



Land at Netherhampton Road, Netherhampton, Salisbury, SP2 8RA

Badger Survey Report

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1.0 Summary

The proposal is to construct new commercial buildings on an area of land adjacent to the Armishaws Removal and Storage building. The land had been cleared of vegetation down to bare ground in what appears to be late 2024, however at the time of survey the vegetation on site was returning and becoming re-established. Vegetation was beginning to grow again over the earth mounds.

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken and a report prepared on this in November 2024, this highlighted the presence of Badgers on site. A single sett entrance or potential outlier sett was recorded along the eastern boundary and seven holes, a potential main sett, was recorded along the southern boundary.

The site was revisited in May and June 2025 and activity included:

- A main Badger sett along the southern boundary which was partially on the Armishaws site and partially on the land to the south on the other side of the hedge – this had at least 7 entrances.
- Two Badger Sett holes into the southern side of an earth mound close to the southern boundary.
- Two Fox earth holes in earth mounds on site.
- Signs of digging and foraging by Badgers.
- Badger activity on a trail-camera with a Badger passing by close to the southern boundary.

The existing setts were monitored over a period of 29 days with cameras, sticks and sand. During this time none of the setts were shown to be in use, however the camera traps showed Badgers continuing to use the site. It is unclear if the works to clear the site resulted in disturbance to the Badgers and their sett and they deserted it.

As a precautionary measure a 20m exclusion buffer, on areas of vegetation, will be maintained between the main sett to the south and any development. The 20m zone will be fenced off with appropriate fencing during construction works. This would include retaining the existing earth mound and other vegetation in the zone. A wildlife corridor will also be retained along the eastern boundary lining the southern boundary to the north. Typical measures for avoidance of badger injury or death will also be employed during construction (e.g. escape ramps in excavations).

Badgers are mobile animals and sett creation and use can change on a daily basis. A further assessment will need to take place prior to any construction works, this will involve a check of the site for active setts. Any active setts not covered by the exclusion zone or impacted by the works will need to be closed down under licence. Badger sett closures, which involve excluding badgers from their setts or destroying them, are restricted to the period between 1st July and 30th November. This is to avoid disturbing badgers during the breeding season, which includes the time when they have dependent young below ground.

The proposals for the adjacent development to the south were also reviewed. It would appear that Badgers move south from the Armishaws site and from here they are able to access their main foraging habitat. Further consultation should take place with the owners of the site to the south to ensure the Badger sett on the shared boundary is not disturbed by any future proposals in that area and that a suitable buffer and wildlife corridor is retained. It will be important to ensure that badgers remain able to pass through the Armishaws site into the wider countryside to the north also.

2.0 Introduction

Background

- 2.1 Peach Ecology was commissioned in May 2025 to carry out a Badger Survey at Land at Netherhampton Road, Netherhampton, Salisbury, SP2 8RA (Grid Reference: SU 12438 29128), located as shown in **Appendix A** and laid out as shown in **Appendix B**. This report will be submitted to Wiltshire Council for permission to build new commercial buildings, as shown in **Appendix C**.

Description of site and surrounding area

- 2.2 The site is the Armishaws Storage and Removal building and this includes an area of green space to the east of the building. The area of vegetation had been mostly cleared of vegetation in 2024 and since this time it had been colonised with patches of grassland, ruderals and scrub. There were also some areas of hard standing on site. There are several mature trees to the north of the site, a native hedgerow along the southern boundary and patches of vegetation and shrubs along the eastern boundary. The site is located on the eastern edge of Netherhampton, 2km west of Salisbury city centre. There are newly built residential houses to the east along with an electricity sub-station. Commercial buildings are located to the west, the A3094 forms the northern boundary and beyond this is a new residential development along with some arable fields. to the south of the site are more arable fields and to the south-west is a new residential development under construction.

Brief

- 2.3 To carry out a Badger survey of the site and inform the clients of any ecological implications associated with the proposals. Additional advice was requested on the likelihood of Great Crested Newts (GCN) being present in nearby ponds.

3.0 Methodology

Desk Study

- 3.1 This involved gathering ecological data relating to Badgers from Ecological Assessments for the sites immediately to the east and west, this included:
- Phase 1 Habitat Survey - Land at Harnham Business Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire (CC Ecology, 2014)
 - Extended Phase 1 Ecological Survey - Land at Harnham Business Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire (Stark Ecology, 2018)
 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal - Land at Netherhampton Road, Netherhampton, Salisbury, SP2 8RA (Arbtech, 2024)
 - Update Ecology Survey Report - Land South of Netherhampton Road, Salisbury (EDP, 2021)
- 3.2 Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) a DEFRA run website was used along with Ordnance Survey maps and aerial images to check for relevant data on badgers, foraging areas, wildlife corridors etc, where the site connects into the surrounding area.

Site Assessment

- 3.3 The initial site survey was undertaken on the 8th May 2025. The survey employed techniques based on standard Badger Survey techniques (Surveying Badgers, The Mammal Society). The site survey included an assessment of the habitats immediately adjacent to the site, where possible, to look at its value within the local landscape. A search was conducted on site and within the land nearby to look for signs of badgers and their setts. Any setts encountered were classed as main, annexe, subsidiary or outlier. A search was also conducted for any other evidence of badger. Signs of Badgers looked for included the following:
- Setts: These can be single isolated holes or interconnected series of holes.
 - Paths: Look for paths between setts or leading to feeding areas.
 - Latrines: Badger latrines are often found at home range boundaries and are characterized by excavated pits containing faeces.
 - Snuffle Holes: Small scrapes where badgers have searched for food.
 - Scratching Posts: Look for these at the base of tree trunks.
 - Day Nests: These are bundles of grass and vegetation where badgers may sleep above ground.
 - Footprints, Hair, and Snuffle Holes: These can also be indicators of badger presence.
 - Sett Monitoring: Use camera traps, sand, and sticky tape to monitor sett activity.

4.0 Results and Analysis

Desk study

- 4.1 The existing Ecological Assessments to the south, west and east recorded signs of badgers in the immediate vicinity of the development site, these are shown in Appendix D. There has been an active Badger population in the immediate area and it is likely they used the site prior to site clearance to commute through and to forage in. suitable buffer zones and wildlife corridors will need to be maintained on site.

Site Assessment

Habitats

- 4.2 The site was cleared of vegetation in 2024 (Photo 1) and it has been recolonised by a mixture of Nettles, Bramble, Bindweed, Cleavers, Fumitory, ruderals and grasses (Photo 2). There are large piles of earth (Photo 3) made when the site was cleared and these have become used by Badgers and Foxes. The earth piles have become vegetated also and there are piles of wood stacked on site (Photo 4). A native hedgerow containing Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Bramble and Dogwood runs along the southern boundary, this is where a main Badger sett is located. The site has an area of hard standing along the western side between the vegetated part and the Armishaws storage building, this leads up to the turning area and the entrance to the A3094 Netherhampton Road. An area of grassland with mature trees is located to the northern side of the site near alongside the main road.



Photo 1: The site viewed from the south looking north, the colonised earth mounds are shown to the right



Photo 2: The south-east corner next to the electrical substation with an earth pile to the left



Photo 3: An earth pile adjacent to the southern boundary with Badger digging



Photo 4: Wood piles from cleared vegetation

Badgers

- 4.3 The site was visited first on 8th May 2025 and then subsequently on 16th May, 22nd May, 28th May and 1st June 2025. Sand, sticky sticks and a trail camera were used to check the site and setts for Badger activity overnight.
- 4.4 Evidence recorded during the surveys is shown in Appendix D and includes:
- A main Badger sett along the southern boundary which was partially on the Armishaws site (Photo 5) and partially on the land to the south on the other side of the hedge (Photo 6) – this had at least 7 entrances. The survey showed no signs of recent use of the entrances but past use was clear
 - Signs of digging and foraging by Badgers on site (Photo 7)
 - Two Badger Sett holes into the southern side of an earth mound close to the southern boundary (Photo 8) showing that Badgers have used the site to build setts since it was cleared of vegetation in 2024. These showed no new signs of evidence in 2025
 - Fox earth holes in earth mounds on site
 - Badger activity on a trail-camera with a Badger passing by close to the southern boundary (Photo 9)
 - Badger tracks to the south of the southern boundary hedge (Photo 10)
- 4.5 The existing setts were monitored over a period of 29 days with cameras, sticks and sand. During this time none of the setts were shown to be in use, however the camera traps showed Badgers continuing to use the site, just not the setts.
- 4.6 No new use was shown of the main sett along the southern boundary and continued monitoring is recommended. It is unclear if the works to clear the site in 2024 resulted in Badgers deserting it although the holes leading out to the south appear to have been used in the last few months. The hedge to the south was retained when the site was cleared and the main Badger sett is in the bank of the hedge with the holes pointing south away from the cleared part of the site. Vegetation had been disturbed at the entrance to the sett.
- 4.7 The presence of Badgers on site digging new setts in the earth piles from the site clearance would indicate that the main sett will become occupied again in time. It is important therefore that the main sett along the southern boundary is retained and protected during construction with a suitable buffer and with suitable fencing. The buffer will extend into the existing mounds of earth – these will be retained as features within the buffer and will be allowed to vegetate naturally.
- 4.8 Access to the sett from the north along the eastern side of the development will be retained as it is unclear if this is an important corridor with access to the northern side of the site and across the A3094.



Photo 5: A Sett entrance along the northern side of the hedge along the southern boundary of the site



Photo 6: A sett entrance on the southern side of the hedge along the southern boundary



Photo 7: Signs of digging by Badgers in the past but no recent evidence



Photo 8: Two Badger Set holes into the southern side of an earth mound close to the southern boundary



Photo 9: A Badger recorded along the southern boundary on a trail camera



Photo 10: Badger tracks are present to the south of the southern boundary where they have access into the open countryside

- 4.9 The site will need to be reassessed prior to any construction proposals as Badgers are mobile animals and are using the area. Any active setts potentially disturbed by any works (vegetation clearance, heavy machinery etc) will need to be closed under licence (between July and the end of October) and as part of this further monitoring will take place over 21 days and if there are signs of badger usage during this time the sett will be fenced off and a one-way gate will be installed so badgers can leave but not return. Every day for 21 days, the sett must be checked. If badgers have dug back in again, the process starts from the beginning. Once the badger sett is finally confirmed empty and a successful 21-day period has passed, you can dig it up. You must do this promptly to prevent badgers returning and being at risk.

5.0 Requirements and Recommendations

Badgers

- 5.1 A 20m exclusion zone from the southern hedgerow on the vegetated area along the southern hedgerow boundary will be marked out. This area will then be allowed to naturally vegetate and managed as a no-go area unless an ecologist is present. Wood and logs from the site can be used in this area.
- 5.2 A vegetated wildlife corridor at least 1m wide will be maintained along eastern boundary – this will be fenced off. This will maintain access to the north.
- 5.3 Suitable fencing will be in place to protect the exclusion zone and Badger setts during construction – this will be erected prior to construction.
- 5.4 The site will be resurveyed prior to construction to check on the earth mounds and other old outlier setts. Any outlier setts potentially impacted will be monitored over a 21 day period and if there are no signs of activity the sett can be closed down under licence.
- 5.5 If badgers have dug back in again, the process starts from the beginning. Once the badger sett is finally confirmed empty and a successful 21-day period has passed, it can be dug out under ecological supervision promptly to prevent badgers returning and being at risk.
- 5.6 Avoid artificial lighting around setts, the wildlife corridor to the east and the area of grassland to the front below the trees. These areas will be maintained below 2 lux.
- 5.7 A Construction Method Statement and/or a Construction Environment Management Plan will be prepared to ensure badgers are not harmed during construction.
- 5.8 Typical measures for avoidance of badger injury or death will also be employed during construction (e.g. escape ramps in excavations).
- 5.9 A site management and monitoring plan should be in place to monitor the site during construction to ensure that setts are protected and then post construction to ensure that setts have not been interfered with, such as from increased human presence, lighting or vandalism. This can include carrying out management works to habitats and additional survey work to check that mitigation measures are working as intended, followed by remedial work if needed.
- 5.10 Further consultation should take place with the owners of the site to the south to ensure the Badger sett on the shared boundary is not disturbed by any future proposals in that area and that a suitable buffer and wildlife corridor is retained

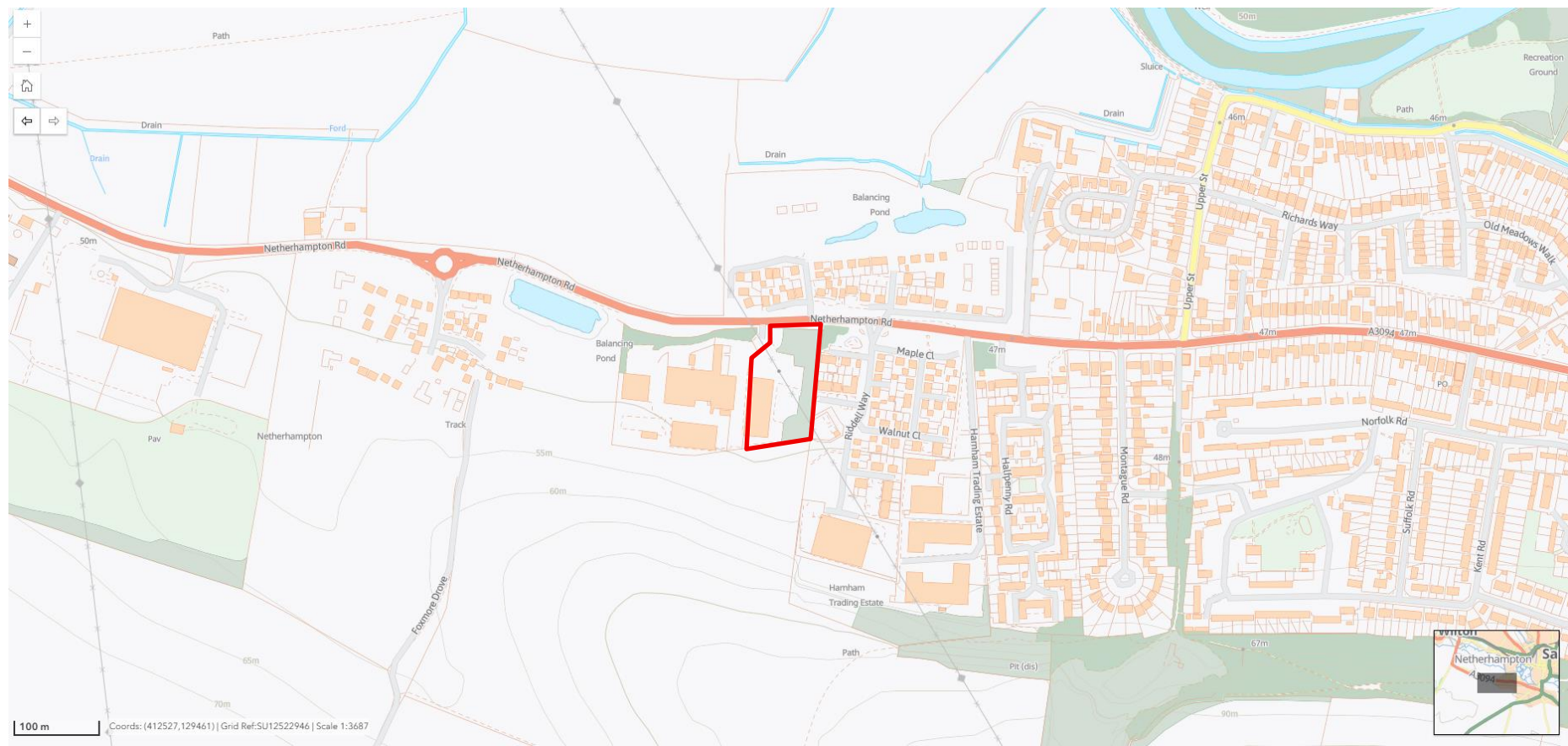
Construction management plan

- 5.11 A construction management plan will be prepared. This will take into account:
 - Clearance of any vegetation

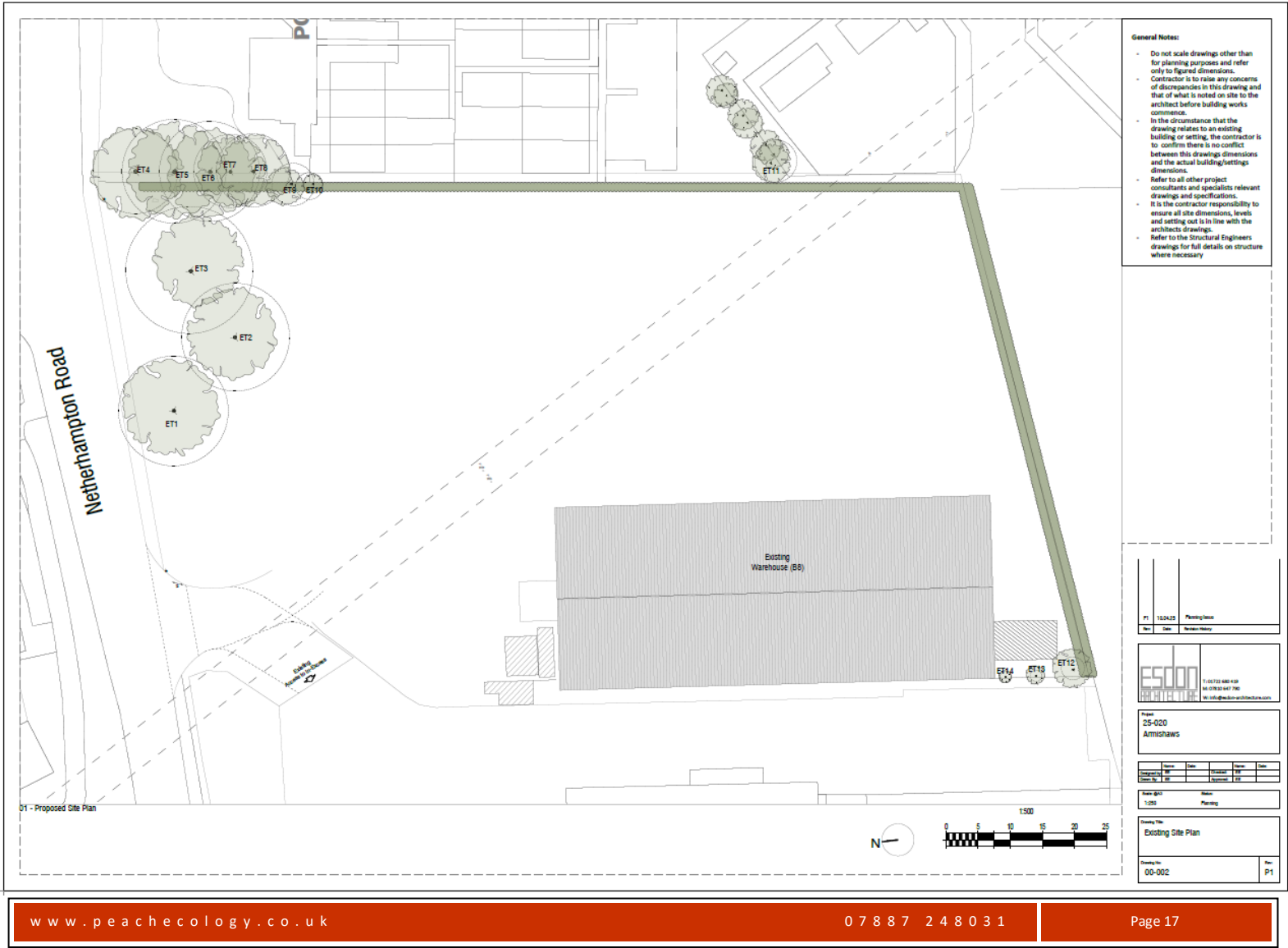
- Badger presence near to the site
- Storage of materials on site
- Pollution and drainage
- Erection of fencing to protect the Badger exclusion zone

Appendices

Appendix A: Site location

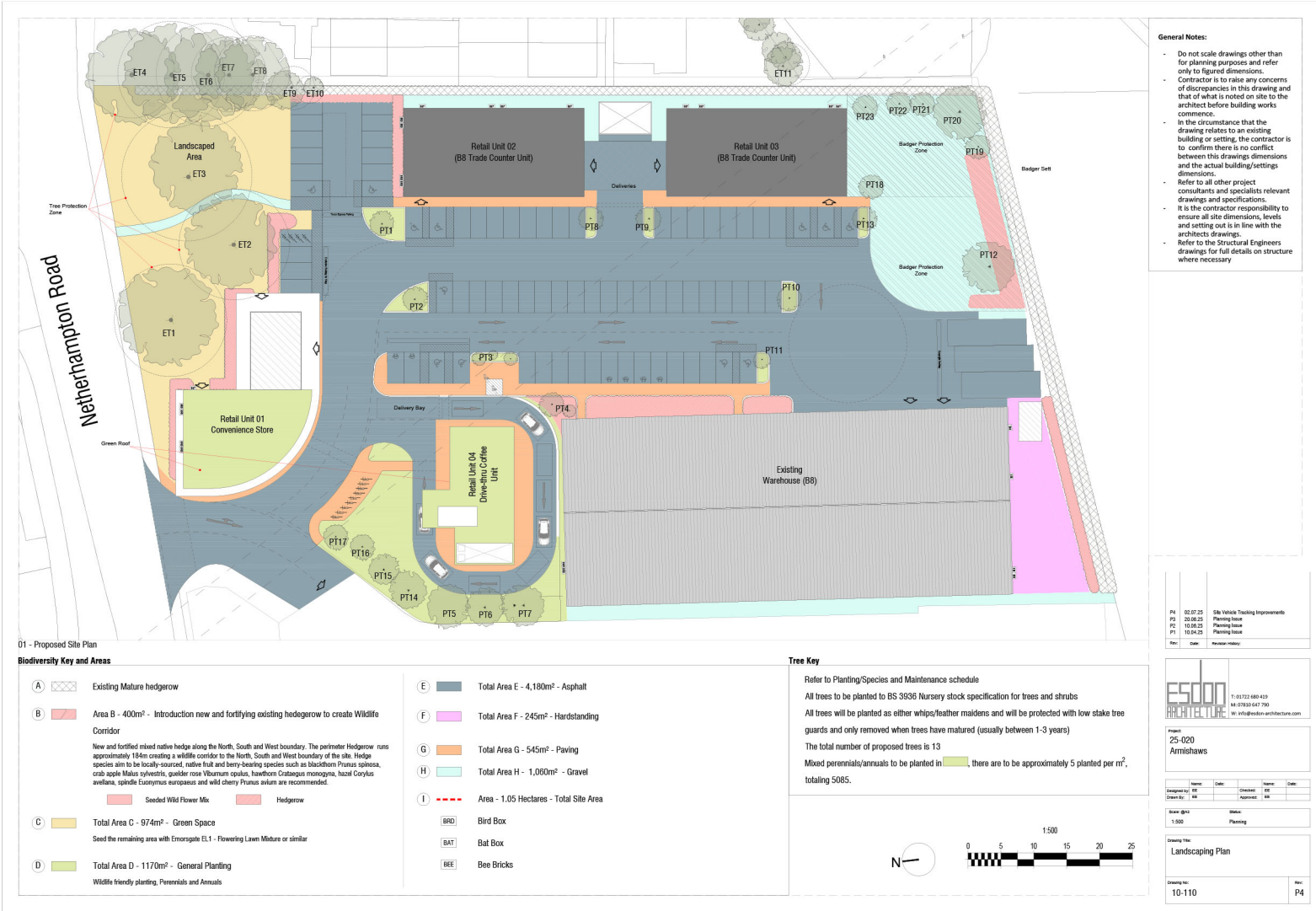


Appendix B: Existing site plan

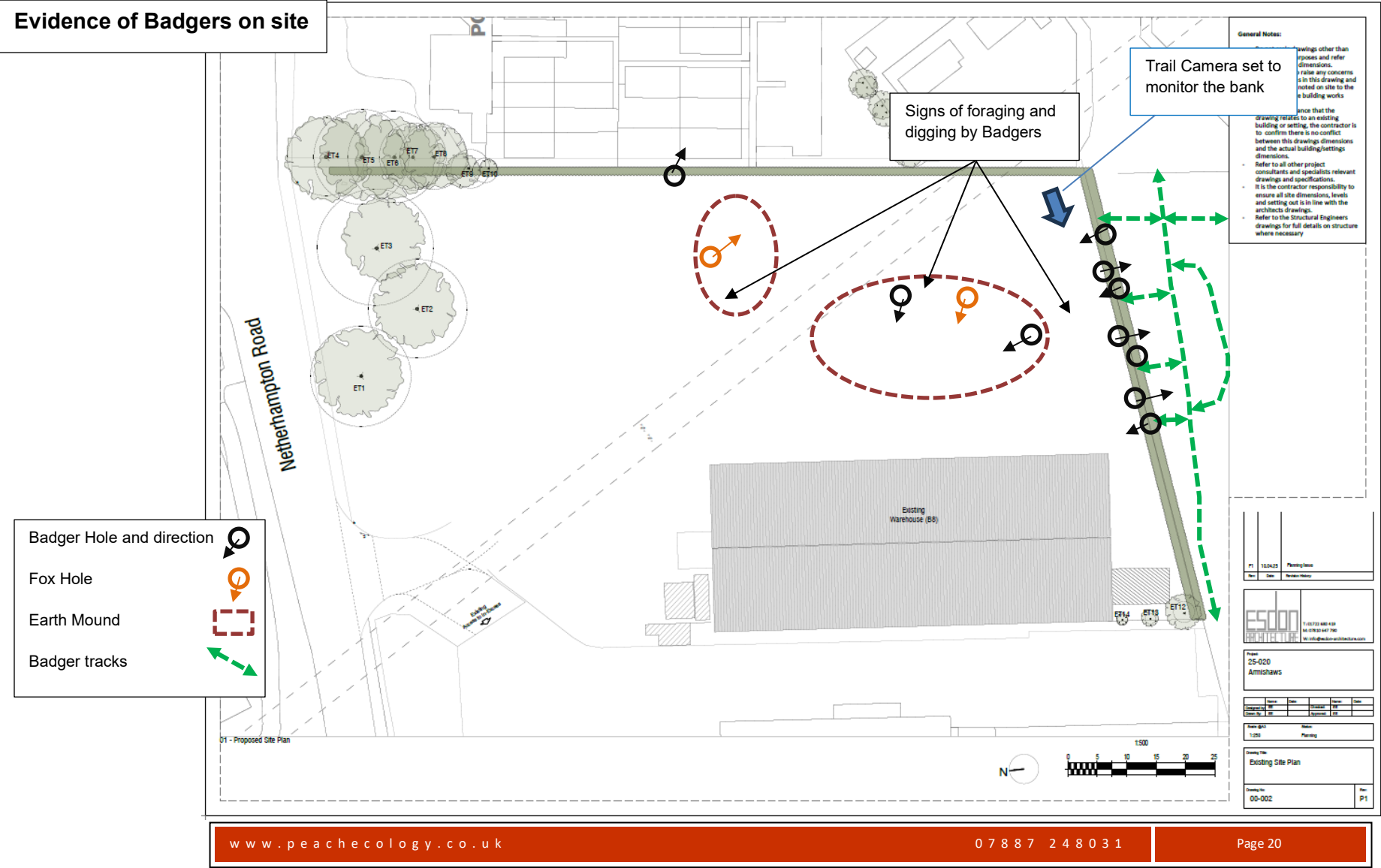




Appendix C: Proposals



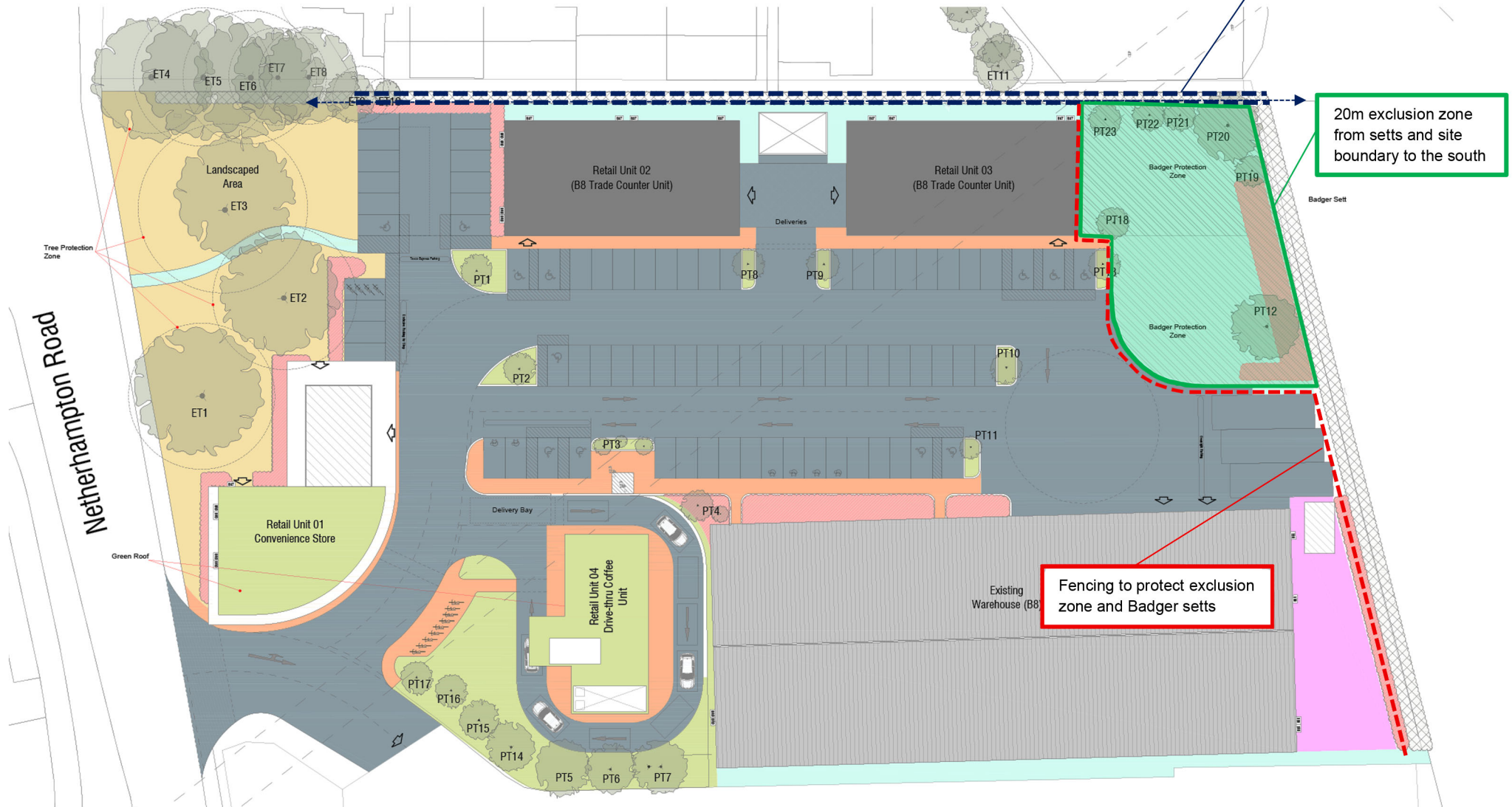
Appendix D: Results of Badger Survey



Historic evidence of Badgers in the vicinity of the site



Appendix E: Mitigation plan



Appendix F: Protected species legislation

Amphibians

Natterjack toad, pool frog and great crested newt are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). They are also afforded additional protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Natterjack toad, common toad, great crested newt and northern pool frog are also Species of Principal Importance (SPIs).

Reptiles

Smooth snake and sand lizard are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). They are afforded additional protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Adder, grass snake, common lizard and slow-worm are all protected from killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). All UK reptile species are SPIs.

Birds

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This includes damage and destruction of their nests whilst in use, or construction. Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act, such as barn owl, are afforded protection from disturbance during the nesting season.

The following 50 bird species are SPIs: lesser redpoll, aquatic warbler, marsh warbler, skylark, white-fronted goose, tree pipit, scaup, bittern, dark-bellied brent goose, stone-curlew, nightjar, hen harrier, northern harrier, hawfinch, corncrake, cuckoo, Bewick's swan, lesser spotted woodpecker, corn bunting, ciril bunting, yellowhammer, reed bunting, red grouse, herring gull, black-tailed godwit, linnet, twite, Savi's warbler, grasshopper warbler, woodlark, common scoter, yellow wagtail, spotted flycatcher, curlew, house sparrow, tree sparrow, grey partridge, wood warbler, willow tit, marsh tit, dunnoek, Balearic shearwater, bullfinch, roseate tern, turtle dove, starling, black grouse, song thrush, ring ouzel and lapwing.

Birds are also categorised according to their level of conservation concern indicated by their population status and stability. These are known as the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC4), Red, Amber and Green lists (Eaton et al, 2015). Where red and amber species are present, their conservation status should be considered in determining the likely impacts of proposed projects and plans.

The conservation status of birds recorded during the survey was assessed against the following criteria:

- EC Birds Directive 2009 Annex 1,
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As Amended) Schedule 1, (Table 1, WCA1)
- Natural Environment and rural communities (NERC) Act 2006 – Section 41
- Red and Amber lists of Birds of Conservation Concern in England (BoCC4)

Badger

Badger is protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under this legislation it is an offence to kill or injure a badger; to damage, destroy or block access to a badger sett; or to disturb badger in its sett. The Act also states the conditions for the Protection of Badgers licence requirements.

Bats

All bat species are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), as detailed above. Bats are further protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it an offence to:

- Deliberately or recklessly damage or destroy any structure or place which bat(s) use for shelter or protection.
- Disturb bat(s) while occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.
- Obstruct access to any structure or place which they use for shelter or protection.

Furthermore, seven bat species are SPIs, covered under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. These include western barbastelle, Bechstein's, noctule, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared, lesser horseshoe and greater horseshoe.

Hazel dormouse

Hazel dormouse is protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). It is afforded additional protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), including obstruction to a place of shelter or rest.

Hazel dormouse is also a SPI.

Hedgerow

Under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 it is against the law to remove or destroy certain hedgerows without permission from the LPA, which are also the enforcement body for offences created by the Regulations. LPA permission is normally required before removing hedges that are at least 20 m in length, more than 30 years old and contain certain plant species. The authority will assess the importance of the hedgerow using criteria set out in the regulations. The regulations do not apply to hedgerows within the curtilage of, or marking a boundary of the curtilage of, a dwelling house.

Hedgerow is a Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI).

Other mammals

West European hedgehog, brown hare, mountain hare, pine marten, harvest mouse, polecat and red squirrel are all SPIs.

The following mammals are listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended): wildcat, brown hare (Schedule 5A), mountain hare (Schedule 5A), pine marten and red squirrel.

Non-native invasive plant species

Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is a list of non-native plant species for which Section 14 of the Act applies. It is an offence to plant, or otherwise cause to grow in the wild species listed under Schedule 9 of the act. These include, but are not limited to:

- Himalayan balsam
- Cotoneaster sp.
- Japanese knotweed
- Giant hogweed

Habitats of Principal Importance

Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 details 56 HPIs, of which the following could be present in south-east England: Lowland calcareous grassland, Lowland dry acid grassland, Lowland meadows, Lowland Heathland, Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land, Lowland fens, Lowland raised bog, Reedbeds, Lowland beech and yew woodland, Lowland mixed deciduous woodland and Wet woodland.

Impacts to HPI are of material planning consideration.

Ancient woodland and veteran trees

The NPPF 2021 states that 'Planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss'. In addition, Natural England's standing

advice for ancient woodland indicates that a 15 m buffer is retained between ancient woodland and any works or development. Ancient woodlands, and ancient and veteran trees, may also be protected by Tree Preservation Orders.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

Details the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied, particularly to contribute to the Government's commitment to halt the decline of biodiversity. When assessing planning applications, LPAs should have regard to conserving and enhancing biodiversity by applying a number of principals, including:

- Avoiding impacts to biodiversity through appropriate site selection.
- Mitigating residual impacts.
- Encouraging the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity.
- Preventing the development of protected sites, such as SSSIs.
- Refusing permission where habitats that cannot be recreated, such as ancient woodland, would be lost.
- Encouraging good design that limits light pollution.
- Relevant paragraphs in the NPPF (2021) are detailed below.

Paragraph Number	Detail
174	"Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by...minimising impact on and providing net gains for biodiversity" Protection of sites of biological values Preventing new and existing development from adverse impacts to soil, air, water or noise Development should help improve local conditions
175	Maintenance and enhancement of networks of habitats and green infrastructure; plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale
179	"To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should: a) 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; and b) 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."
180	"When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles: 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 reasons 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."
181	The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites: a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation; b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites⁶⁴; and c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.
185	"Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living

	conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should: ... c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.”
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Environment Act (2021)

The Environment Act (2021) achieved Royal Assent in November 2021.

The Environment Act (2021) makes a provision for biodiversity net gain to be a condition of planning permission in England, however, it is not anticipated that a 10% biodiversity net gain will be mandatory until 2023. When it does become mandatory, planning applications will need to demonstrate a 10% biodiversity net gain can be met. A biodiversity net gain plan must be submitted and must include:

- a) information about the steps taken or to be taken to minimise the adverse effect of the development on the biodiversity of the onsite habitat and any other habitat
- b) the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat,
- c) the post-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat,
- d) any registered offsite biodiversity gain allocated to the development and the biodiversity value of that gain in relation to the development,
- e) any biodiversity credits purchased for the development.

It should be noted however, that the NPPF (2021) as set out below on does require a project to provide a measurable net gain for biodiversity.

Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000

Amends and strengthens the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It also details habitats and species for which conservation measures should be promoted.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 40 of the Act places a duty on local planning authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England whilst carrying out their normal functions. Section 41 comprises a list of Habitats of Principal Importance (HPIs) and Species of Principal Importance (SPIs) which should be considered.

The LPA will need to have particular regard to any relevant local nature recovery strategies, and any relevant species conservation strategy or protected site strategy prepared by Natural England.

Hedgerows Regulations 1997

Under these regulations it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly remove, or cause or permits another person to remove, a hedgerow. Important hedgerows are defined in Section 4 of the Regulations. This includes hedgerows that have existed for over 30 years or satisfies at least one criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1.

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

Under this act wild mammals are protected from the intentional unnecessary suffering by crushing and asphyxiation.

ODPM Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and Their Impact within the Planning System (2005)

The Government's Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Circular 06/05 (ODPM 2005) presents the legal requirement for planning authorities with regard to statutory designated sites. Planning approval should not be granted where impacts to statutory designated sites that are not connected to the site maintenance for nature conservation, or will have a significant effect on the site's conservation objectives and/or affect the site's integrity. Permission may be granted if the proposed development overrides public interest.

The presence of a protected species is a material planning consideration. The Circular clearly outlines that it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is granted. Otherwise, all relevant considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.

The West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015)

The West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015) (Dorset Council, 2015) Policy EVN2 'Wildlife and Habitats' states:

'Development that is likely to have an adverse effect on internationally protected species will not be permitted unless there are reasons of overriding public interest why the development should proceed and there is no alternative acceptable solution. Development on sites supporting other protected species will only be permitted where adequate provision can be made for the retention of the species or their safe relocation.'

Policy ENV2 also encourages that development proposals will be supported where enhancements to biodiversity are provisioned. The Local Plan also addresses impacts on internationally, nationally and locally designated sites.

The Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol (DBAP)

Under the Dorset Biodiversity Appraisal Protocol (DBAP) (Dorset Council, 2020), the following ecological enhancements are required for new residential developments in Dorset:

- A minimum of 50% new dwellings must feature integrated bird nesting boxes/bricks.
- Every new dwelling facing into the open countryside must feature one integrated 'bat tube'. The remaining 50% of new dwellings must feature integrated bat roosting features.
- Every new dwelling must feature a minimum of two solitary bee bricks.
- A minimum of one new fruit tree is required per development.
- Any new fencing must be 'hedgehog-friendly'.

Additionally, any new/existing hedgerows must not be included within residential ownership to retain dark wildlife corridors. Any habitats to be lost or impacted as part of the proposed development must be assessed under the Dorset Biodiversity Compensation Framework (DBCF) to demonstrate a net gain for biodiversity where possible, with financial offsetting secured as a last resort in line with the mitigation hierarchy.