing 2016-25380-CLS-CLS). The inspection followed the professional survey guidance as detailed in Bat Survey Guidelines for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023).

All trees within the Site boundary were inspected systematically for Potential Roost Features (PRFs) that could be used by bats including woodpecker holes, squirrel holes, rot holes, knot holes, pruning cuts, tear outs, wounds, cankers, compression forks, butt rots, lightning strikes, hazard beams, subsidence, cracks, shearing cracks, transverse snaps, welds, lifting bark, desiccation, fissures, frost cracks, fluting and ivy. The assessment was conducted using the criteria described in Table 3.

Table 3: Guidelines for Assessing the Suitability of Trees on Proposed Development Sites for Bats (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023)

Suitability	Description
None	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present

All trees were numbered and marked on a plan of the site. The tree species, height, whether the tree is alive or dead and a tree tag number (if present), the diameter at breast height, number of stems and whether the tree has been coppiced were recorded. Information regarding PRFs present was collected including whether the PRF is on a stem or a limb, the PRF type, height and what direction the PRF faces. The height and orientation of the entrance was recorded if this was different.

2.7.3 Potential Roost Assessment

A survey of the built structures on Site was carried out on 25 February 2025 by Tessa Pepler (class licence registration number: 2019-40584-CLS-CLS-1 replacing 2016-25380-CLS-CLS). The inspection followed the professional survey guidance as detailed in Bat Survey Guidelines for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023).

The survey entailed a direct search for evidence of bats on both internal and external features of the buildings. The external building inspections were carried out from the ground. Other supporting equipment included close focusing binoculars and a high-powered torch, as required. The buildings were examined externally for features that could

support roosting bats and features that could lead to internal potential roost features (PRFs). The buildings were also subject to an internal inspection.

The presence of roosting bats can be observed through signs such as accumulations of moth or butterfly wings or bat droppings and staining and/or scratch marks around potential entrance and exit points. However, the absence of droppings/evidence cannot be treated as conclusive proof that bats are not present, and therefore an assessment was also made of the potential of the building to support bats based on the criteria detailed by the Bat Conservation Trust (2023) and provided in Table 3 below.

2.7.4 Limitations Constraints and Assumptions

Some flats were inaccessible at the time of survey; however, loft voids were surveyed in a variety of locations and were of similar build and condition throughout, with negligible bat potential. The surveyed loft voids are therefore considered to be representative of the buildings as a whole.

The UKHab was undertaken in March 2025, which is outside of the JNCC's optimum field survey season for the south of England (from late March to Mid-October), wherein the most accurate picture of the vegetation communities present can be gained. For the modified grassland area G2, the number of species per m² was less than 6-8 species (excluding footnote 1 undesirable species), following the precautionary principal it is assumed that in season this criterion is met and the BNG includes this.

The findings of this report are considered valid at the time of last site visit (March 2025). Should there be delays to the project timetable and/or implementation of the proposed development, updated desk study and/or survey work may be required. In this instance, advice should be sought to ensure the data, recommendations and conclusions set out in this report remain valid.

It has been assumed that the development proposals are as described in this document and that all proposed mitigation and enhancement measures will be implemented in full.

3 RESULTS

3.1 ZONE OF INFLUENCE

The proposed development design was reviewed by an ecologist and a zone of influence for species scoped into the assessment was determined. The zone of influence was assessed as being 20 m from all construction activities. This will include potential foraging habitats for badgers, hedgehog, bats, amphibians and reptiles and potential nest sites for breeding birds.

3.2 DESK STUDY

3.2.1 Statutory Designated Sites

There were three Statutory designated sites within 2 km of the proposed Site, one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and two Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). A summary of sites and the reasons for designation are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Statutory Designated Sites within 2 km.

Site Name & Designation	Description	Area of Site	Distance/ Bearing from Site
Smallbrook Meadows LNR	A complex site which includes two LNRs and a WWT reserve and supports neutral grassland, wet and dry woodland, swamp and fen vegetation within the southern part of Warminster. A mosaic of six small water meadows, wet woodland, marsh, ponds, chalk rivers, hedgerows and ditches. The meadow is rich in flora and invertebrates, and kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i> and water vole <i>Arvicola amphibius</i> are occasionally spotted.	6.15 ha	900 m east at closest point
River Avon SSSI	The Avon in southern England is a large, lowland chalk and clay river system designated for its vegetation and fish populations. It is not designated for bats.	475 ha	1.1 km southeast at closet point
River Wylfe LNR	The reserve is part of the larger Langford Lakes reserve which consists of three lakes and a half-mile stretch of the river Wylfe. The site hosts a variety of birds over a 20-mile stretch.	4.2 ha	1.7 km southeast at closest point

Within 5 km there are a further three European/international statutory designated sites, two Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and one SPA (Special Protection Area). A summary of sites and the reasons for designation are provided in Table 5.

Table 5: European and International Statutory Designated Sites within 5 km.

Site Name & Designation	Description	Area of Site	Distance/ Bearing from Site
River Avon SAC	The Avon in southern England is a large, lowland chalk and clay river system designated for its vegetation and fish populations. It is not designated for bats.	475 ha	1.1 km southeast at closet point
Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA	Salisbury Plain is the best remaining example in the UK of lowland juniper scrub on chalk. The site hosts the priority habitat type "orchid rich sites". It is believed to be the largest surviving semi-natural dry grassland	21460 ha	3 km northeast at closet point

	within the EU and is therefore the most important site for this habitat in the UK. Salisbury Plain is not designated for bats although it constitutes high quality foraging habitat due to its richness of flora, including orchids and invertebrates.		
--	--	--	--

3.2.2 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

A total of seven non-statutory Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) were identified within 2 km of the Site using MAGIC map and data returned by the Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre. These are described in Table 6.

Table 6: Non-Statutory Designated Local Wildlife Sites within 2 km

LWS name	Reason for designation	Location from the Site
Coldharbour Meadows LWS	Species-rich grassland and swamp vegetation in a flood storage basin along with areas of reedbed, wet-woodland and associated habitats.	724 m north at closest point
Cannimore Farm Meadow LWS	Lowland meadow and valley fen with a stream running through it, with species-rich boundary hedgerows with mature trees.	885 m southwest at closest point
Norridge Wood LWS	A large ancient woodland site (124 ha), mostly replanted with broadleaves & conifers, but with substantial semi-natural areas.	1.4 km northwest at closest point
Eastleigh Farm Meadow LWS	A complex of abandoned water meadows dominated by sedges and reeds.	1.4 km east at closest point
Cop Heap LWS	Calcareous and neutral grassland, broadleaved woodland and scrub on a low chalk hill on the northern edge of Warminster.	1.6 km northeast at closest point
Woodcroft Wood LWS	Ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland and plantation on an ancient site.	1.6 km southeast at closest point
Arn Hill LWS	Unimproved grassland and woodland on the fringes of a golf course.	1.67 km northeast at closest point

3.2.3 Local Species Records

The WSBRC returned the following records of notable and protected species within 2 km of the Site from the last 10 years. Results are summarised in Table 7.

Table 7: Local species records (WSBRC, 2024)

Species Group	Details	Location from the Site
Amphibian	One record of great crested newt dating from 2019 was returned, along with hundreds of records of common toad <i>Bufo bufo</i> and common frog <i>Rana temporaria</i> .	1.32 km west at the closest point
Badgers	50 badger records have been returned within the last 10 years, including 16 sett records, the most recent being from 2022.	248 m southwest at the closest point
Bat	Thousands of bat records from the last 10 years were returned, comprising the following species: Barbastelle <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> , serotine <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> , five species of Myotis, noctule <i>Nyctalus noctule</i> , Leisler's <i>N. leisleri</i> , three species of Pipistrellus, brown long eared <i>Plecotus auritus</i> , and lesser horseshoe <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i> . Records of 11 roosts were also returned for common species (common and soprano pipistrelle, brown long eared and noctule) and for whiskered bat <i>Myotis mystacinus</i> . The most recent record is for a long eared <i>Plecotus</i> spp. roost in 2021.	Common pipistrelle was the closest record being 267 m west

Bird	Thousands of bird records were returned, including recent nest records for the following species: Barn owl <i>Tyto alba</i> (2022), hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i> (2019), firecrest <i>Regulus ignicapilla</i> (2019), red kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> (2021), kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i> (2017) and little egret <i>Egretta garzetta</i> (2020).	A swift was the closest record being 140 m south
Reptiles	WSBRC returned 29 records of grass snake <i>Natrix natrix</i> , eight records of slow worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i> and five records of common lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i> , all three were recorded within 2km of the Sites in 2023.	A grass snake was the closest record being 770 m northeast
Hazel Dormice	Five records of hazel dormouse were returned, including three nests. The most recent record is from 2021. The nearest record is from 2015 in an area of woodland 500m southeast of the Site.	708 m southwest at the closest point
Other Mammals	Other recent notable mammal records include 35 records of water vole (2022), 17 records of otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> (2022), five records of brown hare <i>Lepus europaeus</i> (2021), and 366 records of hedgehog record since (2015).	A hedgehog was the closest record being 116 m north

3.2.4 Granted Protected Species Licenses

No European Protected Species (EPS) licenses issued by Natural England were identified within 2 km of the Site. There were no records of great crested newt ponds surveys 2017 – 2019 within a 1 km radius.

3.2.5 Great Crested Newt (GCN) Pond Surveys 2017 to 2019

There are no records of ponds located within 1 km of the Site which were surveyed from 2017 to 2019.

3.2.6 Ponds within 500 m of the Site

There was one pond located within a 500 m radius of the redline boundary of the Site located within the grounds of Sambourne Primary School 306 m to the north east of the Site.

3.2.7 Priority Species

The following Priority Species have been recorded within the data search with WSBRC that could be supported within the Site or the Zone of Influence of the Site (20 m): Hedgehog, grass snake, slow worm, common lizard, common toad, common frog, barbastelle bat, noctule bat, soprano pipistrelle bat, brown long-eared bat, and lesser horseshoe bat.

3.2.8 Priority Habitats

The following Priority Habitats are recorded on MAGIC Map within 500 m of the Site: Deciduous woodland located along Cannimore Road 426 m to the south west of the Site and chalk river – Cannimore Stream located 458 m to the south west of the Site.

3.3 FIELD SURVEY RESULTS – HABITATS

3.3.1 On-Site Baseline Habitats

The Existing UKHab Plan (Figure 2) should be referred to throughout this section. No Schedule 9 non-native invasive species were encountered during the survey.

u1b5 Buildings

The majority of the Site was made up of two two-storey red brick buildings with concrete interlocking tiles. See the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) section below for a full description of the buildings.

u1c Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

A central gravel courtyard was present at 43-60 Alcock Crest and 61-78 Alcock Crest (Plate 1).

Plate 1: Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface



u1d Suburban mosaic of developed and natural surfaces (827, Garden)

Vegetated gardens were present at the rear of the blocks of Alcock Crest flats and comprised small areas of grass and native and non-native shrubs (Plate 1).

g4 Modified Grassland

Regularly mown modified grassland habitat was present in between the 43-60 Alcock Crest and 61-78 Alcock Crest blocks (Plate 2), as well as small areas to the west and east.

The modified grassland present in between the two blocks (G1) (Plate 2) supported perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* (D), annual meadow grass *Poa annua* (A), dandelion *Taraxacum sp.* (O), daisy *Bellis perennis* (O), creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* (O), yarrow *Achillea millefolium* (O), dove's-foot cranesbill *Geranium molle* (O), cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata* (F), fescue sp. *Festuca sp.* (F), greater plantain *Plantago major* (O) and white clover *Trifolium repens* (O).

The area of modified grassland to the west of the Site (G2) supported cocksfoot (A), annual meadow grass (F), dandelion (O) and daisy (O).

The area of modified grassland to the east of the Site (G3) (Plate 3) supported perennial rye grass (A), cocksfoot (A), Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* (F), creeping buttercup (O), lesser celandine *Ficaria verna* (O), dandelion (O) and daisy (O).

Plate 2: Modified Grassland (G1)



Plate 3: Modified Grassland (G3)



Individual Trees – Urban

Several trees were present across the Site including Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris*, ornamental cherry *Prunus sp.*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, cotoneaster *Cotoneaster frigidus* and silver birch *Betula pendula*. Table 8 provides the details of the trees which are numbered as per the Tree Survey and Constraints Plan produced by Tim Pursey in February 2024. Appendix C of the appended BNG Report (Appendix B) provides the Tree Survey Plan. Tree T18, an ash was outside of the red line boundary, (although the RPA is within the Site), and is not included within the BNG assessment, however the tree will be protected during the construction phase and this is outlined within the EclA Report.

Table 8: Individual Tree Information

Tree Ref. No.	Species Common Name	Species Latin Name	DBH	BNG Size Class	BNG Condition
T6	Scots pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	46.5	Medium	Moderate
T7	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	45	Medium	Moderate
T8	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	46.5	Medium	Moderate
T9 (Plate 4)	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	51	Medium	Moderate
T10	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	54	Medium	Moderate
T11	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	45	Medium	Moderate
T15	Sycamore	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	22.5	Small	Moderate
T16	Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster frigidus</i>	27.5	Small	Poor
T17 (Plate 4)	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	32.5	Medium	Moderate

Plate 4: Tree 9 (foreground) Tree 17 (background)



h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow

A short section of ornamental hedgerow was present at the entrance to each Alcock Crest block of flats (Plate 5).

Plate 5: Ornamental Hedgerow



w1g Other Broadleaved Woodland

An area of broadleaved woodland was located to the south west of the Site. A mature line of beech *Fagus sylvatica* trees (Plate 6) was located along the northern boundary and due to the tree canopies adjoining within ash *Fraxinus excelsior* tree canopy (Plate 7) within the area of trees and scrub layer to the south, this whole area has been classed as other broadleaved woodland. The scrub layer included hazel *Corylus avellana* (a), field maple *Acer campestre* (f) and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* (r). Ground flora (Plate 8) included common nettle *Urtica dioica* (f), ivy (f), herb Robert *Geranium robertianum* (o), lesser celandine *Ficaria verna* (f), lords-and-ladies *Arum maculatum* (o), ivy leaved speedwell *Veronica hederifolia* (o).

Plate 6: Line of Mature Beech Trees (W1)



Plate 7: Area of Woodland (W1)



Plate 8: Area of Woodland (W1)



3.3.2 Adjacent Habitats

Individual Trees

T18, a medium mature ash tree (Plate 9) was located to the east of the Site, to the rear of the eastern building.

Plate 9: Ash Tree (T18)



Scrub & Individual Trees

An area to the south of the eastern block of flats comprised mixed scrub with field maple (a), hazel (a) and dogwood (r). Bramble scrub spanned along the majority of the southern boundary of the western block of flats with a small area of willow *Salix* sp. scrub and young scrubby cherry *Prunus* sp. trees to the east. Individual trees were also present to the south of the buildings (Plate 10).

Plate 10: Scrub and Individual Trees to South of Buildings



Figure 2: Baseline UKHab Habitat Plan & Target Notes



3.4 FIELD SURVEY RESULTS – SPECIES

3.4.1 Bats – Potential Roost Assessment (PRA)

External assessment

The roof is constructed with a wet ridge and interlocking concrete tiles, featuring a 150mm overlap. (Plate 11). There was a line of raised tiles at the east and western gable ends of each building on the southern faces. There were also small gaps in the lead flashing at the base of several of the gas chimney flues and chimney breasts on both faces of the roofs on both buildings. The brick work of the walls was in good condition, well sealed, with no PRFs (Plate 12).

The eaves and soffits were constructed from plastic and were well sealed with no PRFs or access points recorded.

The external roofs and particularly the southern faces which overlook areas of other broadleaved woodland patches within the park to the south have a low to moderate suitability for roosting bats.

A bat box was located on the southern face of a building opposite the Site within Alcock Crest.

Plate 11: 48-60 Alcock Crest Roof Aspect



Plate 12: East Gable of Eastern Building



Internal Assessment:

In summary, there was no evidence of bats found within the roof voids and no access for bats. The gable walls on the outside had all been filled for fire safety (). The internal roofs were well sealed with no access for roosting bats present and were constructed from either concrete breeze blocks or red bricks. The roofs were lined with Breathable Roof Membrane (BRM) (Plate 14). The full internal inspection results are provided in Table 9Table 9: Internal building assessment.

Plate 13: Filled Gable Walls and Internal Roof Void Walls



Plate 14: Internal Roof Void



Table 9: Internal building assessment

Flat number	Internal roof description
Number 52	The roof is cross-hipped and BRM-lined, with one chimney. The west-facing gable wall is brick, while the adjoining roof void at Number 51 is made of concrete breeze blocks. The roof structure includes wooden trusses, rafters, and a ridge beam, with a wooden beam along the edge about 1 m from the ground. There is one A-frame truss. No droppings were observed, though a few rat droppings were found. The floor is lined with fiberglass.
Number 53	Two separation brick walls with BRM lining. One king post and a fink truss are present. The floor is lined with fiberglass. The tops of the wall plates have gaps filled with fire proof mortar or a similar material. A small piece of BRM is hanging down, providing some access into the void; however, the interlocking roof tiles offer limited access points. Heavy cobwebs are present, but no droppings were found.
Number 54	Similar to Number 53, but with two fink trusses and a king post. No droppings observed.
Number 55	Same as Number 54, with a chimney present. The gaps on the gable wall plate have been sealed for fire safety. There are heavy cobwebs on the ridge beam.
Number 57	A tile has been removed for a gas flue (Plate 15). The brick walls are sealed with fire sealant around the top, leaving no gaps. There are two fink trusses, and no evidence of bats being found
Number 58	Two fink trusses. The west-facing gable wall is brick, while the east wall is breeze block. The chimney is very cobwebby, but otherwise, the situation remains unchanged.
Number 59	Cross gabled roof with a chimney. One half fink truss and one fink truss are present. All other conditions are as before.
Number 60	Wooden chipboard flooring on fiberglass with concrete breeze block walls. This is similar to Number 55, with no evidence of bats. Fewer cobwebs are present, and the chimney has moisture at the bottom of the chipboard, which is wrapped in plastic to prevent leaks. The concrete breeze block walls do not have fire sealant applied.
Number 69	The north wall is made of unsealed breeze blocks, and the south wall is brick, also unsealed. The roof structure has three fink trusses, and the chimney has been cut off at the top to prevent it from protruding through the roof.
Number 70	No access.
Number 71	There is a wet hole where the roof truss connects to the neighboring property. The chimney is present, and two fink trusses are in place. The brick separating walls are not sealed, and heavy cobwebs cover the ridge beam.
Number 72	As Number 71, but with fewer cobwebs.

Number 73	At the end of this half of the building, there are two brick walls, both sealed with fire sealant on top. A chimney is present, and the ridge beam has thick cobwebs. The storage space below has no evidence of bats.
Number 76	As before, with two fink trusses and no evidence of bats.
Number 77	The cross-gabled roof void is very dusty, with no significant changes. The breeze block wall is not filled, but two brick walls are sealed.
Number 78	Located on the far eastern flat. The roof has Type 1 crumble paper-like lining on top of the BRM. Three fink trusses are present, with the north gable wall made of breeze blocks and the south wall made of brick, both unsealed.
Storage areas	As before, there is no evidence of bats. The buildings are now cleared, making it easier to detect bat droppings. No internal cracks or crevices were found.

Plate 15: Gas flue exiting the roof through removed tile.



3.4.2 Bats – Foraging and Commuting

The Site is of moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats, with fairly continuous habitat leading south to Longleat Woodland. The habitats on Site are generally of limited ecological value. The trees provide suitable but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats. The woodland to the west and within the wider landscape provides greater value for foraging and commuting bats.

3.4.3 Bats – Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)

One Tree – T9 a multi-stemmed ornamental cherry had potential PRFs within the tangle of stems and potential crevices between them (Plate 16).

Plate 16: Multi-Stemmed Ornamental Cherry – PRF-FAR



3.4.4 Breeding Birds

No nests were seen; however the trees, ornamental hedgerows and woodland are considered suitable to support nesting birds

3.4.5 Amphibians

No GCN licenses or pond surveys were conducted between 2017 and 2019 recorded on Magic Map within a 1 km radius of the Site. There was one waterbody located within 500 m of the Site within Sambourne Primary School.

The habitats on Site are of limited value to GCN and the scrub habitat adjacent to 48-60, 61-78 Alcock Crest is isolated from the wider landscape.

3.4.6 Dormouse

The Site is not connected to areas of significant woodland, scrub and hedgerows, with roads and walls associated with residential areas posing a significant barrier to dispersal.

3.4.7 Reptiles

The modified grassland within the Site has negligible suitability for reptiles. The garden habitat could support individual reptiles. The rough grassland and scrub habitat adjacent to the south of the Site are suitable to support common species such as slow worm and common lizard and there is further suitable habitat within Warminster Common to the south of the Site.

3.4.8 Badger

No evidence of badger was found during the survey including runs through vegetation, setts, latrines, snuffle holes and tracks/prints. Badger may be present in the wider area and could utilise the woodland for foraging and commuting, however the majority of the Site is unsuitable for badger. Badgers may traverse across the Site.

3.4.9 Hedgehog

The vegetated gardens to the rear of the building and the woodland to the west of the Site may support hedgehog.

3.5 SUMMARY BNG RESULTS

The full BNG assessment spreadsheet is provided separately to this report. Appendix B provides the full Statutory BNG Assessment Report with a detailed analysis of the results. Figure 3 provides the post-development UKHab plan which was developed through consultation with Planning Sphere and Selwood Housing. The plan was updated to avoid urban tree and woodland loss. Eight new small urban trees will be planted to offset the loss of the two small trees. A larger area of modified grassland is provided post-development which provides compensation for the modified grassland loss and contributes, with the additional tree planting, to achieving the mandatory 10% BNG. Garden habitat is replaced with new garden habitat post-development.

In summary there is an **11.45% BNG** (0.19 net unit increase) as a result of the proposed development and the Trading Rules have been met.

Figure 3: Post-Development UKHab Habitat Plan



3.6 POTENTIAL ECOLOGICAL RECEPTORS AND SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

Table 10 summarises information regarding the ecological receptors that have been identified through the scoping process as having the potential to be significantly affected by the proposed development and the legislation that could be contravened as a result of the proposed development without implemented mitigation and the potential effects that need to be assessed.

Additionally, Table 10 summarises the details of receptor habitats and species that have been scoped out of further assessment due to non-presence or no potential impacts predicted from the proposed development.

Table 10: Scoping Results of Potential Ecological Receptors and Legislation

Potential receptor	Important/ values and/or legally protected?	Relevant criteria and legislation	Potentially significant effects
Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	International importance Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	The site is located approximately 3 km from the Site. The proposed Site does not support the species or habitats for which this site is designated and also does not provide functionally linked habitats. No likely source-receptor pathway. No potentially significant effects or legal contravention predicted. Scoped out of the assessment.
River Avon SAC	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	International importance Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	The site is located approximately 1.1 km from the Site. The proposed Site does not support the species or habitats for which this site is designated and also does not provide functionally linked habitats.
River Avon SSSI	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	National importance NERC Act 2006 S.41 Habitats and Species of Principal Importance	No likely source-receptor pathway. No potentially significant effects or legal contravention predicted. Scoped out of the assessment.
Smallbrook Meadows LNR	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	National importance NERC Act 2006 S.41 Habitats and Species of Principal Importance	The site is located approximately 0.9 km from the Site. Due to the distance from the proposed development Site, no significant effects are considered likely. Scoped out of the assessment.

Potential receptor	Important/ values and/or legally protected?	Relevant criteria and legislation	Potentially significant effects
River Wylfe LNR	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	National importance NERC Act 2006 S.41 Habitats and Species of Principal Importance	The site is located approximately 1.7 km from the Site. Due to the distance from the proposed development Site, no significant effects are considered likely. Scoped out of the assessment.
Non-statutory Designated Wildlife Sites: 7 non-statutory Local Wildlife Sites	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	County importance NERC Act 2006 S.41 Habitats and Species of Principal Importance	The LWSs are all located between 0.7 km and 2km from the Site. These sites are considered to be a sufficient distance whereby significant effects are unlikely and/or source receptor pathways do not exist. Scoped out of the assessment.
Other broadleaved woodland	Biodiversity conservation value	Local value only	The woodland is located within and adjacent to the Site and There is the potential for accidental damage to this habitat from construction activities, including un-authorised access, dust and surface water emissions, waste/rubbish deposition. Scoped into the assessment
Individual trees	Biodiversity conservation value	Site value only	Provides habitat for legally protected breeding birds. Trees proposed to be lost include T15 and T16. Off-site tree (T18) may be affected by accidental damage and/or construction within the Root Protection Area (RPA). Scoped into the assessment.
Plants (protected or invasive species)	Biodiversity conservation value	EC Habitats Directive Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981	The habitats on site are widespread and of limited ecological value. Notable plant species are considered to be absent. Scoped out of the assessment.
Bats	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	International and national importance Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	The site location was assessed to provide moderate foraging opportunity for bats due to comprising a small area of garden, modified grassland and urban tree habitat. The wider landscape within which it is located provides moderate suitability, being adjacent to Warminster Common and Recreation Ground.

Potential receptor	Important/ values and/or legally protected?	Relevant criteria and legislation	Potentially significant effects
		NERC Act 2006 S.41 Species of Principal Importance Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981	The buildings provided low to moderate suitability for roosting bats. No evidence of bats was found during the internal PRA, however a number of PRFs were identified externally. Demolition of the building may result in roost loss and/or direct disturbance to bats including accidental killing or injury, if present. Tree 9 within the application site had potential suitability for roosting bats that could be disturbed/damaged by construction activities. Scoped into the assessment.
GCN	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 NERC Act 2006 S.41 Species of Principal Importance	One pond located 306 m to the north east of the Site separated by significant urban habitat from the Site. Habitat on Site of limited suitability for GCN. GCN are considered to be absent from the Site and no further effects on this species are predicted. Scoped out of the assessment.
Birds	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	National importance (BoCC Red List Species) Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 NERC Act 2002 S41 Species of Principal Importance	Suitability for common species of nesting birds was recorded within trees and ornamental shrubs on site and in adjacent habitat to the south. There is considered to be limited/no habitat suitability for rarer bird species. Tree/shrub removal could result in the risk of accidental disturbance of nesting birds/ loss of adults/ young/ eggs. Scoped into the assessment.
Common Reptiles	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	Local Importance Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981	The Site is considered to be of limited suitability for reptiles, however they could be present within habitats to the south adjacent to Alcock Crest. Scoped into the assessment.
Badger	Legal status	Local Importance	No evidence of badger was recorded within the site. Badger may utilise the

Potential receptor	Important/ values and/or legally protected?	Relevant criteria and legislation	Potentially significant effects
		Protection of Badgers Act 1992	woodland to the west and commute across the Site. Scoped into the assessment.
Dormouse	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 NERC Act 2006 S.41 Species of Principal Importance Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981	Habitats within and adjacent to the Site unsuitable to support dormouse due to lack of connectivity to woodland habitat to the north of Warminster where dormouse are present. Scoped out of the assessment.
Other NERC S.41 Fauna (e.g. Hedgehog and common toad)	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	NERC Act 2006 S.41 Species of Principal Importance Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981	There is habitat suitability for hedgehog and common toad on site within the vegetated gardens and woodland. Vegetation removal and construction activities have the potential to affect available foraging habitat. Scoped into the assessment.
Invertebrates	Biodiversity conservation value Legal status	NERC Act 2006 S.41 Species of Principal Importance	There is considered to be limited habitat suitability for common invertebrate species only. Scoped out of the assessment.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL MEASURES INTEGRATED AND EMBEDDED INTO THE PROPOSALS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

A range of environmental measures have been integrated and embedded into the development proposals as outlined in this Section. The design process for the proposed development has included consideration of the ecological constraints and has incorporated measures to reduce the potential for adverse ecological effects in accordance with the ‘mitigation hierarchy’ and relevant planning policy. The measures identified and adopted include those that are inherent to the proposed development and can be expected to be applied as part of the construction environmental best practice a result of legislative requirements.

The development design and impact avoidance measures will be adopted during the construction and operation phases of the proposed development. Table 11 outlines how these embedded measures will influence the biodiversity assessment. A Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) and a Landscape Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) will be produced via Condition that will set out the full detail of all appropriate measures for the delivery/aftercare/monitoring and long-term management for these measures.

Table 11: Summary of Integrated and Embedded Biodiversity Mitigation and Enhancement Measures

Receptor	Changes and Effects	Integrated/Embedded Measures and Influence on Assessment
Other broadleaved woodland	Potential for accidental damage to retained woodland from construction activities including from dust generation, spillages, vehicle movement within root protection zones, and rubbish/waste deposition.	Construction: 1. Establishment of protective buffer around woodland/trees. Installation of site demarcation/tree protection fencing around retained woodland habitat to the west of the Site in accordance with BS5837:2012 to prevent accidental access and use of signage as necessary. 2. Preparation of a CEMP through Condition to avoid and minimise all potential construction related using best practice tried and tested industry methods and a monitoring program. Installation of site demarcation fencing to prevent accidental access. 3. Ecological toolbox talk and supervision of certain tasks by Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) including garden vegetation clearance. 4. Preparation of a LEMP through Condition to introduce a long-term programme of appropriate management of all created habitats to increase habitat diversity, quality

Receptor	Changes and Effects	Integrated/Embedded Measures and Influence on Assessment
		and ecological value. All works to be supervised where necessary by a suitably qualified ecologist and carried out by appropriate ecological contractors. Operation: 5. LEMP will be implemented during operation to manage the retained, enhanced and created habitats within the Site. Monitoring Site visits will be conducted on Years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 and follow up Site visits will also be required following any remediation measures being implemented to ensure success.
Individual trees	Removal of two trees (T15 and T16). Potential for accidental damage to retained trees on-site and adjacent trees off-site. 8No. new native trees to be planted.	Construction: Measure 1 and 2 6. Plant 8No. trees as per the condition LEMP and development plans. Operation: Measure 5
Bats	The site location is of moderate suitability to foraging and commuting bats. Loss of garden and modified grassland habitats and 2No. small trees. The building provides low to moderate suitability for roosting bats. Demolition of the building may result in roost loss and/or direct disturbance to bats including accidental killing or injury, if present. One tree (T9) has suitability for roosting bats within the redline boundary. Potential for accidental damage to habitat adjacent to the proposed Site from machinery and spillages during construction activities. Enhancement of the Site through creation of a larger area of modified grassland, garden and urban tree habitat.	Planning: One to two bat emergence surveys to be conducted to feed into the planning applications for demolition and re-development to confirm presence/absence of roosting bats. Bat Survey Report to be submitted as an addendum to this EclA. Construction: Measures 1 to 4 7. Provision of permanent in-built compensation crevice roost features if required and to be informed by the further bats surveys. 8. A lighting assessment has been conducted by DFL, 21-03-25 which demonstrates that Lux levels are 0.2 Lux at the edge of the southern garden area and there is not light spill to the southern adjacent scrub and woodland habitat. Operation: Measure 5.

Receptor	Changes and Effects	Integrated/Embedded Measures and Influence on Assessment
	Commuting and foraging habitat adjacent to the Site affected by an increase in lighting.	
Breeding Birds	Potential direct effects on birds, young and/or eggs due to disturbance, damage or destruction of active nests associated with vegetation removal and demolition of the existing building/structures on Site, and from construction related noise and vibration. Enhancement of the Site through creation of a larger area of modified grassland, garden and urban tree habitat.	Construction: Measures 1 to 4 9. Avoidance of potential effects on actively nesting birds, young, eggs and nest through the avoidance of vegetation clearance and building demolition works between March to August inclusive, or through the use of a suitably qualified ecologist who has confirmed no nesting activity present within 48 hours of clearance occurring between March and August. 10. Provision of 4No. 1SP sparrow nest boxes to be installed within the new buildings. Operation: Measure 4
Common Reptiles	Potential for accidental harm to reptiles in adjacent habitats to Site if not protected.	Construction: Measures 1 to 4
Badger	Potential risk of accidental injury/killing through falling in trenches/holes.	Construction: Measures 1 to 4 13. Open trenches/holes to be covered overnight or an access ramp left in for fauna to escape. Operation: Measure 4
Hedgehog and Common Toad	Potential risk of accidental injury/killing through movement of soil, falling in trenches/holes. Loss of garden habitat. Enhancement of the Site through creation of a larger area of modified grassland, garden and urban tree habitat.	Construction: Measures 1 to 4 Measure 14. Hedgehog access holes to be made in perimeter fencing and between gardens. Operation: Measure 4

5 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS AND EMBEDDED MITIGATION MEASURES

5.1 LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

The ecological changes that are likely to be caused by the proposed development where a valued receptor is considered sensitive to these and which therefore have the potential to cause significant effects and/or contravention of wildlife legislation, have been identified as:

- Construction phase habitat loss;
- Construction phase damage/harm to flora and fauna;
- Construction and operational phase deposition of particulates and nutrient enrichment from air emissions (in particular from dust and nitrogen);
- Construction and operational phase increase in noise, disturbance and vibration;
- Accidental construction phase pollution incidents; and
- Construction biodiversity net gain through creation of new ecologically enhanced and management of habitats at the proposed development site.

5.2 INTER-RELATED EFFECTS

There are two types of inter-related effect:

- Combined effects: when individual effects of the proposed development combine to create a cumulative effect; and
- Interactive effects: consideration of interactions between different effects in relation to a specific receptor.

Combined effects normally occur when different activities associated with a project act upon the same environmental receptor (e.g. the additive effect of physical disturbance from construction activities upon nesting birds may occur at the same time as transport related noise and lighting, that may act upon the same receptor(s) during the construction phase). In determining such effects, consideration would be given to the sensitivity of the receptor and the magnitude of environmental change. This is considered directly within the assessments included in this EclA and, as such, is not reported separately.

Interactive effects are assessed in relation to a specific receptor where the effect could be caused by the interactions of different types of effect from project activities even if individually these are insignificant (e.g. the interaction of noise disturbance on bats).

The assessment of effects on biodiversity receptors has the potential to be exacerbated by climate change, and this has been incorporated into the approach to integrated and embedded mitigation as set out in this EclA.

5.3 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS: OTHER BROADLEAVED WOODLAND

Potential effects associated with the proposed development to the woodland may occur as a result of the development. Consideration of how construction and operation of the proposed development will affect the habitat and therefore cause a negative (or positive) effect on its ecological status is set out below.

5.3.1 Damage/Harm to Flora from Construction

No removal of the woodland will be undertaken as part of the proposals. There is, however, the potential for accidental damage to scrub/tree roots and compaction of soil to occur as a result of vehicle movements, direct damage from machinery/plant and accumulation of rubbish/waste.

The installation of site demarcation fencing to prevent accidental access will protect tree habitat from damage by vehicle movements and plant/machinery, with signage to be used as appropriate. The implementation of embedded mitigation measures 1 to 4 provided in Table 11 will ensure these potential effects are avoided or minimised. The production of a CEMP will minimise the potential construction related effects through the implementation of standard industry working methods. Trees adjacent to the Site will be protected through the use of appropriate root protection fencing. Ecological toolbox talks will be mandatory for all construction personnel, with certain tasks being supervised by an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW).

With the mitigation measures including a CEMP in place and regular inspections conducted by an ECoW it is considered that there is **a minor but not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of construction damage/harm incidents to the woodland habitat.

5.3.2 Pollution Incidents from Construction

There is the potential for accidental pollution to occur during the construction phase of the proposals through the accidental release of pollutants/silt/soils into the adjoining habitats from a spillage of pollutants such as hydrocarbons from site machinery/vehicles onto soil. This could result in a change to water soil chemistry or siltation within the grassland and as such there is the potential that it could cause damage to vegetation, animals or birds by direct contact with the contaminant (especially fuels), leading to chronic or acute effects.

There is the potential for dust generation as a result of soil movements and construction traffic and dust could become deposited on the adjoining retained habitats.

The implementation of embedded mitigation measure 3 (preparation of CEMP) will avoid or minimise potential construction related effects through the implementation of standard industry methods. The establishment of bunded storage compounds for fuels (or self-bunded tanks) and soils will ensure that no accidental discharge will reach the adjacent habitats. Mandatory ecological toolbox talks prior to works commencing on Site and the supervision of key tasks with the potential to affect the habitats on-Site by an ECoW will minimise the potential for negative effects to the retained habitat to the north.

Although the likelihood or frequency of accidental pollution risks are low, a one-off event could be acute to retained habitats. However, with the implemented mitigation measures including a CEMP in place and regular inspections conducted by an ECoW it is considered that there is **a minor but not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of construction pollution incidents to the retained woodland habitat.

5.3.3 Habitat Management from Operation

There is the potential for woodland habitat to become degraded over time through a lack of appropriate management. The production and implementation of a CEMP (mitigation measures 4 and 5) will introduce a long-term programme of high-quality and appropriate management of all retained, enhanced and newly-created habitats within the Site, which will increase their ecological quality and function. All works will be supervised where necessary by a suitably qualified ecologist and carried out by appropriate ecological contractors.

5.4 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS: INDIVIDUAL TREES

Potential effects associated with the proposed development to the individual retained trees may occur as a result of the development. Consideration of how construction and operation of the proposed development will affect the habitat and therefore cause a negative (or positive) effect on its ecological status is set out below.

5.4.1 Habitat Loss from Construction

The proposed development will result in the loss of two trees (T15 and T16). Habitat creation and enhancement, including individual urban tree planting (8No.) will compensate for these losses. It is considered that there is a **minor positive but not significant** likely effect predicted as a result of habitat creation and enhancement during construction within the proposed development site.

5.4.2 Damage/Harm to Flora from Construction

The installation of site demarcation fencing to prevent accidental access will protect tree habitat from damage by vehicle movements and plant/machinery, with signage to be used as appropriate. The implementation of embedded mitigation measures 1 to 4 provided in Table 11 will ensure these potential effects are avoided or minimised. The production of a CEMP will minimise the potential construction related effects through the implementation of standard industry working methods. Trees adjacent to the Site will be protected through the use of appropriate root protection fencing. Ecological toolbox talks will be mandatory for all construction personnel, with certain tasks being supervised by an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW).

With the mitigation measures including a CEMP in place and regular inspections conducted by an ECoW it is considered that there is a **minor but not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of construction damage/harm incidents to the individual tree habitat.

5.4.3 Habitat Management from Operation

There is the potential for individual tree habitat to become degraded over time through a lack of appropriate management. The production and implementation of a LEMP (mitigation measures 4 and 5) will introduce a long-term programme of high-quality and appropriate management of all retained, enhanced and newly-created habitats within the Site, which will increase their ecological quality and function. All works will be supervised where necessary by a suitably qualified ecologist and carried out by appropriate ecological contractors.

It is considered that the management of the compensation habitat will provide a 11.45% BNG at the Site in the long-term, and therefore there is a **significant positive** effect predicted as a result of the habitat creation and management from operation of the development.

5.5 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS: BATS

Potential effects associated with the proposed development on foraging and commuting bats could occur as a result of the development. Consideration of how construction and operation of the proposed development could affect bats and therefore cause a negative (or positive) effect on their ecological status is set out below.

5.5.1 Loss of Potential Bat Roosting Habitat

The building has low to moderate suitability for roosting bats. Demolition of the building may result in roost loss and/or direct disturbance to bats including accidental killing or injury, if present. Should roosting bats be found to be present during one to two emergence surveys to be conducted in May/June 2025, compensation and mitigation measures will

be implemented for bats. This will be informed by the Bat Survey Report which will be submitted in due course in support of the planning application. A licence from Natural England will be applied for post-planning should this be required.

The tree (T9) which could potentially have PRFs for bats will be protected and retained through the construction phase via construction measures 1 and 2 (Table 11).

5.5.2 Habitat Loss to Bats from Construction

The proposed development will result in the loss of modified grassland and garden habitat which provides minimal foraging and commuting habitat for bats, however the Site location is of moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats. Habitat creation and enhancement, including the creation of a larger area of modified grassland and garden habitat with 8No. new urban native trees planted will compensate for these losses.

It is considered that there is a **neutral not significant** likely effect predicted as a result of habitat creation and enhancement within the proposed development site to bat habitat.

5.5.3 Light Disturbance to Bats from Operation

A lighting strategy and assessment has been produced for the Site (DFL, 23-03-25) which will minimise levels of lighting and use uni-directional lights and cowls etc to reduce light spill to adjoining boundary habitats to a minimum. The assessment demonstrates that there will be less than 0.2 Lux light spill at the edge of the red line boundary and therefore the light spill onto habitat adjacent to the south of the Site will be less than 0.2 Lux.

It is considered that there is a **minor not significant** likely effect predicted as a result of lighting on foraging and commuting bats as a result of the lighting strategy.

5.5.4 Habitat Management from Operation

There is the potential for on-site habitats used by bats to become degraded over time through a lack of appropriate management. The production and implementation of a LEMP (mitigation measures 4 and 5) will introduce a long-term programme of high-quality and appropriate management of all retained, enhanced and newly-created habitats within the Site, which will increase their ecological quality and function. All works will be supervised where necessary by a suitably qualified ecologist and carried out by appropriate ecological contractors.

The increased lighting from the operation has been minimised through a carefully planned lighting strategy. The created habitats will result in a **11.45% BNG** in on-site habitats in the long term for foraging and commuting bats. It is therefore considered that there is a **non-significant minor negative** effect predicted upon foraging and commuting bats as a result of operation of the development.

5.6 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS: BREEDING BIRDS

Common bird species were recorded using the wider Site. Consideration of how construction of the development proposals could affect breeding birds is set out below.

5.6.1 Habitat Loss from Construction

The proposed development will result in the loss of two trees (T15 and T16) and ornamental shrubs within the Site which have the potential to be used by nesting birds.

The Site will be enhanced through the creation of a larger area of modified grassland, garden habitat and 8No new native trees.

The provision of 4No. 1SP sparrow nest boxes (Measure 10) within the new buildings, will provide suitable compensation breeding habitat following the construction works. The compensation habitat at the Site contributes to a **11.45%** BNG in on-site habitats at the site calculated by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The compensation habitat will maintain nesting, shelter and foraging habitat for breeding birds.

It is considered that there is a **minor not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of a loss of foraging, shelter and breeding habitat for breeding birds from construction within the Site.

5.6.2 Damage/Harm to Flora and Fauna from Construction

Construction phase impacts on birds relate to the potential disturbance to foraging and active nests and breeding birds/eggs and young. The implementation of mitigation measures 1 to 4 will avoid or minimise potential effects to breeding birds during the construction phase of the proposed improvement works.

The production and implementation of a CEMP (mitigation measure 2) will minimise potential construction related effects through the use of standard industry working methods. Potential effects to birds, their nests, eggs and/or young will be avoided through the implementation of mitigation measure 9. Vegetation clearance will occur outside the bird nesting season, (March to August inclusive). Where this is not possible, a suitably qualified ecologist will confirm no nesting activity is present within 48 hours of clearance by undertaking a careful search of the area of vegetation to be removed.

With the mitigation measures including a CEMP in place and regular inspections conducted by an ECoW it is considered that there is a **negligible not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of construction damage/harm incidents to breeding birds within the Site.

5.6.3 Habitat Management from Operation

The on-going management of the garden, urban tree and modified grassland areas in accordance with the proposed LEMP by Condition, will result in maintaining the compensation habitats in a favourable condition to support breeding bird species. It is considered that there is a **minor but not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of habitat management from operation to breeding birds within the Site.

5.7 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS: BADGER

Potential effects associated with the proposed development on badger could occur as a result of the development. Consideration of how construction of the proposed development could affect badger and therefore cause a negative (or positive) effect on its ecological status is set out below.

5.7.1 Damage to Fauna from Construction

There is a potential risk of accidental injury/killing of badger through falling in open trenches or holes. The implementation of embedded mitigation measures 1 to 4 will ensure these potential effects are avoided or minimised.

Open trenches/holes to be covered over night or an access ramp left in for fauna to escape should they become accidentally trapped (Measure 13).

With the mitigation measures including a CEMP in place and regular inspections conducted by an ECoW it is considered that there is a **minor but not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of construction damage/harm incidents to badger within the Site.

5.7.2 Habitat Management from Operation

There is the potential for on-Site habitats used by badger to become degraded over time through a lack of appropriate management. The production and implementation of a LEMP (Measures 4 and 5) will introduce a long-term programme of appropriate management of all retained, enhanced and newly-created habitats within the Site, which will increase their ecological quality and function. All works will be supervised where necessary by a suitably qualified ecologist and carried out by appropriate ecological contractors.

It is considered that there is a **significant minor negative** effect predicted as a result of foraging and shelter habitat management and enhancement for badger from operation within the Site.

5.8 ASSESSMENT OF RESIDUAL EFFECTS: REPTILES, HEDGEHOG AND COMMON TOAD

Potential effects associated with the proposed development on reptiles, hedgehog and common toad could occur as a result of the development. Consideration of how construction of the proposed development could affect hedgehog and common toad and therefore cause a negative (or positive) effect on its ecological status is set out below.

5.8.1 Habitat Loss from Construction

The proposed development will result in the loss of vegetated garden which could be inhabited by reptiles, hedgehog and common toad.

The Site will be enhanced through the creation of a larger area of garden and modified grassland habitat. The compensation habitat at the Site contributes to a **11.45%** BNG in on-site habitats at the site calculated by the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The compensation habitat will maintain shelter and foraging habitat for hedgehog.

It is considered that there is a **minor not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of a loss of foraging and shelter habitat for hedgehog and common toad from construction within the Site.

5.8.2 Damage/Harm to Flora and Fauna from Construction

There is the potential for accidental damage to retained woodland habitat to occur as a result of construction activities including vehicle movements within root protection zones and direct damage from machinery/plant which could harm/kill reptile, hedgehog and common toad. There is also a potential risk of accidental injury/killing reptile, hedgehog and common toad through soil movement and vegetation clearance. The implementation of embedded mitigation measures 1 to 4 will ensure these potential effects are avoided or minimised and the vegetation clearance work will be overseen by an Ecological Clerk of Works (EcOW).

The production of a CEMP (Measure 2) will minimise the potential construction related effects through the implementation of standard industry working methods. The installation of Site demarcation fencing to prevent accidental access will protect boundary habitats from damage by vehicle movements and plant/machinery, with signage to be used as appropriate. Ecological toolbox talks will be mandatory for all construction personnel, with certain tasks being supervised by an ECoW.

Open trenches/holes to be covered over night or an access ramp left in for fauna to escape should they become accidentally trapped (Measure 13).

With the mitigation measures including a CEMP in place and regular inspections conducted by an ECoW it is considered that there is a **minor but not significant negative** effect predicted as a result of construction damage/harm incidents to hedgehog within the Site.

5.8.3 Habitat Management from Operation

There is the potential for on-Site habitats used by hedgehog and common toad to become degraded over time through a lack of appropriate management. The production and implementation of a LEMP (mitigation measures 4 and 5) will introduce a long-term programme of appropriate management of all retained, enhanced and newly-created habitats within the Site, which will increase their ecological quality and function. All works will be supervised where necessary by a suitably qualified ecologist and carried out by appropriate ecological contractors.

It is considered that there is a **significant minor negative** effect predicted as a result of foraging and shelter habitat management and enhancement for reptiles, hedgehog and common toad from operation within the Site.

6 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

There are no known future developments within the Site or adjacent to the Site on the Wiltshire Council Planning Portal that are likely to have a cumulative impact with the proposed development.

7 ADDITIONAL MITIGATION OR COMPENSATION REQUIREMENTS

The emergence bat surveys may inform that further mitigation and compensation measures are required to be implemented for bats and these will be submitted into the planning application as an addendum to this report. If required.

8 IMPLEMENTATION OF BIODIVERSITY MEASURES & MONITORING

Table 12 summarises the environmental measures embedded within the proposed development and the means by which they will be implemented, i.e. they will have been secured through planning conditions.

Table 12: Summary of Environmental Measures to be Implemented

Environmental measure	Responsibility for implementation	Compliance mechanism
Production and implementation of a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP)	Contractor/Project Ecologist	Planning condition
Production and implementation of a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)	Selwood Housing/Project Ecologist	Planning condition
Ecological toolbox talk and register of attendance for all persons working within the construction area	Contractor/Project Ecologist	Planning condition
Suitably Qualified Ecologist/Ecological Clerk of Works/Ecological Contractors to manage, monitor and implement all ecological aspects of the development.	Selwood Housing /Project Ecologist	Planning condition
Retention and protection woodland and trees (apart from those specifically identified as being removed through the development) with suitable offsets and barriers	Selwood Housing /Contractor	Planning condition
Use of dust suppression techniques	Selwood Housing /Contractor	Planning condition
Use of pollution control and response methods during construction and operation	Selwood Housing /Contractor/Operator	Planning condition
Implementation of all on site landscape/habitat measures in accordance with CEMP/LEMP and the Integrated/Embedded Mitigation and Enhancement Plan submitted with the Planning Application.	Selwood Housing /Project Ecologist/ Contractor	Planning Condition
Implementation of a programme of robust ecological monitoring, reporting and intervention to ensure all integrated and embedded mitigation and enhancement measures are successful in the short and long term.	Selwood Housing /Project Ecologist	Planning condition

Periodic UKHab condition habitat surveys to further inform the successful delivery of the habitat creation and management to confirm the delivery of the planned Biodiversity Net Gain will be undertaken following completion of the proposed works in years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30.

Habitat areas and conditions will be monitored during the site visits and prescriptions for amendments to management of the site will be provided to Selwood Housing to maximise the ecological benefit of ecological management actions for habitats at the site and fauna that may inhabit the site and to provide habitat gain that can be banked to offset future phases of development at the proposed Site.

9 CONCLUSIONS OF SIGNIFICANCE EVALUATION

Considering the detailed ecological baseline, the integrated and embedded ecological mitigation and enhancement measures and the assessment of likely significant effects as set out in Section 5 of this EclA; it is considered reasonable to conclude that no negative significant effects will occur to important biodiversity receptors, including legally protected species and designated sites, from either the construction or operational stages of the proposed development. A range of positive significant effects on biodiversity will arise through the development proposals with a measurable gain in habitats.

Furthermore, the development proposals are considered to meet the requirements of local and national planning policy alongside best practice in relation to the construction and long-term management of the Site.

The use of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric has demonstrated that the proposals will also deliver a significant 11.45% Biodiversity Net Gain in line with national and local policy as well as best practice, demonstrating the credible benefits this development proposal has for biodiversity at a local to district level.

It is recommended that a CEMP be produced in order to set out avoidance and mitigation measures during construction, particularly in relation to **retained and enhanced** habitats, and root protection zones. A LEMP will need to also be required to ensure that the required habitats and habitat conditions are created, maintained and monitored appropriately to ensure that the BNG conditions stated within this assessment are achieved. Monitoring Site visits will be required to be conducted on Years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 and follow up Site visits will also be required following any remediation measures being implemented to ensure success.

If any significant changes to the proposals shown in Figure 3 occur, a reassessment of the potential impacts may be required.

10 REFERENCES

- British Standards Institution, (2013). *BS42020 Biodiversity – A code of practice for planning and development*. Available at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/16%20-%20biodiversity%20-%20code%20of%20practice%20for%20planning%20and%20development%20%282013%29%20BS%20420202013.pdf>
- CIEEM, (2017). *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester. Available at: <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Guidelines-for-Preliminary-Ecological-Appraisal-Jan2018-typo-edit.pdf>
- Collins, J. (2023). *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*. 4th edition. Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- DEFRA The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, November 2023
- MAGIC Map <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>
- NARRS, Reptile Habitat Guide. [Online] Available at: http://narrs.org.uk/documents/Reptile_habitat_guide.pdf
- Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats*. Version 1.1. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.
- Stace, C., (2019). *New Flora of the British Isles*. 4th Edition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.
- Surveying Badgers, The Mammal Society, 1989
- UK Government, (2021). *Environment Act 2021*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>
- UK Government, (2019). *Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/579/contents/made>
- UK Government, (2006). *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>
- UK Government (1990) *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. Available at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>
- UK Government, (1981). *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>
- UK Habitat Classification, Habitat Definitions Version 2.01, UKHab July 2023 Natural England Biodiversity Metric 4.0 User Guide JP039, March 2023.

APPENDIX A – LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

LEGISLATION

Many species of animal and plant receive some degree of legal protection. For the purposes of this report, legal protection refers to: species included on Annex II of the Habitats Directive 1992 (Council of European Communities, 22/07/1992) , Schedules 2 and 5 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) , excluding species that are only protected in relation to their sale (see Section 9[5] and 13[2]) reflecting the fact that the proposed development does not include any proposals relating to the sale of species.

Legal offences associated with species listed on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act in England and Wales include inter alia:

- Deliberate capture, injury or killing of animals or taking or destroying their eggs;
- Deliberately disturb animals in a way that would significantly affect their local distribution or abundance, or affect their ability to survive, breed or rear young;
- Intentional or reckless disturbance of an animal in its place of shelter or protection;
- Damaging or destroying a resting place or breeding site;
- Intentionally or recklessly obstructing access to a place of shelter or protection; and
- Possess, control, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale/exchange any live or dead animal or any part of an animal.

Relevant species listed on these Schedules that are potentially associated with this Site include bats and reptile species (e.g. slow worm). All species of bat receive full protection from all legal offences listed above. Common reptile species receive partial protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act in that they are protected from killing and injury only.

All species of wild bird are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) from killing or injury. In addition, it is an offence to take or damage/ destroy their eggs and to damage or destroy a nest whilst it is in use. Species listed on Schedule 1 (such as barn owl) receive additional protection in that it is illegal to disturb birds or their young whilst occupying, or near to, an active nest.

A number of wild plants, habitats and animals (including reptiles, hedgehog and most species of bat) are also included within Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 which lists flora, fauna and habitats considered by the Secretary of State to be of principal importance for conserving biodiversity. The publication of the "England Biodiversity List" satisfies the requirements of Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 for the conservation of biodiversity. Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006 requires public bodies, including local planning authorities, to have regard for the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions.

Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (UK Government, 1992) which makes it an offence to willfully kill, injure or take (or attempt to kill, injure or take) a badger; or to disturb badgers whilst occupying their setts.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

NPPE

There are numerous national and local planning policies associated with flora and fauna (also referred to as biodiversity) that need to be addressed as part of the planning process. The Government has issued its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024, which requires impacts to biodiversity to be minimised. Paragraph 194 of the NPPF applies the same protection to Ramsar sites as that conferred by the Habitats Regulations to SACs and SPAs, it also applies the same protection to sites identified or required as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitat sites.

To protect and enhance biodiversity plans should:

- 192a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation;
- 192b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF requires development to apply the following principles (Paragraph 193):

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁷⁰ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Planning authorities should follow key principles to ensure that the potential impacts of planning decisions on biodiversity conservation are considered. Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation provides guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation and complements the NPPF.

The Natural Environment Paper

“The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature” outlines the Government’s approach and vision for nature in the UK including protecting and improving our natural environment, growing a green economy and reconnecting people and nature.

Biodiversity 2020

A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, are the country level strategies for England and builds on the natural Environment White Paper. It sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea. The proprieties for action include a more integrated large-scale approach to conservation, putting people at the heart of biodiversity policy, reducing environmental pressure and improving knowledge.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Wiltshire Core Strategy

As well as national policy, there is relevant biodiversity policy contained within Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted in January 2015. Core Policy 50 is relevant to the proposed application and is summarised below.

Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Protection

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.

All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

Any development potentially affecting a Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in paragraphs 6.75-6.77 above where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000 network. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Biodiversity enhancement

All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character.

Local sites

Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:

cannot reasonably be avoided

are reduced as far as possible

are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest

where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning

obligations or agreements.

Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long-term

Local Biodiversity Action Plans

The "England Biodiversity List" satisfies the requirements of Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and includes those habitat and species considered to be of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales. This list replaces the UK BAP Priority Habitats and Species.

However, many local authorities/counties still maintain a Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) document which includes those habitats and species considered to be a priority within the local area in terms of their biodiversity importance.

The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan produced in 2008 has a separate action plan for the 15 species of bats found in the county. The county is a stronghold for bats, and they utilise a wide range of habitats. Existing roosts, hibernation sites and key flight lines are protected, and more potential hibernation and roost sites should be created.

APPENDIX B – STATUTORY METRIC BNG REPORT

Alcock Crest, Warminster

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Report

Final

1643/Version 2.0

Client: Selwood Housing

Date: 9 April 2025

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Report prepared for:

Selwood Housing

Main contributors:

Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Principal Ecologist

Reviewed by:

Liz Johns BSc (Hons) MSc CEnv MCIEEM MRSB

Director

Issued by:

Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Principal Ecologist

Green Tree House, 11 St Margaret's St, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire, BA15 1DA
T: 01225 723652 | E: info@johnsassociates.co.uk | W: www.johnsassociates.co.uk

DOCUMENT REVISIONS

Version	Details	Date
1.0 Draft	Draft Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) issued to Client for review	21 March 2025
2.0 Draft	Draft Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) issued to Client for review following issue of updated development plan	25 March 2025
2.0 Final	Final Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) issued to Client for submission	9 April 2025

Third party disclaimer

Any disclosure of this report to a third party is subject to this disclaimer. The report was prepared by Johns Associates at the instruction of, and for use by, our client named on the front of the report. It does not in any way constitute advice to any third party who is able to access it by any means. Johns Associates excludes to the fullest extent lawfully permitted all liability whatsoever for any loss or damage howsoever arising from reliance on the contents of this report. We do not however exclude our liability (if any) for personal injury or death resulting from our negligence, for fraud or any other matter in relation to which we cannot legally exclude liability.

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Purpose of the Report	To provide the results of a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment conducted for Alcock Crest, Warminster, to inform the masterplanning of the development and the requirement for further habitat compensation and/or enhancement measures.
Summary of Proposed Development	The proposed development comprises demolition of the existing housing and redevelopment to provide new housing.
Surveys Undertaken	An extended UKHab survey and BNG condition assessment was conducted of all areas within the red line planning boundary at the Site to provide a habitat baseline on 12 March 2025.
Summary of Results	The development will result in a 0.19 unit BNG which represents a 11.45% BNG.
Conclusions	All on-site habitats including hardstanding, buildings, artificial unsealed surface, modified grassland and vegetated gardens will be lost. Two small trees will also be removed. All habitats will be re-created with 8No. small trees to be planted.
Compensation	All habitats can be compensated for on-site within the red line boundary.
Enhancement	Additional BNG unit enhancement is gained through an increase in modified grassland at the Site and through the individual urban tree planting.
Data Valid Until	March 2026
Local Planning Authority BNG Statement	
Do you believe that, if the development is granted planning permission, the BNG Condition (as set out in pg. 13 of Schedule 7A of the T&CPA 1990) would apply?	Yes
The date of the pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitat(s) have been calculated and the reason that it is a date earlier than the planning application submission date	12 March 2025. This is the date of the UKHab and BNG condition assessment survey which must occur in advance of the planning submission to inform the development layout.
The pre-development biodiversity value of onsite habitats on this date	1.66
Has there been any loss (or degradation) of any onsite habitat(s), resulting from activities carried out before the date specified in 1. Either: - On or after 30 January 2020 which were not in accordance with a planning permission; or - On or after 25 August 2023 which were in accordance with a planning permission	No
If yes, please provide details including: the date immediately before this activity was carried out; the onsite biodiversity on this date; and any supporting evidence (or reference to relevant document containing these details).	N/A
Publication date of the biodiversity metric tool used to calculate the biodiversity value	Statutory Biodiversity Metric July 2024
Does the application site have irreplaceable habitats	No
If yes, please provide a description of these habitats or reference to relevant documents	N/A
Confirm that application includes the following: i) Completed Biodiversity Metric Tool ii) Baseline and Post-Development Habitat Plans iii) If applicable; plans showing irreplaceable habitats on site	Yes, Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tool submitted separately, and results summarised in this report with the plans included (Figures 2 and 3).
Area there Protected and priority species on Site	Potential for roosting bats under the roof tiles. No evidence of roosting bats found during internal inspection.

Designated sites, important habitats or other biodiversity features	No
Features of geological conservation importance	No

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Background.....	1
1.2	Summary of Proposals.....	1
1.3	Purpose of this Report	1
1.4	Personnel.....	1
1.5	Statutory Biodiversity Metric	1
1.5.1	Significant On-Site Enhancements.....	2
1.5.2	Non-Significant Enhancements	3
1.6	Legislation and Policy.....	3
2	METHODOLOGY	4
2.1	Habitat Classification And Condition Assessment	4
2.1.1	UKHab Survey.....	4
2.1.2	Individual Trees	6
2.1.3	ArcGIS Symbology.....	6
2.1.4	Minimum Mapping Units.....	6
2.1.5	Strategic Significance	7
2.1.6	Distinctiveness.....	7
2.2	Limitations, Constraints and Assumptions	7
3	BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN	8
3.1	Strategic Significance.....	8
3.2	Existing UKHab Baseline Habitat Findings.....	8
3.2.1	Buildings – u1b5.....	8
3.2.2	Developed Land, Sealed Surface – u1b.....	8
3.2.3	Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface – u1c	8
3.2.4	Modified Grassland - g4.....	8
3.2.5	Suburban mosaic of developed and natural surfaces (827, Garden).....	8
3.2.6	Other Woodland; Broadleaved – w1g	9
3.2.7	Individual Trees – Urban.....	9
3.2.8	Non-native and ornamental hedgerow – h2b	9
3.3	Existing BNG Baseline Habitats	10
3.3.1	On-Site.....	10
3.3.2	Habitat Distinctiveness	10
3.4	Post-development	12
3.4.1	On-Site Habitats.....	12
3.4.2	Headline Results	14
3.4.3	BNG Good Practice Principals for Development.....	14
3.4.4	Compensation and Enhancement Measures	15
4	CONCLUSIONS	17
5	REFERENCES	18
APPENDIX A – LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY		
APPENDIX B BASELINE BNG CONDITION ASSESSMENTS		
APPENDIX C TREE SURVEY PLAN		
APPENDIX D POST-DEVELOPMENT BNG CONDITION ASSESSMENTS		

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Selwood Housing commissioned Johns Associates Ltd to undertake a Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment of the proposed site at Alcock Crest, Warminster, in support of a planning application for the site. The site is located at post code BA12 8ND (central Ordnance Survey (OS) grid reference ST 86624 44512) and is hereafter referred to as the 'Site'. Figure 1 provides the Site location plan. The Site currently consists of a block of flats and associated communal gardens, grassland and individual trees.

1.2 SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The existing blocks of flats at 43-60, 61-78 Alcock Crest are in need of renovation and are proposed to be demolished and replaced by new buildings on the same footprint as the existing structures.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide the results of a Statutory BNG assessment. Delivery of a 10% BNG became mandatory for most developments on the 12 February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). If the required BNG cannot be met on-site, an off-site compensation area or compensation payment to a habitat banking scheme is required. This report will outline the results of the baseline UKHab survey and provide the results of the BNG habitat condition assessments, the post-development habitat condition assessments and the BNG calculations.

The post-development plan produced by Planning Sphere Ltd has informed the post-development BNG calculations and the plans were designed with ecological advice and through consultation with Selwood Housing to avoid the woodland habitat of higher distinctiveness and to maximise the achievable BNG whilst strengthening green infrastructure in the local area.

1.4 PERSONNEL

The UKHab survey, BNG Condition Assessments, BNG calculations and production of this report were conducted by Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM, a Principal Ecologist at Johns Associates who has worked as an ecological consultant since 2005. Tessa has a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Studies and an MSc in Ecology and Management of the Natural Environment. Tessa is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and holds a Natural England Class 1 survey licence for bats (2019-40584-CLS-CLS-1). Tessa is competent in botanical identification and is certified FISC Level 3.

1.5 STATUTORY BIODIVERSITY METRIC

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric uses habitat as a proxy for overall biodiversity within different habitat types. Habitats are assigned a value based on their intrinsic biodiversity value or 'distinctiveness', which is predefined for each habitat within the metric. This value is then multiplied based on the size, condition, and geographical location of the habitat in order to ascertain its absolute value in 'biodiversity units'. Separate calculations are used within the metric for area-based habitats, linear habitats (such as hedgerows) and watercourses (including ditches and streams). These units are non-transferable and must therefore be considered individually for each project or development. Hereafter they will be referred to as "habitat units", "hedgerow units" and "river units" respectively. Collectively, they will be referred to as "biodiversity units".

Natural England provides a Calculation Tool with all calculations built in to aid in the assessment process. This report should be read in conjunction with the Calculation Tool provided for the assessment of this Site.

Underlying this assessment process are a key set of principles which explain the intended use of the Metric. They are as follows:

- Principle 1 – The metric assessment should be completed by a competent person.
- Principle 2 – The use of this biodiversity metric does not override existing biodiversity protections, statutory obligations, policy requirements, ecological mitigation hierarchy or any other requirements. This includes consenting or licensing processes, for example woodlands.
- Principle 3 – This biodiversity metric should be used in accordance with established good practice guidance and professional codes.
- Principle 4 – This biodiversity metric is not a complex or comprehensive ecological model and is not a substitute for expert ecological advice.
- Principle 5 – Biodiversity units are a proxy for biodiversity and should be treated as relative values.
- Principle 6 – This biodiversity metric is designed to inform decisions in conjunction with locally relevant evidence, expert input, or guidance.
- Principle 7 – Habitat interventions need to be realistic and deliverable within a relevant project timeframe.
- Principle 8 – Created and enhanced habitats should be, where practical and reasonable, local to any impact and deliver strategically important outcomes for nature conservation.
- Principle 9 – This biodiversity metric does not enforce a minimum habitat size ratio for compensation of losses. Proposals should aim to:
 - Maintain habitat extent - supporting more, bigger, better and more joined up ecological networks;
 - Ensure that proposed or retained habitat parcels are of sufficient size for ecological function.

During the process of undertaking a biodiversity net gain assessment using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, the following rules must be followed to ensure its proper use:

- Rule 1 – The trading rules of this biodiversity metric must be followed.
- Rule 2 – Biodiversity unit outputs, for each type of unit, must not be summed, traded, or converted between types. The requirement to deliver at least a 10% net gain applies to each type of unit.
- Rule 3 – To accurately apply the biodiversity metric formula, you must use the biodiversity metric calculation tool or small sites biodiversity metric tool (SSM) for small sites. The tools remove the need for a user to manually calculate the change in biodiversity value. The tool will summarise the results of the calculation and inform a user whether the biodiversity net gain objective has been met.
- Rule 4 – In exceptional ecological circumstances, deviation from this biodiversity metric methodology may be permitted by the relevant planning authority.

1.5.1 Significant On-Site Enhancements

A significant on-site enhancement occurs where habitat enhancement has contributed significantly to the proposed development's BNG, relative to the biodiversity value before development. This varies with the scale of the development but usually include the following:

- Habitats of medium or higher distinctiveness in the biodiversity metric.
- Habitats of low distinctiveness which create a large number of biodiversity units relative to the biodiversity value of the site before development.

- Habitat creation or enhancement where distinctiveness is increased relative to the distinctiveness of the habitat before development.
- Areas of habitat creation or enhancement which are significant in area relative to the size of the development.
- Enhancements to habitat condition, for example from poor or moderate to good.

Where there are significant enhancements, they must be secured with a legal agreement (planning obligation or conservation covenant) or planning condition for 30 years in the same way as off-site gains e.g. a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP). Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) will consider the most appropriate mechanism. The above mechanisms can also be applied by the LPA for plans that are not 'significant enhancements' where they contribute to locally important species or ecological networks.

1.5.2 Non-Significant Enhancements

Non-significant enhancements are habitat enhancements whose loss will not significantly decrease the biodiversity value, for example, private gardens or container planting. These enhancements do not normally require maintenance provisions e.g. an HMMP, legal agreement or commitment to maintain them for 30 years.

1.6 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

The legislation and national and local planning policies which are relevant to this assessment are provided in Appendix A to this report.

Figure 1: Site Location Red Line Boundary Plan and Context of Site



2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 HABITAT CLASSIFICATION AND CONDITION ASSESSMENT

2.1.1 UKHab Survey

A UKHab survey and Statutory BNG Condition Assessments of the Site was undertaken on 12 March 2025 by experienced ecologist Tessa Pepler BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM from Johns Associates Ltd. The temperature was 5.5°C, cloud 8/8, wind 2, dry with good visibility. This survey was completed in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) v2.01 (2023) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017) and BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development (British Standards Institute, 2013).

Each habitat parcel was assessed on its condition via a series of relevant criteria as per the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (Defra July 2024). Information recorded included species abundance, presence of non-native species, undesirable species, management, habitat structure, human impacts and age of habitats, and these were recorded using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments in the field which are appended to this report.

The on-Site and off-Site (where accessible) habitats were classified following the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Version 2.01 (2023) guidelines, which provides a more detailed interpretation of baseline habitat survey data than previous habitat classifications systems, such as Phase 1 Habitat Assessments. The professional edition of UKHab “UK Habitat Classification – Professional Edition1” (UKHab-P) was used which includes Priority Habitat Types, all Annex 1 Habitats and the habitats listed in EUNIS.

The classification of primary habitats is hierarchical with five levels with a list of Secondary Codes, the latter is sub- divided into Essential codes and Additional codes. It is mandator that each recorded habitat parcel is allocated single primary Habitat Code and to record the presence of all Essential Secondary Code features associated with that habitat parcel. Additional Secondary Codes can also be associated with habitat parcels, where it is relevant to the whole parcel. Up to six Secondary Codes can be allocated to a single habitat.

UKHab v2.01 has a total of 268 Secondary Codes, sub-divided into 15 major groupings. Secondary codes are added to habitat parcels to:

- Confirm the identity of habitat mosaic and complexes.
- Add information about habitat origin and modifications.
- Add information on environmental context, management and land use in a consistent manner.

Essential Secondary Codes are identified as 2-digit numbers (10 – 90). Additional Secondary Codes (100 – 853) are 3-digit numbers and cover features including land management, land use (incorporating green infrastructure), environmental qualifiers, species features and hydrological regime descriptors. The UK Habitat Classification v2.0 Secondary Code Groupings are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: The UK Habitat Classification v2.0 Secondary Code Groupings

UKHab v2.0 Secondary Code Grouping	Description	UKHab v2.0 Codes
Secondary Essentials – Grasslands and Heathland	Habitat mosaic types and complexes that occur in the grassland, heathlands, hedgerows and scrub habitat	10 – 19
Secondary Essentials – Woodlands and Trees	Habitat complexes, origins and mosaic types that principally occur in woods associated with trees	25 – 34
Secondary Essentials – Freshwater	Habitat complexes and origins that principally occur in freshwater habitats	40 – 51

UKHab v2.0 Secondary Code Grouping	Description	UKHab v2.0 Codes
Secondary Essentials – Wetlands	Habitat complexes and environmental qualifiers that principally occur in wetlands	55 – 57
Secondary Essentials – All habitats	Habitat descriptors that can occur on any habitat	60 – 63
Secondary Essentials – Coast	Habitat complexes that principally occur on the coast	70 – 77
Secondary Essentials – Built environment	Habitat complexes, mosaics, land uses and green infrastructure principally associated with the built environment	80 – 90
Additional Secondary Codes – Grasslands and Heathlands	Habitat management, land use, environmental qualifier and species features principally associated with grassland, heathlands, hedgerows and scrub habitat	100 – 131
Additional Secondary Codes – Woodlands and Trees	Habitat management, land use, environmental qualifiers and species features principally associated with woods and trees	200 – 217
Additional Secondary Codes – Freshwater	Habitat management, land use, environmental qualifiers and species features principally associated with freshwater habitats	300 – 323
Additional Secondary Codes – Wetlands	Hydrological regime, habitat management and species features principally associated with wetlands	400 – 425
Additional Secondary Codes – All habitats	Additional habitat descriptors that can occur on any habitat	500 – 532
Additional Secondary Codes – Farming	Habitat management and land uses principally associated with farmlands	600 – 618
Additional Secondary Codes – Coast	Land use and environmental qualifiers principally associated with coastal areas	700 – 703
Additional Secondary Codes – Built environment	Land use and green infrastructure descriptors principally associated with the built environment	800 – 853

Where appropriate, maps were supplemented with target notes which provided specific information on habitats present that were too limited in extent to map at the scale at which data is presented, or the presence of species and habitats of ecological interest.

An annotated habitat map together with descriptions of the recorded habitat types was produced, which was subsequently digitised using a geographical information system (ArcGIS). The survey also included identification of any non-native invasive plant species. Flora taxonomy follows the nomenclature detailed in New Flora of the British Isles (4th Edition) (Stace C., 2019). Flora, where appropriate, are given a descriptive score of abundance using the DAFOR scale, as follows:

- D – Dominant
- A – Abundant
- F – Frequent
- O – Occasional
- R – Rare
- L – Locally (to be used as a prefix for any of the above)

- V – Very (to be used as a prefix for any of the above)

2.1.2 Individual Trees

'Individual tree' is a broad habitat type which is used to record:

- Individual urban/rural trees
- Lines of trees
- Blocks/groups of trees found within the perimeter of urban land.
- Includes ancient and veteran trees

Individual trees are classified as either 'urban' or 'rural' trees. Classification is carried out after considering the degree of urbanisation of the habitats around the tree and the overall best fit for the location.

Recording individual trees at baseline is based on their diameter at breast height (DBH). The biodiversity metric uses set values to represent the areas of individual trees as displayed in Table 2. The number of individual trees is then input into the tree helper tool embedded within the statutory metric to generate area values to input into the metric spread sheet.

At baseline, a small size class tree is considered to have a minimum DBH of 7.5 cm. All trees under this DBH are considered saplings and are therefore excluded from individual tree assessments. Sapling trees are covered under secondary coding.

In post development calculations, all trees planted with a DBH less than 7.5 cm are classified as 'small'.

Table 2: Tree Size Classes and Area Equivalents, Taken from the Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide

Size Class	Diameter at Breast Height (cm)	Biodiversity Metric Area Equivalent (ha)
Small	Greater than 7.5 cm and less than or equal to 30cm	0.0041
Medium	Greater than 30 cm and less than or equal to 60cm	0.0163
Large	Greater than 60 cm and less than or equal to 90 cm	0.0366
Very Large	Greater than 90 cm	0.0765

2.1.3 ArcGIS Symbology

At the time of production, a complete symbology for all habitats in the UK Habitat Classification Professional Edition (UKHab-P) was not available. The UK Habitat Classification Basic Edition (UKHab-B) symbology has therefore been used, and where necessary to add in habitats not included in UKHab-B we have designed our own hatching system within the Level 2 colours for those habitats – following the guidance provided in the UK Habitat Classification Basic Edition: Suggested Symbology for Maps document (UKHab, 2020).

2.1.4 Minimum Mapping Units

UKHab guidance indicated that UKHab has 3 Minimal Mapping Units (MMU's):

- 25 m² and 5 m length for urban and small-scale development projects, fine scale mapping of designated sites
- 400 m² and 20 m length for landscape scale surveys
- 2500 m² for larger unenclosed upland habitats.

Large scale, simple habitats or feasibility surveys should use a larger MMU. For this project, given the size of the site and the scale of the map the 25 m² and 5 m length MMU has been applied. This will allow all habitats to be clearly visible on the map whilst enabling enough fine detail to remain to clearly show all habitats present.

2.1.5 Strategic Significance

As part of the BNG assessment, habitats are afforded different levels of strategic significance, which describes the local significance of the habitat based on its location and the habitat type. In the absence of Wiltshire Council having a published Local Nature Recovery Strategy, habitats were assigned a strategic significance value using a data search on MAGIC Map, the Wiltshire Core Strategy Interactive Map and a WSBRC data search for priority and statutory wildlife/habitat designations. The strategic significance assigned is high, moderate or low. 'High' strategic value is assigned to biodiversity opportunity areas, core statutory sites, core non-statutory sites and network opportunity areas, 'medium' to habitats that provide connectivity or ecological function to high strategic habitats and 'low' to habitats that do not fall within the above categories.

2.1.6 Distinctiveness

For the purpose of the metric assessment, distinctiveness refers to the relative scarcity of the habitat and its importance for nature conservation. The actual values assigned to each habitat type used in the metric are given in the Technical Supplement. These are automatically applied by the calculator tool based on the habitat type.

2.2 LIMITATIONS, CONSTRAINTS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The findings of this report are valid at the time of survey. Should there be delays to the project timetable and/or implementation of the proposed development, updated desk study and/or site survey work may be required. In this instance, advice should be sought to ensure the data, recommendations and conclusions set out in this report remain valid.

The UKHab was undertaken in March 2025, which is outside of the JNCC's optimum field survey season for the south of England (from late March to Mid-October), wherein the most accurate picture of the vegetation communities present can be gained. For the modified grassland area G2, the number of species per m² was less than 6-8 species (excluding footnote 1 undesirable species), following the precautionary principal it is assumed that in season this criterion is met and the BNG includes this.

No other limitations or constraints with regard to the field survey or desk study were encountered and therefore the BNG calculations are considered valid.

3 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

3.1 STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE

The Site is not contained within, and does not have connectivity to, any statutory or non-statutory designated sites and is not included within the Wiltshire Council Core Strategy. All habitats within the Site have therefore been assigned a strategic significance of low within the baseline and post-development BNG calculations.

3.2 EXISTING UKHAB BASELINE HABITAT FINDINGS

The Existing UKHab Plan (Figure 2) and the baseline BNG habitat condition sheets (Appendix B) should be referred to throughout this section. No Schedule 9 non-native invasive species were encountered during the survey – one cotoneaster tree *Cotoneaster frigidus* was present however this species is not included on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

3.2.1 Buildings – u1b5

The majority of the Site consisted of 2 two-storey red brick buildings with concrete interlocking tiles.

3.2.2 Developed Land, Sealed Surface – u1b

Hardstanding was present, forming the parking area and paths through the Site.

3.2.3 Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface – u1c

A central gravel courtyard was present at both 43-60 Alcock Crest and 61-78 Alcock Crest.

3.2.4 Modified Grassland - g4

Regularly mown modified grassland habitat was present in between the 43-60 Alcock Crest and 61-78 Alcock Crest blocks, as well as to the west and east of the Site. Species lists for the distinct grassland habitat parcels are provided in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Modified Grassland and Descriptions

Modified grassland number	Species composition
G1	Perennial rye grass <i>Lolium perenne</i> (D), annual meadow grass <i>Poa annua</i> (A), dandelion <i>Taraxacum officinale</i> (O), daisy <i>Bellis perennis</i> (O), creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> (O), yarrow <i>Achillea millefolium</i> (O), dove's foot cranesbill <i>Geranium molle</i> (O), cocksfoot <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> (A), red fescue <i>Festuca rubra</i> (F), greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> (O) and white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> (O).
G2	Cocksfoot (A), annual meadow grass (F), dandelion (O) and daisy (O).
G3	Perennial rye grass (A), Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i> (F), cocksfoot (A), creeping buttercup (O), daisy (O), dandelion (O) and lesser celandine <i>Ficaria verna</i> (O).

3.2.5 Suburban mosaic of developed and natural surfaces (827, Garden)

Vegetated gardens were present at the rear of the Alcock Crest flats and comprised small areas of grass and native and non-native shrubs.

3.2.6 Other Woodland; Broadleaved – w1g

An area of broadleaved woodland was located to the south west of the Site. A mature beech *Fagus sylvatica* trees was located along the northern boundary and due to the tree canopies adjoining within ash *Fraxinus excelsior* tree canopy within the area of trees and scrub layer to the south, this whole area has been classed as other broadleaved woodland. The scrub layer included hazel *Corylus avellana* (a), field maple *Acer campestre* (f) and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* (r). Ground flora included common nettle *Urtica dioica* (f), ivy (f), herb Robert *Geranium robertianum* (o), lesser celandine *Ficaria verna* (f), lords-and-ladies *Arum maculatum* (o), ivy leaved speedwell *Veronica hederifolia* (o).

3.2.7 Individual Trees – Urban

Several trees were present across the Site including Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris*, ornamental cherry *Prunus sp.*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, cotoneaster *Cotoneaster frigidus* and silver birch *Betula pendula*. Table 4 provides the details of the trees which are numbered as per the Tree Survey and Constraints Plan produced by Tim Pursey in February 2024. Appendix B provides the habitat condition assessment and Appendix C provides the Tree Survey Plan. Tree T18, an ash was outside of the red line boundary, (although the RPA is within the Site), and is not included within the BNG assessment, however the tree will be protected during the construction phase and this is outlined within the EclA Report.

Table 4: Individual Tree Information

Tree Ref. No.	Species Common Name	Species Latin Name	DBH	BNG Size Class	BNG Condition
T6	Scots pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	46.5	Medium	Moderate
T7	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	45	Medium	Moderate
T8	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	46.5	Medium	Moderate
T9	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	51	Medium	Moderate
T10	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	54	Medium	Moderate
T11	Ornamental cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	45	Medium	Moderate
T15	Sycamore	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	22.5	Small	Moderate
T16	Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster frigidus</i>	27.5	Small	Poor
T17	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	32.5	Medium	Moderate

3.2.8 Non-native and ornamental hedgerow – h2b

A short section of ornamental hedgerow was present at the entrance to each Alcock Crest block. The hedgerows were less than 20 m in length and are therefore not included within the BNG assessment.

3.3 EXISTING BNG BASELINE HABITATS

3.3.1 On-Site

Condition assessments for the baseline habitats are provided in Appendix B. Figure 2 provides the baseline UKHab Habitat Plan. The Statutory BNG Metric Assessment spreadsheet is submitted separately to this report and should be referred to for the habitat areas and the baseline BNG unit values.

3.3.2 Habitat Distinctiveness

Overall, the majority of the habitats within the Site boundary are of very low to medium distinctiveness and this has been quantified from the Statutory Metric trading summary for each habitat type (Table 5). Areas of medium distinctiveness value have been preferentially retained and development avoided within those areas to ensure that a high loss is BNG does not occur.

Table 5: Existing Habitat Type Distinctiveness

Habitat Type	Distinctiveness	Trading Rule
Habitats		
Modified grassland	Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required
Vegetated garden		
Other woodland; broadleaved	Medium	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required
Urban trees		

Figure 2: On-Site Baseline UKHab Habitat Plan



3.4 POST-DEVELOPMENT

3.4.1 On-Site Habitats

The post-development proposals for the Site currently comprise loss of all very low and low distinctiveness habitats and retention of the medium distinctiveness habitats – the other woodland; broadleaved and the majority of the individual urban trees (2No. are lost). The following calculations are based on BBA Plan Number 4464-3-305E. The plan was updated to avoid urban tree and woodland loss. Eight new small urban trees will be planted to offset the loss of the two small trees. A larger area of modified grassland is provided post-development which provides compensation for the modified grassland loss and contributes, with the additional tree planting, to achieving the mandatory 10% BNG. Garden habitat is replaced with new garden habitat post-development.

Figure 3 provides the Post-Development UKHab Habitat Plan. Condition assessments for the proposed habitats are provided in Appendix D.

Figure 3: On-Site Post-Development UKHab Habitat Plan



3.4.2 Headline Results

As demonstrated in Table 6 below, the biodiversity net gain results show an overall 11.45% net gain in habitats and the Trading Rules have been satisfied.

Table 6: Summary of BNG Results

Unit Type	Baseline Units	Post-development Units	Net Unit Change	% Change	Trading Rules Satisfied?
Habitat	1.66	1.85	0.19	11.45%	Yes

3.4.3 BNG Good Practice Principals for Development

In accordance with the BNG Good practice Principles for Development, A Practical Guide, produced by CIEEM, IEMA and Ciria, Baker *et al* 2019. Table 7 provides the Good Practice Principles that have been applied to the BNG assessment.

Table 7: Accordance with 'Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development' (Baker *et al.*, 2019).

Principle	In Practice
1. Apply the mitigation hierarchy	Designs decisions have been documented within the prepared EclA due consideration for the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) (CIEEM, 2018) including mitigation hierarchy. Trading rules have been accorded with in the prepared metric and ecologically justified decisions have been taken in respect of proposed habitats. Avoidance of loss of modified grassland, garden and two small urban tree habitat is not possible within the development footprint, full compensation of the loss of habitats within the development footprint has been provided and generates benefits for nature conservation.
2. Avoid losing biodiversity that cannot be offset elsewhere	There are no irreplaceable habitats on-site and impacts to such habitats are avoided.
3. Be inclusive and equitable	Design decisions taken have considered wider stakeholders including the local residents and the end users of the Site. The compensation has sought to balance biodiversity benefits and access to nature, with the retention of the other woodland; broadleaved and the majority of the baseline urban trees.
4. Address risk	A precautionary approach has been taken to creation of new habitat types and condition for on-site biodiversity gain provision, with all habitats included with a predicted moderate condition.
5. Make a measurable net gain contribution	The Statutory Biodiversity Metric has been used to demonstrate a clear and quantified calculation of the net effect of development upon biodiversity, using habitat as a proxy for wider biodiversity. The statutory 10% BNG will be achieved, and the Trading Rules are met.
6. Achieve the best outcomes for biodiversity	The decisions for design proposals have been subject to an iterative process with ecologists to ensure biodiversity is considered from an early stage and the best outcomes for biodiversity are achieved. The Trading Rules are met for all habitats.
7. Be additional	Habitat creation has been included with a larger area of modified grassland and more urban trees than the baseline as a betterment to the habitat at the Site, and not as compensation for protected species.
8. Create a net gain legacy	All habitats will be managed for at least 30 years to support long term benefits with interest of both nature and the residents in mind. A Landscape Ecological

Principle	In Practice
	Management Plan (LEMP) will be produced for the on-site habitats which will outline designing for climate change, adaptive management and the funding mechanisms for the long-term management of the habitats. The habitat creation at the Site is not significant enhancement and therefore an HMMP is not required.
9. Optimise sustainability	The habitats are designed to be low maintenance to reduce costs and the need for any pesticides.
10. Be transparent	An iterative approach has been used to inform the biodiversity net gain throughout the design of the Site. Inputs from stakeholders will be used to refine the approach as necessary through the planning process.

3.4.4 Compensation and Enhancement Measures

Table 8 below details the requirements of the compensation and enhancement measures which will be implemented in order to achieve the BNG habitat conditions for the post-development habitats. These should be read in conjunction with a LEMP or similar (enhancement is not significant) which should be provided within the planning application or via planning condition.

Table 8: Summary of Proposed Compensation and Enhancement Measures

Habitat Type	Proposed Compensation or Enhancement Measure	Target Condition	Delivery Details
Grassland	Creation of modified grassland	Moderate	In order to satisfy the criteria for moderate condition as per the Statutory Metric, the following must apply: - There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m². - The sward height must be varied with at least 20% of the sward >7cm in height, and 20% <7cm. - No bracken or scrub encroachment should be allowed to establish. - No invasive non-native species should be present.
Woodland	Retention of broadleaved woodland	Moderate	Please see appended baseline Condition Assessment Sheet for Woodlands (Appendix B). Enhancement of the woodland will not be possible due to the small area.
Trees	Planting of 8No. small trees	Moderate	In order to achieve moderate condition, <u>at least three</u> of following must apply: - Tree species should be native. - Trees should not be unnecessarily pruned or subjected to detrimental activities. - Deadwood, cavities, ivy and loose bark should be preserved. - At least 20% of the tree canopy should oversail vegetation beneath. - Gaps in canopy of tree groups are <10% and no individual gaps being >5m wide.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Provided that the recommendations for the creation and management of habitats can be implemented, it is predicted that the proposed development will achieve a net gain of 11.45% (0.19 Units). The habitat Trading Rules have been met.

Figure 3 Provides the post development UKHab Plan and the Statutory Biodiversity Metric BNG spreadsheet has been submitted separately within this planning application.

It is recommended that a CEMP be produced which sets out the avoidance and mitigation measures required during construction, particularly in relation to the root protection zones (RPZs) of the **retained woodland and individual tree** habitats. A LEMP will be required (ecological enhancement is not-significant) to ensure that the habitats and habitat conditions are created, maintained and monitored appropriately to ensure that the BNG conditions stated within this assessment are achieved. Monitoring Site visits will be required in Years 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 and follow up Site visits will also be required following any necessary remediation measures being implemented to ensure success.

Should any significant changes to the proposals shown in Figure 3 occur, a reassessment of the potential impacts will be required.

5 REFERENCES

CIEEM, IEMA and Ciria (2019). *Good practice Principles for Development, A Practical Guide*, Baker et al. Available at:

<https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/C776a-Biodiversity-net-gain.-Good-practice-principles-for-development.-A-practical-guide-web.pdf>.

British Standards Institution, (2013). *BS42020 Biodiversity – A code of practice for planning and development*. Available at:

<https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-06/16%20-%20biodiversity%20-%20code%20of%20practice%20for%20planning%20and%20development%20%282013%29%20BS%20420202013.pdf>

CIEEM, (2017). *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester. Available at: <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Guidelines-for-Preliminary-Ecological-Appraisal-Jan2018-typo-edit.pdf>

MAGIC Map <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

Stace, C., (2019). *New Flora of the British Isles*. 4th Edition. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, UK.

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide, February 2024.

UK Government, (2021). *Environment Act 2021*. Available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>

UK Government, (2019). *Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2019/579/contents/made>

UK Government, (2006). *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006*. Available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

UK Government (1990) *Town and Country Planning Act 1990*. Available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents>

UK Government, (1981). *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Available at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>

UK Habitat Classification, Habitat Definitions Version 2.01, UKHab July 2023

Wiltshire Core Strategy Interactive Map. Site Accessed on 21 March 2025.

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/edf6de344bab47cabf9cee7cc42f2af8/page/Page>

APPENDIX A – LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

LEGISLATION

Environment Act 2021 and Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Under the Environment Act 2021, all planning permissions granted in England (with a few exemptions) except for small sites will have to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain from 12 February 2024. BNG will be required for small sites from 2 April 2024. BNG will be measured using Defra's biodiversity metric and all off-site and significant on-site habitats will need to be secured for at least 30 years. This sits alongside:

- A strengthened legal duty for public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity,
- New biodiversity reporting requirements for local authorities, and
- Mandatory spatial strategies for nature: Local Nature Recovery Strategies or 'LNRS'.

Schedule 7A Biodiversity Gain in England – Part 1 states:

1 (1) This Schedule makes provision for grants of planning permission in England to be subject to a condition to secure that the biodiversity gain objective is met.

(2) Paragraphs 2 to 12 have effect for the purposes of this Schedule.

Biodiversity gain objective

2 (1) The biodiversity gain objective is met in relation to development for which planning permission is granted if the biodiversity value attributable to the development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by at least the relevant percentage.

(2) The biodiversity value attributable to the development is the total of—

- (a) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat,
- (b) the biodiversity value, in relation to the development, of any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development, and
- (c) the biodiversity value of any biodiversity credits purchased for the development.

(3) The relevant percentage is 10%.

(4) The Secretary of State may by regulations amend this paragraph so as to change the relevant percentage.

Biodiversity value and the biodiversity metric

3 References to the biodiversity value of any habitat or habitat enhancement are to its value as calculated in accordance with the biodiversity metric.

4 (1) The biodiversity metric is a document for measuring, for the purposes of this Schedule, the biodiversity value or relative biodiversity value of habitat or habitat enhancement.

(2) The biodiversity metric is to be produced and published by the Secretary of State.

(3) The Secretary of State may from time-to-time revise and republish the biodiversity metric.

(4) Before publishing or republishing the biodiversity metric the Secretary of State must consult such persons as the Secretary of State considers appropriate.

(5) The Secretary of State may by regulations make transitional provision in relation to the revision and republication of the biodiversity metric.

(6) The Secretary of State must lay the biodiversity metric, and any revised biodiversity metric, before Parliament.

Pre-development biodiversity value

5 (1) In relation to any development for which planning permission is granted, the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the relevant date.

(2) The relevant date is—

(a) in a case in which planning permission is granted on application, the date of the application, and

(b) in any other case, the date on which the planning permission is granted.

(3) But the person submitting the biodiversity gain plan for approval and the planning authority may agree that the relevant date is to be a date earlier than that specified in sub-paragraph (2)(a) or (b) (but not a date which is before the day on which this Schedule comes into force in relation to the development).

(4) This paragraph is subject to paragraphs 6 and 7.

6 If—

(a) a person carries on activities on land on or after 30 January 2020 otherwise than in accordance with—

(i) planning permission, or

(ii) any other permission of a kind specified by the Secretary of State by regulations, and

(b) as a result of the activities the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat referred to in paragraph 5(1) is lower on the relevant date than it would otherwise have been, the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is to be taken to be its biodiversity value immediately before the carrying on of the activities.

7 Where planning permission is granted in respect of land which is registered in the biodiversity gain site register under section 100 of the Environment Act 2021, the pre-development biodiversity value of the land is the total of—

(a) the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat on the relevant date, and

(b) to the extent that it is not included within that value, the biodiversity value of the habitat enhancement which is, on that date, recorded in the register as habitat enhancement to be achieved on the land.

Post-development biodiversity value

8 (1) In relation to any development for which planning permission is granted, the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat is the projected value of the onsite habitat as at the time the development is completed.

(2) That value is to be calculated by taking the pre-development biodiversity value and—

(a) if at the time the development is completed the development will, taken as a whole, have increased the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat, adding the amount of that increase, or

(b) if at the time the development is completed the development will, taken as a whole, have decreased the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat, subtracting the amount of that decrease. This is subject to paragraph 9.

9 (1) This paragraph applies in relation to any development for which planning permission is granted where—

(a) the person submitting the biodiversity gain plan for approval proposes to carry out works in the course of the development that increase the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat, and

(b) the planning authority considers that the increase is significant in relation to the pre-development biodiversity value.

(2) The increase in biodiversity value referred to in sub-paragraph (1) is to be taken into account in calculating the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat only if the planning authority is satisfied that the condition in sub-paragraph (3) is met.

(3) The condition is that any habitat enhancement resulting from the works referred to in sub-paragraph (1)(a) will, by virtue of—

(a) a condition subject to which the planning permission is granted,

(b) a planning obligation, or

(c) a conservation covenant, be maintained for at least 30 years after the development is completed.

(4) The Secretary of State may by regulations amend sub-paragraph (3) so as to substitute for the period for the time being specified there a different period of at least 30 years.

Registered offsite biodiversity gains

10(1) “Registered offsite biodiversity gain” means any habitat enhancement, where—

(a) the enhancement is required to be carried out under a conservation covenant or planning obligation, and

(b) the enhancement is recorded in the biodiversity gain site register (as to which, see section 100 of the Environment Act 2021).

(2) References to the allocation of registered offsite biodiversity gain are to its allocation in accordance with the terms of the conservation covenant or planning obligation referred to in sub-paragraph (1)(a).

(3) The biodiversity value of registered offsite biodiversity gain is measured, under the biodiversity metric, in relation to development to which it is allocated.

Biodiversity credits

11 “Biodiversity credits” means credits under section 101 of the Environment Act 2021.

General

12 (1) In relation to development for which planning permission is granted—

“onsite habitat” means habitat on the land to which the planning permission relates;

“planning authority” means the local planning authority, except that—

(a) in a case where the planning permission is granted by Mayoral development order under section 61DB, “planning authority” means such of the Mayor of London or the local planning authority as may be specified in the order;

(b) in a case where the planning permission is granted by the Secretary of State under section 62A, 76A or 77, “planning authority” means such of the Secretary of State or the local planning authority as the Secretary of State may determine;

(c) in a case where the planning permission is granted on an appeal under section 78, “planning authority” means such of the person determining the appeal or the local planning authority as that person may direct.

(2) “Habitat enhancement” means enhancement of the biodiversity of habitat.

(3) References to the grant of planning permission include the deemed grant of planning permission.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

NPPF

There are numerous national and local planning policies associated with flora and fauna (also referred to as biodiversity) that need to be addressed as part of the planning process. The Government has issued its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024, which requires impacts to biodiversity to be minimised. Paragraph 194 of the NPPF applies the same protection to Ramsar sites as that conferred by the Habitats Regulations to SACs and SPAs, it also applies the same protection to sites identified or required as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitat sites.

To protect and enhance biodiversity plans should:

- 192a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation;
- 192b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF requires development to apply the following principles (Paragraph 193):

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁷⁰ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Planning authorities should follow key principles to ensure that the potential impacts of planning decisions on biodiversity conservation are considered. Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation provides guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation and complements the NPPF.

The Natural Environment Paper

“The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature” outlines the Governments approach and vision for nature in the UK including protecting and improving our natural environment, growing a green economy and reconnecting people and nature.

Biodiversity 2020

A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, are the country level strategies for England and builds on the natural Environment White Paper. It sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy for the next decade on land (including rivers and lakes) and at sea. The proprieties for action include a more integrated large-scale approach to conservation, putting people at the heart of biodiversity policy, reducing environmental pressure and improving knowledge.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Wiltshire Core Strategy

As well as national policy, there is relevant biodiversity policy contained within Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted in January 2015. Core Policy 50 is relevant to the proposed application and is summarised below.

Core Policy 50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Protection

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.

All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

Any development potentially affecting a Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in paragraphs 6.75-6.77 above where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000 network. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Biodiversity enhancement

All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character.

Local sites

Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:

cannot reasonably be avoided

are reduced as far as possible

are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest

where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements.

Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long-term

Local Biodiversity Action Plans

The "England Biodiversity List" satisfies the requirements of Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and includes those habitat and species considered to be of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales. This list replaces the UK BAP Priority Habitats and Species.

However, many local authorities/counties still maintain a Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) document which includes those habitats and species considered to be a priority within the local area in terms of their biodiversity importance.

The Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan produced in 2008 has a separate action plan for the 15 species of bats found in the county. The county is a stronghold for bats, and they utilise a wide range of habitats. Existing roosts, hibernation sites and key flight lines are protected, and more potential hibernation and roost sites should be created.

APPENDIX B BASELINE BNG CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)													
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type													
Grassland - Modified grassland													
Habitat Description													
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification													
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-site Alcock Crest	Survey date and Surveyor name	12/03/25 Tessa Pepler										
		Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)											
Limitations (if applicable)		Habitat parcel reference											
		G1	G2	G3									
		Grid reference											
Condition Assessment Criteria													
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)											Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these 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 ² (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.	Y	N	Y									
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.	N	N	N									
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	Y	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.	N	N	Y									
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	N	Y	N									
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> less than 20%.	Y	Y	Y									
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Y	Y	Y									
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)		Y	N	Y									
Number of criteria passed		4	4	5									
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓											
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)												
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	X		X									
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)		X										
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score													
Footnotes													
Footnote 1 – 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> . Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover. Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement. Footnote 4 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)													

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type														
Habitat Types														
Individual trees – Urban trees Individual trees – Rural trees Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.														
<i>Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of rural trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in rural locations.</i>														
Habitat Description														
Urban trees														
Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment): Young trees over 7.5 cm 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 should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.														
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-Site Alcock Crest			Survey date and Surveyor name		12/03/25 Tessa Pepler								
				Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)										
Limitations (if applicable)				Habitat parcel reference										
				T6	T7	T8	T9	T10	T11	T15	T16	T17		
				Grid reference										
Condition Assessment Criteria														
				Criterion passed (Yes or No)										Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).			Y	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	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	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .			N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N		
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	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.			N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y		
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.			N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y		
Number of criteria passed				3	4	4	4	4	4	3	2	5		
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score		Score Achieved x/✓										
Passes 5 or 6 criteria		Good (3)										X		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria		Moderate (2)		X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Passes 2 or fewer criteria		Poor (1)									X			
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.														
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score ²														

Condition Sheet: WOODLAND Habitat Type						
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Types						
Woodland and forest - Lowland beech and yew woodland						
Woodland and forest - Lowland mixed deciduous woodland						
Woodland and forest - Native pine woodlands						
Woodland and forest - Other coniferous woodland						
Woodland and forest - Other Scot's pine woodland						
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; broadleaved						
Woodland and forest - Other woodland; mixed						
Woodland and forest - Upland birchwoods						
Woodland and forest - Upland mixed ashwoods						
Woodland and forest - Upland oakwood						
Woodland and forest - Wet woodland						
Habitat Description						
Other broadleaved woodland						
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification						
This condition sheet is based on the England Woodland Biodiversity Group (EWBG) Woodland Condition Survey Method, available here:						
Woodland Wildlife Toolkit (sylva.org.uk)						
IMPORTANT: This biodiversity metric woodland condition assessment must be used to assess woodland being input into the biodiversity metric. The outputs of this condition assessment are not equivalent to, nor are they comparable with the scores from the EWBG condition assessment, because the EWBG assessment has been adapted for the biodiversity metric, including the removal of EWBG Indicator 7 (Proportion of favourable land cover around woodland) and Indicator 14 (Size of woodland), and minor changes to other indicators.						
On-site or off-site, site name and location		On site Alcock Crest	Survey date and Surveyor name		12/03/25 Tessa Pepler	
Limitations (if applicable)			Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)			
Grid reference			Habitat parcel reference		W1	
Condition Assessment Criteria						
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator	Notes (such as justification)
A	Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes ¹ present.	Two age-classes ¹ present.	One age-class ¹ present.	2	
B	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland ² .	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland ² .	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland ² .	3	
C	Invasive plant species	No invasive species ³ present in woodland.	Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, and other invasive species ³ <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ³ ≥10% cover.	3	
D	Number of native tree species	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.	Two or less native tree or shrub species ⁴ across woodland parcel.	1	Ash and beech
E	Cover of native tree and shrub species	>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 .	3	Field maple, blackthorn, hazel
F	Open space within woodland	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 .	2	

G	Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland ⁸ ; trees 4 - 7 cm 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 .	2	
H	Tree health	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback ⁹ .	11% to 25% tree 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 .	3	
I	Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.	2	
J	Woodland vertical structure	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 .	2	
K	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees ¹² per hectare.	One veteran tree ¹² per hectare.	No veteran trees ¹² present in woodland.	1	
L	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	1	
M	Woodland disturbance	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 .	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ .	3	

Total Score (out of a possible 39)

28

Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Result Achieved
Total score >32 (33 to 39)	Good (3)	Moderate
Total score 26 to 32	Moderate (2)	
Total score <26 (13 to 25)	Poor (1)	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score		

APPENDIX C TREE SURVEY PLAN



Category B trees

Category C trees

Category U trees

Root protection area

Tim Pursey

Arboricultural Consultant

1 Stanley Park, Lower Easton, Bristol BS5 6DT

Tel 0117 951 1375 Email info@tree-expert.com

TITLE

Tree Constraints Plan

Apartments at Alcock Crest

SIZE

A1

SCALE

1:250

DWG NO

TP 3108/2402/TCP

REV

27 Feb 2024

TIM PURSEY

SIZE

A1

SCALE

1:250

DWG NO

TP 3108/2402/TCP

REV

27 Feb 2024

APPENDIX D POST-DEVELOPMENT BNG CONDITION ASSESSMENTS

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) Habitat Type			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-Site Alcock Crest, Warminster	Survey date and Surveyor name	Post-Development Tessa Pepler
Limitations (if applicable)	N/A	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference	
Habitat Description			
Modified grassland public spaces			
ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² present, including at least 2 forbs (these 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 ² (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.	Y	
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.	N	
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.	N	
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	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 ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Y	
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			Y
Number of criteria passed			4
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Good (3)		
Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	4	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			

Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type			
Habitat Types			
Individual trees – Urban trees Individual trees – Rural trees Complete a condition sheet for each tree or block of trees.			
<i>Please see the separate Line of trees condition sheet for a line of rural trees. You should only use the Line of trees condition assessment and record that habitat type in rural locations.</i>			
Habitat Description			
Urban trees			
Individual trees (description applied to the urban or rural environment): Young trees over 7.5 cm 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 should predominantly overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.			
On-site or off-site, site name and location	On-Site Alcock Crest, Warminster	Survey date and Surveyor name	Post-Development Tessa Pepler
Limitations (if applicable)	N/A	Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey)	
Grid reference		Habitat parcel reference	8No. New small native trees
Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
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) ¹ .	N	
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	
Number of criteria passed		4	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	4	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.			
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score ²			