



Land at Newlands Farm, Rodbourne Road,
Ashton Keynes, SN16 0HB

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



December 2025

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Notice to Readers:

The results of the survey and assessment work undertaken by All Ecology are representative at the time of surveying.

Every endeavour has been made to identify the presence of protected species on site, where this falls within the agreed scope of works.

The flora and fauna detailed within this report are those noted during the field survey and from anecdotal evidence. It should not be viewed as a complete list of flora and fauna species that may frequent or exist on site at other times of the year.

Up to date standard methodologies have been used, which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory conservation bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where these methodologies fail to identify all species on-site.

All Ecology cannot take responsibility where Government, national bodies or industry subsequently modify standards.

All Ecology cannot accept responsibility for data collected from third parties.

Reference to sections or particular paragraphs of this document taken out of context may lead to misrepresentation.

Summary

In December 2025, All Ecology Ltd was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of a site known as Land at Newlands Farm, Rodbourne Road, Ashton Keynes, SN16 0HB. The majority of the application site is grassland and buildings, with areas of scrub, areas of ruderal/ephemeral, individual trees and boundary hedgerows. The local area consists mostly of arable fields and residential areas.

The proposals for the site are to erect two new dwellings with associated gardens, access and driveways. This will involve removing the majority of the existing habitats, including the buildings, grassland, areas of scrub and ruderal/ephemeral and the individual trees.

The habitats present on site are of low to moderate ecological value in terms of their vegetation and the development would result in the loss of the majority of these habitats, including the grassland, the ruderal/ephemeral, the individual trees and the scrub, and their replacement with buildings, hard standing and gardens. Boundary hedges would be retained.

The site provides potential habitat for a range of fauna. The following require further consideration/action:

- Bats – The buildings do not provide any potential for roosting bats. Bat are likely to forage over the site and adjacent areas. No further bat activity surveys deemed necessary provided a suitable lighting strategy is implemented.
- Birds – Nesting and foraging opportunities are present across the site. Any vegetation removal and building demolition should commence outside the bird nesting season unless a pre-works survey confirms absence. The proposed landscape scheme should ensure there is no overall loss of foraging and nesting habitats and the new buildings provide an opportunity for providing nesting boxes for species such as Swifts and House Sparrows.
- Reptiles - Reptile habitat is present in the areas of tall ruderal, grassland and scrub edge. A reptile survey will be required to determine presence/absence.
- Amphibians – There are no ponds on site; however, there is one pond 64 m to the south and there are no significant barriers to dispersal. The pond is located on private land and access to carry out a HSI Assessment was not possible. Further investigation of the pond will be required or an application made to use the district licence.

General suggestions for enhancement have been made e.g. bat and bird boxes.

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1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 In December 2025, All Ecology Ltd was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of a site known as Land at Newlands Farm, Rodbourne Road, Ashton Keynes, SN6 6NX. The majority of the application site is grassland and buildings, with areas of scrub, areas of ruderal/ephemeral, individual trees and boundary hedgerows. The local area consists mostly of arable fields and residential areas.
- 1.2 The proposals for the site are to erect two new dwellings with associated gardens, access and driveways. This will involve removing the majority of the existing habitats, including the buildings, grassland, areas of scrub and the individual trees.

Objectives and Aim

- 1.3 The main objectives and aim of the survey were to identify features of ecological interest, undertake a basic search of habitats present for evidence of use, or potential use, by protected species, and to identify any other possible ecological constraints to any further development of the site.

Site Location & Aerial Photograph



Figure 1: Site location plan.



Figure 2: Aerial view of the site.

2.0 Methodology

Personnel

- 2.1 The survey was carried out by Jacob Richardson BSc Hons and the work overseen by James Godbeer BSc Hons MCIEEM, an ecologist with over 18 years' experience working as a consultant. James has extensive experience of managing environmental contracts, and particular experience in surveying, assessment and mitigation for rare and protected species. He has considerable knowledge of the development and planning process including Ecological Impact Assessments, sustainable ecological design and he has completed ecology chapters of Environmental Statements. James holds a number of protected species licences including bats (all species, all counties, Class Licence Registration No. 2015-12313-CLS-CLS), and Great Crested Newts (Class Licence Registration No. 2019-44282-CLS-CLS). He has successfully obtained European Protected Species mitigation licences for a number of bat species including Lesser Horseshoe, Greater Horseshoe, Serotine, Brown Long-eared, Common Pipistrelle and Natterer's bats, for a number of roost types including maternity and hibernation sites.

Desk Study

- 2.2 In order to compile background information on the site and immediate surroundings Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre Centre for Environmental Records (WSBRC) was contacted.
- 2.3 Information requested was as follows:
- Statutory site designations on or within 1 km of the site.
 - Non-statutory site designations on or within 1 km of the site.
 - Records of protected species within the 1 km of the site.
 - Records of rare or notable species within the 1 km of the site.
- 2.4 Online OS maps and aerial photographs were inspected for the presence of ponds in the surrounding area. Additionally, MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside, 2025) was used to establish the distance and direction of statutory and non-statutory designated sites and species records within the search area.

Habitat Survey

- 2.5 The site was visited on the 17th November 2025 and surveyed in accordance with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Phase I Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC, 2010). This technique provides an inventory of the basic habitat types present and allows identification of areas of greater potential that might warrant further study.
- 2.6 In addition to Phase I, UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) methodology was also used to categorise and map the primary habitat types present within the survey area using a standard set of habitat categories, with associated secondary codes/features identified where applicable (UKHab Ltd, 2023). Details of current management and habitat condition have also been recorded where appropriate.

Fauna

- 2.7 The buildings were inspected externally and internally following the methodology set out in the Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 4th Ed (Collins, 2023).
- 2.8 The trees were assessed for their potential to support bat roosts by visually inspecting them from the ground using binoculars and high-powered torches where appropriate. Potential features such as holes, cavities or splits are then recorded and then inspected where possible for signs of bats, which include grease/urine stains, scratch marks, droppings or the bats themselves.
- 2.9 The habitats present on the site were searched for signs of animal activity. The site and surroundings, for a minimum distance of 30 m where access was available, were searched for signs of Badgers. These include setts, latrines, dung pits, snuffle marks or hairs caught in hedges or on fencing.
- 2.10 Incidental observations of invertebrates and birds were recorded and a search made for any signs of previous nesting.
- 2.11 Any refuges on site such as logs or other debris were lifted and inspected for reptiles and amphibians.
- 2.12 There are no ponds on site, however there is pond within 250 m of the site. Pond 1 was not accessible and was therefore not subject to the GCN HSI Assessment.

Valuation of Ecological Features

- 2.13 The valuation process used in this report follows the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2018).
- 2.14 The value of areas of habitat and plant communities has been measured against published criteria where available. Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) have been searched to identify whether action has been taken to protect all areas of a particular habitat and to identify current factors causing loss and decline of particular habitats. The presence of injurious and legally controlled weeds has also been taken into account.
- 2.15 When assigning a level of value to a species, its distribution and status (including a consideration of trends based on available historic records) has been taken into account. Other factors influencing the value of a species are: legal protection, rarity and Species Action Plans (SAPs). Guidance, where it is available, for the identification of populations of sufficient size for them to be considered of national or international importance has also been taken into account.

Nomenclature

- 2.16 The English name only of flora and fauna species is given in the main text of this report; however, scientific names are used for invertebrates where no English name is available. Vascular plants and charophytes follow the nomenclature of The Botanical Society for the British Isles (BSBI) 2007 database (BSBI, 2007) with all other flora and fauna following the Nameserver facility of the National Biodiversity Network Species Dictionary (<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nbn/>), which is managed by the Natural History Museum.

Limitations

- 2.17 The site was fully accessible with no limitations to undertaking the survey in accordance with the stated methodology.

3.0 Results

Desk Study

3.1 There is one statutory designated site within 1 km of the site:

- Corston Quarry and Pond, Local Nature Reserve (LNR), is approximately 389 m to the northwest of the site.

3.2 The statutory sites are all well removed from the application site. There is no reasonable likelihood of any impacts arising as a result of the proposed development.

3.3 There are four non-statutory designated sites within 1 km of the site:

- Gauzebrook Meadows, Local Wildlife Site (LWS), series of banks along then Gauze Brook with unimproved limestone, approximately 653 m to the northeast of the site.
- Brickyard Scrub, LWS, two small meadows of fairly species-rich neutral grassland with a pond and areas of scrub woodland dominated by mature Hawthorn, approximately 587 m to the southeast of the site.
- West Park Wood - west, LWS, Half of a small ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland surrounded by arable land, approximately 971 m to the northwest of the site.
- West Park Wood - east, LWS, Half of a small ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland surrounded by improved grassland, approximately 797 m to the northwest of the site.
- Corston Quarry and Pond, LWS, Disused limestone quarry managed as a community nature reserve, with mesotrophic open water, marginal swamp vegetation, species-rich calcareous grassland and scrub woodland, approximately 389 m to the northwest of the site.

3.4 The non-statutory sites are all well removed from the application site, with the closest being 389 m away from the site. There is no reasonable likelihood of any impacts arising as a result of the proposed development.

3.5 WSBRC provided the following notable and protected species within 1 km of the site:

- **Mammals** – Otter, Badger, Polecat, unidentified Bat species, Serotine, Myotis species, Noctule, Pipistrelle Bat Species, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, Long-eared Bat species, Hedgehog, Brown Hare, Rabbit and Water Vole.
- **Amphibians** – Common Toad, Common Frog and Great Crested Newt.
- **Birds** – Sparrowhawk, Red Kite, Mallard, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Grey Heron, Little Egret, Woodpigeon, Collared Dove, Kingfisher, Kestrel, Coot, Moorhen, Greenfinch, Rook, Yellowhammer, Grey Wagtail, House Sparrow, Tree Sparrow, Dunnock, Bullfinch, Starling, Wren, Redwing, Song Thrush, Fieldfare, Mistle Thrush, Tawny Owl and Barn Owl.
- **Reptiles** – Slow-worm and Grass Snake.
- **Invertebrates** – White-clawed Crayfish, Gyrinus natator (Beetle), Small Heath, Wall, Common Darter, Red-shanked Carder Bee, Lackey, Cinnabar and Large Black Slug.
- **Fish** – European Eel.

- **Flora** – Fat Duckweed, Bluebell, Marsh Willowherb, Smooth Brome, Meadow Brome, Cyperus Sedge, Needle Spike-rush and Blunt-flowered Rush.

Habitats

3.6 The following table presents a description of the habitats present.

Table 1: Details of habitats present on and bordering the site.

Habitats	Description
g4 – Modified grassland	The majority of the site comprises of two different areas of modified grassland. The area of grassland to the northwest is dominated by Cock's-foot and Common Nettle, with frequent occurrences of Cleavers, Creeping Buttercup, Fescue sp., and Dove's-foot Crane's-bill, and occasional occurrences of Broad-leaved Dock, White Dead-nettle, White Clover, Creeping thistle and Ground-ivy. The grassland in the southeast section of the site is dominated by Cock's-foot, with abundant Fescue sp., frequent occurrences of Creeping Buttercup, Perennial Rye-grass and Dove's-foot Crane's-bill, occasional occurrences of Creeping Thistle, Dock, Common Nettle and Meadow Buttercup, and rare Chamomile, Bramble agg., and Cow Parsley
Individual trees	There are six individual trees on-site, including three Elder trees and three Leyland Cypress trees.
h2a - Native hedgerows	There are two native hedgerows onsite. Hedge 1 is along the southeast boundary and Hedge 2 along the northwest boundary. Hedge 1 comprises Cherry Laurel, Beech and Bramble. Hedge 2 comprises Common Hazel, Field Maple, Bramble agg., Alder, Hawthorn, Dogwood and Dog-rose.
Ruderal/ephemeral	The area along the northeast boundary of the site is partially formed dense tall ruderal comprising Common Nettle, White Dead-nettle, Creeping Thistle and Cleavers.
h3d – Bramble scrub	There are several areas of Bramble agg. onsite, including the east corner of the site, adjacent to the existing buildings and along the west and southwest boundaries of the site.
h3h – mixed scrub	There is an area of mixed scrub along the northeast boundary of the site, comprising Hawthorn, Bramble agg., Elder and Blackthorn.
u1b – Developed land; Sealed surface	The driveway is the only hard standing on site.
u1b5 – Buildings	There are two buildings on site: a dilapidated modern barn, and a dilapidated out building. Further details are presented below in relation to their suitability for roosting bats.
Fencing	The site is bound by a mixture of different fencing, including post and rail, post and wire and concrete post and timber panel.



1: Northeast facing view of the drive.



2: Southwest facing view of the site.



3: Northwest facing view of the site.



4: Southwest view of the northwest area of the site.



5: View of the scrub along the southwest boundary.



6: View of the Bramble scrub surrounding the buildings.



7 View of the bramble scrub along the southwest boundary.



8: Mixed scrub and ruderal along the northeast boundary.



9: Hedge one along the southeast boundary.



10: Hedge two and dominant area of Nettle along the northwest boundary.



11: Southeast facing view of the drive.



12: Bramble scrub in the north corner of the site.

Fauna

3.7 The follow table presents the nature of the habitats surrounding the building and connectivity into the wider area in relation to their potential importance to bats.

Table 2: Details of habitats in relation to foraging and commuting bats.

Habitats	Description
Immediate surroundings	The site is immediately surrounded by arable land and fields to the north, east and south, and residential dwellings to the west.
Connectivity	There is connectivity through the northwest and southeast boundary hedgerows, and the northeast scrub to further hedges in the surrounding residential dwellings and fields.
Wider Landscape	The wider landscape contains grass fields, arable land, a woodland to the west, and the village Corston also to the west.
Potential for presence on site and site value	The site contains two buildings, areas of Bramble and mixed scrub, dense areas of ruderal, different areas of grassland and boundary hedgerows. The areas of scrub, ruderal and scrub provide habitats for invertebrates and it is expected that at least low numbers common species of bats will forage over the site. Overall, common bats are likely to forage and commute over the site, but any significant value of the site for bats associated with any potential for roosting.

3.8 The following table presents a description of the buildings in terms of their general characteristics, and their potential for roosting bats.

Table 3: Building description and details in relation to its potential for roosting bats.

Barn	Description
External	General: Disused and dilapidated Dutch barn. Roof: Metal corrugated roof. Walls: Metal corrugated walls. Cladding: None. Verges: Exposed with no bargeboards or sealing.
Internal	General: Disused barn. Enclosed/Separate Roof Voids: None. Roof Structure: Metal corrugated roof. Roof Lining: None. Insulation: None.

	Other e.g. Water Tanks, Boilers, AC Units: None.
Potential access points	The barn is permanently open offering large access points through the various entrances.
Potential roosting features	The main interior is open, well-lit and unsuitable for roosting.
Evaluation	Given the lack of potential roosting features and any evidence of use, the suitability of this building for bats to roost is negligible.



13: General interior of barn.



14: General interior of barn.

Table 4: Building description and details in relation to its potential for roosting bats.

Outbuilding	Description
External	General: Dilapidated outbuilding. Roof: Previous gable end roof that now lacks roof tiles and roof lining. Walls: Solid concrete block walls. Cladding: None. Verges: Timber barge boards. Eaves: Timber fascia boards.
Internal	General: Disused outbuilding. Enclosed/Separate Roof Voids: None. Roof Structure: Metal corrugated roof. Roof Lining: None. Insulation: None. Other e.g. Water Tanks, Boilers, AC Units: None.

Potential access points	The main interior is open, well-lit and unsuitable for roosting.
Potential roosting features	Given the general lack of potential roosting features and any evidence of use, the suitability of this building for bats to roost is negligible.



15: General interior view of the outbuilding.



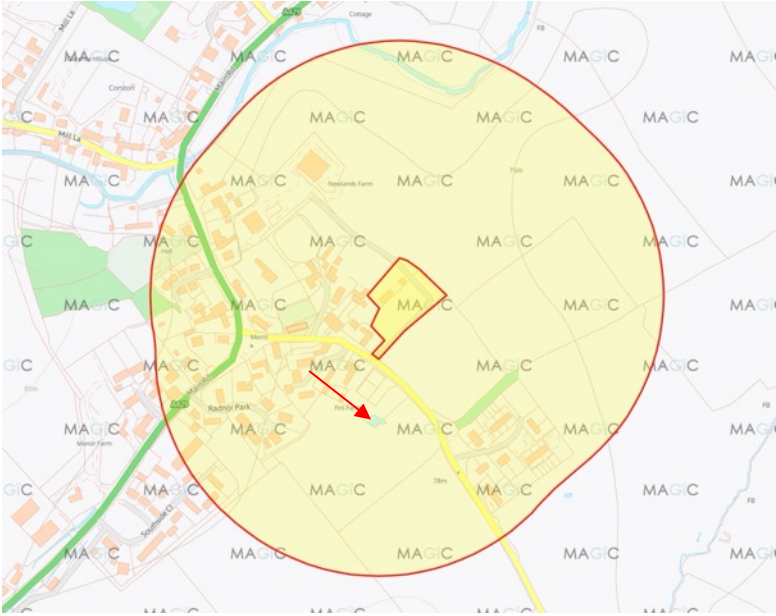
16: General interior view of the outbuilding.

3.9 The following table assesses the potential for other protected species to be present.

Table 5: Protected Species Assessment

Fauna	Description
Bats	Records: WSBRC provided two records of unidentified Bat species (1991, 1994), one record of Serotine (2019), one record of Myotis Bat species (2019), one record of Noctule (2019), four records of Pipistrelle Bat species (1981 - 2002), two records of Common Pipistrelle (2009 - 2019), one record of Soprano Pipistrelle (2019), and one record of Long-eared Bat species (1985), all within 1 km of the site. Habitats (roosting): See above for buildings. None of the trees on site were suitable for roosting. Habitats (foraging/commuting): The open grassland areas on site provide sub-optimal foraging habitat but the remainder of the site provides varying habitats in sheltered locations that will be used by foraging and commuting bats. Common species will be present but the potential for more notable species would appear to be limited.
Badgers	Records: WSBRC provided twelve records of Badgers between 1976 - 2021 within 1 km of the site. Habitats: The site provides foraging opportunities for Badgers within the grassland, ruderal and scrub habitats on site. Presence/absence: The site was searched for evidence of Badgers such as digging, latrines, setts etc but no evidence was recorded.

Dormice	Records: None. Habitats: The hedges and scrub provide limited habitat for this species but they have limited connectivity to the wider area. Presence/absence: Likely absent from the site.
Otters and Water Voles	Records: WSBRC provided four records of Otter (2012 – 2020) and six records of Water Vole (1981 – 1991) all within 1 km of the site. Habitats: None. Presence/absence: Absent.
Other Mammals	Records: WSBRC provided 43 records of Hedgehog (1986 – 2024), three records of Brown Hare (1998 and 2014) and nine records of Rabbit (1997 – 2014) all within 1 km of the site. Habitats: The areas of scrub and ruderal vegetation provide areas of cover for common small mammals and Hedgehogs, and some areas of longer grassland provide additional areas of cover for small mammals. These habitats also provide foraging opportunities for common mammal species. Presence/absence: Hedgehogs and common small mammals may be present but other notable species are likely to be absent.
Birds	Records: WSBRC provided multiple species records including red/amber listed species. Foraging Habitats: The site as a whole provides a variety of habitats including grassland and scrub. Nesting Habitats: The grassland is unsuitable for ground nesting birds. Birds may have nested in the trees, hedges and buildings previously and could do in the future. Presence/absence: Common bird species are present and it is likely that birds will nest in the trees, hedges and possibly the buildings in the future.
Reptiles	Records: WSBRC provided four records of Slow-worm (2004 – 2023) and one record of Grass Snake (1997 - 2004) all within 1 km of the site. Habitats: The site provides optimal habitat for reptiles in the scrub and ruderal habitats in association with grassland and open areas for basking. Presence/absence: No evidence, but significant potential for presence.
Amphibian	Records: WSBRC provided seven records of Common Toad (1979 - 2009), three records of Common Frog (1979 – 1999) and one record of Great Crested Newt (2020) all within 1 km of the site. Terrestrial Habitats: The site provides optimal habitat for amphibians in the scrub and ruderal habitats in association with grassland. Aquatic Habitats: There are no ponds on site; However, there is one pond 64 m to the south and there are no significant barriers to dispersal. The pond is located on private land and access to carry out a HSI Assessment was not possible.

	Presence/absence: Great Crested Newts are most likely absent but their presence cannot be entirely ruled out.  Figure 3: Pond location plan within 250 m.
Invertebrates	Records: WSBRC provided multiple records of notable species within 1 km of the site. Habitats: The modified grassland is poor habitat for invertebrates in general but the hedges and scrub provide some limited areas of where there is likely to be more invertebrates present. Presence/absence: Common assemblages of invertebrates are expected to be present in limited numbers. The potential for notable species to be present is negligible.

4.0 Development Constraints and Recommendations

Development Proposals

- 4.1 The proposals for the site are to erect two new dwellings with associated gardens, access and driveways. This will involve removing the majority of the existing habitats, including the buildings, grassland, tall ruderal, area of scrub and the individual trees.

Habitats

- 4.2 The grassland on site was identified as improved (modified) grassland and although this was not surveyed during the optimal period for grasslands, it was evidently this habitat type. In order to qualify as a NERC Priority Habitat, grassland typically has to be unimproved (good semi-improved grassland can also qualify) and would have to be examples of grasslands such as lowland calcareous grassland or lowland dry acid grassland, habitats not found on site. Any impacts as a result of loss/changes to the grassland on site are considered to be negligible.
- 4.3 The NERC Priority Habitats include all hedgerows with at least 80% cover of at least one woody UK native species (JNCC, 2019). The hedge along the northwest boundary of the site had at least 80% cover of native species and as such qualifies as NERC Priority Habitats. The hedges will all be retained, so a Hedgerow Assessment will not be required to determine if it is classified as 'important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.
- 4.4 Where other new areas of habitat are to be created, consideration should be given to the seeding of these areas using appropriate seed mixes. Where possible these seeds should be locally sourced to support the genetic integrity of local wild plant populations. Where new trees or shrubs are to be planted, native tree and shrub species should be used as these are most beneficial to invertebrates, and many also produce seeds, nuts and berries that are food for native mammals and birds. Planting of non-native plant species should be limited to those that are not invasive and should prioritise those that provide a good source of nectar for invertebrates.

Fauna

Bats

- 4.5 The buildings on site were unsuitable for roosting bats.

Table 6: General presence/absence survey specification for structures.

Roost Suitability	Survey Specification
Negligible	No further surveys required.
Low	Number of Survey Visits: One survey visit. One dusk emergence survey. Timing: May to August.
Moderate	Number of Survey Visits: Two survey visits. Two dusk emergence surveys.

	Timing: May to September with a least one of the surveys between May and August. Surveys should be at least two weeks apart.
High	Number of Survey Visits: Three survey visits. Three dusk emergence surveys. Timing: May to September with a least two of the surveys between May and August. Surveys should be at least two weeks apart.
	Dusk Survey Times: Start at 30 minutes* before sunset and end at 1.5 – 2 hours after sunset. Dawn Survey Times: Start at 1.5 – 2 hours before sunrise and end at 15 minutes after sunrise *Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines state that dusk surveys should begin 15 minutes before sunset but repeated/the start times of subsequent surveys adjusted if bats are already in flight. 30 minutes is therefore specified to reduce the risk of having to repeat a survey as species such as pipistrelles will often emerge well before sunset.

Table 7: Required presence/absence surveys for the structures on site.

Building	Further Surveys
Barn and out building	Number of Surveys (dusk emergence): None. In this instance it has been determined that roosting bats are likely to be absent. Required Number of Surveyors: N/A.

4.6 None of the trees on-site were found to have potential roosting features for bats but when removing trees, overhanging branches or undertaking tree surgery works, the following procedures should be employed in the unlikely event a bat or bats are discovered:

- If the roost is still on the tree and bats are not injured, seek advice from a licensed ecologist. If help is not available, allow bats to fly out of harm's way.
- If the timber is felled, the roost is not exposed and the bats are not injured, temporarily seal and isolate the roost and seek advice from a licensed ecologist. If advice is not readily available, position the roost off the ground, re-open it and allow bats to relocate of their own accord.
- If the roost has been exposed, and especially if bats have been injured, collect bats in a secure box or bag (using a glove) and contact a licensed ecologist.
- Note the date, locality, type of tree, situation in tree and bat species

4.7 The site provides foraging habitat in sheltered locations that will be used by foraging and commuting bats.

4.8 The proposed development will remove large portions of the site, including the buildings, areas of grassland, scrub and ruderal habitat. Provided a suitable lighting strategy is implemented, no

significant impacts to bats are predicted and the new gardens will provide new foraging habitats. Further surveys for bat activity are not deemed necessary.

- 4.9 A suitable lighting design strategy should be designed to ensure impacts to foraging and commuting bats are minimised. In general, measures should include the use of lighting only where absolutely necessary utilising highly directional warm white LED lighting, an example being down spots at 2.5 m high using warm white (2700 K) 8W LED lamps, 550 lumens, 35 degree beam angle. These could be individually activated by PIR sensors on a 1 minute cut off to further reduce their impacts. These will assist in lighting only the areas where lighting is required and minimising light spill either directly or through reflected light. Retained boundary vegetation must not subject to more than 0.2 lux of light spill and this must be demonstrated on a Lighting Illumination Plan.
- 4.10 The proposed development provides an opportunity to significantly enhance the site for roosting bats by incorporating roosts into the new buildings and these will usually be requested by the local planning authority. There are many ways that the buildings could be enhanced for crevice-dwelling bat species (virtually all UK bat species) without inconveniencing prospective occupants or requiring any significant design considerations. Bat tubes, panels, shelters or boxes can be installed in suitable locations around the site usually close to cover and at the apices of gable ends. A variety of aspects increases the likelihood of colonisation.

Badgers and other mammals

- 4.11 No further surveys are required but for the protection of Badgers and other wildlife that could pass through the site, it is recommended that during the construction phase of the project any trenches and other excavations should be back-filled before nightfall or a ramp left to allow animals to easily exit, and any open pipes larger than 150 mm should be capped off overnight.

Birds

- 4.12 The site provides foraging habitat in general with the scrub and buildings and trees providing nesting habitats. Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and amendments). The removal of scrub and the demolition of the buildings should take place outside the nesting season of March to August. Where this is not possible these habitats would need to be surveyed for nesting birds prior to works taking place.
- 4.13 In order to compensate for any loss of foraging habitat and/or enhance the site, it is recommended that any new planting should concentrate on species that are native to the area and ideally produce a range of seeds and berries at varying times of the year. Nectar rich plants could also be used encourage invertebrates on to the site, which in turn provide food for birds as well as other species such as bats.
- 4.14 The new buildings are likely to provide a good opportunity to enhance the site for birds and the following options could be explored for inclusion on the sides of the buildings:
- Nest boxes for Swifts could be incorporated into the eaves. These not only provide nesting sites for Swifts but can also be used by other species such as House Sparrows and Starlings.
 - House Martin nests could be provided under the eaves or on the north to east sides of the building.

- Individual boxes, such as the Schwegler Bird Home 1MR, could also be installed at a height of at least 2 m.
- Groups of multiple small bird boxes could also be installed at a height of at least 2 m to provide nesting sites for birds such as House Sparrows.

Reptiles

- 4.15 The areas of scrub and ruderal habitats in association with grassland and open areas for basking provide good habitat for reptiles. There is a high likelihood that reptiles are present.
- 4.16 A reptile survey will be required to determine presence/absence. This can be determined with seven visits undertaken over a period of at least three weeks following the setup of the survey at least 10 days in advance. Survey period is April to September although March and October can also be suitable depending on weather conditions. Should reptiles be recorded it may be necessary to carry out additional visits to allow a population assessment and a suitable mitigation strategy devised.

Amphibians

- 4.17 There are no ponds on site; However, there is one pond 64 m to the south which is not connected by continuous habitat but there are no significant barriers to dispersal. The pond is located on private land and access to carry out a HSI Assessment was not possible.
- 4.18 Great Crested Newts and their places of breeding or rest are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and amendments) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 making it illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb a Great Crested Newt and to damage or destroy a breeding or resting site of this species. All activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 must be licensed by Natural England. Great Crested Newts are also a NERC Priority Species.
- 4.19 The site measures approximately 0.5 ha in size. Using Natural England's Great Crested Newt Rapid Risk Assessment, for any land (not just newt habitat) which is within 100 m of any breeding pond where between 0.1 and 0.5 ha is to be lost or damaged, the risk of an offence being committed is rated as 'Amber: Offence likely'. If there is a risk to individual Great Crested Newts such as capture of newts in excavations, disturbance of newts or killing or injuring of newts then the risk increases to "Red: Offence highly likely". As the scrub and ruderal areas provide potential areas of cover, much of which will be removed, there is a risk this could occur. Further investigation and possibly surveys of the nearby pond will be required, or alternatively an application to use the district licence will be applied for to permit the works on site, which does not require further survey data.

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5.0 Plans

Plan 1 – Proposed site plan

