

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Bat Roost Assessment and BNG Feasibility Report v2

PREPARED FOR

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Oakstone Farm
Bratton Road
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The evidence which has been prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the guidance of The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

Executive Summary

Introduction	This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report has been prepared by Acorus Rural Property Services Limited for Mr R Lanning and relates to the proposed welfare and office building, storage building and biomass boiler at Oakstone Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton, Wiltshire, BA14 6AX. The purpose of this report is to identify potential ecological constraints to development, particularly in relation to potential legally protected species onsite, confirm the need for further survey work to confirm all baseline ecological conditions, if necessary, and highlight opportunities for ecological enhancement.
Summary of Main Findings	The site comprises scrub, grassland, hedgerows with trees, an onsite pond and an access roadway. The findings of the survey confirm that the habitats onsite have the potential to support reptiles, foraging bats, Great Crested Newt, Hedgehog and Badger. The site is not considered suitable for Hazel Dormouse, Water Vole, Otter.
Ecological Constraints	The constraints to development will be the removal of habitats considered suitable for protected species, including grassland suitable for foraging reptiles, Hedgehog and Badger. Also considered a constraint is the onsite pond and the possibility of degradation of the waterbody during construction works.
Avoidance Measures & Timings of Works to Reduce Impact	Roosting bats (trees): The features of T3 & T4 are located between 40m and 72m from the proposed development area. It should be possible to avoid direct impact on PRF features through the design of a sensitive lighting scheme and reduction of impact measures in terms of noise and vibration during construction phase should be detailed within a Construction Method Statement (CEMP) which should be secured as an approved planning condition. Foraging and commuting bats: Risk reduction measures should be designed into the scheme to include retention and protection of all trees currently around the boundaries of the site, and a sensitive lighting scheme should be designed and agreed at detailed design stage in coordination between a qualified lighting engineer and a suitably qualified ecologist, according to current best practice guidelines.

	Hedgehog: To reduce the impact to Hedgehog, excavations during development or ground investigation works should be covered overnight to prevent entrapment of Hedgehogs. Badger: Prior to any construction works the site should be checked by an ecologist to ensure that Badgers have not inhabited the site since the original survey visit. All open excavations should be covered overnight to prevent entrapment of Badgers or other mammals during development.
Further Survey Work Required	The following surveys have been carried out following the initial issue of this report: GCN: eDNA Survey; Survey samples submitted to SureScreen Scientifics and returned a positive result. A summary report regarding GCN has been submitted by Halpin Robbins (Ref. R.1) which recommends implementing a non-licensed method statement approach, secured by a CEMP (Construction Environmental Management Plan) to include a toolbox talk. Bats: Halpin Robbins also carried out a site visit to assess the possible implications posed by the newly adopted Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS) and issued a technical note (Ref. R.2). The technical note confirms there are no direct impacts to bats and their places of roost, protected under the TWBMS, via the proposed construction of a site office and welfare unit; storage hut; and biomass boiler building.
Ecological Enhancement Opportunities	The following has been recommended for consideration within the final development scheme: • Planting of native plant species beneficial to wildlife should be incorporated into the final design. This will provide additional habitat for invertebrates, which will in turn provide a food source for reptiles, birds, bats, and Hedgehog. • The final development plan should ideally incorporate bat boxes into the scheme. Ideally, bat boxes should be sited either on existing trees or on building elevations that face towards boundary hedgerows/scrub and away from any lighting.

	• Log piles should be placed in connectivity to the boundary vegetation on the bund onsite and adjacent to the pond, enhancing the habitats onsite for GCN, reptiles and invertebrates' post-development. • To help achieve biodiversity net gain on the site, areas of natural habitat would need to be included within the scheme. Metric calculations will likely be a requirement of planning, to show that net gain can be achieved.
BNG Feasibility Assessment	The site currently achieves a net gain of 12.33% in area habitats with the enhancement of the scrub area onsite and a net gain in hedgerow habitats of 19.28% with the enhancement of the northern and southern hedgerows onsite. All trading rules are satisfied.
Conclusions & Recommendations	Provided the recommendations within this report are followed and the mitigation hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, compensation, and enhancement is implemented throughout the detailed design process, potential negative effects from development on important ecological features will be limited and the development will achieve net gain in biodiversity. This ecological report will remain valid for a period of 18 months from the date of the last survey.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report has been prepared by Acorus Rural Property Services Limited for Mr R Lanning and relates to the proposed development of the site at Oakstone Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton, Wiltshire, BA14 6AX, which planning permission will be sought. The purpose of this report is to:

- Identify if important ecological features are present that may be affected by development proposals.
- Determine if further survey work is necessary, and if so, provide detailed scope for any further survey and assessment that may be required to support a planning application.
- Highlight opportunities for ecological enhancement.

Any limitations and conditions pertaining to the report are stated within Appendix 1, with a full list of technical references provided within Appendix 2.

1.2 Background

This report has been updated following changes made to the plans to be submitted and comments received from the Ecology Officer at Wiltshire Council. To this end additional surveys were commissioned from, and undertaken by, Halpin Robbins (Ref. R.1, Ref. R.2) with regard to Great Crested Newt mitigation and the considerations of the Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS).

1.3 Site Location and Description

The site occupies an area of approximately 2.67 hectares (ha) within the ownership boundary of 4.11ha and is located around National Grid Reference ST898541. The indicative development boundary is shown on Figure 1 overleaf:

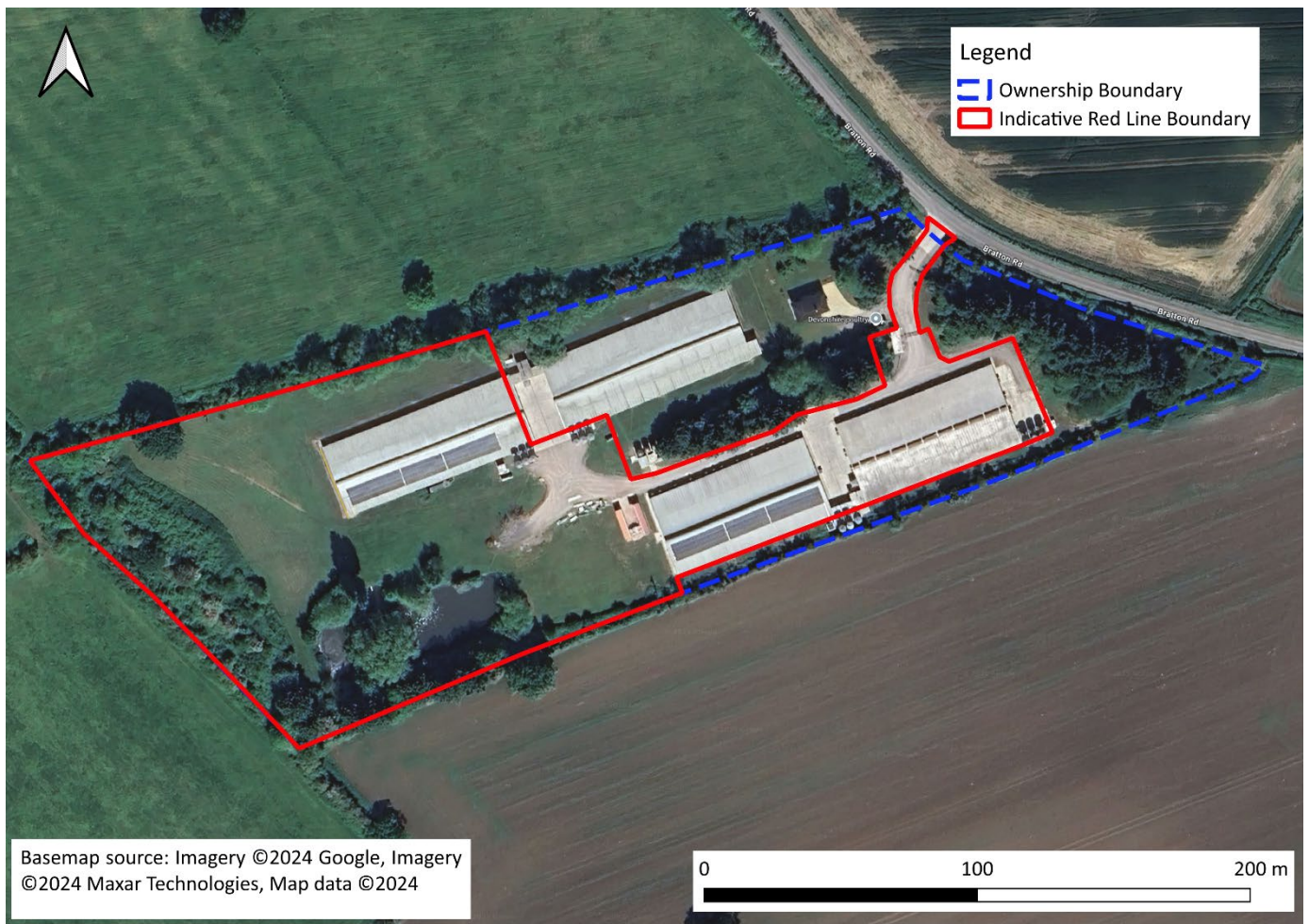


Figure 1 – Indicative Site Boundaries

1.4 Proposed Works

The proposed development is in two phases: Phase 1 is for a biomass boiler, staff welfare building and a storage building; Phase 2 will be for three poultry shed extensions and will be addressed in a subsequent report. Phase 2 drawings for the poultry shed extensions have not been completed.

Phase 1 drawings for the biomass boiler, welfare and storage buildings shed can be seen in Appendix 3. Drawing reference 200 03 B Proposed Block Plan.

This report is concerned with Phase 1 only.

2. LEGISLATION AND POLICY

2.1 Current UK Legislation

The main legislation that applies to ecological issues within England and Wales is as follows:

- The Environment Act 2021 Act became law on 9 November 2021 and introduced a framework to improve and protect the natural environment, overseen by the Office for Environmental Protection. Under the Act there is a statutory duty for local authorities to create new local nature recovery strategies and a mandatory requirement for developments to achieve measurable biodiversity net gain. All planning permissions in England (subject to exemptions) must be granted subject to a biodiversity gain pre-commencement condition, requiring the approval of a biodiversity gain plan. The planning authority may only approve the biodiversity gain plan if the biodiversity value attributable to a development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by 10%.
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) transposes European Union Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (formally the EC Habitats Directive) into national law. Under the regulations, public bodies have a duty in exercising their functions to provide for the protection of 'Habitats Sites' and 'European Protected Species' (EPS).
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, (WCA) (as amended) provides detail on a range of protection and offences relating to wild birds, other animals, and plants. The level of protection depends upon which Schedule of the Act the species is listed on. Licences are available for specific purposes to permit actions that would otherwise constitute an offence in relation to species.
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities, (NERC), Act 2006 imposes an obligation on all public bodies, including local authorities, to consider whether their activities can contribute to the protection of wildlife. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and states that: "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity."

Species-specific conservation legislation is detailed within Appendix 4.

The reader is referred to the original legislation for definitive interpretation.

2.2 Planning Policy

The recommendations of this report are in line with the key principles of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024 (ref. R.3) and Government Circular 05/06: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (ref. R.4).

Local planning policies relating to ecology are invariably based upon the conservation of species protected under the above legislation, including species and habitats of principal importance listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and the protection of designated sites.

All these features are considered within the scope of this Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, and therefore any recommendations made herein are likely to be in line with this policy.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Technical Approach

The PEA has been undertaken following guidelines provided by CIEEM's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, (ref. R.5), and BS 42020: 2013 Biodiversity standards, (ref. R.6) to provide an indication of the ecological value of the site and the potential for the site to be used by protected species.

Scientific names and common names of plant species identified are as they appear in Stace, (ref. R.7).

The conclusions and recommendations for further works are in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

3.2 Personnel

This report was produced by Tracy Amies BSc TechArborA ACIEEM who is experienced in ecological consultancy including surveys and mitigation for a range of protected species and in producing preliminary ecological appraisals and impact assessments.

3.3 Ecological Desk Study

A data search was conducted of freely available biological records. The sources of information included:

- The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) online database (ref. R.8) was consulted to obtain geographic information on key statutory designated nature conservation sites and other ecological features of relevance to the site.
- Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) was contacted to provide details of legally protected species and non- statutory designated conservation sites within 2km of the site. Only records of protected species from within the last ten years are considered within this report.
- Ordnance Survey maps were used to identify ponds / ditches within 500m of the site to assess the potential for Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*) (GCN) within the immediate vicinity of the site.

3.4 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

The surveys used to inform the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal comprise a habitat survey and protected species scoping survey. The preliminary ecological appraisal considers findings of the outcome of the survey work alongside any features highlighted by the desk study.

The site survey was undertaken on 20th November 2024. The weather conditions at the time of the survey were dry and breezy with an approximate temperature of 5°C.

3.4.1 Habitats and Flora

A list of plant species was compiled in accordance with methodology required to establish UK Habitat Classification types (ref. R.9) aiming to record to level 4, ensuring habitats were recorded to at least level 3 where it was not possible to record to level 4. Care was taken to accurately record all habitats of principal importance (if present) (ref. R.10).

The frequency and cover of each species identified as they are distributed in each habitat is estimated using the DAFOR scale, (ref. R.11), as follows:

- Dominant – >75% cover.
- Abundant – 51-75% cover.
- Frequent – 26-50% cover.
- Occasional – 11-25% cover.
- Rare – 1-10% cover.
- Locally dominant (LD), abundant (LA) and frequent (LF) is also used where the distribution is patchy.

3.4.2 Species Assessment

The site was assessed for its suitability to support protected species and other species of conservation importance, which could pose a planning constraint. All signs and areas of habitat considered suitable for protected species or those of conservation interest, were recorded and photographed. These include burrows, droppings, footprints / paths, hairs, refuges and particular habitat types, such as ponds, known to

be used by certain class of fauna. Sites are taken in the context of their surroundings and so include the immediate environs outside of site boundaries, where appropriate.

Any mammal paths found were noted down and followed where possible.

All ponds within 500m of the site were also assessed for their suitability for GCN if the ponds were publicly accessible or if access had been granted prior to the survey. This includes a habitat suitability index (HSI) assessment (ref. R.12) which assesses the pond based upon a number of factors including the size, water quality, permanence, shading, presence of fish, the number of nearby ponds and macrophyte cover. A score between 0 and 1 is given; where 0 represents poor suitability and 1 represents excellent suitability.

A Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW) and external Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the buildings was undertaken to identify the suitability of the building to provide potential roost space for bats, in line with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) survey guidelines (ref. R.13) and Bat Hibernation Assessment: A Practical Approach (ref. R.14).

In particular, potential access points and evidence of bats were searched for. This was carried out in full day light with the aid of binoculars, to identify the following features:

- Age and structure of the building.
- Condition of the roof noting any missing, dislodged or lifted tiles that would provide entry.
- Condition of the walls, doors and windows that may also provide entry.
- Windowsills, walls and sheltered areas are searched for bat droppings.
- Grease marks, scratch marks and urine staining around possible entry points.

All established trees that could be accessed onsite were inspected during a DBW and underwent a ground level tree assessment (GLTA) to assess their suitability, for roosting bats by identifying and classifying potential roost features (PRFs), subject to leaf cover. The categories for assessment are none or negligible, FAR (further assessment required to confirm if PRFs are present) or PRF (a tree with at least one PRF present).

Where possible, an approximation of the PRF categorisation has been provided as PRF-I (whereby the PRF is only considered suitable for individual bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats) or PRF-M (PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony), in line with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) survey guidelines (ref. R.13).

3.5 Ecological Evaluation

The ecological evaluation detailed below is based upon CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the United Kingdom, (ref. R.15).

CIEEM Guidelines state that the value or potential value of an ecological resource or feature should be determined within a defined geographical context as follows:

- On an international scale, e.g., Ramsar, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Area (SPA) site.
- On a UK scale, for example a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or a National Nature Reserve, (NNR).
- On a national scale, e.g., a reserve of importance to England / Northern Ireland / Scotland / Wales.
- On a regional scale, e.g., a local site with important regional habitats of principal importance (HoPI) or good populations species of principal importance (SoPI).
- On a county scale, e.g., a local site with a habitat that is characteristic of the county or rare on a county scale, or with local Habitat of Principal Importance / Site of Principal Importance.
- On a district scale, e.g., a site with wildlife corridors likely to improve the biodiversity of the area.
- On a local or parish scale, e.g., areas of green space in a predominantly urban environment.

The potential for protected species to use the habitats onsite contributes significantly towards the potential value of the habitats onsite.

3.6 Site-specific Limitations

Due to the time of year the survey was undertaken, some plant species are not identifiable. For baseline surveys undertaken between September to April (depending on management at the time), grassland classifications are assumed. This limitation does not affect the classification of the habitats present for the purpose of the PEA. Baseline habitats should be verified by a condition assessment at a more suitable time of year (May to September) to facilitate future Biodiversity Net Gain assessments.

The western end of the site is overgrown with scrub and tall ruderal vegetation on a tall bank, so the lone surveyor did not enter this area. This feature prevented access to the whole site. Where access was not practicable, observations of habitats as far as possible were used to inform the habitat mapping.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Designated Sites

All relevant desk study data relating to designated sites is attached in Appendix 5.

There are no designated sites within the site boundary.

4.1.1 Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites of Nature Conservation Significance

There are two statutory wildlife sites within 2km, Picket & Clanger Wood and Steeple Ashton SSSIs (Sites of Special Scientific Interest); 1.48km west and 2km northwest of the site, respectively.

Consultation of the MAGIC online interactive mapping tool confirms the presence of six internationally important statutory designations within 20km of the site boundary:

- River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – 10km south of the site
- Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA (Special Protection Area) – 3km south of the site
- Mendip Woodlands SAC – 19km west of the site
- Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats SAC – 15km northwest of the site
- Mells Valley SAC – 15km west of the site

WSBRC has confirmed the presence of two non-statutory designations within the 2km search radius:

- Blue Circle Cement Works LGS (Local Geological Site) – 1.5km southwest of the site
- Bratton Verge Protected Road Verge – 2km southeast of the site

There are no County Wildlife Sites within 2km.

4.1.2 Impact Risk Zones

The site is within the impact risk zone for Steeple Ashton, Picket & Clanger Wood, Bratton Downs and Salisbury Plain SSSIs, however, given the limited nature of the proposals, it is not considered that the development will impact any of the features of the SSSIs.

The site is also within the Yellow Medium Risk Bat Sensitivity Zone for the Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS) (Ref. R.16).

4.1.3 Priority Habitat

Priority habitats within 2km include:

- Ponds and Lakes
- Ancient Woodland
- Deciduous Woodland
- Traditional Orchards

4.2 Habitats

The results of the habitat survey and protected species scoping survey are detailed below and annotated on Figure 2 below.



Figure 2 – Habitat Survey Plan

The following area-based habitat types were recorded within the survey area:

- Modified grassland – g4
- Mixed scrub – h3h
- Willow scrub – h3j
- Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface – u1c
- Developed land, sealed surface – u1b
- Buildings – u1b5
- Pond – r1

Linear habitats recorded within the survey area comprise hedgerow, native, with trees – h2a 11.

4.2.1 Modified grassland

The main part of the site is an area of modified grassland, kept mown to approximately 20cm year-round. The grassland comprises frequent Perennial Ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), Annual Meadow Grass (*Poa annua*) and Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) with occasional Creeping Bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), Daisy (*Bellis perennis*), Cock's Foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and Dock (*Rumex* sp.). Also present were rare occurrences of Burnet-saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifraga*), Meadow Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), Groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.) and White Clover (*Trifolium repens*). (Photographs 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10)

4.2.2 Mixed scrub

To the western boundary is a bund, approximately 2 to 3m high, covered in mixed scrub and with trees on the western edge comprising Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Leyland Cypress (*Cupressus x cuprocyparis leylandii*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and standing dead Elms (*Ulmus* sp). The vegetation is dominated by Nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and Brambles with occasional Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) and Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*). There was also Meadow Thistle (*Cirsium dissectum*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Wild Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), Cleavers (*Galium aparine*) and Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*). (Photograph 4). There is also a small area of mixed scrub to the eastern side of the site comprising Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Brambles, Cherry Laurel and Cotoneaster.

4.2.3 Willow scrub

Central to the pond onsite was a small island dominated by Willow scrub (*Salix* spp) around the base of a large multi-stemmed Willow tree.

No other vegetation was visible from the banks. (Photograph 11)

4.2.4 Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface

The roadway leading to the site passes through the wider ownership area of the site and is composed of compacted hoggin and road chippings. (Photograph 1 & 2)

4.2.5 Developed land, sealed surface

There is an area of concrete east of the easternmost shed (Shed 1).

4.2.6 Buildings

There are three permanent building within the red line boundary, poultry sheds numbers 1, 2 and 4 proposed for extension in Phase 2. There is a caravan, currently used as site office and staff welfare, to the east near the access from Bratton Road. On the wider ownership site there is one other poultry shed, shed 3.

4.2.7 Native hedgerow with trees

Surrounding the wider ownership site, and on the north, west and southern boundaries of the red line site boundary, lies a hedgerow with trees. The hedgerow is unmanaged and gappy in places. The hedgerow is comprised of standing dead Elms, Willow (*Salix* sp), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), Bramble, Blackthorn, Hawthorn and Oak (*Quercus robur*). The trees within the hedgerow are Oaks (T3 and T4). They are mature trees, 18m in height with a DBH (diameter at breast height) of 800mm. These trees, and others onsite, are discussed further in section 4.3.7.2. (Photographs 2, 5 & 10)

4.2.8 Pond

There is a pond onsite, P1, approximately 1800m², with a central island populated by Willow scrub and a multi-stemmed Willow tree. There were waterfowl on the pond and, from information provided by staff onsite, there may be fish present. The banks were steep and vegetated with no sign of mammal activity. (Photographs 11 & 12)

4.2.9 Habitats Outside the Development Zone

The site sits within a heavily arable landscape with few hedgerows, most of which are isolated and gappy.

There is an area of woodland (Clanger Wood) 1.5km to the west.

The settlement of Bratton lies 2.5km to the south and West Ashton 2.5km to the north.

4.3 Species

Descriptions and relevant photographs are included in Appendix 7.

4.3.1 Species Discounted from Further Consideration

Legally protected species for which there is no suitable habitat onsite include Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) and Otter (*Lutra lutra*).

These species are therefore not considered further in this report.

4.3.2 Plants

WSBRC has returned 18 records of rare or otherwise notable plants recorded in the last 10 years within 2km of the site. This includes species such as Spreading Hedge Parsley (*Torilis arvensis*) that may be present in the grassland at the site.

All of the plant species recorded at the site are common and widespread native or naturalised species or else ornamental, non-native species.

Given the nature of the identified habitats (i.e., themselves common and widespread) within and immediately adjacent to the proposed works areas, no notable plant species are expected within the affected areas.

4.3.3 Invertebrates

WSBRC has returned 67 records of invertebrates recorded in the last 10 years within 2km of the site. This includes species such as Brown Spot Pinion (*Anchoscelis litura*) that could make use of the Oaks and Hawthorn present onsite, and Cinnabar Moth (*Tyria jacobaeae*) which could make use of the Common Ragwort onsite.

The majority of areas that will be impacted are of low species diversity, including species-poor grassland and are unlikely to support an assemblage of rare invertebrates. Therefore, invertebrates are not considered further within the constraints section of this report.

4.3.4 Great Crested Newt

WSBRC has returned no records of Great Crested Newt recorded in the last 10 years within 2km of the site. However, there is a positive GCN presence recorded in 2018 for pond P5 during a GCN pond survey for District Level Licensing for Natural England.

Six ponds are located within 500m of the site, referenced ponds P1 to P6 and shown on Figure 4 below. The site is also located within a Natural England Amber risk zone for GCN (Figure 4), meaning the surrounding area could contain main population centres for GCN and comprise important connecting habitat that aids natural dispersal.

Following comments from Halpin Robbins (Ref. R.1) the Habitat Suitability Index used initially has been investigated for errors and the results have been re-checked and amended below to be correct.

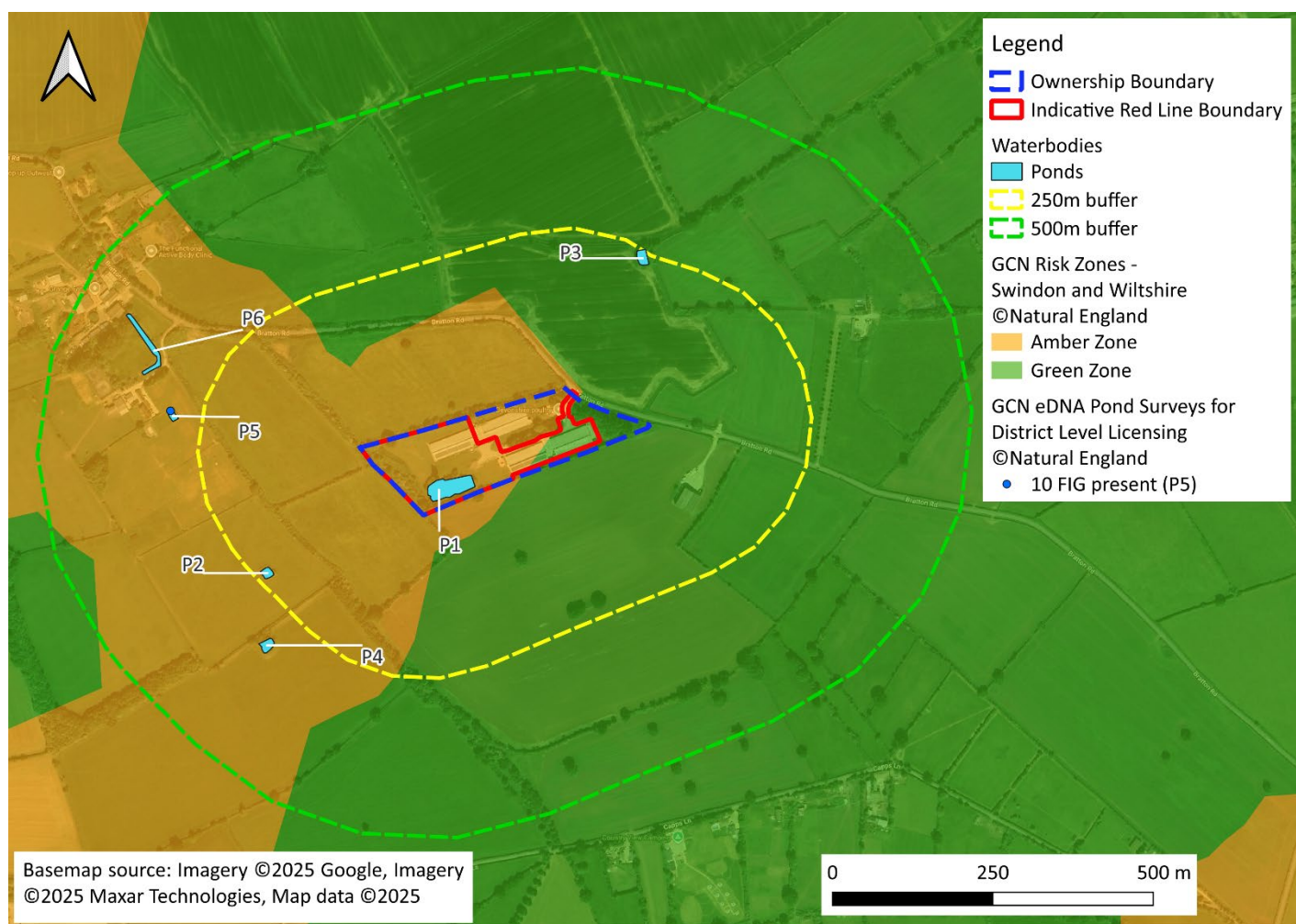


Figure 3– Pond Locations, Pond Surveys for DLL and Natural England GCN Risk Zones

Ponds P2 to P6 were not accessible.

A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment was undertaken where access was possible to assess the suitability of each pond to support Great Crested Newt or alternatively, an assessment has been made based on review of aerial maps and professional judgement to provide comment on the potential of GCN to be present. A score between 0 and 1 is given; where 0 represents poor suitability and 1 represent excellent suitability. The results are provided in Appendix 6 and summarised in Table 1 below:

Pond	Distance from Site	Connected or Separated from Site	Pond Size (m ²)	HSI Score	Pond Suitability for Great Crested Newts
1	Onsite	Onsite, no separation.	1820	0.7581616	Good based on HSI, considered suitable due to proximity of GCN in the area and suitable terrestrial habitat surrounding.

Table 1 – HSI Scores and General Assessment of Waterbodies within 500m					
Pond	Distance from Site	Connected or Separated from Site	Pond Size (m ²)	HSI Score	Pond Suitability for Great Crested Newts
2	239m	Isolated field pond with no direct connectivity to site.	230	Unknown as it could not be accessed.	Situated in a horse grazing paddock within a fenced area of vegetation. No shading. Unlikely to be suitable for GCN.
3	222m	Separated from site by arable field and Bratton Road.	350	Unknown as it could not be accessed.	Arable field edge pond, heavily shaded by trees but connected to other pond habitats (GCN positive) by a ditch to the north. Suitable for GCN.
4	300m	Connected to site by hedgerows.	320	Unknown as it could not be accessed.	Horse grazing paddock pond, heavily shaded by trees. Unlikely to be suitable for GCN.
5	295m	Connected to site by hedgerows. This pond has a positive eDNA test (biological record dates 2018).	135	Unknown as it could not be accessed.	GCN survey in 2018 concluded GCN present in this pond. Pond is therefore suitable for GCN.
6	335m	Connected to site by hedgerows.	840	Unknown as it could not be accessed.	Likely suitable for GCN due to presence of positive eDNA in P5, 70m south.

The site itself has suitable terrestrial GCN habitat within the scrub bund to the west and the unmanaged hedgerows. The pond onsite (P1) is considered suitable for GCN, especially as P5 (295m northwest) has a positive eDNA record from 2018. The presence of GCN onsite is considered likely.

Following an eDNA survey (Appendix 7) which indicated a positive for the presence of GCN eDNA in pond P1, Halpin Robbins (Ref. R.1) were consulted to determine the necessity for further survey or licencing and mitigation measures required.

4.3.5 Reptiles

WSBRC has returned 6 records of reptiles recorded in the last 10 years within 2km of the site. Records include Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), Slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*) and Adder (*Vipera berus*). The closest is an Adder recorded 1946 m from the site.

The site has suitable foraging and hibernation habitat for reptiles on the bund of scrub to the west and within the unmanaged hedgerows surrounding the site.

4.3.6 Birds

WSBRC has returned 112 records of birds recorded in the last 10 years within 2km of the site. This includes species such as Spotted Flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*) that could make use of the scrub, trees and grassland present onsite.

Table 2 below, shows the species of birds that were noted during the survey:

Table 2 – Birds Identified During the Survey			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Status*	Location Notes
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	Green	Heard not seen in hedgerow
Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	Green	Four flying over site
Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	Green	One seen in hedgerow
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber	Five took flight from the pond onsite
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Amber	One on the pond onsite
Pied Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	Green	Three foraging onsite
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Green	Two foraging onsite
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Amber	Three flying over
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Amber	Two seen in hedgerow, warning calls heard
Status abbreviations: Red / Amber / Green: Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BoCC 5) status (ref. R.14) SOPI: species of principal importance, listed on section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 Sch 1: protected species listed on schedule 1 of the WCA 1981 as amended			

The site is not considered suitable for ground nesting birds however, habitats including, buildings, scrub and trees offer value to breeding birds for common passerine birds. The buildings, trees and scrub provide suitable nesting habitat for common and widespread species. These habitats and the grassland also provide suitable foraging habitat for birds and are considered important for birds on a less than local scale.

The trees, larger area of scrub and buildings will not be impacted by the development.

The small area of scrub to the east will be impacted by the development.

4.3.7 Bats

WSBRC has returned 106 records of bats recorded in the last 10 years within 2km of the site. Records include *Myotis* species, Barbastelle bat (*Barbastella barbastellus*), Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*), Noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctula*), Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Brown Long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), Greater Horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) and Lesser Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*).

The application site is located within the recently adopted (July 2025) yellow medium risk and the grey hatched recreational zone of the Trowbridge & Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy and must therefore be considered against the habitat regulations (Ref. R.2).

4.3.7.1 Buildings

The buildings subject to a preliminary roost assessment are referenced as shown on Figure 4 below.

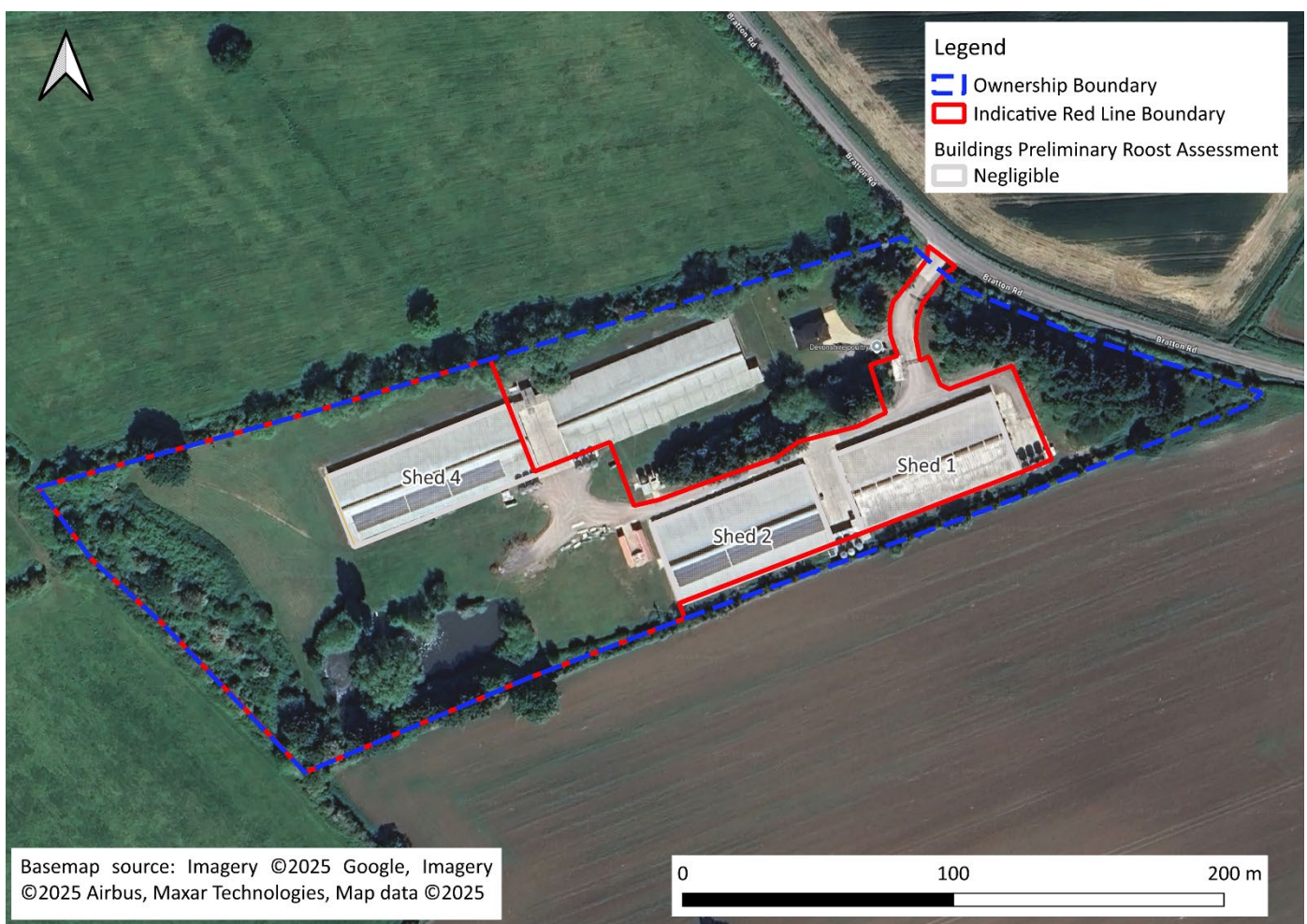


Figure 4 – Preliminary Roost Assessment and PRF Locations (Summer roost suitability)

Selected photographs of the scoping survey are included in Appendix 7 and details of the potential roost features identified, and their suitability are provided in Table 3 below:

Table 3 – Bat Roost Suitability of Buildings*				
Ref. No.	Building Description	Potential Roost Feature	Summer Bat Roost Suitability**	Hibernation Suitability***
Shed 1	Single storey, wood-clad poultry shed with corrugated metal roof.	None found	Negligible	Negligible
Shed 2	Single storey, wood-clad poultry shed with corrugated metal roof.	None found (Photograph 3 & 7)	Negligible	Negligible
Shed 4	Single storey, metal-clad poultry shed with corrugated metal roof.	None found (Photograph 2 & 6)	Negligible	Negligible
*Based upon external PRA unless stated otherwise				
Delete definitions not used in table.				
** Summer bat roost suitability is defined as follows: • Negligible potential has no obvious features likely to be used, but a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.				
Delete definitions not used in table.				
*** Hibernation suitability is defined as follows: • Negligible potential has no features present within the structure that are likely to be used by bats during the winter period.				

Given that the buildings have negligible potential for roosting bats and no demolition of the buildings is planned, no impact to roosting bats is likely.

4.3.7.2 Trees

The GLTA of the established trees onsite identified 2 trees with suitable features confirmed or have potential to support features for roosting bats based on their age. The location of these trees is shown on Figure 5 below.



Figure 5 – Trees Identified as Having Bat Roost Potential

Selected photographs of the scoping survey are included in Appendix 7 and details of the potential roost features identified in these trees and their suitability are provided in Table 4 below:

Ref. No.	Species	Potential Roost Feature / Direction and Height on Tree	Photo Reference in Appendix 7	Summer Bat Roost Suitability: NONE, FAR, PRF, PRF-I, PRF-M
T1	Alder	Two live, semi-mature Alder trees, approximately 10m tall and ~350mm DBH (fenced off) No features observed.	8	NONE
T2	Poplar	Two Lombardy Poplar trees, semi-mature, approximately 20m tall and ~500mm DBH (fenced off) No features observed.	8	NONE
T3	Pedunculate oak	A semi-mature tree approximately 18m tall with a DBH 800mm. Marcescent growth (retention of dead leaves) and ivy clad stem made GLTA limited.	9	FAR
T4	Pedunculate oak	A semi-mature tree approximately 18m tall with a DBH 800mm. Marcescent growth (retention of dead leaves) made GLTA limited.	10	FAR
T5	Willow	A semi-mature tree approximately 18m tall, multi-stemmed, ~ DBH of 450mm per stem	11	NONE

Table 4 – Ground Level Tree Assessment				
Ref. No.	Species	Potential Roost Feature / Direction and Height on Tree	Photo Reference in Appendix 7	Summer Bat Roost Suitability: NONE, FAR, PRF, PRF-I, PRF-M
		(tree on island in pond and inaccessible). No features observed.		
Abbreviations / Notes: • DBH: Diameter at breast height • FAR: Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present • PRF: a tree with at least one PRF feature, unknown if feature is PRF-I or PRF-M				

Following the guidance within Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) survey guidelines (Figure 6.2) (ref. R.13) it is considered that the proposed development will have no direct or indirect impact on the trees onsite, however, additional external lighting may impact any potential roost sites/features.

4.3.7.3 Foraging and Commuting Habitat

The site is 2.7km from a confirmed Barbastelle roost and within the CSZ (Core Sustenance Zone) for Barbastelle bats (6km).

Scattered trees, hedgerows and scrub offer suitable commuting routes and foraging habitat for bats. The connectivity of the site with surrounding suitable habitats is not optimal given the large amount of arable with fragmented hedgerows. The nearby woodland block to the west may present roosting and foraging opportunities for bats.

The potential suitability of foraging and commuting habitat onsite is considered Low.

4.3.8 Water Vole

WSBRC has returned no records of Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) recorded in the last 10 years within 2km of the site.

The pond onsite is not directly connected to any waterways but is 200m from a wet ditch that connects with ditches in the wider landscape.

No signs of Water Vole were found onsite and given the isolation of the pond onsite it is considered unlikely that the site supports Water Vole.

4.3.9 Hedgehog

WSBRC has returned 7 records of Hedgehog.

The site provides suitable foraging habitat for Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) in the grassland, and suitable nesting and hibernating habitat in the scrub.

The connectivity of the site to the wider landscape is good with ditches and hedgerows providing commuting routes.

4.3.10 Badger

The site provides suitable foraging habitat for Badger, and whilst no evidence of Badger was found onsite, it is possible that setts could be present amongst the dense scrub. The grassland provides good quality foraging habitat for this species. Biological records confirm the presence of this species in the surrounding area.

5. EVALUATION, CONSTRAINTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Nature Conservation Sites

The desk study identified two nature conservation sites with statutory designation, and two non-statutory designated nature conservation sites within 2km radius of the site. Six internationally protected sites were noted within 20km:

- River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – 10km south of the site
- Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA (Special Protection Area) – 3km south of the site
- Mendip Woodlands SAC – 19km west of the site
- Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats SAC – 15km northwest of the site
- Mells Valley SAC – 15km west of the site

The development site does not contain any habitats which could support the important species associated with either the statutory or non-statutory sites, and there no potential habitat connectivity between the site and the statutory sites.

It is considered unlikely, given the distance from the survey area and localised nature of the proposed development works, that the Nature Conservation sites listed above will be directly affected by any construction activity on the surveyed area. It is considered unlikely that the proposed development at Oakstone Farm is of sufficient size to have any indirect impacts on the designated sites.

The development site falls within the zone of influence of the internationally protected site Salisbury Plain SAC/SPA. However, the development will not impact the site sensitivities of Salisbury Plain SAC/SPA.

5.2 Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy

The application site is located within the recently adopted (July 2025) Yellow Medium Risk and the grey hatched recreational zone of the Trowbridge & Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy and has been considered under the habitat regulations by Halpin Robbins (Ref. R.2).

The Halpin Robbins report (Ref. R.2) concludes that *“there are no suitable roosting features for bats within the site ... therefore no direct impacts to bats and their places of roost, protected under the TWBMS, via the proposed construction of a site office and welfare unit, storage hut and biomass boiler building”*. The report also agrees that the foraging and commuting habitat is of low value for bats and that *“the proposed new*

buildings will therefore have negligible impact on the foraging and commuting ability of the bats protected under the TWBMS”.

The grey hatched recreational zone is an area within a zone of influence within which new residential development is likely to result in increased recreational use of the woodland bat sites. However, as this development does not include residential development, this area is not considered any further.

5.3 Habitats

The ecological constraints regarding general habitats onsite are detailed within Table 5 overleaf, along with associated recommendations for avoidance and / or mitigation to reduce likely impact:

Table 5 – Habitat Constraints and Recommended Actions			
Habitat	Value / Importance	Potential Impact / Effect	Recommended Actions (Avoidance Measures or Recommendations to Reduce Impact)
Grassland	Semi-natural habitat that provides opportunities for wildlife. Diverse grasslands have intrinsic ecological value, and capacity to support notable plants and fauna.	Loss of foraging and resting ground for protected species.	Retain as much grassland as possible. Any areas of retained grassland should be managed to enhance its current condition, if possible. Offsite habitat creation / enhancement will be required to compensate for loss of grassland.
Ponds	Habitat of principal importance. Ponds are islands of water within a predominantly dry landscape. Ponds provide an important network of stepping stones for aquatic species, such as amphibians and invertebrates.	Loss of, or degradation of, a habitat of principal importance. Loss of or degradation of, potential breeding / resting / foraging habitat for protected and / or notable species.	The pond should be retained within the scheme and protected from impacts of construction works, such as surface water runoff for the duration of the works. Drainage of the scheme should be designed such that the water quality of the pond is not impacted by the development, e.g. the pond is not used as part of the drainage strategy of the site.

5.4 Legally Protected and Notable Species

5.4.1 Great Crested Newt

Biological Records within 2km	No
Value of Supporting Feature(s)	The grassland and scrub habitats onsite are considered suitable terrestrial and hibernation habitat for GCN. The pond onsite is considered suitable breeding habitat for GCN.

	GCN are fully protected under the Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 as amended and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended and are species of principal importance.
Potential Impact or Effect	Loss of GCN terrestrial habitat. Damage of a GCN breeding / resting place. Death or injury of GCN.
Recommended Actions for avoidance/mitigation/compensation and Recommended Further Works	Following the positive result from the eDNA survey (Appendix 7) and additional site survey carried out by Halpin Robbins (Ref. R.1) it is recommended that there is a low/negligible risk of the works causing harm to GCN. Halpin Robbins also recommend the works be carried out under a non-licensed method statement secured by a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
Timing Restrictions	N/A

5.4.2 Reptiles

Biological Records within 2km	Yes
Value of Supporting Feature(s)	Habitats onsite are considered suitable to support a good population of widespread species of reptiles. Grassland onsite is suitable for foraging reptiles, the scrub on the bund may be suitable for hibernating reptiles.
Potential Impact or Effect	Reduction in breeding / foraging / hibernation habitat for reptiles. Death or injury of reptiles.
Recommended Actions for avoidance/mitigation/compensation and Recommended Further Works	Due to the small extent of habitat to be affected by the development and surrounding connected habitats available for dispersal, a method statement should be approved and followed to avoid harm to any reptiles which may be present at the time of works. A Method Statement is recommended to be submitted to the LPA for approval prior to clearance of any grassland within the red-line boundary. Due to the very limited extent of habitat to be removed, this approach is considered appropriate.

	The Method Statement should include timings and details of the clearance methods and post clearance maintenance methods (including a toolbox talk to all site staff involved) to minimise the risk of harm to reptiles, if present.
Timing Restrictions	N/A

5.4.3 Bats

Biological records within 2km – yes

5.4.3.1 Bat Roost – Trees

Value of Supporting Feature(s)	FAR (further assessment required) – on trees T3 & T4
Potential Impact or Effect	None – trees are not to be impacted directly by development.
Recommended Actions for avoidance/mitigation/compensation and Recommended Further Works	Avoidance / risk reduction measures: The features of T3 & T4 are located between 40m and 72m from the proposed development area. It should be possible to avoid impact on PRF features through the design of a sensitive lighting scheme in coordination between a qualified lighting engineer and a suitably qualified ecologist, according to current best practice guidelines. Reduction measures in terms of noise and vibration during construction phase should be detailed within a Construction Method Statement (CEMP) which should be secured as an approved planning condition. If avoidance isn't possible a tree climbing survey under the supervision of a bat licenced ecologist, should be undertaken to confirm the classification of the roost features noted within the GLTA. This will confirm whether features are suitable and are PRF-I, or PRF-M. This will then determine the level of survey effort required to confirm likely presence / absence. These recommendations follow those of Halpin Robbins (Ref.R.2).
Timing Restrictions	Climbing surveys to confirm suitability of PRFs can be undertaken anytime.

5.4.3.2 Bat Foraging

Value of Supporting Feature(s)	Hedgerows and scrub around the margins of the site are suitable habitat for foraging and commuting bats. The foraging and commuting habitat onsite is considered to be of low value however, none of this habitat is to be impacted. Boundary vegetation offers suitable commuting routes for bats, and as there is currently no bat data for the site it is unknown how the proposed lighting associated with the development would affect these routes.
Potential Impact or Effect	Reduction in foraging availability reducing breeding success.
Recommended Actions for avoidance/mitigation/compensation and Recommended Further Works	Risk Reduction measures should be designed into the scheme to include: Retention and protection of all trees currently around the boundaries of the site. A sensitive lighting scheme should be designed and agreed at detailed design stage in coordination between a qualified lighting engineer and a suitably qualified ecologist, according to current best practice guidelines. If avoidance of effects on foraging / commuting habitat by artificial lighting cannot be demonstrated at the pre-planning stage (e.g., through comparison of existing lux levels and proposed lux level plans, showing no net increase in lux levels at the tree canopy / hedgerows), additional survey effort will be required to confirm baseline conditions prior to the planning application submission. Nighttime bat walkover (NBW) and static monitoring surveys should be carried out to determine the importance of the foraging / commuting habitat around the site boundaries assemblages of bat species in the local area. This will enable an ecological risk assessment to determine the level of effect, if any, additional artificial lighting will have on foraging and commuting bats, and design mitigation and / or compensation measures that may be necessary to address the effect.

Timing Restrictions	Activity surveys are restricted to April to October inclusive and will require one NBW in spring (April to May) summer (June to August) and autumn (September to October) supported by monthly static monitoring between April and October inclusive.
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5.4.4 Hedgehog

Biological Records within 2km	yes
Value of Supporting Feature(s)	Foraging habitat in grassland. Nesting/hibernation habitat in scrub.
Potential Impact or Effect	Loss of foraging habitat. Interruption of foraging routes. Death of individuals.
Recommended Actions for avoidance/mitigation/compensation and Recommended Further Works	Reduction of impact: Excavations during development or ground investigation works should be covered overnight to prevent entrapment of Hedgehogs.
Timing Restrictions	N/A

5.4.5 Badger

Biological Records within 2km	yes
Value of Supporting Feature(s)	No Badger setts or foraging signs were identified within the site during the habitat survey; however, this species could move onto site at any time if Badger are present in the local area.
Potential Impact or Effect	N/A – at present
Recommended Actions for avoidance/mitigation/compensation and Recommended Further Works	Prior to any construction works the site should be checked by an ecologist to ensure that Badgers have not inhabited the site since the original survey visit. All open excavations should be covered overnight to prevent entrapment of Badgers or other mammals during development.
Timing Restrictions	None - Pre-construction check can be undertaken anytime

6 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN – FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT

The Environment Act 2021 Act became law on 9 November 2021 and introduces a framework to improve and protect the natural environment, overseen by the newly created Office for Environmental Protection. The Act introduces a mandatory requirement for developments to achieve measurable biodiversity net gain, meaning all planning permissions in England (subject to exemptions) must be granted subject to a general pre-commencement condition that requires approval of a biodiversity gain plan. The planning authority may only approve the biodiversity gain plan if the biodiversity value attributable to a development exceeds the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat by 10%.

This report includes a feasibility BNG assessment to inform the final development plan and potential mitigation onsite/offsite. If a further design stage assessment is required a further habitat assessment at the optimal time of year may be needed to more accurately assign habitats and condition.

6.1 Baseline Habitats

The biodiversity net gain assessment is quantified using the statutory biodiversity metric (ref. R.18) which is completed using data compiled during the habitat assessment. This feasibility assessment is for the Phase 1 development which application this report has been compiled.

Baseline habitats identified onsite include:

- Modified grassland
- Scrub (willow and mixed)
- Hedgerow with trees
- Pond
- Trees

And are shown on Figure 6 below



Figure 6 – Baseline Habitats Onsite for Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Feasibility)

6.2 Proposed Habitats

The mitigation hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensation must be satisfied before a no net loss of biodiversity can be realised. This includes implementation of any mitigation measures required to ensure there are no significant effects on ecological receptors. Once these key requirements are met, biodiversity net gain can then be considered.

The post-intervention value is based upon what is considered feasible within the current design. The target habitat conditions are based upon professional opinion of what is achievable with positive management.

Figure 7 below shows the extent of proposed habitats digitised and assigned to the most rational category based upon statutory biodiversity metric.



Figure 7 – Proposed Habitats Onsite

6.3 Feasibility

The headline results from the biodiversity net gain assessment statutory metric tool are shown in Table 6 below:

Table 6 – Onsite Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Summary of Results		
Onsite baseline	Habitat units	13.33
	Hedgerow units	6.63
Onsite post-intervention	Habitat units	14.98
	Hedgerow units	7.90
Onsite total net unit change	Habitat units	1.64
	Hedgerow units	1.28
Onsite net % change	Habitat units	12.33%
	Hedgerow units	19.28%
Trading rule issues	All trading rules satisfied	

The site currently achieves a measurable net gain of biodiversity, provided assumptions made regarding the future condition of post-intervention habitats are successfully implemented.

Trading rules are satisfied.

Further recommendations for mitigation or to inform design for the development can be provided in a more detailed report.

7. OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT

The following general enhancements have been recommended to be included within the final development Scheme:

- Planting of native plant species beneficial to wildlife should be incorporated into the final design. This will provide additional habitat for invertebrates, which will in turn provide a food source for reptiles, birds, bats, and Hedgehog.
- The final development plan should ideally incorporate integrated bat boxes into the scheme. If integrated boxes are not possible due to the development design, externally mounted boxes should be used. Ideally, bat boxes should be sited either on existing trees or on building elevations that face towards boundary hedgerows/scrub and away from any lighting.
- Log piles should be placed in connectivity to the boundary vegetation on the bund onsite, enhancing the habitats onsite for both reptiles and invertebrates' post-development.
- To help achieve biodiversity net gain on the site, areas of natural habitat would need to be included within the scheme. Metric calculations will likely be a requirement of planning, to show that net gain can be achieved.

It is not recommended to include bird boxes into the scheme as encouraging wild birds onto the site poses a biosecurity risk to the poultry unit.

Examples of potential enhancement features are included as Appendix 9.

8. CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER SURVEY

The proposed development will not adversely affect statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation sites.

None of the habitats that occur within the survey area were considered to have high ecological importance on an international, national, regional or county scale. The habitats onsite are of local significance only.

The findings of the habitat survey and protected species scoping survey confirm that the habitats onsite have the potential to support reptiles, foraging bats, Great Crested Newt, Hedgehog and Badger. The recommendations within section 5 of this report should be implemented to reduce the potential impact on protected species.

If avoidance measures are not possible, additional surveys for foraging bats and roosting bats in trees will be required to confirm baseline use of the site by protected species. If present, a detailed mitigation strategy will be required to be provided to the Local Planning Authority prior to the determination of a planning application. Recommendations for mitigation should be in-line with CIEEM guidance (ref. R.15) for ecological impact assessment.

The results of the eDNA survey are included within Appendix 7. The positive result was considered within the Summary Report by Halpin Robbins (Ref. R.1) and recommendations made to employ a non-licensed method statement approach, secured by a CEMP.

Regarding reptiles, a method statement is recommended to be submitted to the LPA for approval prior to clearance of any grassland within the red-line boundary. Due to the very limited extent of habitat to be removed, this approach is considered appropriate.

The Method Statement should include timings and details of the clearance methods and post clearance maintenance methods (including a toolbox talk to all site staff involved) to minimise the risk of harm to reptiles, if present.

Halpin Robbins also reported on the potential impacts to bats against the Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (Ref. R.2) and concluded that *“No features with the potential to support bats are being impacted by the works. There are no impact pathways relevant to the TWBMS”*.

The proposed development will be subject to the statutory requirement to achieve 10% biodiversity net gain. A feasibility assessment carried out shows that the Phase 1 of the development onsite will achieve a net gain

of 12.33% for area habitats with the enhancement of the scrub area to the western boundary. The site will also achieve a net gain of 19.28% for hedgerow habitats with the enhancement of the hedgerows to the north and south boundaries. All trading rules will be satisfied.

Opportunities exist for the provision of ecological enhancements in the form of bat boxes, log piles for invertebrates and GCN (Ref. R.1), and the incorporation of locally sourced native plant species, or those of known wildlife benefit, into the landscape strategy.

Provided the recommendations within this report are followed and the mitigation hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation, compensation, and enhancement is implemented throughout the detailed design process, potential negative effects from development on important ecological features will be negligible.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Report Limitations and Conditions

General Limitations and Exceptions

This report was prepared solely for our Client for the stated purposes only and is not intended to be relied on by any other party or for any other use. No extended duty of care to any third party is implied or offered. Third parties should not rely on the facts, matters or opinions set out in this report without the express written permission of Acorus Rural Property Services.

Acorus Rural Property Services does not purport to provide specialist legal advice.

The Executive Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations sections of the report provide an overview and guidance only and should not be specifically relied upon until considered within the context of the whole report.

Interpretations and recommendations contained within the report represent our professional opinions, which were arrived at in accordance with currently accepted industry practices at the time of reporting and based upon current legislation in force at that time.

Ecology Limitations and Exceptions

Any limitations associated with the report will be stated. The consequences of any limitations, findings and / or recommendations in the report are made clear in line with CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester, and BSI (2013) BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – ‘Code of practice for planning and development’.

This report is prepared and written in the context of the proposals stated in the introduction to this report and should not be used in a differing context.

The wildlife and habitats present on any site are subject to change over time. Surveys of this kind can have limited validity, with the possibility of behaviour patterns and territory boundaries varying over time, due to the dynamics of adjacent populations.

New information, improved practices and legislation may necessitate an alteration to the report in whole or in part after its submission. Therefore, with any change in circumstances or after the expiry of one year from the date of the report, the report should be referred to us for re-assessment and, if necessary, re-appraisal.

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation can ensure the complete characterisation of the natural environment.

The scoping survey does not assess the presence or absence of a species but is used to assess the potential for habitat to support them. Additional surveys may be recommended if, based on the preliminary assessment or during subsequent surveys, it is considered reasonably likely that protected species may be present.

If bats or any other European protected species are found to be present onsite, and the proposed activities will cause disturbance or destruction of a roost site then this report will only summarise the potential requirements. For works to continue a detailed mitigation plan with appropriate compensation measures would be required and a development licence would need to be sought from Natural England.

This survey does not constitute an invasive species survey and should not be treated as such.

Owing to seasonal variances and prevailing weather, conditions may sometimes be sub-optimal for surveying, and this may delay or disrupt planned survey programmes. If applicable, full details are given in the report.

Acorus Rural Property Services may not be aware of information that could be held by other organisations or individuals, and it is always possible for features of nature conservation interest to be unrecorded during surveys.

Scientific survey data will be shared with local biological records centre in accordance with the CIEEM professional code of conduct.

Appendix 2 – References

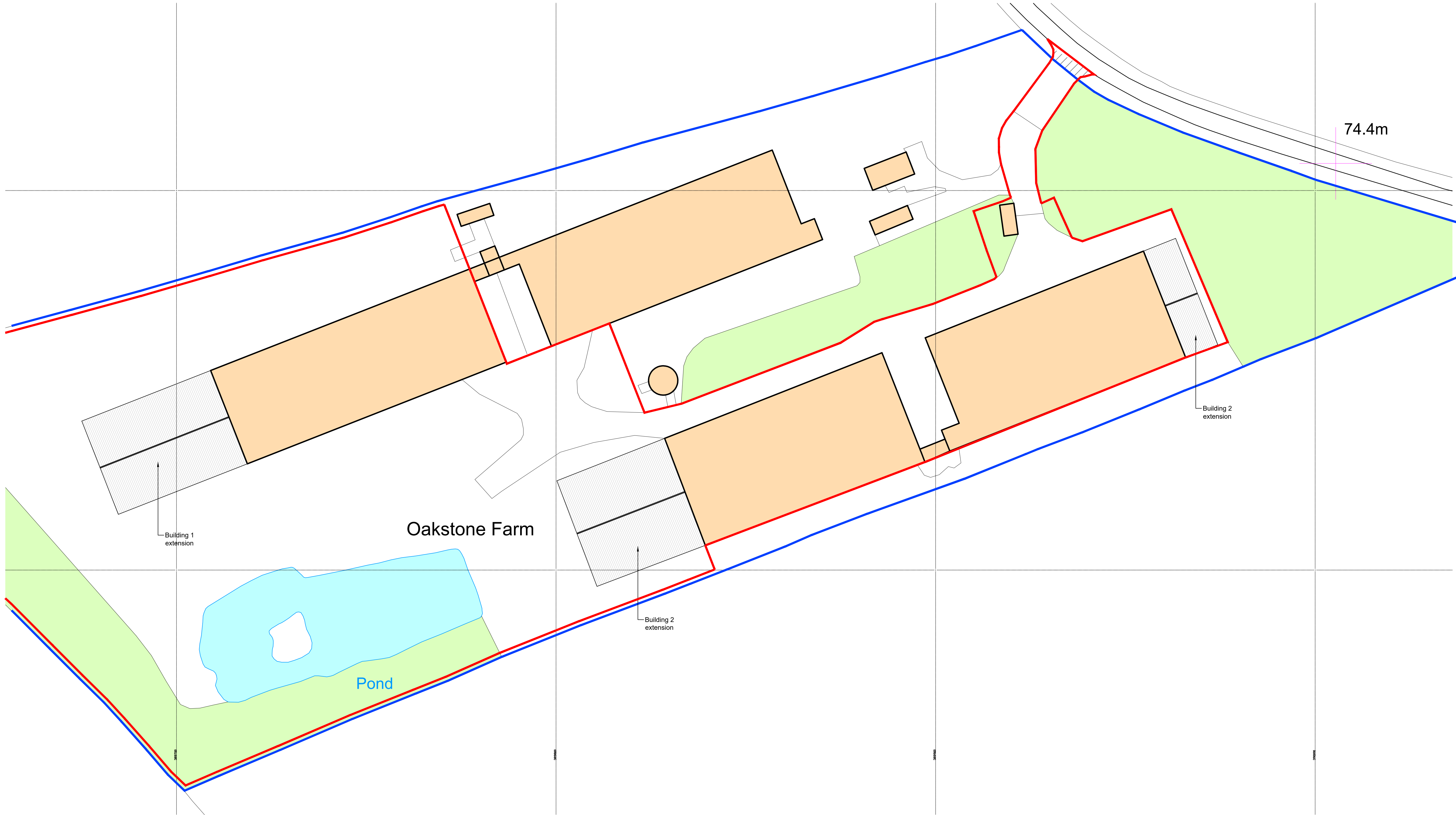
- R.1.** Halpin Robbins, (2025). Oakstone Farm: Summary Reports, reference 01.132.006.02 – Welfare Shed, 07th July 2025.
- R.2.** Halpin Robbins, (2025). Oakstone: Ecological Technical Note – New Buildings, reference 01.132.006.03, 22nd October 2025.
- R.3.** Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (December 2024) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- R.4.** ODPM (2005) Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – statutory obligations and their impact within the planning system.
- R.5.** CIEEM, (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- R.6.** BSI (2013) BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development. BSI Standards Limited 2013.
- R.7.** Stace, C. A. (2010). New Flora of the British Isles (third edition), Cambridge University Press.
- R.8.** Magic [accessed 14/11/2024] Site Check Report. www.magic.gov.uk.
- R.9.** Butcher, B., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. (2023) The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 at <http://www.ukhab.org/>
- R.10.** BRIG (ed. Ant Maddock). UK Biodiversity Action Plan; Priority Habitat Descriptions. <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-bap-priority-habitats/>
- R.11.** Goldsmith, B. (1991). Monitoring for Conservation and Ecology, Chapman & Hall.
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- R.13.** Collins, J (ed) (2023). ‘Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition.’ Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- R.14.** Neil Middleton (08/10/2019). Assessing Sites for Hibernation Potential. A Practical Approach including a Proposed Method and Supporting Notes. Draft/V2.2019
- R.15.** CIEEM (April 2022) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Version 1.2. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- R.16.** Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS). July 2025, Wiltshire Council.
- R.17.** Stanbury A. et. al. (2021). The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of

extinction risk for Great Britain. British Birds 114: 723-747. Available online at <https://britishbirds.co.uk/content/status-our-bird-populations>

- R.18.** Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs. (3rd July 2025). Statutory biodiversity metric tools and guides. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>
- R.19.** BS 5837: (2012), 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction'.
- R.20.** Institution of Lighting Professionals (2023) Bats and artificial lighting at night – Guidance Note 08/23

Appendix 3 – Drawings

Proposed development - Drawing reference 200 03 B Proposed Block Plan.



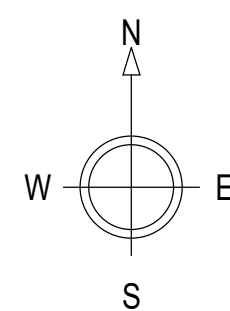
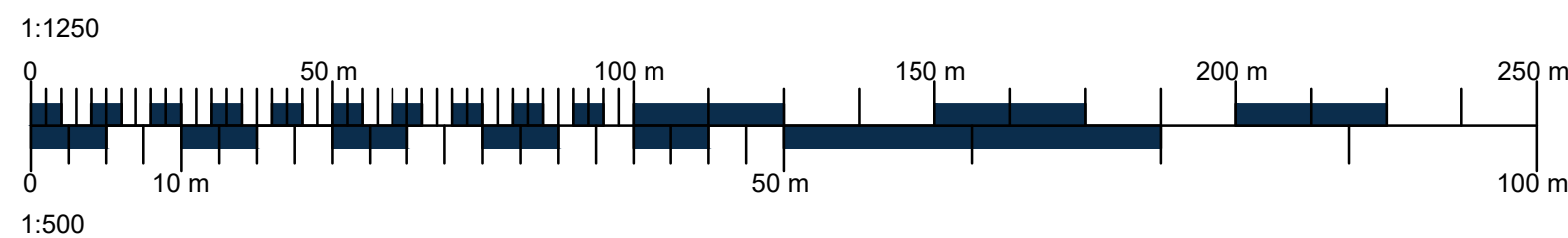
PLANNING ISSUE

PROPOSED BLOCK PLAN

Scale 1:500

NOTES:

1. Use written dimensions only. All dimensions to be checked on site and any discrepancies reported to ACORUS immediately. If in doubt ask.
 2. Where relevant, significant hazards have been identified on the drawing. Hazards which should be obvious to a competent contractor or unforeseeable have not been identified.
 3. This drawing is confidential and remains the exclusive property of ACORUS.
 4. Ordnance Survey Paper Map Copying Licence Number: 100039456.
- © ACORUS Rural Property Services Ltd.



- Ownership Boundary
- Site Boundary
- ▨ Site Access

Rev	Date	Description	Dwn	Chk
Rev	Date	Amendment	Drawn	Checked
PROJECT				
Mr R Lanning				
Oakstone Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton				
Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 6AX				
TITLE				
Poultry Extensions				
Proposed Block Plan				
SCALE				
AS SHOWN	@A1	JUN 25	JT	JW
JOB & DRAWING NO.		REVISION		
JW/2401/0425		- 200_03		



acorus

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Appendix 4 – Species Specific Legislation

Introduction

This is a summary only. The reader is referred to the original legislation for definitive interpretation.

Badger

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 exists for welfare reasons, to protect Badgers from cruelty. Under the act it is a criminal offence to wilfully kill, injure, take, possess, or cruelly ill-treat a Badger, or to attempt to do so, or to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett.

Bats

All bat species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is illegal to kill or injure bats, cause disturbance at their resting places or to block access to, damage or destroy their roost sites.

Great Crested Newts

Great Crested Newts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Section 5 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is illegal to intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture Great Crested Newts or intentionally, deliberately, or recklessly damage or destroy their breeding and resting places or obstruct access to their place of shelter or protection.

Birds

Wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is illegal to take or harm them, their nests (whilst in use or being built) or their eggs.

Additionally, for some species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act, it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb the adults while they are in and around their nest or intentionally or recklessly disturb their dependent young.

Reptiles

Common reptiles include slow-worm, adder, grass snake and common lizard. These are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Schedule 5, Sections 9 (1) & 9 (5) only. It is illegal to kill or injure them.

It is not illegal to capture, disturb or to damage their habitats. However, the reptiles themselves are protected so any works to damage their habitat could risk causing harm to reptiles and hence could be illegal.

Rare reptiles which include sand lizard and smooth snake are restricted to a few locations in Britain and are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Schedule 5, Section 9 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is illegal to kill, injure or intentionally disturb them whilst occupying a 'place used for shelter or protection' and destruction of these places.

Appendix 5 – Desk Study Data

Site Check Report Report generated on Thu Nov 14 2024

You selected the location: Centroid Grid Ref: ST89825414

The following features have been found in your search area:

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)

Name

Picket and Clanger Wood SSSI

Reference

1000946

Natural England Contact

LLOYD, (KATIE S)

Natural England Phone Number

0845 600 3078

Hectares

66.9

Citation

1001598

Site Details Hyperlink

<http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=s1001598>

Site Feature Condition Hyperlink

[https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteFeatureCondition.aspx?](https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteFeatureCondition.aspx?SiteCode=s1001598&SiteName=Picket and Clanger Wood SSSI)

[SiteCode=s1001598&SiteName=Picket and Clanger Wood SSSI](https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteFeatureCondition.aspx?SiteCode=s1001598&SiteName=Picket and Clanger Wood SSSI)

Name

Steeple Ashton SSSI

Reference

1006568

Natural England Contact

Wessex Area Team, (Somerset)

Natural England Phone Number

0845 600 3078

Hectares

26.47

Citation

2000307

Site Details Hyperlink

<http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteDetail.aspx?SiteCode=s2000307>

Site Feature Condition Hyperlink

[https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteFeatureCondition.aspx?](https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteFeatureCondition.aspx?SiteCode=s2000307&SiteName=Steeple Ashton SSSI)

[SiteCode=s2000307&SiteName=Steeple Ashton SSSI](https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteFeatureCondition.aspx?SiteCode=s2000307&SiteName=Steeple Ashton SSSI)

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (England)

No Features found

Local Nature Reserves (England)

No Features found

National Nature Reserves (England)

No Features found

National Parks (England)

No Features found

Ramsar Sites (England)

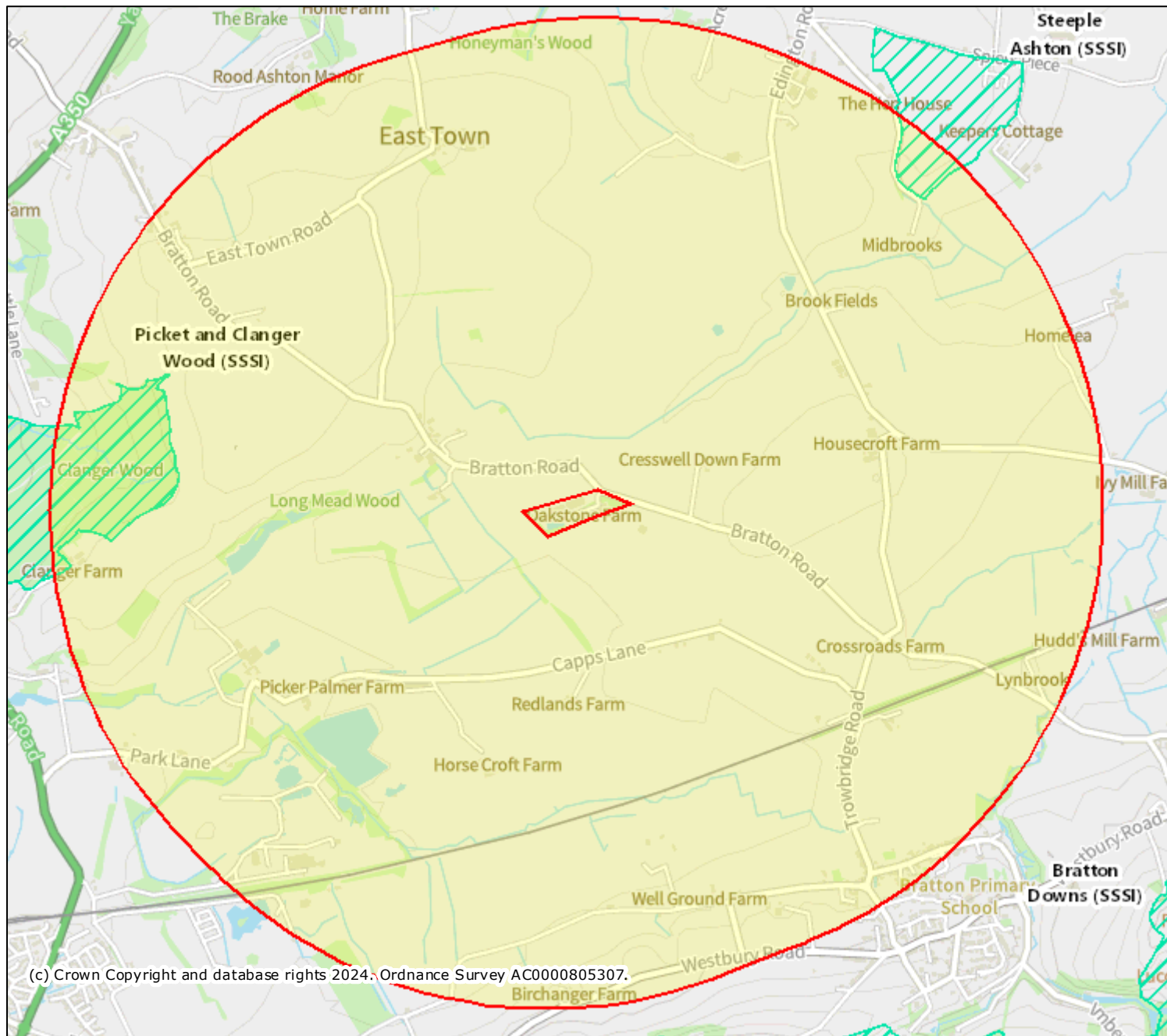
No Features found

Special Areas of Conservation (England)

No Features found

Special Protection Areas (England)

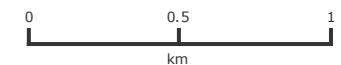
No Features found



Legend

- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (England)
- Local Nature Reserves (England)
- National Nature Reserves (England)
- National Parks (England)
- Ramsar Sites (England)
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England)
- Special Areas of Conservation (England)
- Special Protection Areas (England)

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 383600
ymin = 151000
xmax = 396300
ymax = 157200



Map produced by MAGIC on 14 November, 2024.
Copyright resides with the data suppliers and the map must not be reproduced without their permission. Some information in MAGIC is a snapshot of the information that is being maintained or continually updated by the originating organisation. Please refer to the metadata for details as information may be illustrative or representative rather than definitive at this stage.

Site Check Report Report generated on Thu Nov 14 2024
You selected the location: Centroid Grid Ref: ST89825414
The following features have been found in your search area:

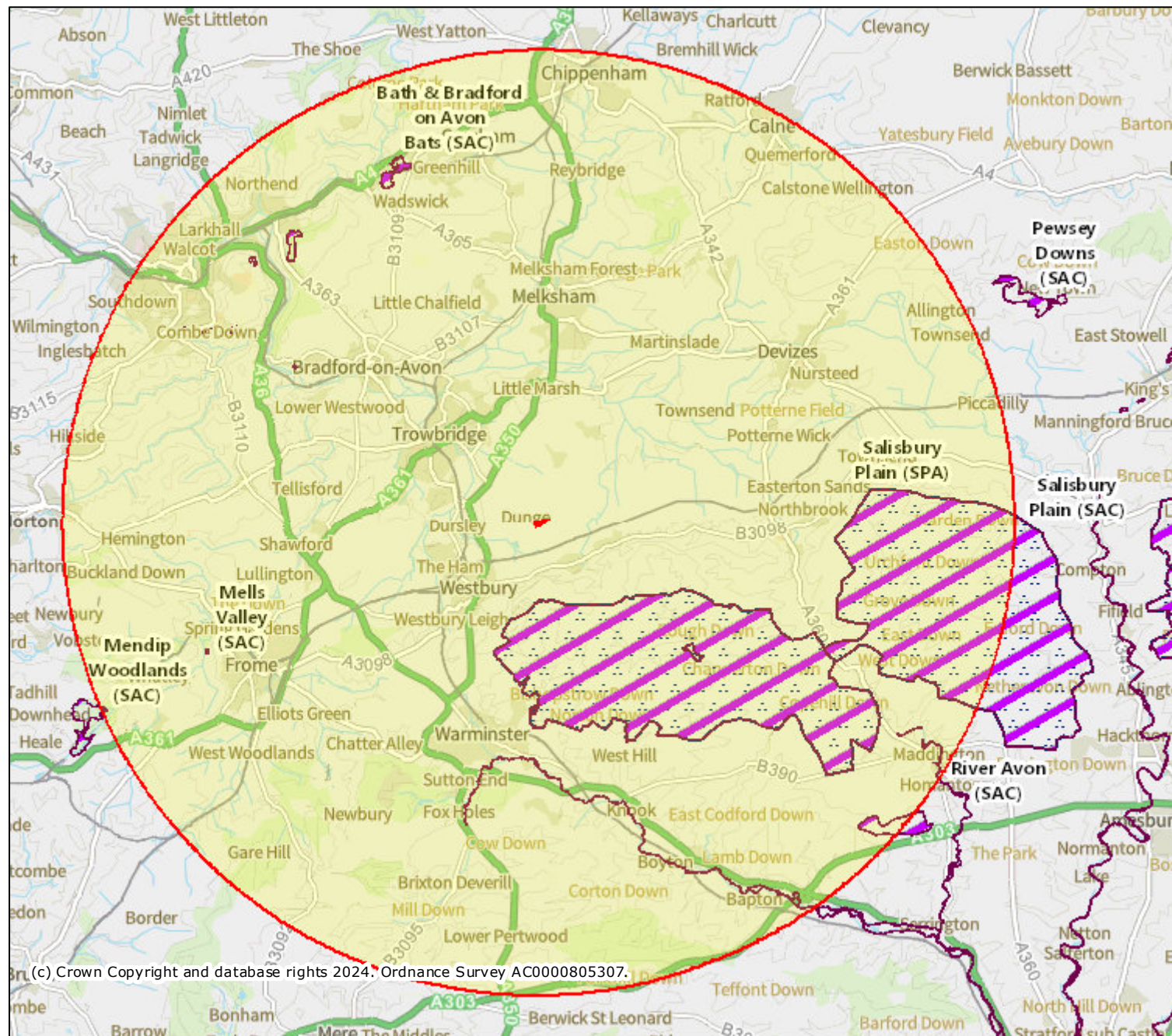
Special Areas of Conservation (England)

Name	RIVER AVON
Reference	UK0013016
Hectares	467.58
Hyperlink	https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0013016
Name	SALISBURY PLAIN
Reference	UK0012683
Hectares	21460.88
Hyperlink	https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0012683
Name	MENDIP WOODLANDS
Reference	UK0030048
Hectares	253.67
Hyperlink	https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0030048
Name	BATH & BRADFORD ON AVON BATS
Reference	UK0012584
Hectares	107.86
Hyperlink	https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0012584
Name	MELLS VALLEY
Reference	UK0012658
Hectares	28.62
Hyperlink	https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0012658

Special Protection Areas (England)

Name	SALISBURY PLAIN
Reference	UK9011102
Hectares	19714.54

Ramsar Sites (England)
No Features found



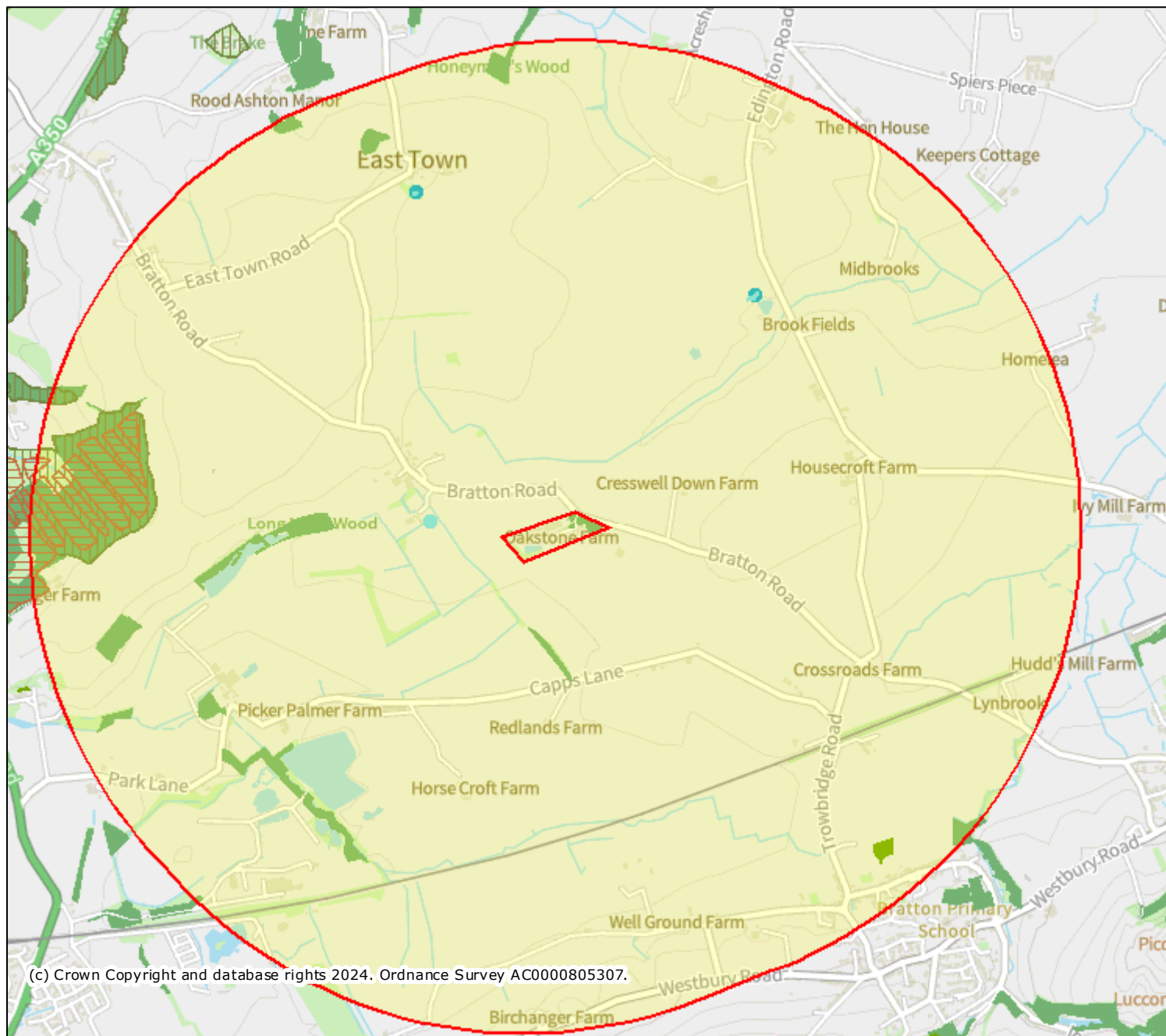
Legend

-  Ramsar Sites (England)
-  Special Areas of Conservation (England)
-  Special Protection Areas (England)

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 328700
ymin = 122800
xmax = 455700
ymax = 185500



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Legend

Priority Habitat Inventory -
Ponds and Lakes
(England)

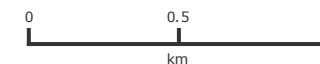
Surveyed Priority Ponds Points (points)

- CWW no OS pond within 30m
- CWW within 30m of OS pond
- CWW within OS pond
- PP no OS pond within 30m
- PP within 30m of OS pond
- PP within OS pond

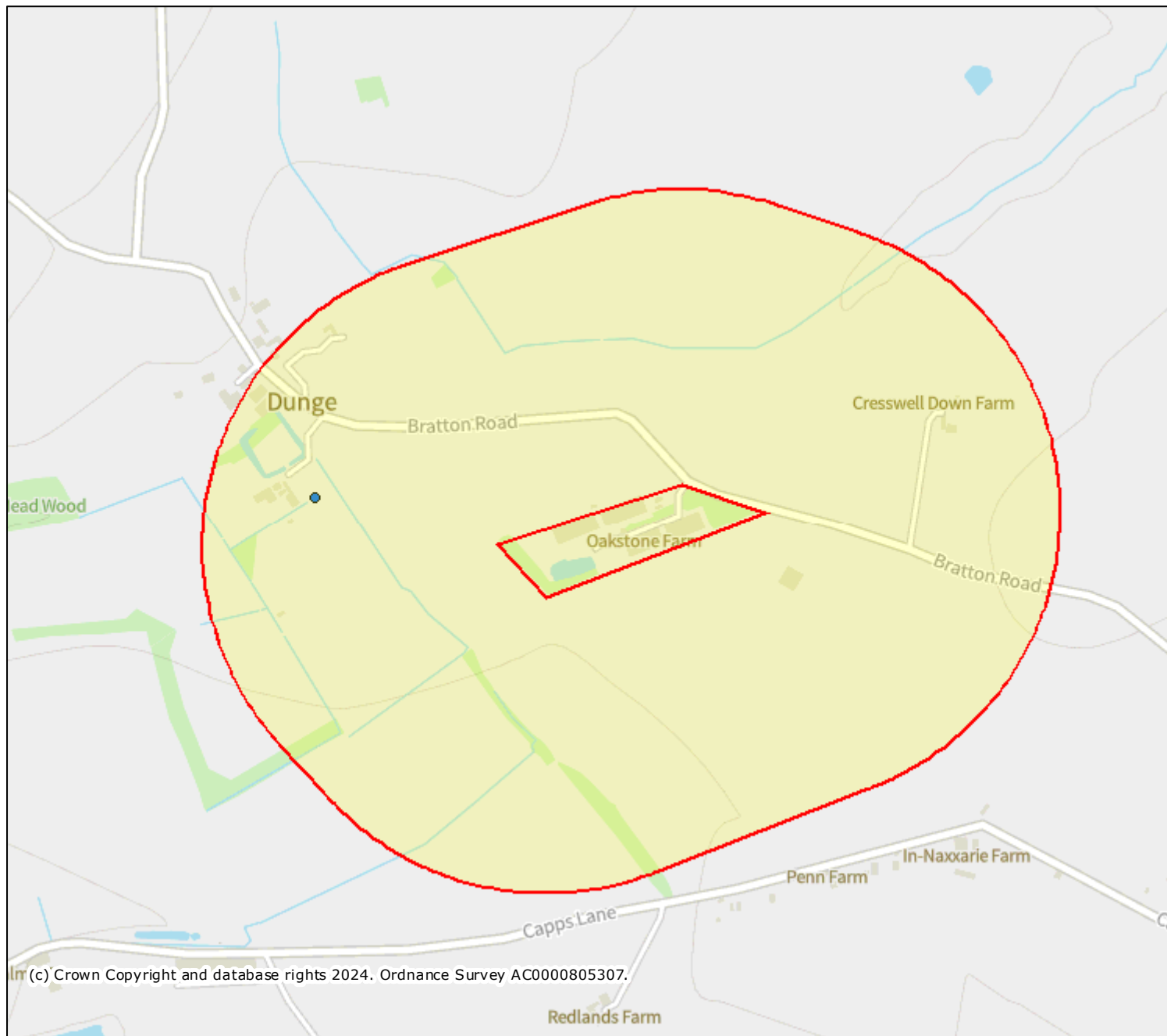
Ancient Woodland (England)

- Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland
- Ancient Replanted Woodland
- Priority Habitat Inventory -
Deciduous Woodland
(England)
- Priority Habitat Inventory -
Traditional Orchards
(England)

Projection = OSGB36
xmin = 383600
ymin = 151100
xmax = 396300
ymax = 157300



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Legend

Great Crested Newt Class
● Survey Licence Returns
(England)

Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017 - 2019

- 10 FIG present
- 10 FIG absent
- 10 FIG inconclusive
- 8 FIG present
- 6 FIG present
- 4 FIG present
- 4 FIG absent
- 4 FIG inconclusive

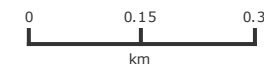
Projection = OSGB36

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ymax = 155400



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Appendix 6 – Habitat Suitability Index

[illegible]

Appendix 7 – eDNA Results

Folio No: 333-2025
Purchase Order: Oakstone
Contact: Acorus Rural Property Services
Issue Date: 28.04.2025
Received Date: 17.04.2025

GCN Report

Technical Report



SureScreen Scientifics

Folio No: 333-2025
Purchase Order: Oakstone
Contact: Acorus Rural Property Services
Issue Date: 28.04.2025
Received Date: 17.04.2025

GCN eDNA Analysis

Summary

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

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
GCN25 0933	Oakstone Farm P1	ST 897 540	Pass	Pass	Positive	1/12

Matters affecting result: none

Reported by: Chelsea Warner

Approved by: Chelsea Warner

Methodology

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

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

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

Interpretation of Results

Sample Integrity Check:

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

Degradation Check:

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

Inhibition Check:

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

Result:

Presence of GCN eDNA (Positive/Negative/Inconclusive)

Positive: GCN DNA was identified within the sample, indicative of GCN presence within the sampling location at the time the sample was taken or within the recent past at the sampling location.

Positive Replicates: Number of positive qPCR replicates out of a series of 12. If one or more of these are found to be positive the pond is declared positive for GCN presence. It may be assumed that small fractions of positive analyses suggest low level presence, but this cannot currently be used for population studies. In accordance with the WC1067 Natural England protocol, even a score of 1/12 is declared positive. 0/12 indicates negative GCN presence.

Negative: GCN eDNA was not detected or is below the threshold detection level and the test result should be considered as evidence of GCN absence, however, does not exclude the potential for GCN presence below the limit of detection.

Inconclusive: Controls indicate inhibition or degradation of the sample, resulting in the inability to provide conclusive evidence for GCN presence or absence.



Appendix 8 – Selected Photographs

Photograph 1



Photograph 2



Photograph 3



Photograph 4



DESCRIPTION

Photograph 1

Entrance to site from Bratton Road.

Photograph 2

View west into site, Shed 4 on the right.

Photograph 3

View east towards Shed 2 across modified grassland.

Photograph 4

Bund of scrub to western boundary.

PROJECT

Oakstone Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton, , Wiltshire, BA14 6AX

TITLE

Selected Photographs Relating To Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

DATE

15/01/2025

PAGE NO.

1 of 3

Photograph 5



Photograph 6



DESCRIPTION

Photograph 5

Northern hedgerow.

Photograph 6

Shed 4.

Photograph 7

Shed 2 (left)

Photograph 7



Photograph 8



Photograph 8

Trees T1 and T2

PROJECT

Oakstone Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton, , Wiltshire, BA14 6AX

TITLE

**Selected Photographs Relating To
Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey**

DATE

15/01/2025

PAGE NO.

2 of 3

Photograph 9



Photograph 10



DESCRIPTION

Photograph 9

Tree T3

Photograph 10

Tree T4 within hedgerow.

Photograph 11

Tree T5, surrounded by Willow scrub on an island in pond P1.

Photograph 11



Photograph 12



Photograph 12

Pond P1 onsite.

PROJECT

Oakstone Farm, Bratton Road, West Ashton, , Wiltshire, BA14 6AX

TITLE

**Selected Photographs Relating To
Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey**

DATE

15/01/2025

PAGE NO.

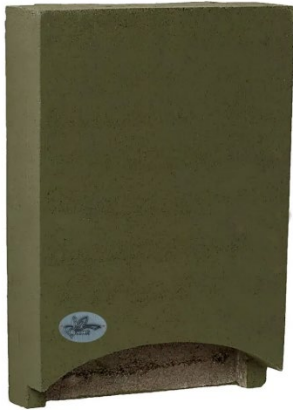
3 of 3

Appendix 9 – Example Enhancement Features

External Bat boxes

NHBS Elisa Bat Box

Website: <https://www.nhbs.com/>



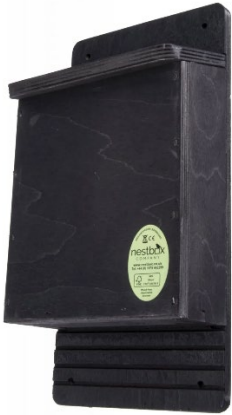
The Elisa Wood Concrete Batbox is designed to provide an ideal summer roost and nesting space for a variety of bat species, including pipistrelles and Daubenton's. Sitting close to a wall in order to minimise the dangers of strong winds knocking it free, the Elisa features a single internal cavity with an entrance hole at the bottom, meaning that it does not need to be cleaned. It can also be fitted to trees, and has a specially curved back to enable it to sit more securely against a rounded surface. It is constructed from wood concrete, a blend of wood fibres and concrete, which makes it extremely long lasting but comparatively light. It also has excellent thermal properties compared to timber boxes, retaining heat exceptionally well. The Elisa is supplied without fittings, as the necessary supports will vary depending on whether the box is going to be mounted on a tree or wall. It does include a strong wire loop to make hanging easier. The ideal position for the Elisa, as with any bat box, is a height of at least 3m from the ground, in a sheltered area exposed to the sun for part of the day (usually south, south-east or south-west) and away from artificial light sources.

Specification

- Function: Maternity roost, Summer roost
- Exterior dimensions (l x w x h): 26x10x37cm
- Inner dimensions (l x w x h): 21 x 3-1.5 (tapered) x 30 cm
- Colour: Grey
- Material: Wood concrete
- Supplied With: Galvanised Steel Hangar

Improved Crevice Bat Box

Website: <https://www.nhbs.com/>



This Improved Crevice Bat Box is available with either a double or treble crevice. This box is designed to be suitable for the small British crevice-dwelling bats - the Pipistrelles, Soprano Pipistrelles and Barbastelle's - these species make up over three quarters of UK bats.

The external panels are made from 12mm Exterior Grade FSC plywood and are stained with black water based wood stain, both improve the boxes heat insulation. The multiple crevices allow for different temperature characteristics, and the internal ceramic heat sink improves temperature stability. The overhanging apex roof also provides protection from the UK weather.

There is a 'Bat Ladder' at the base of the box which facilitates bats landing and climbing into the box. This continues inside of the box making it easy for the bats to move around and grip the surface. The ladder acts as a 'convector heater' for the box - when the sun shines on the ladder, warm air rises into the box and does not come out when the outside cools.

The box is relatively lightweight and can easily and safely be mounted to walls or trees. The roof of the box can be removed for ease of cleaning, and a rectangular back plate facilitates fitting several boxes side to side to increase colony size.

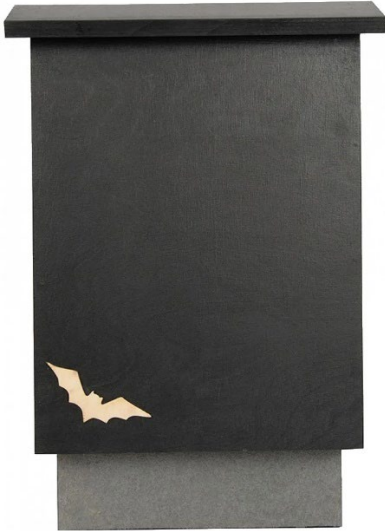
Specification

Double Crevice Bat Box

- Height of back panel: 335mm
- Internal height of roost chamber: 197mm
- External depth of roost chamber: 69mm
- External depth including roof overhang: 101mm
- External width: 166mm
- Weight: 1.4kg

Chambord Wooden Bat Box

Website: <https://www.nhbs.com/>



The Chambord Wooden Bat Box is a traditional style bat box with an entrance at the base and a textured ladder to give bats easy access. This bat box has a single roosting chamber and is suitable for a range of bats including the brown long-eared bat, the greater mouse-eared bat and the common pipistrelle.

Specification

Height: 41cm

Width: 25cm

Depth: 6.5cm

Weight: 2kg

Log Piles

Website: <https://stagbeetles.ptes.org/how-to-build-a-log-pile/>

Log pyramid

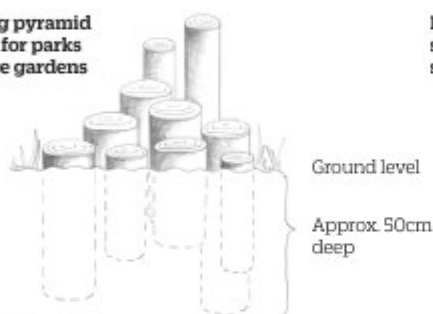
How to make a log pyramid

- ▶ Log pyramids can be built at any time of year
- ▶ Use wood from any broadleaved tree
- ▶ The logs should be at least the thickness of an adults arm
- ▶ Site the logs in partial shade if possible to prevent them drying out
- ▶ Partially bury the logs in the soil so that they don't dry out
- ▶ Allow plants to grow over the log pyramid to retain moisture and provide shade

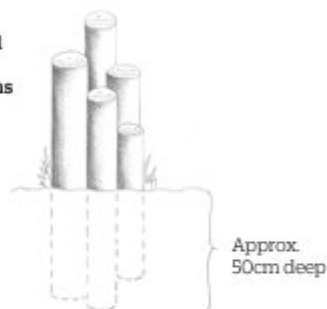
Your log pyramid will also benefit a range of other species including fungi, dead wood invertebrates and the animals that feed on them. It will be a great place for foraging small mammals, basking reptiles and potentially solitary bees.



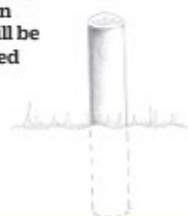
**Large log pyramid
suitable for parks
and large gardens**



**Log pyramid
suitable for
small gardens**



**Or, if space is
limited, a single
log on or in
the soil will be
appreciated**



More tips for stag beetle friendly gardening

- ▶ Leave tree stumps in place if possible; they can become garden features with plants growing over them
- ▶ Try not to use pesticides
- ▶ Keep a lid on your water butt as stag beetles are known to fall in and drown
- ▶ Avoid using polythene sheeting to control weeds. Newly emerging stag beetles can get trapped beneath it in spring and die
- ▶ If you find larvae in the bottom of rotten fence posts and need to move them, dig a hole elsewhere in your garden and put them in together with some of the rotting wood from the original site. Cover loosely with soil

Images: Ross Bowler, Steve Haywood

people's
trust for
endangered
species

www.ptes.org
enquiries@ptes.org
020 7498 4533

facebook.com/ptes.org
twitter.com/PTES
[Instagram.com/ptes_org](https://www.instagram.com/ptes_org)

Registered charity no. 274206



Log pyramid (or stumpery) provides rotting wood underground which is great for stag beetles. Bury several logs upright in the soil, approximately 50cm deep. Logs should be broadleaved wood (not conifers) and at least as thick as an adult's arm.

Make sure that there is space (filled with soil) in between the logs so that stag beetles can use all parts of the log. (Female stag beetles lay their eggs in the soil next to rotting wood and the larvae move in and out of them)

In dappled shade is best to prevent the logs drying out.

Log Pile

Website: <https://www.nhm.ac.uk/discover/how-to-make-a-log-pile-to-provide-shelter-for-garden-wildlife.html>



1. Find a damp, shady spot and create a base layer of logs.
2. Push some sturdy sticks into the ground on both sides of your logs, to stop them rolling away.
3. Fill any gaps between your logs with dry leaves.
4. Add a layer of loose bark.
5. Continue adding alternate layers of logs, sticks, bark and leaves, finishing in a pyramid shape. To ensure the log pile is stable, place your biggest logs towards the bottom of the pile.
6. Keep the log pile damp by watering it during dry spells.

Tips on building the best log pile

- When sourcing logs, you could use tree prunings or ask friends and neighbours if they have any offcuts. Don't take logs from woods or other wildlife sites because you might be disturbing established habitats.
- Keeping the log pile moist will provide homes for the greatest variety of wildlife. However, a very shady log pile might be too cold for some insects to live in.
- You can encourage shade-loving plants such as primroses and ferns to grow around or over your log pile. This can make your logs look more attractive and provide extra shelter.
- To create a broader range of habitats, partially bury the initial layer of logs, rather than leave them resting on the surface.

Trees			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Crab apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Wild Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>	Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Pedunculate Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Plants for Bees and Pollinators			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Wood anemone	<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>
Winter aconite	<i>Eranthis hyemalis</i>	Common Mallow	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>
Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Lady's bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>
Lungwort	<i>Pulmonaria officinalis</i>	Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Sweet Violet	<i>Viola odorata</i>	English Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
Purple Toadflax	<i>Linaria purpurea</i>		
Native Wildflowers			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Agrimony	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	Toadflax	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>
Corncockle	<i>Agrostemma githago</i>	Yellow Loosestrife	<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>
Chives	<i>Allium schoenoprasum</i>	Common Mallow	<i>Malva sylvestris</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Forget-me-nots	<i>Myosotis</i> spp
Harebell	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	Cornflower	<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>
Common Poppy	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>	Common Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
Cowslip	<i>Primula veris</i>	Greater Knapweed	<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>
Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	White Campion	<i>Silene alba</i>
Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Red Campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
Teasel	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Devil's Bit Scabious	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>
Lady's Bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>	Tansy	<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>
Meadow Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium pratense</i>	Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Herb-Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Wild Thyme	<i>Thymus drucei</i>
Corn Marigold	<i>Glebionis segetum</i>	Great Mullein	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>
Dame's Violet	<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Field Scabious	<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Spiked Speedwell	<i>Veronica spicata</i>
Oxeye Daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Bird's Foot Trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
Plants for Shady Areas			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Bugle	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
Lords and Ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Yellow Archangel	<i>Lamium galeobdolon</i>
Lily of the Valley	<i>Convallaria majalis</i>	Daffodils	<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>
Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>
Wood Avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Sweet Violet	<i>Viola odorata</i>

Plants for Wildflower Meadows			
Common Name	Scientific Name	Common Name	Scientific Name
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Poached-egg plant	<i>Limnanthes douglasii</i>
Corncockle	<i>Agrostemma githago</i>	Toadflaxes	<i>Linaria spp.</i>
Flax	<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	Yellow alyssum	<i>Alyssum saxatile</i>
Grecian windflower	<i>Anemone blanda</i>	Bird's-foot Trefoils	<i>Lotus spp.</i>
Honesty	<i>Lunaria rediviva</i>	Yellow loosestrife	<i>Lysimachia vulgaris</i>
Scentless Mayweed	<i>Matricaria recutita</i>	Black Medick	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>
Forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis spp.</i>	Cornflower	<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>
Common Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common poppy	<i>Papaver rhoeas</i>
Greater knapweed	<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>	Red valerian	<i>Centranthus ruber</i>
Meadow-grasses	<i>Poa sp.</i>	Cowslip	<i>Primula veris</i>
Larkspur	<i>Consolida spp.</i>	Yellow Rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>
Common Sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Sheep's Sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosella</i>
Teasel	<i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>	Fleabane	<i>Erigeron spp.</i>
Stork's-bills	<i>Erodium spp.</i>	White campion	<i>Silene alba</i>
Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>	Devil's-bit scabious	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>
Lady's bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>	Dove's-foot Crane's-bill	<i>Geranium molle</i>
Tansy	<i>Tanacetum vulgare</i>	Meadow crane's-bill	<i>Geranium pratense</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Herb-robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Wild thyme	<i>Thymus drucei</i>	Heliotrope	<i>Heliotropium arborescens</i>
Red Clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Horseshoe Vetch	<i>Hippocrepis comosa</i>
Great mullein	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>	Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Field Scabious	<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Spiked speedwell	<i>Veronica spicata</i>
Oxeye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>		