

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Survey site:

Land to the east of New Road, Melksham, SN12 7QZ

Client:

Stuart Little

Survey date:

3rd December 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Wiltshire Council. The proposal is described as:
The construction of two self-build dwellings.

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion. Survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

The site survey was undertaken by Jade Lemm BSc (Hons) DipHE MRSB (Natural England Protected Species Licence Numbers: Great Crested Newt (2025-82550-SCI-CL08) and Bat Class 1 (2025-84745-CL17-BAT)).					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
03/12/2025	5	47	0	0	None
Executive Summary					
<u>Bats</u> A low-impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development, which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting <u>Amphibians</u> Any ponds or suitable waterbodies within 250m of the site (where accessible) will require an environmental DNA (eDNA) survey to determine the presence or absence of great crested newts. Alternatively, a district-level licence (DLL) could be obtained. A DLL can be sought without any further survey work. <u>Badgers, hedgehogs, birds, reptiles, riparian mammals and other small mammals</u> Precautionary working methods. Please see the relevant sections for details. <u>Biodiversity enhancements</u> Please see the relevant sections for details.					
Survey limitations					
It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being					

present. This is based on the suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the searches of historical biological records.

No site-specific limitations were identified during the survey.

Ecological Survey Factor Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consents. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in Appendix 1, ponds within 500m in Appendix 2, location plan in Appendix 3, proposal plan in Appendix 4 and habitat condition assessment in Appendix 5). Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i> <u>UKHab codes:</u> - <i>Modified grassland (waterlogged) with tall forbs and scattered trees g4 16 32 504</i> - <i>Tussocky modified grassland g4 128</i> - <i>Native hedgerow h2a</i> - <i>Standing water and canals r1 (drainage ditch 50)</i> - <i>Fence</i>	<u>Site context and background</u> The site is located at National Grid Reference ST 92268 65151 and has an area of approximately 0.38ha comprising managed grassland, tussocky grassland, tall forbs and hedgerow. It is immediately surrounded by an equestrian centre to the north, a caravan site to the south, New Road to the west and agricultural fields to the east. The wider landscape comprises Withybed Copse ~250m east, town of Melksham ~700m west, Hack Plantation ~900m north-east, Hanging Wood ~1.3km east, Eight Acre Plantation ~1.45km south-east, Morass Wood ~1.6km south-east and A350 ~1.9km north-west. <u>Desk study</u> A search using Magic Maps identified a range of notable local habitats located within 2km of the site. These include: - Deciduous woodland ~250m east - Wood-pasture and Parkland ~1.1km east - Ancient Replanted Woodland ~1.3km east <u>Habitats</u>

The habitat condition assessments are presented in Appendix 5.

Modified grassland (waterlogged) with tall forbs and scattered trees g4 16 32 504

An area (~0.21ha) of managed modified grassland (G1 and G2). The grassland had ~5% bare ground and a sward height of 3-5 cm. The species composition included perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne* (D), Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* (A), white clover *Trifolium repens* (A), cocks foot *Dactylis glomerata* (F), creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* (O). No bracken was identified within the grassland. The grassland had poor drainage and was waterlogged. Grassland G2 had recently been cut (~3cm sward height).





Areas (approximately 100m²) of tall forbs on the western and eastern boundaries. Species composition included broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* (D), creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* (O), and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* (R).



A group of five immature trees were present within the tall forbs (<6cm DBH). Species included goat willow *Salix caprea*, spruce species *Picea sp.*, silver birch *Betula pendula* and black walnut *Juglans nigra*.



Tussocky modified grassland g4 128

An area (~125m²) of tussocky modified grassland was present around the western and northern boundaries of the site. The grassland had less than 5% bare ground and a varied sward height of 3-8 cm. The sward height was over 20% less than 7cm, and less than 20% was over 7cm. The species composition included Perennial ryegrass (A), cocks foot (A), broadleaved dock (F) and wild parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris* (O). No scrub or bracken was identified within the grassland. No management of the grassland was noted.



Native hedgerow h2a

Hedgerow H1 was located along the western and northern boundary (approximately 120m length x 2.5m height x 2m wide). The hedgerow had no canopy gaps (<0.5m canopy to base gap), and no invasive species. Species composition included hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* (A), blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* (A) and field maple *Acer campestre* (R). The understorey species included common ivy *Hedera helix* (A) and bramble (F). The hedgerow indicated no signs of management.



Standing water and canals r1 (drainage ditch 50)

Several areas (~4m²) of drainage ditches were found around the site.



	<u>Fence</u> A stock-proof fence surrounded the site. 
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. The site contains hedgerows, which are listed as a habitat of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006). Further notable habitats are present within 2km. No direct impacts on any notable habitats are expected to occur as a result of the proposed development. However, indirect effects such as pollution or tree damage could occur during construction.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Best practice pollution prevention measures in accordance with the guidance detailed in Environmental Agency Pollution Prevention Guidance Note 6: Working on Construction and Demolition Sites must be adhered to prevent

	indirect impacts on adjacent connecting habitats. Definitive detail should be included within a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) prior to development works. Retained trees, hedgerows and woodland should be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations" (BS 5837) (2012).
Locality and Designated Sites	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<u>On-site designations</u> The site is not subject to any designation. <u>Statutory designated sites (within 2km)</u> There are no known designations within 2km of the site. However, the site lies within the impact risk zone for Spyre Park Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, the proposed development type is not listed as a possible high risk for this designation. <u>Non-statutory designated sites</u> The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC).
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. No impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the distance of the proposed development from such sites (where known).

Recommendations	Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution must be implemented during construction.								
Invasive / Non-native species									
Summary of Survey Findings	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.								
Foreseen Impacts	None.								
Recommendations	No further surveys but remain vigilant.								
Invertebrates									
Summary of Survey Findings	The grassland, tall forbs and hedgerow recorded on site are suitable to support and provide refuge, foraging, and commuting value for common invertebrates.								
Foreseen Impacts	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations, owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitats in the area.								
Recommendations	No further surveys.								
Bats									
Summary of Survey Findings	<u>Desk study</u> A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites less than 2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitats either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roost sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are four granted European Protected Species Licenses (ESPLs) listed on Magic Maps within 2km of the site. Details are shown below. <table><tr><th>ESPL reference</th><th>Bat species affected</th><th>Impacts allowed by the licence</th></tr><tr><td>2015-13904-EPS-MIT</td><td>Brown long-eared</td><td>Destruction of a resting place</td></tr></table>			ESPL reference	Bat species affected	Impacts allowed by the licence	2015-13904-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared	Destruction of a resting place
ESPL reference	Bat species affected	Impacts allowed by the licence							
2015-13904-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared	Destruction of a resting place							

	~700m south-east		
	2019-42098-EPS-MIT ~1.25km south-east	Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, serotine, soprano pipistrelle and Whiskered bat	Damage to a breeding site and destruction of a resting place
	2016-20145-EPS-MIT ~1.25km north	Common pipistrelle	Destruction of a breeding site and resting place
	2018-38346-EPS-MIT ~1.4km north-west	Brown long-eared, greater horseshoe, lesser horseshoe, soprano pipistrelle and Whiskered bat	Damage and destruction of a resting place
<u>Foraging and commuting habitats</u> Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide limited foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of grassland, hedgerow and tall forbs. Whilst the habitats will attract invertebrate prey species to the site and contribute to the continuity of vegetated habitats within the immediate landscape, the habitats are limited in species diversity. The site is not assessed to represent a significant resource for foraging and commuting bats in the context of the wider landscape. However, the local landscape surrounding the site provides highly favourable habitats for commuting and foraging bats, including agricultural fields, grasslands, tree lines, hedgerows, and parcels of woodland. <u>Roosting habitats</u> The trees within the site are too small and immature to provide roosting features.			

<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<u>Foraging and commuting habitats</u> The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. This vegetation removal is not considered to significantly impact foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the context of the wider landscape. There is potential for indirect impacts on foraging and commuting bats using habitats on and directly adjacent to the site through increased artificial light levels. Therefore, the proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting on surrounding habitats. This may disturb commuting bats. <u>Roosting habitats</u> None.
<i>Recommendations</i>	<u>Foraging and commuting habitats</u> No further surveys are required. A low-impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development, which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting <u>Roosting habitats</u> None. <u>Enhancements</u>

	The installation of one bat box on the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat box will be installed on one of the new dwellings. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level, facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<u>Vegetation</u> The hedgerow provides nesting opportunities for birds. A nest was identified within the hedgerow during the survey (TN1).  No habitat for Schedule 1 or ground-nesting birds was observed. <u>Barn owls</u> The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls. <u>Overwintering birds</u>

	Due to the extent and type of habitats recorded, the site is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. The proposed development could result in the disturbance of active bird nests, with subsequent abandonment.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Any vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged. Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged.
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The tall forbs, hedgerows and tussocky grassland, which are restricted to the site's boundaries, provide suitable foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for amphibians. Whilst the shorter sward grassland in the centre of the site provides some limited foraging and commuting value, opportunities are suboptimal due to an absence of refuge value. Due to the extent of suitable habitats recorded on the site's boundaries, the site is not considered suitable to support any notable reptile populations, such as a population that would qualify the site as a key reptile site. However, the presence of low numbers of common reptiles around the site's boundaries cannot be discounted.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. The grassland will not fragment landscape connectivity for any existing reptile

	populations and will not significantly reduce habitat availability, potentially rendering any existing populations unviable. Although small areas of suitable habitat are being removed as part of the development, the loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations due to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitats to the south and west of the site. However, there is a low risk that individual reptiles could be injured or killed during the construction phase without mitigation.
<i>Recommendations</i>	A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures: • Vegetation will be maintained at a short sward (5cm) to discourage reptiles. • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. • If any reptiles are found in the working area, these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
Amphibians	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<u>Desk study</u> Using Natural England's GCN Risk Zone (Swindon and Wiltshire) Map, the site falls within an 'amber' area for great crested newts (Natural England, 2023)¹.

¹ Natural England (2023). GCN Risk Zones (Swindon and Wiltshire). <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::gcn-risk-zones-swindon-and-wiltshire/explore?location=51.612889%2C-2.315849%2C10.67>

	No historic pond records, EPSLs or class licence returns were identified on Magic Maps within 2km of the site. <u>Field results</u> <u>Terrestrial habitat suitability</u> The tall forbs, hedgerows and taller sward grassland, which are restricted to the site's boundaries, provide suitable foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for amphibians. Whilst the grassland in the centre of the site provides some limited foraging and commuting value, opportunities are suboptimal due to an absence of refuge value. <u>Aquatic habitat suitability</u> Amphibians require a suitable aquatic habitat in which to breed and complete their life cycle. There are four known ponds and multiple drainage ditches within 500m of the site boundary, as shown on the OS maps, including ~5m (drainage ditch), ~60m north (P1), ~95m north (P2), ~160m north (P3) and ~400m north-east (P4). All of the ponds were located in private estates and could not be accessed for an HSI assessment. The ponds are separated from the site by an equestrian centre. However, there are multiple drainage ditches, hedgerows and lines of trees that connect the site to these ponds. The drainage ditch had a low flow and no aquatic vegetation.
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<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. For the nearest pond (P1 60m north), a Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment was undertaken for the proposed works to the site. The risk assessment assumes that great crested newts are present in the nearest inaccessible pond and the disturbance of 0.38ha of suitable habitat, and returned a result of 'Amber: Offence likely' for the proposed development works (Natural England, 2016)². Due to the presence of suitably connected habitats and ponds, as well as the 'Amber' risk identified from the Natural England Risk Assessment, there is a probability that great crested newts could be in the vicinity of the works.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Any ponds or suitable waterbodies within 250m of the site (where accessible) will require an environmental DNA (eDNA) survey to determine the presence or absence of great crested newts. This will comprise collecting water samples and sending them off for laboratory analysis. Such surveys must be undertaken between mid-April and June,

² Natural England (2016) Great Crested Newts: Surveys and Mitigation for Development Projects – Standing Advice. Online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/great-crested-newts-apply-for-a-mitigation-licence> (Accessed December 2025).

	in accordance with current survey guidelines (Biggs et al., 2014). The surveys are likely to be required before planning permission can be granted. If presence is identified and a licence is required, there are two licence options in Wiltshire Council, comprising an EPSL or entering the District Level Licence (DLL) scheme with Natural England. Alternatively, a district-level licence (DLL) could be obtained. A DLL can be sought without any further survey work and will require no compensatory habitat creation, as well as less stringent on-site mitigation during construction. However, it's important to note that entering the DLL scheme requires the applicant to make a conservation payment to the DLL provider to provide the compensatory habitat creation off-site on their behalf. The cost of which is relative to the scale of the impacts. As a general recommendation, if no ponds are being removed to facilitate the development, entering the DLL scheme is likely to be the most cost-effective licensing option, if necessary.
Badger	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	From the survey and aerial imagery, no sett-making activity, latrines or feeding activity was observed within the site boundary or 30m of the development boundary. The modified grassland and tall forbs provide foraging opportunities for badgers. However, the site is surrounded by stock-proof fencing. This will reduce connectivity to the site and thus commuting opportunities. Due to the boundary restrictions and limited habitats on the site, badgers are unlikely to use the proposed development site for foraging and commuting.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. No direct impacts on badgers are anticipated as a result of the proposed development. However, albeit low, badgers could commute through the site and get stuck in any excavations (if any) during the construction phase.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Basic precautionary mitigation during works is recommended:

	- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. - The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill onto habitats which badgers could use. - Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified within 30m, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No evidence of riparian mammals was found during the survey. The drainage ditches adjacent to the western and northern boundaries could be suitable for commuting habitats for riparian mammals. The ditch is suboptimal for foraging due to its depth (less than 0.5m) and width (0.5m). However, the site is surrounded by stock-proof fencing. This will reduce connectivity to the site and thus commuting opportunities. Due to the boundary restrictions and limited habitats on the site, riparian mammals are unlikely to use the proposed development site for foraging and commuting.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. The proposed development will not result in the loss of any riparian habitats. Due to the watercourse adjacent to the western and northern boundaries, indirect effects such as noise and pollution could occur during construction. Furthermore, construction activities could result in the death or injury of riparian mammals, if present.

<i>Recommendations</i>	Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts on riparian mammals, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to the watercourse and any retained habitats which riparian mammals could use. • Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to the watercourse and any retained habitats that riparian mammals could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. In the unlikely event that any evidence is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<u>Desk study</u> There are no European Protected Species Licenses (EPSLs) for dormice within 2km. <u>Survey results</u> No evidence of dormice was found within the site. The hedgerow provides suitable commuting opportunities for dormice. However, research indicates that dormice require 20ha of woodland habitat to support a viable population (Bright et al. 1994). It is not anticipated that dormice are present on the site due to the lack of suitable woodland present on or directly adjacent to the site that is big enough (20ha) to support dormice.

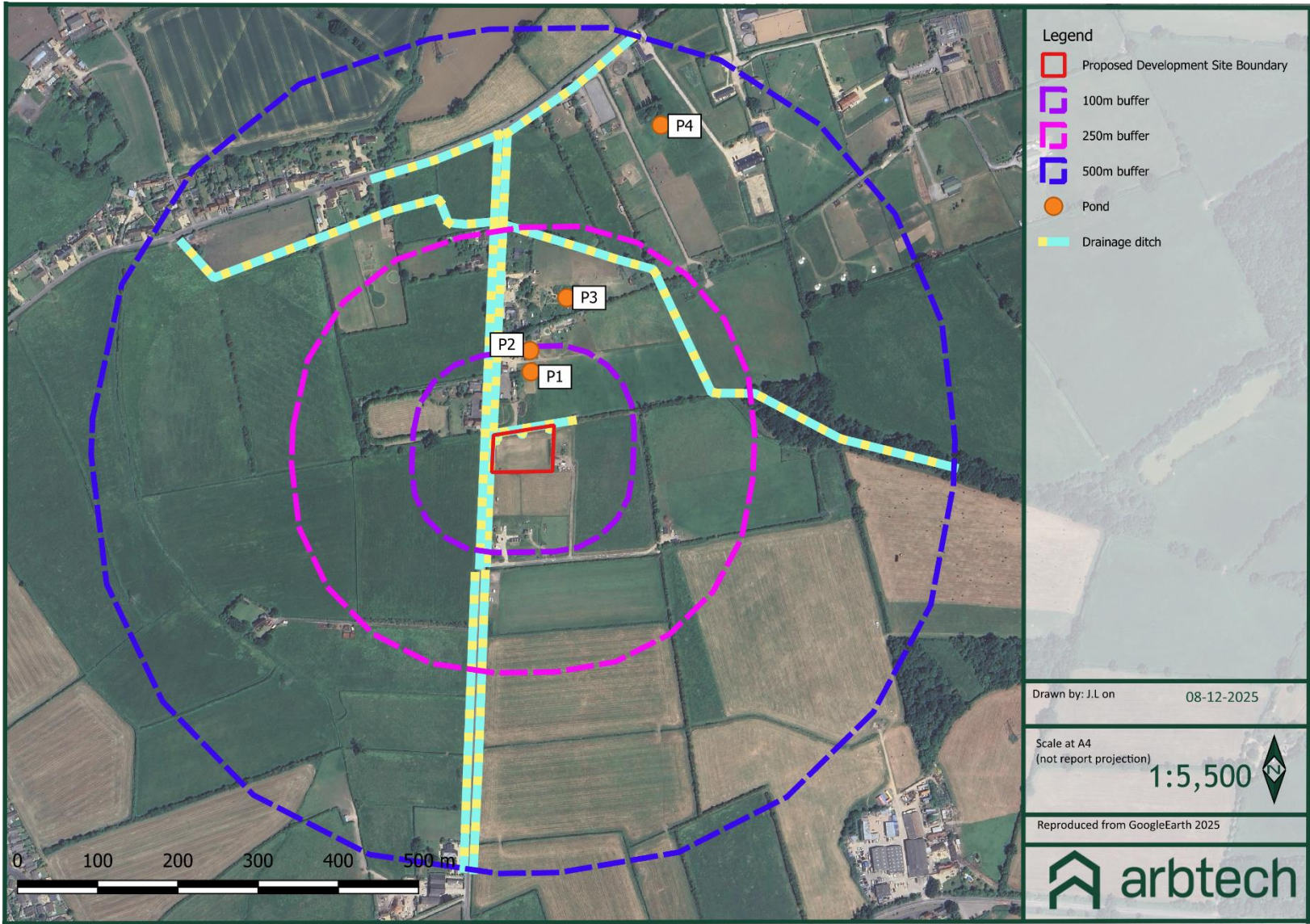
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The grassland, hedgerows and tall forbs provide limited foraging, sheltering and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs. However, the site is surrounded by stock-proof fencing. Therefore, connectivity will be reduced, and the proposed development site is unlikely to be used by hedgehogs for commuting.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of the modified grassland (tussocky, G1 & G2), drainage ditches and the tall forbs. A ~6m section of hedgerow will be removed for the site access. However, the majority of the hedgerow will be retained. The loss of such habitat is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill onto retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

	If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
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Appendix 1: Habitat and survey map



Appendix 2: Ponds within 500m



Appendix 3: Location map



Appendix 4: Proposed plan



Appendix 5: Habitat condition assessment

Modified Grassland (G1 and G2); assessed using 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet:

Condition Assessment Criteria:		Condition passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² , including at least 2 forbs. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	N	Fewer than 6 vascular plant species per m ² .
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	N	Regularly mown, uniform sward height present.
C	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	No scattered scrub present (less than 20% coverage).
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	N	Physical damage present is more than 5% of total grassland area – regular management.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y	Bare ground cover between 1% and 10%.
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	No bracken observed (less than 20% coverage).
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Y	Absence of invasive species.
Essential criterion achieved (Y/N)			N
Number of criteria passed			4
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate (2)	
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion A		Poor (1)	✓

Tussocky Modified Grassland; assessed using 'Grasslands Low Distinctiveness' habitat type condition sheet:

Condition Assessment Criteria:		Condition passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m ² , including at least 2 forbs. Note – this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition.	N	Fewer than 6 vascular plant species per m ² .
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Y	No regular management.
C	Some scattered scrub (including bramble) may be present, but scrub accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. Note - patches of shrubs with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	N	Bramble more than 20% coverage.
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Y	Physical damage present in less than 5% of total grassland area.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens).	Y	Bare ground cover between 1% and 10%.
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%.	Y	No bracken observed (less than 20% coverage).
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981).	Y	Absence of invasive species.
Essential criterion achieved (Y/N)			N
Number of criteria passed			5
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓
Passes 6 or 7 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good (3)	
Passes 4 or 5 of 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Moderate (2)	
Passes 0, 1, 2 or 3 of 7 criteria; OR 4, 5 or 6 of criteria but failing criterion A		Poor (1)	✓

Tall Forbs; assessed using the 'Urban' habitat type condition sheet:

Condition Assessment Criteria	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
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Core Criteria - must be assessed for all urban habitat types :			
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	N	Broadleaved dock is dominant.
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	Y	Different plant species present.
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area. Note – to achieve good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Y	None observed.
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)			Y
Number of criteria passed			2
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only:			
Passes all 3 core criteria AND Meets the requirements for good condition within criterion C	Good (3)		
Passes 2 of 3 core criteria OR Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criterion C	Moderate (2)		✓
Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria	Poor (1)		

Hedgerow H1; assessed using 'Hedgerow' habitat type condition sheet:

Hedgerow favourable condition attributes				
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, & D)	Criteria (the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A1. Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is > 1.5 m height).	Y	Hedgerow averages 2.5m in height.
A2. Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (e.g. blackthorn suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).	Y	Hedgerow averages 2m in width.
B1. Gap – hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth.	Y	Gap between ground and base of canopy is <0.5m for more than 10% of length.

		Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).		
B2. Gap – hedge canopy continuity	Gaps make up <10% of total length and No canopy gaps >5 m	This is the horizontal ‘gappiness’ of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall ‘gappiness’, but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).	Y	No canopy gaps.
C1. Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: - measured from outer edge of hedgerow, and - is present on one side of the hedge (at least)	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedge. Undisturbed ground should be present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedge. This criterion recognises the value of the hedge base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.	N	Ground disturbed both sides of the hedge.
C2. Undesirable perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of	The indicator species used are nettles (<i>Urtica</i> spp.), cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>) and docks (<i>Rumex</i> spp.). Their presence, either singly or together, should not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	Y	No nutrient enrichment.

	undisturbed ground			
D1. Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native and recently introduced species	Recently introduced species refer to plant that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives.	Y	No invasives observed.
D2. Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (e.g. excessive hedge cutting).	Y	>90% of hedgerow and understorey is free of damage caused by human activities.
Condition categories for hedgerows without trees				
Category	Maximum number of attributes that can fail to meet 'favourable condition' criteria in Table TS1-2	Weighting (score)		
Good	No more than 2 failures in total AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group	3		
Moderate	No more than 4 failures in total	2		

	AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (e.g., fails attributes A1, A2, B1, and C2 = moderate condition)		
Poor	Fails a total of more than 4 attributes OR <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (e.g. fails attributes A1, A2, B1, and B2 = poor condition)	1	
Score achieved:	Good		

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