

ECOLOGY & BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG) ASSESSMENT

18th December 2025

Land to the northwest of College
Farmhouse, Pewsey Road, Upavon,
Wiltshire, SN9 6DT

On behalf of: Kate Scruby & David Hollinghurst

Agent: Tuttle Architectural Services

DOCUMENT CONTROL:

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Note to LPA:	Contains highly confidential species information – ensure that sensitive information is redacted before publishing in the public domain

VERSION HISTORY:

Version:	Date:	Author:	Description of change:
1	04.08.25	Alex Homewood BSc (Hons)	Red line boundary and metric amendments

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This document has been prepared in accordance with CIEEM’s Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (CIEEM, 2017) and Biodiversity Net Gain Report & Audit Templates (CIEEM, 2021).

This report may contain sensitive data pertaining to particularly vulnerable species. It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to determine whether data and information contained within his report is made publicly available.

At the time of writing, standard methodologies have been used which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where standard methodologies change and where Government, national bodies and industry subsequently modify standards.

This report has been produced using all reasonable skill and care, and a Quality Assurance (QA) review process has been conducted prior to issue of this report.

SURVEY DATA LIFESPAN AND VALIDITY OF THIS REPORT:

Unless otherwise explicitly stated, survey data contained within this report is valid for 12 months from the survey date in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Advice note (CIEEM, 2019) due to the presence of and/or potential for mobile species to be present within the site. However, should the condition on-site change substantially during this 12-month period, and/or if the nature/extent of the development changes, then this report may not be valid, and a reassessment of the site may be required.

This report has been prepared to identify the presence of protected species and habitats within the site, where this falls within the scope of the agreed works.

Survey data has a limited lifespan for mitigation licence applications with Natural England. Update surveys may be required e.g. in the event a bat licence is required; survey data must be sought from the then current survey season (May to August).

The results of the surveys and this assessment are representative at the time of the surveys taking place.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ◆ ABR Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Tuttle Architectural Services on behalf of Kate Scruby and David Hollinghurst to produce an Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment to inform a full application for the installation of solar panels and a pump at the land to the northwest of College Farmhouse, Pewsey Road, Upavon, Wiltshire, SN9 6DT.

Survey background:

- ◆ A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) were conducted on the 29th April 2025 by Natural England class 2 licensed ecologists and experienced botanists Russell Hoyle ACIEEM and Amy Parsons ACIEEM. Former PEA surveys of the site were conducted on the 9th January 2025, 6th December 2022 and 22nd July 2022.

Habitats:

- ◆ Habitats within the red line boundary include modified grassland (g4 128), one 'other native hedgerow with trees' (h2a6 11), rural trees (g 32), and artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface. Habitats within the blue line boundary include a barn (u1b5), ruderal vegetation (g4 81), a non-native and ornamental hedgerow (h2b), and an 'ecologically valuable line of trees' (w 34).

Biodiversity net gain – metric results:

- ◆ Baseline habitat units on-site are 0.17 units and 0.38 hedgerow units; and it is anticipated that a net change of +0.02 habitat units and +0.04 hedgerow units will be generated post-development.
- ◆ The development is estimated to result in a percentage change of +11.57% for habitats and +10.46% for hedgerows and therefore the minimum 10% net gain has been achieved onsite and is anticipated to occur post-development. Further details are provided in Section 5.

Badgers:

- ◆ Badgers are not considered likely to be impacted by the development and no further action is advised for this species.

Barn owls:

- ◆ A barn owl box is situated within the barn in the southwest of the site with pellets, feathers and white splashing (droppings) previously recorded. The barn supports a barn owl roost; however, this building is offsite and not subject to be impacted by the development.
- ◆ The grassland on-site is long/tussocky, however, lacks a deep thatch layer required by prey and is therefore not considered likely to support foraging barn owls. Therefore, no impacts on barn owls are anticipated as part of this application, and no further action is recommended for this species.

Bats:

Roosts in buildings

- ◆ No buildings on-site are being impacted as part of this development. Therefore, no further action relating to bats roosting in buildings is advised.

Roosts in trees

- ◆ Potential Roosting features (PRFs) were observed within several trees on-site. However, only one small tree will be impacted as part of this development and did not hold potential for roosting bats. Therefore, no further action relating to bats roosting in trees is advised.

Commuting and foraging habitats

- ◆ The loss of habitat (grassland and one small tree) is considered to be minimal, and no new artificial lighting is proposed. Therefore, no impacts on commuting and foraging bats are anticipated.

Great crested newts (GCN):

- ◆ No impacts on GCN are anticipated and no mitigation is advised for this species.

Nesting birds:

- ◆ A bird's nest, likely from the former season, was identified within a tree on-site, however, no vegetation that holds potential for nesting birds will be lost as part of the development. Due to the proximity of the solar panels area to the hedgerow, a hedgerow protection plan to protect nesting birds is provided in Section 5 of this report.

Hedgehogs:

- ◆ The site consists of suitable habitat for hedgehogs; mitigation is provided in Section 5.

Common reptiles and amphibians (herpetofauna):

- ◆ There are suitable fringe habitats along the hedgerow/treeline bases for common herpetofauna and a log pile in the northeast site which will require removal from the works area. No suitable fringe habitats will be affected by the proposed works; however, the log pile will need to be dismantled and reassembled away from the works area under supervision of an ecologist. Mitigation for herpetofauna is provided in Section 5.

Biodiversity enhancements:

- ◆ Two '1B Schwegler Nest Boxes' will be provided as enhancements to ensure the application is compliant with planning policy. These enhancements are detailed in Section 5 of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 ABR Ecology Ltd were commissioned by Tuttle Architectural Services on behalf of Kate Scruby and David Hollinghurst to produce an Ecology and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment to inform a full application for the installation of solar panels and a pump at the land to the northwest of College Farmhouse, Pewsey Road, Upavon, Wiltshire, SN9 6DT (central grid reference: SU 13405 55255) (herein referred to as 'the site' / 'on-site').
- 1.2 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) were conducted on the 29th April 2025 by Natural England class 2 licensed ecologists and experienced botanists Russell Hoyle ACIEEM and Amy Parsons ACIEEM. Former PEA surveys of the site were conducted on the 9th January 2025, 6th December 2022 and 22nd July 2022.
- 1.3 A site location plan is provided in Appendix A and proposed plans are provided in Appendix B.

Site context

- 1.4 The site is approximately 0.08 hectares (ha) in size and is located in Upavon, Wiltshire. The site consists of an area of paddock comprising modified grassland with a bordering native hedgerow with trees to the north and an gravel path to the east. Offsite habitats within the blue line boundary include a modified grassland, ruderal vegetation, a non-native hedgerow to the west and a line of trees at the southern boundary. The site is situated within a semi-rural setting surrounded by residential housing and gardens to the south and agricultural and pastoral land to the north.
- 1.5 The wider surrounding landscape consists of a mosaic of agricultural land and pasture, with small areas of deciduous woodland and rural residential buildings. The River Avon is situated to the northeast of the site and Upavon Golf Club to the east. The area provides excellent opportunities for biodiversity due to a wide range of habitats including the nearby River Avon and commuting corridors for local wildlife within the treeline and hedgerow corridors in the wider landscape.

Purposes and aims of this assessment

- 1.6 This assessment primarily aims to determine the biodiversity value of the site and looks to identify the presence/likely absence of protected and vulnerable species on-site. This report also evaluates whether there will be any potential development

impacts on species and habitats; and identifies whether mitigation and/or protected species licensing is required to ensure the development complies with legislation and national and local planning policy.

- 1.7 This assessment also estimates the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) anticipated to be generated by the current proposals for the site, as measured using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Natural England, 2025¹) (current version 03.07.2025); and follows guidance set out within the Biodiversity Net Gain: Good Practice Principles for Development (Baker *et al.*, 2019) and BS 8683:2021 Process for designing and implementing Biodiversity Net Gain - Specification (BSI, 2021).

Legislation and planning policy

- 1.8 Full details of relevant planning policy and legislation are provided in Appendix C of this report; the following policy and legislation in respect of biodiversity is applicable to this application:

- ◆ The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 – Section 15
- ◆ The Environment Act 2021 – Schedules 7a and 14 Parts 1 and 2
- ◆ Annex II and IV of the EC Habitats and Species Directive 1992
- ◆ The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019
- ◆ The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) – Section 1 and Schedules 5 and 9
- ◆ The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 – Sections 40 and 41
- ◆ Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System
- ◆ The Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015)
- ◆ Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Wiltshire and Swindon Public Consultation Draft March 2025 (Wiltshire Council, New Forest National Park & Swindon Borough Councils, 2025)

- 1.9 It is the responsibility of the applicant(s) to ensure that the proposed development proceeds in full compliance with legislation, national and local policy, and in accordance with all conditions of the obtained planning consent.**

2. METHODOLOGY

Desktop data search

- 2.1 Sites of international protection including Ramsars, Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) were identified within a 7.5 kilometre (km) radius of the site; and sites of national protection including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) were identified within a 2km radius of the site using the Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside website (MAGIC) (2025).
- 2.2 Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC, 2025) were contacted to provide records of any protected, vulnerable and notable species and any locally designated sites such as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) within a 1km radius of the application site.
- 2.3 A search was also conducted on MAGIC (2025) to identify the presence of nearby priority habitats, European Protected Species (EPS) licences and known great crested newt breeding ponds.
- 2.4 This information was used to evaluate the potential of the site for protected and vulnerable species, and to determine whether there is potential for development impacts on these species, surrounding habitats and protected sites.
- 2.5 To inform the BNG assessment, a desktop study was undertaken to determine strategic significance of habitats. This comprised a review of the following:
 - ◆ Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) online database (accessed May 2025) to identify any statutory nature conservation designations
 - ◆ Data search response from WSBRC (January 2025)
 - ◆ The Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015)

Botanical survey (UKHab)

- 2.6 A botanical survey of the site was conducted on 29th April 2025 by experienced botanists Amy Parsons ACIEEM and Russell Hoyle ACIEEM.
- 2.7 The survey involved a detailed flora survey of habitats, and each flora species was allocated an abundance in accordance with the DAFOR scale, using local (L) as a pre-fix where a species was restricted in distribution across the habitat:

- D** – Dominant
- A** – Abundant
- F** – Frequent
- O** – Occasional
- R** – Rare

2.8 Habitats on-site were classified in accordance with the UKHab Classification System, using the UK Habitat Classification Definitions document Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd, 2023¹) and UKHab Field Key Version 2.1 (UKHab Ltd, 2023²). Other features of ecological interest were identified using ‘target notes’.

2.9 All habitat mapping was undertaken digitally within the Coreo app (Coreo, 2024).

Statutory biodiversity metric

2.10 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Natural England, 2025¹) was conducted as a tool to determine a baseline and proposed biodiversity value for the site, this included both a percentage habitat net gain/loss and the overall change in habitat units post-development.

Baseline and proposed habitat mapping

2.11 Pre and post-development habitat maps were digitised using the QGIS template associated with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Natural England, 2025²). The proposed site plan (as shown in Appendix B) was georeferenced, and habitats were overlain using this plan.

2.12 Information was entered for each parcel including habitat type, condition, strategic significance, a unique habitat parcel reference, a retention category and a spatial risk category for both on-site and offsite proposed habitats (where applicable).

Strategic significance

2.13 Habitats within the site were assessed to identify whether these occurred within any strategic locations for biodiversity, such as connecting offsite habitats, forming part of a designated site for nature conservation or within local planning strategies.

Measurements of Habitat Areas

2.14 Baseline and proposed habitat areas were measured as distinct habitat parcels. Baseline habitat parcels were measured using habitat mapping and aerial photography overlain in QGIS and Coreo. Post-development habitat parcels were calculated by measuring the proposed site plan (as shown in Appendix B).

- 2.15 Data from the QGIS template was then transferred to the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation tool using the QGIS Import Tool associated with the Metric.

Protected species assessment

Badgers

- 2.16 A walkover was conducted during the site visit looking for potential evidence of badgers *Meles meles*. Evidence of badgers can include setts (underground burrows), ‘snuffle marks’ (badger foraging signs), latrines (territorial marking sites), scats (dung), hair, footprints and well-worn paths.

Barn owls and other nesting birds

- 2.17 A search was conducted for evidence of barn owl *Tyto alba* and other nesting birds during the site visit. Evidence of nesting can include the physical presence of chicks and/or adult birds feeding/nest building, nesting material, eggs and/or egg casings, feathers, white splashing (droppings), and pellets (for barn owls).

Bats

Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW)

- 2.18 A Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW) survey was conducted to record any habitats suitable for roosting bats; this included an inspection of trees for bat suitability as detailed below.

Survey conditions, equipment and timings

- 2.19 Survey information for the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) is provided in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Weather conditions, equipment and timings for survey

Survey date	Time of survey	Surveyor(s)	Equipment available for use	Weather conditions		
29/04/2025	10:30am	Amy Parsons ACIEEM and Russell Hoyle ACIEEM	High-powered torch, mirrors, sealable bags, FFP3 face masks, gloves, extendable ladder, endoscope, binoculars	Temp:	Okta cloud cover:	Beaufort wind force:
				20°C	2/8	3/12

- 2.20 The surveying ecologists have received training in Working at Heights (and in-house training on the specific use of ladders for PRA surveys), Manual Handling, and Emergency First Aid At Work to ensure compliance with Health and Safety legislation

(The Work at Height Regulations 2005, Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992, The Health and Safety (First-Aid) Regulations 1981).

Trees

2.21 A Ground-Level Tree Assessment (GTLA) was undertaken in accordance with The BCT Guidelines (Collins, 2023). A systematic search was made of any trees on-site for bats and where present, information was compiled on the potential and actual bat entry/exit points where present; potential and actual bat roosting locations; and any evidence of bats found.

2.22 The inspection was carried out systematically and consistently around all of accessible elevations of each tree. Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) that can be exploited by bats are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) for bats in trees

PRFs formed by disease and decay	PRFs formed by damage	PRFs formed by association
Woodpecker holes Squirrel holes Knot holes Pruning cuts Tear outs Wounds Cankers Compression Forks Butt rots	Lightning strikes Hazard beams Subsidence cracks Shearing cracks Transverse snaps Welds Lifting bark Desiccation Fissures Frost cracks	Fluting Ivy

2.23 Trees were categorized in accordance the scale shown in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Categories for assigning tree potential for roosting bats

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

2.24 The above assessment was further refined for any trees with identified Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) which were categorized in accordance with the following scale (Table 4 below) (Collins, 2023):

Table 4: Categories for assigning tree potential for roosting bats

Suitability	Description
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.

- 2.25 The tree was identified as a 'confirmed' bat roost where bat evidence was recorded. If droppings were present, a sample of the bat droppings were collected and couriered to Swift Ecology Ltd for DNA analysis to confirm the species of bat present.

Dormice

- 2.26 An assessment was conducted to evaluate the suitability of the habitats on-site for the dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*, a small, nocturnal mammal which occupies habitats such as hedgerows, scrub, woodland and treelines. The dormouse requires good habitat connectivity and suitable food resources providing fruit, nuts, nectar and/or insects throughout the year.

Great crested newts

- 2.27 The habitats on-site were assessed for their potential to support the great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN). GCN occupy both aquatic and terrestrial habitats, spending most of their life cycle on land and a short period of the year for breeding and egg-laying. Suitable terrestrial habitats can include grassland, woodland, hedgerows, scrub, and tall herb communities; and suitable overwintering (hibernation) sites can include piles of materials such as rubble/logs and at the base of buildings/stone walls.
- 2.28 GCN are known to travel up to 500 metres (m) from their breeding sites (waterbodies); for this reason, an aerial assessment was made prior to the site visit to determine if any waterbodies were present on-site and around the site (offsite). Any accessible waterbodies were assessed under the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) (Oldham et al, 2000, 2008) to determine the suitability of the waterbody to support great crested newts.
- 2.29 The Natural England 'GCN Risk Zones' map (Natural England, 2025) was accessed to determine what risk zone the application site falls within under the GCN District Level Licence (DLL) scheme.

Reptiles and common amphibians (herpetofauna)

- 2.30 An appraisal of the site was conducted to evaluate suitable habitats for common British reptiles, such as slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, grass snake *Natrix natrix* and adder *Vipera berus*, and common amphibians such as common frog *Rana temporaria*.

- 2.31 Suitable habitats include those with a varied structure, offering a range of niches for basking and foraging, coupled with sunny areas to allow thermoregulation. Typical habitats include rough and unmanaged grassland with shorter margins, heathland, woodland, scrub and ruderal vegetation, and can include urban settings such as gardens with compost heaps. Potential overwintering (hibernation) sites can include piles of materials such as rubble/logs, rockeries and at the base of buildings/stone walls.

Survey limitations and assumptions

PEA, PRA, GTLA and UKHab survey

- 2.32 The UKHabs habitat survey was conducted at an optimal time of the year (spring/summer) for general botanical survey. However, vegetation on-site being fairly regularly managed, which may have removed some identifiable features from flora.
- 2.33 Evidence of crevice-dwelling bats may have been missed due to the concealed nature of bat roosts. Binoculars were used to identify any potential bat droppings on the exterior features of the buildings/trees.
- 2.34 An aerial search for waterbodies can be constrained by the accuracy of online maps. Several websites were accessed to minimize the chances of missing waterbodies, however, garden ponds within residential properties are very rarely mapped and it is possible that waterbodies have been overlooked as part of this assessment.
- 2.35 The site visit provides a 'snapshot' of the site and does not take into account seasonal variation. Species may have been overlooked due to the constraints of the season and time of which the survey was undertaken.
- 2.36 The GLTA can be constrained by canopy cover and by the angle of the surveyor and some PRFs may not be visible from ground level. Where PRFs are present at height, these cannot be inspected from ground level.
- 2.37 Certain species are highly mobile, and it is therefore possible for these species to occupy the site at any time in the future. The survey only provides a 'snapshot' in time and does not account for seasonal variation. As such, it is not possible to have complete certainty that species are not present, rather, that there was no indication of their presence at the time of survey.
- 2.38 Often bats leave no visible sign of their presence on the outside of a building, and even when they do, wet weather can wash evidence away.

DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric

- 2.39 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation relies upon outputs of biodiversity unit calculations which are not absolute values or scientifically precise. Therefore, the Metric's results interpreted within caution.
- 2.40 The Metric calculation does not change the legislation afforded to biodiversity; individual species and protected/irreplaceable habitats are outside of the scope of the Metric.
- 2.41 The accuracy of habitat area measurements is constrained by baseline data collection and the resolution of the proposed site plan. QGIS has been used to calculate habitat areas which have been aligned with Google Maps satellite imagery and the site location and proposed site plans.
- 2.42 Habitat conditions for proposed habitats were assigned on a precautionary approach and with consideration of biological and operational phase conditions (i.e. which may limit the degree to which 'good' condition is likely to be reached).

GLTA survey

- 2.43 The GLTA can be constrained by canopy cover and by the angle of the surveyor and some PRFs may not be visible from ground level. Where PRFs are present at height, these cannot be inspected from ground level.

Reporting and survey data lifespan

- 2.44 The data within this report should not be seen as comprehensive. Data obtained from the data search (WSBRC, 2025) is unlikely to provide a complete record of species within the search area. It is possible that a species may occur within the vicinity of the site that has not been identified within the data search.
- 2.45 Survey data is considered valid for 12 months from the survey date in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Advice note (CIEEM, 2019) due to the presence of and/or potential for mobile species to be present within the site.
- 2.46 Survey data is only intended for the proposals outlined within this report. If any material changes to the site occur and/or if the nature and/or extent of the proposed development changes, an update visit to reassess the site will be required, and any conclusions provided herein may not be relied upon.

3. RESULTS

Desktop data search

Internationally, nationally and regionally protected (statutory) sites

- 3.1 MAGIC (MAGIC, 2025) was used to identify any international statutory sites located within 7.5km of the application-site and national/local sites within 2km of the site. Results are presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Internationally, nationally and regionally protected (statutory) sites

Site name	Distance from site	Designation	Site description
River Avon	160m east	SAC	The Avon and its tributaries comprise a large, lowland river system. It includes sections running through chalk, greensand, and clay, with transitions between them. Five aquatic <i>Ranunculus</i> species occur in the river system, but stream water-crowfoot <i>Ranunculus penicillatus</i> ssp. <i>pseudofluitans</i> and river water-crowfoot <i>R. fluitans</i> are the main dominants. Some winterbourne reaches, where pond water-crowfoot <i>R. peltatus</i> is the dominant watercrowfoot species, are included in the SAC. There is an extensive population of Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> along the margins and associated wetlands of the Rivers Avon, Bourne and Wylfe.
River Avon System	160m east	SSSI	"The Avon is richer and more varied than in most chalk streams with over 180 species of aquatic plant having been recorded, one of the most diverse fish faunas in Britain and a wide range of aquatic invertebrates. It rises in the Pewsey Vale as a network of clay streams fed by chalk springs. These converge to a chalk river running through Salisbury Plain. The upper reaches of the rivers are largely fed from chalk springs and in the Avon itself flows are relatively constant. The system has an extremely diverse fish fauna with more species recorded in the Avon than in any other British river. The renowned salmonid fisheries, with wild populations of migratory sea trout <i>Salmo trutta</i> , brown trout and Atlantic salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> . A wide range of coarse fish are present, including bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i> , minnow <i>Phoxinus phoxinus</i> , 3-spined stickleback <i>Gasterosteus aculeatus</i> , dace <i>Leuciscus leuciscus</i> , stone loach <i>Noemacheilus barbatulus</i> , pike <i>Esox lucius</i> , grayling <i>Thymallus thymallus</i> , eel <i>Anguilla anguilla</i> , perch <i>Perca fluviatilis</i> , roach <i>Rutilus rutilus</i> , gudgeon <i>Gobio gobio</i> , bleak <i>Alburnus alburnus</i> . The system is notable for brook lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> , having particularly important spawning areas in the upper reaches."
Salisbury Plain	2.6km southwest	SAC	The defining habitat type is chalk grassland, also some secondary and ancient woodland is present. Juniper scrub is significant on parts of

			Salisbury Plain and much of Porton Down. SAC is also distinctive in hosting the priority habitat type 'orchid rich sites'. This priority habitat type comprises calcareous grasslands which contain either a rich suite of orchid species, important populations of at least one nationally uncommon orchid species or one or several orchid species considered to be rare, very rare or exceptional in the UK
Salisbury Plain	2.6km southwest	SPA	The site includes unimproved chalk grassland with small blocks of scrub and woodland. The majority of the site has been used for military training since early 20th century and has therefore not been subject to intensive farming. The site supports nationally important populations of two Annex I species. other Annex I species which occur in small numbers include merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i> and short eared owl <i>Asio flammeus</i> .
Salisbury Plain	2.6km southwest	SSSI	Salisbury Plain supports the largest known expanse of unimproved chalk downland in northwest Europe and represents 41% of Britain's remaining area of this rich wildlife habitat. Supports 13 species of nationally rare and scarce plants, 67 species of rare and scarce invertebrates and forms a site of international importance for birds. In addition to chalk downland, this site supports scrub and woodland habitats, temporary and permanent pools, and the Nine Mile River winterbourne. The rare and notable plants which occur here include burnt orchid <i>Orchis ustulata</i> , slender bedstraw <i>Galium pumilum</i> , field fleawort <i>Senecio integrifolius</i> and the nationally scarce British endemic early gentian <i>Gentianella anglica</i> . Salisbury Plain is an important stronghold for declining downland butterflies. Other species of interest on Salisbury Plain include the Great Crested Newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i> . This newt occurs in dew ponds across the Plain and in pools along the Nine Mile River, together with smooth newt <i>T. vulgaris</i> , common frog <i>Rana temporaria</i> and common toad <i>Bufo bufo</i> . Grass snake <i>Natrix natrix</i> are also often seen near pools, and common lizard <i>Lacerta vivipara</i> , slow worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i> and adder <i>Vipera berus</i> are present.

Impacts on statutory sites

- 3.2 No impacts on statutory designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale of the proposals and therefore, no mitigation is proposed regarding these sites.

Locally designated (non-statutory) sites

- 3.3 WSBRC (2025) were consulted to provide results of any locally designated sites within 1km of the site. Results are presented in Table 6 below:

Table 6: Locally designated (non-statutory) sites

Site name	Distance from site	Designation	Area (ha)	Site description
Salisbury Avon Headwaters	645m north	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	7.16	A river complex above the SSSI.
Upavon Swamp	650m south	LWS	5.64	A series of former water meadows that are now overgrown with scrub, tall herb and fen communities in the wetter areas and along the ditches.

Impacts on non-statutory sites

- 3.9 No impacts on non-statutory sites are anticipated due to sufficient distance and presence of landscape buffers between the application site and the LWSs. Therefore, no further mitigation is recommended in relation to LWSs.

Priority habitats (S.41 NERC Act 2006)

- 3.10 No priority habitats were identified on-site; the nearest area of priority habitat is the River Avon which is a chalk river situated approximately 170m east of the site (MAGIC, 2025). No impacts upon this chalk river are anticipated as part of the works due to the presence of landscape buffers between the site and the river.

Protected, rare and vulnerable species

- 3.11 WSBRC (2025) was consulted to provide any records of protected/vulnerable species of interest within a 1km radius of the application site as presented in Table 7 below:

Table 7: Records for protected/vulnerable species of interest

Common name	Latin name	Number of records	Latest record	Nearest record to site
Amphibians and reptiles				
Common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>	1	2015	1km northwest
Common toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>	2	1978	Within 1km
Grass snake	<i>Natrix helvetica</i>	1	2010	260m south
Bats				
Brown long-eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	9	2009	Within 1 km
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	8	2015	340m north
Myotis sp.	<i>Myotis sp.</i>	2	2018	1km northwest
Pipistrelle sp.	<i>Pipistrellus sp.</i>	4	2015	740m southwest
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	2	2009	Within 1 km
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	5	2015	530m east
Birds				
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	16	2019	660m south
Corn bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	7	2020	680m west
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	2	2004	460m south
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	5	2018	1km northwest
Grasshopper warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	1	2019	Within 1km
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	2	2020	Within 1km

Grey partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	1	2005	Within 1km
Hen harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	14	2021	Within 1km
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	2	2021	Within 1km
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	10	2019	940m northwest
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	2	2006	660m south
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	7	2021	610m northeast
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	1	2015	Within 1km
Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	6	2021	Within 1km
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	13	2021	770m northwest
Red wing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	2	2018	1km northwest
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	1	2019	Within 1km
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	6	2021	Within 1km
Spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	1	2006	280m southeast
Short-eared owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	9	2020	525m southwest
Tree pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	1	2006	Within 1km
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	8	2021	970m south
Flora				
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	3	2024	Within 1km
Burnt orchid	<i>Neotinea ustulata</i>	1	1947	Within 1km
Corn buttercup	<i>Ranunculus arvensis</i>	2	2019	Within 1km
Invertebrates				
Marsh fritillary	<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>	3	2011	Within 1km
Small heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	16	2011	Within 1km
Wall	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>	12	2011	190m west
Other mammals				
Brown hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>	13	2020	640m east
European badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	7	2019	630m southeast
Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	12	2020	190m southeast
Polecat	<i>Mustela putorius</i>	1	2003	960m north
Water vole	<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>	1	2014	230m north
Western European hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	48	2022	80m northwest

3.12 There are nearby records for bats, badger, hedgehog and reptiles and common amphibians; these species are discussed further on in Section 3.

Botanical survey (UKHab)

Habitats recorded on-site

3.13 Habitats recorded within the site are listed in Table 8 below (habitat map with species lists for each habitat are provided in Appendix D and photographs provided in Appendix E of this report):

Table 8: Habitats recorded on-site

Habitat	UKHab primary code	UKHab secondary code(s)	Description and UKHAB secondary code(s)	Location within site
Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	u1c	n/a	Access track from the main road to the site.	East.
Modified grassland	g4	128	An area of tussocky modified grassland spans the site.	Throughout the site.
Other native hedgerow with trees	h2a6	11	One 'other native hedgerow with trees' dominated by bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.), hawthorn (<i>Crataegus</i>	Northern boundary.

			<i>monogyna</i>) and wild privet (<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i> .)	
Rural trees	g	32	A single small birch (<i>Betula</i> sp.) tree is present in the modified grassland.	Northeast corner of the site.

Habitats recorded within the blue line land (off-site)

- 3.14 The following habitats were recorded within the blue line land of the site Table 9 below (habitat map with species lists for each habitat are provided in Appendix D and photographs provided in Appendix E of this report):

Table 9: Habitats recorded off-site

Habitat	UKHab primary code	UKHab secondary code(s)	Description and UKHAB secondary code(s)	Location within site
Barn	u1b5	833	A wooden barn with a pitched and hipped corrugated metal roof.	Southwest corner.
Ecologically valuable line of trees	w	34	A line of eight ecologically valuable trees.	Southern boundary.
Modified grassland	g4	128	An area of tussocky modified grassland spans most of the site.	North, east and west of the site.
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	h2b	n/a	A non-native and ornamental hedgerow dominated by cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>).	Western boundary.
Ruderal vegetation	g4	81	An area of ruderal vegetation dominated by ruderal species under the treeline canopy to the south of the site.	Southern boundary.

Impacts of development on habitats

- 3.15 The development consists of the erection of a solar panel array and pump on an area of modified grassland which will require the removal of an immature/small birch *Betula* sp. tree. Therefore, no habitats of high conservation value and/or priority habitats will be lost by the proposed works.
- 3.16 The results of the metric for mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), undertaken to calculate measurable habitat losses/gains, are provided under Section 4 of this report.

Protected species assessment

Badgers

- 3.17 Seven badger records are present 1km of the site (WSBRC, 2025); however, no evidence to suggest badgers are using the site was recorded during the walkover survey, and the habitats on-site are considered limited for this species.
- 3.18 Based on a lack of evidence, badgers are not considered to be impacted by the proposals and are not discussed further in this assessment.

Barn owls and other nesting birds

- 3.19 Evidence of barn owls was identified within the barn to the west of the site, this included white splashing (droppings), feathers, and pellets. A barn owl box is situated internally at the southern elevation and was inspected, and no barn owls were found during a former survey.
- 3.20 Although evidence of barn owl was found within the barn, the barn is within the blue line boundary is not subject to works as part of this application; and the small area of modified grassland to be lost has no thatch layer suitable for barn owl prey animals such as field voles *Microtus agrestis* and *Sorex araneus*. Therefore, no further action is recommended in relation to barn owls.
- 3.21 A bird's nest (considered likely to be from last season) was identified within a tree in the hedgerow to the north on-site. However, the proposed works will not affect the vegetation that holds potential for nesting birds including the hedgerows; a single small birch tree was identified in the northeast which will be removed, however, this is so immature that it is not considered to hold the potential for nesting birds.
- 3.22 A hedgerow/treeline protection plan is detailed in Section 5 to ensure protection of nesting birds during the works.

Bats

Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW)

Buildings

- 3.23 A description of the building surveyed for roosting bats with any identified potential bat access points and roosting areas are provided in Table 10 below (see Appendix D for building locations and Appendix E for photographs):

Table 10: Building description

Building	Description	
Barn ('B1')	- A barn is present in the southwest of the blue line boundary. - The barn is constructed of wooden elevations. - The roof is pitched and hipped and constructed of corrugated metal. - Wooden door frames are present. - No internal loft void is present.	
	<i>Potential access points:</i>	<i>Potential roosting areas:</i>
	- Through the open door on the eastern elevation.	- No suitable crevices were noted as the building is single-skinned.
	<i>Evidence of bats recorded:</i>	
	- No evidence of bats was recorded within or around the building.	
	<i>DNA analysis of dropping sample (as tested by Swift Ecology Ltd):</i>	
	- n/a	

- 3.24 No evidence of bats was recorded, and the building was assessed and was deemed to hold 'negligible potential' for roosting bats in line with the BCT Guidelines (Collins, 2023). This was due to a lack of potential bat exit/entry points and potential roosting areas around the building.
- 3.25 On this basis, it is considered that bats are likely absent from the building and therefore roosting bats are not considered likely to be impacted by the proposed works.
- 3.26 No further surveys or licensing requirements are recommended, however, further information regarding the validity of this report and what to do in the unlikely event a bat is unexpectedly found is provided in Section 4 of this report.

Trees

- 3.27 Potential Roosting features (PRFs) were observed within several trees on-site. However, only one small tree will be impacted as part of this development and did not hold potential for roosting bats. Therefore, roosts in trees are not considered to be a constraint on development; further information is provided in Section 5 regarding the validity of the survey. Therefore, no further action relating to bats roosting in trees is advised.

Foraging and commuting bats - Artificial Lighting at Night (ALAN)

- 3.28 The surrounding outbuildings around the courtyard are known to support roosts for brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bats and lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) bats. No impacts on these roosts are anticipated due to no additional external lighting being required for the proposed works; the proposals will result in minimal loss of modified grassland and a single small birch, and the loss of these habitats is not considered to have a significant impact on foraging bats. Therefore, no further action relating to foraging bats is advised.

Dormice

- 3.29 The habitats on-site are considered to provide limited habitat for dormice. No dormouse records exist within the local area (WSBRC, 2025) and the nearest European Protected Species (EPS) licence is located approximately 15km northeast of the site (MAGIC, 2025). There is a native hedgerow with trees along the northern boundary of the site, however, there is fragmented habitat connectivity to the wider landscape. Due to a lack of connectivity and as the hedgerow is not to be impacted

and will be protected during works, this species is not considered to be affected by the proposals, and no further action is advised.

Great crested newts

- 3.30 There are no known GCN records within 1km of the site (WSBRC, 2025); and the nearest positive EPS licence return is located approximately 7.4km southwest of the site (MAGIC, 2025).

GCN Risk Zone – District Level Licence (DLL) scheme

- 3.31 The site falls within a ‘Green Risk Zone’ for GCN (Natural England, 2025³); therefore, there is considered to be a low probability of GCN occupying the local area and the site.

Aquatic habitats

- 3.32 No waterbodies are present on-site, and an aerial assessment revealed one waterbody within 250m of the site separated by landscape buffers including roads and residential housing (MAGIC, 2025).

Terrestrial habitats

- 3.33 The site holds some limited potential for terrestrial great crested newts (GCN) in some fringe areas of vegetation cover, however, habitat connectivity to the site is fragmented from the wider surrounding landscape.
- 3.34 Based upon a lack of records, a lack of habitat connectivity and due to the limited extent of terrestrial habitat present on-site, GCN are not considered to be present on-site, and this species is not discussed further in this assessment.

Hedgehogs

- 3.35 48 hedgehog records are present within the local area, the closest record situated within 80m northwest of the site (WSBRC, 2025) and the site possesses suitable foraging and commuting habitat for hedgehogs. It is therefore considered possible that hedgehogs utilise the site; hedgehogs are a priority species under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 due to their historical population decline (Wembridge, D. *et al*, 2022). Therefore, mitigation for hedgehogs is provided in Section 5 of this report.

Reptiles and common amphibians (herpetofauna)

- 3.36 The closest record for herpetofauna is 260m south of the site (WSBRC, 2025). The site features potential sheltering and foraging areas for common herpetofauna. There are suitable habitats present along the boundaries of the site and in the log

pile at the northeastern corner of the site. However, these suitable fringe habitats won't be affected by the proposed works; however, the dismantling of the log pile will require supervision. Mitigation for common herpetofauna is provided in Section 5.

4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG) CALCULATION

DEFRA Biodiversity Metric calculation

- 4.1 A DEFRA Biodiversity Metric calculation (Natural England, 2025¹) was undertaken to estimate the projected habitat gains / losses from the proposed development. A full copy of the Calculation Tool accompanies this report and must be read in conjunction with this report.

Baseline habitats

- 4.2 A baseline (existing) habitats plan is provided in Appendix D and photographs in Appendix E of this report. Habitat Condition Assessments are provided in Appendix F providing the habitat condition score for each habitat type and habitat parcel recorded on-site.

Relevant date for baseline of the site

- 4.3 The relevant date for the baseline of the site is taken to be the 29th April 2025; no site clearance is considered to have occurred prior to the baseline habitats survey taking place.

Baseline habitats present on-site

- 4.4 Baseline habitats present within the site are listed in Tables 11 and 12 below:

Table 11 : Baseline habitats present on-site

Habitat type	Habitat parcel reference	Area / length	Habitat condition	Habitat units
Area habitats				
Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface	BA-A	0.015ha	n/a	0.00
Modified grassland	BA-B	0.0683ha	Poor	0.13
Rural tree	BA-T1	0.0041ha	Moderate	0.03
			Total units =	0.17 units
Hedgerow habitats				
Other native hedgerow with trees	BA-H1	0.048km	Moderate	0.38
			Total units =	0.38 units
Watercourse habitats				
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
			Total units =	n/a

Table 12 : Baseline habitats present off-site

Habitat type	Habitat parcel reference	Area / length	Habitat condition	Habitat units
<i>Area habitats</i>				
Developed land; sealed surface	OF-A	0.0047ha	n/a	0.00
Ruderal vegetation	OF-B	0.0471ha	Moderate	0.19
Modified grassland	OF-C	0.15454ha	Poor	0.31
			Total units =	0.50 units
<i>Hedgerow habitats</i>				
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	OF-H1	0.02km	Poor	0.02
Ecologically valuable line of trees	OF-H2	0.055km	Moderate	0.44
			Total units =	0.46 units
<i>Watercourse habitats</i>				
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
			Total units =	n/a

Proposed habitats

- 4.5 A proposed (post-development) habitats plan is provided in Appendix D; proposed habitats are presented in Tables 13 and 14 below:

Table 13: Proposed habitats on-site

Habitat type	Habitat parcel reference	Area / length	Proposed habitat condition	Criteria targeted	Habitat units
<i>Area habitats</i>					
Developed land; sealed surface	PR-A	0.0111ha	n/a	n/a	0.00
Modified grassland (retained)	BA-B	0.0572ha	Poor	Poor condition will be maintained by achieving at least one pass in a criterion.	0.11
Total units newly created habitats =					0.00 units
Total baseline units retained =					0.11 units
<i>Hedgerow habitats</i>					
Species-rich hedgerow	PR-H1	0.006km	Moderate	Moderate condition will be achieved through targeting: Criterion A1 – Height will reach more than 1.5m tall by not overcutting and allowing hedge to grow. Criterion A2 – Width will reach more than 1.5m in width through appropriate management. Criterion B1 – Appropriate management will ensure there is <0.5m of gap between canopy and ground; regular cuts will encourage side shoots to ensure no gap; infill planting where gaps form. Criterion B2 – Management of the hedgerow will include infill planting to ensure this criterion is met. Criterion D1 – Appropriate management will ensure no non-	0.04

Habitat type	Habitat parcel reference	Area / length	Proposed habitat condition	Criteria targeted	Habitat units
				native invasive species will be present within the hedgerow. Criterion D2 – This criterion can be met through appropriate management.	
Other native hedgerow with trees (retained)	BA-H1	0.048km	Moderate	Moderate condition maintained through continuing current management regime.	0.38
Total units projected =					0.04 units
Total baseline hedgerow retained =					0.38 units
<i>Watercourse habitats</i>					
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total units projected =					n/a

Table 14: Proposed habitats off-site (all off-site habitats retained)

Habitat type	Habitat parcel reference	Area / length	Proposed habitat condition	Criteria targeted	Habitat units
<i>Area habitats</i>					
Rural trees	OFP-T1-T6	0.0244ha	Moderate	Criterion A will be targeted through planting native species; Criterion B will automatically pass due to the trees being individual; and Criterion F as the trees will be oversailing vegetation (grassland).	0.07
Total units projected =					0.07 units
<i>Hedgerow habitats</i>					
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total units projected =					0.04 units
<i>Watercourse habitats</i>					
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total units projected =					n/a

Headline results

- 4.6 The headline results presenting the projected overall net loss/gain for the site is presented in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: DEFRA Statutory Biodiversity Metric headline results

FINAL RESULTS		
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	0.02
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	0.04
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	<i>Area habitat units</i>	11.57%
	<i>Hedgerow units</i>	10.46%
	<i>Watercourse units</i>	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

Interpretation of results

- 4.7 Based upon the current proposals, there is anticipated to be an overall net gain of +0.02 in habitat units and +0.04 net gain in hedgerow units post-development; this is equivalent to a net % change of +11.57% in habitat units and +10.46% in hedgerow units post-development.
- 4.8 The +11.57% habitat net gain will be achieved by planting a total of six new trees throughout the offsite grassland within the blue line boundary, predominantly along the southern area of the site.
- 4.9 The +10.46% hedgerow net gain will be achieved through planting 6m of species-rich native hedgerow onsite along the eastern boundary, which will increase foraging and sheltering habitat for foraging bats and birds across the site.

5. BIODIVERSITY MITIGATION AND ENHANCEMENT PLAN

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – habitat gains/losses

- 4.1 A percentage net gain of +11.57% in habitat units and +10.46% in hedgerow units is considered to be achievable as part of the development with the trading rules satisfied.
- 4.2 To secure the management of newly created and retained habitats over a minimum 30-year period, a Biodiversity Gains Plan must be submitted to the LPA to discharge the biodiversity gain condition.
- 4.3 Where there are ‘significant’ on-site gains (this includes habitats of ‘medium’ or higher distinctiveness), a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) will likely be required; a draft HMMP may also be required pre-planning decision to provide further information. The HMMP details how the on-site habitats will be created, managed and secured over a minimum 30-year period.

On-site habitat creation and management prescriptions for BNG

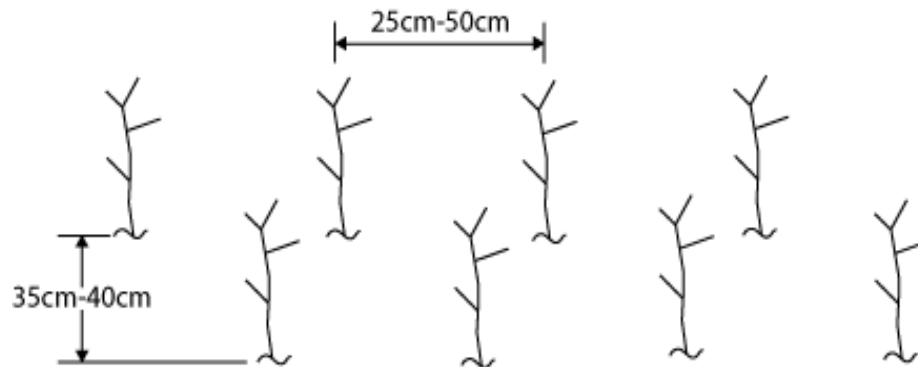
- 4.4 The following habitats will be created on-site and will be managed in the long-term:

Species-rich native hedgerow creation

- 4.5 One new 6m hedgerow will be created on the eastern site boundary. The species-rich hedgerow planting will comprise a mixture of at least five native, woody species to provide nesting and foraging habitat for wildlife. The hedgerow will be planted with a diverse mixture of at least five species from the following list:

- Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
- Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)
- Field maple (*Acer campestre*)
- Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*)
- Oak (*Quercus* sp.)
- Elm (*Ulmus procera*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)
- Crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*)
- Guelder-rose (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
- Wayfaring (*Viburnum lantana*)
- Dog rose (*Rosa canina*)

- 4.6 The new hedgerow whips will be sourced from British-grown stock and will be planted between November and March. The whips will be planted in two rows at a density of six plants per 1m feature approximately 35cm apart. The roots must be kept damp throughout the planting process.



- 4.7 Spiral guards will be required to protect the whips and canes will be used to support the whips and will be removed after 3-5 years. Any new whips will be replaced where they become diseased/die and replaced with plants of the same species and size.
- 4.8 The hedgerow will be managed in perpetuity. This will include watering where necessary, particularly during drought periods. Once the hedgerow has become established, hedgerow laying and cutting will be required to result in good hedge structure.
- 4.9 Hedge trimming/cutting will be undertaken on a 3-year rotational basis outside of the nesting bird season (January to February) and to allow any berry crop to be used by birds. Trimming will keep the hedgerow in good condition and will result in an 'A-frame' hedge. Occasional restoration work will be required to prevent gaps developing. Hedgerow restoration can be undertaken in winter by one of the following methods:
- Laying (cutting stems part way through and laying them along the hedgeline) has a less drastic effect on wildlife and maintains the character of the landscape.
 - Coppicing (cutting the stems at ground level) is the best method of restoration where the hedge is too overgrown to be laid because the stems are too thick.
 - Planting up of gappy areas may be required using a mixture of native, British-grown bare root stock. Planting may be undertaken in winter provided the ground is not frozen.

Trees

- 4.10 Six new trees are to be planted offsite. The new trees will comprise native species such as oak, birch, beech, rowan, whitebeam, or lime. The trees must be sourced from British-grown bare root stock. The trees sourced must be between 16-18cm in girth.

- 4.11 The tree roots must be soaked in water prior to planting, which will take place from September to early May only during a mild spell. The holes must be generous and at least one third larger than the roots of the trees and will be dug-in with well-rotted manure/compost prior to planting.
- 4.12 The trees will be placed in the hole and supported with ties and a stake to ensure it is in an upright position. A plastic water channel will then be installed for each tree starting at the base of the roots to surface level to direct waters into the root system.
- 4.13 Once the stakes, ties and channels are in place, enriched compost will be backfilled over the roots and bedded in to ensure the tree is stable and upright. Immediately after planting the tree will be kept well-watered for the first month to ensure establishment. The trees will then be managed in the long-term by the appointed management company which will include replacement of whips where diseased/dead and pruning to maintain canopy structure.

Hedgerow protection plan

Hedgerow protection plan - to be carried out prior to works commencing

- 4.14 The hedgerow along the northern boundary will be retained and prior to any works commencing on-site, the native hedgerow will be protected by use of 'Heras' fencing. This will ensure machinery does not accidentally track into hedge, potentially disturbing/damaging nests. The 'Heras' fencing will allow for a minimum 2m construction buffer, to be increased where necessary in line with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction (British Standards Institution, 2012) to ensure Root Protection Zones. The 'Heras' fencing must remain in place throughout construction and may only be removed post-development.

Hedgerow protection plan – site preparation and construction phases

- 4.15 The works must be undertaken during the nesting season (1st March and 31st August), due to the potential presence of reptiles, and therefore any and all clearance works will be directly supervised by an experienced ecologist. The ecologist will undertake a pre-works check for signs of nesting birds, if any nests are present, works will cease until the fledglings have vacated the nest and the nest is no longer deemed to be active. A second check by the ecologist would be required in this case to confirm nesting has ceased. If any nests are discovered at any other unsupervised time, works must cease immediately, and the ecologist contacted for further advice.

- 4.16 No stored items will be permitted within the 2m hedge buffers, where reptiles and other small mammals such as hedgehogs could use stored items as refugia/hibernacula. All waste and stored items will be set within a skip or off the ground on pallets away from mature vegetation.

Reptiles

- 4.17 The northern native hedgerow will act as a reptile receptor area which will be protected through the erection of 'Heras' fencing along the length of the hedgerow installed at a minimum 2m away from the hedgerow (see above for hedgerow protection). This fencing will remain in place throughout works and will only be removed post-construction.
- 4.18 The log pile in the northeast corner of the site will be hand dismantled under the direct supervision of an ecologist between 1st March and 30th September when reptiles are mobile between 10°C – 18°C. Any reptiles found during these works will be relocated to the northern receptor site. The log pile will then be relocated and reassembled in the west of the site on a southerly aspect where possible.
- 4.19 The area of grassland outside of the retained receptor site where construction works will take place will then be sensitively strimmed under the supervision of the ecologist. This will take place between 1st March and 30th September when reptiles are mobile between 10°C – 18°C; the grassland will be strimmed to a height of 20cm followed by a cut down to 2cm and will take place in one direction towards the northern hedgerow.

Hedgehogs

- 4.20 The site likely supports hedgehog due to vegetation on-site, surrounding garden networks, rural landscape and the presence of nearby records. The following measures will be followed to ensure they are protected during works and to ensure habitat connectivity is maintained:
- Any new close-boarded fencing and boundaries proposed will feature a minimum of one hedgehog highway (130mm x 130mm hole) along every boundary to ensure habitat connectivity for hedgehogs (Appendix G); this can comprise either a specialised hedgehog highway gravel board (<https://www.garden-fence-panels.co.uk/concrete-posts-bases/concrete-gravel-boards/hedgehog-friendly-concrete-base-panel-plain/>) or if timber gravel boards are used a custom-made hole.

- During works, any trenches/pits will be boarded over at the end of each working day or alternatively a 130mm wide ramp/board will be installed in each trench/pit to allow hedgehogs to escape.
- Materials must be stored on pallets raised off the ground and away from surrounding vegetation to discourage hedgehogs from taking refuge within them.

Biodiversity enhancements

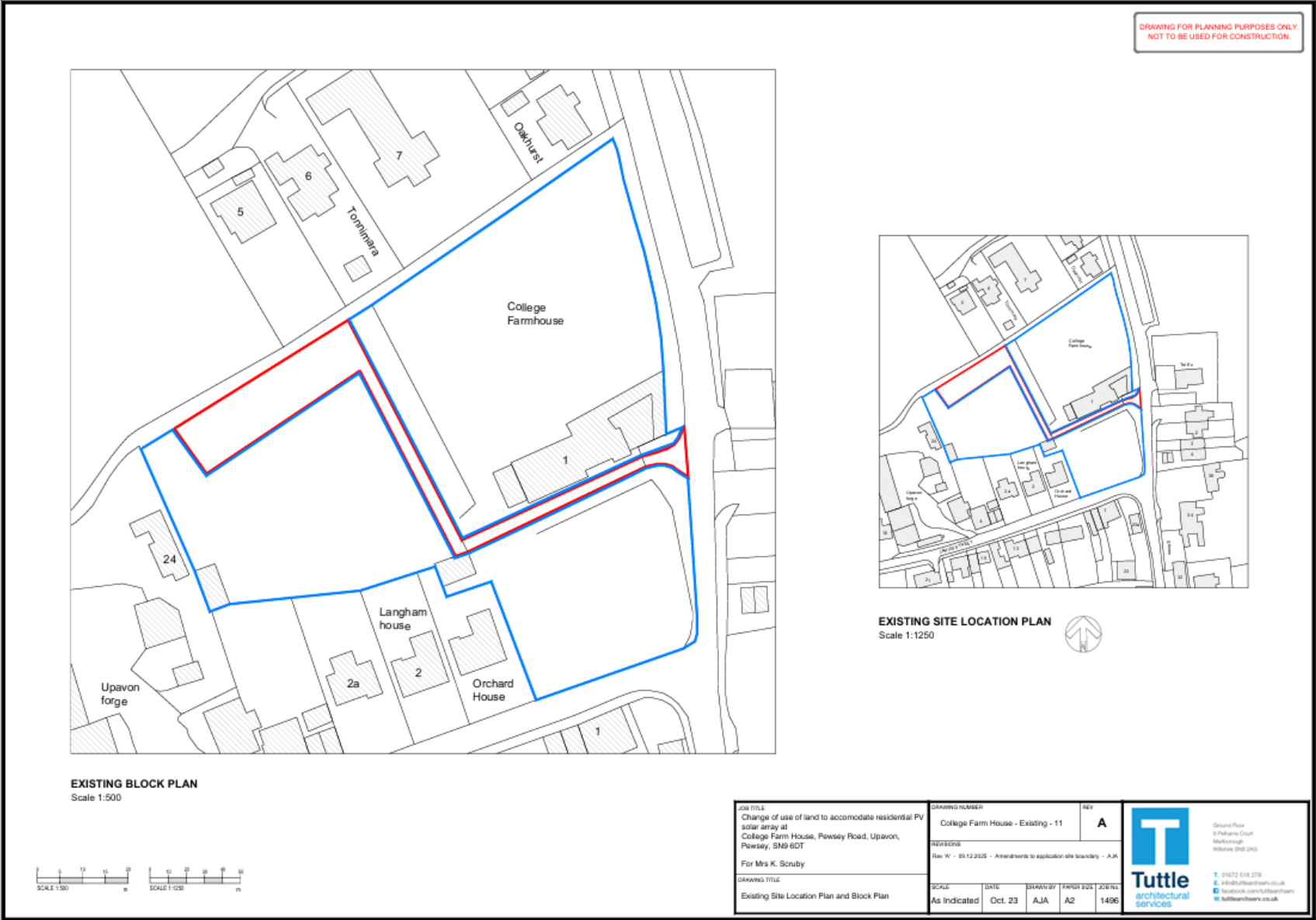
- 4.21 To ensure the application is compliant with Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and local planning policy, two '1B Schwegler Nest Boxes' or similar approved will each be installed on a mature tree at the south of the site within the blue line boundary (see Appendix G for locations and design).

6. REFERENCES

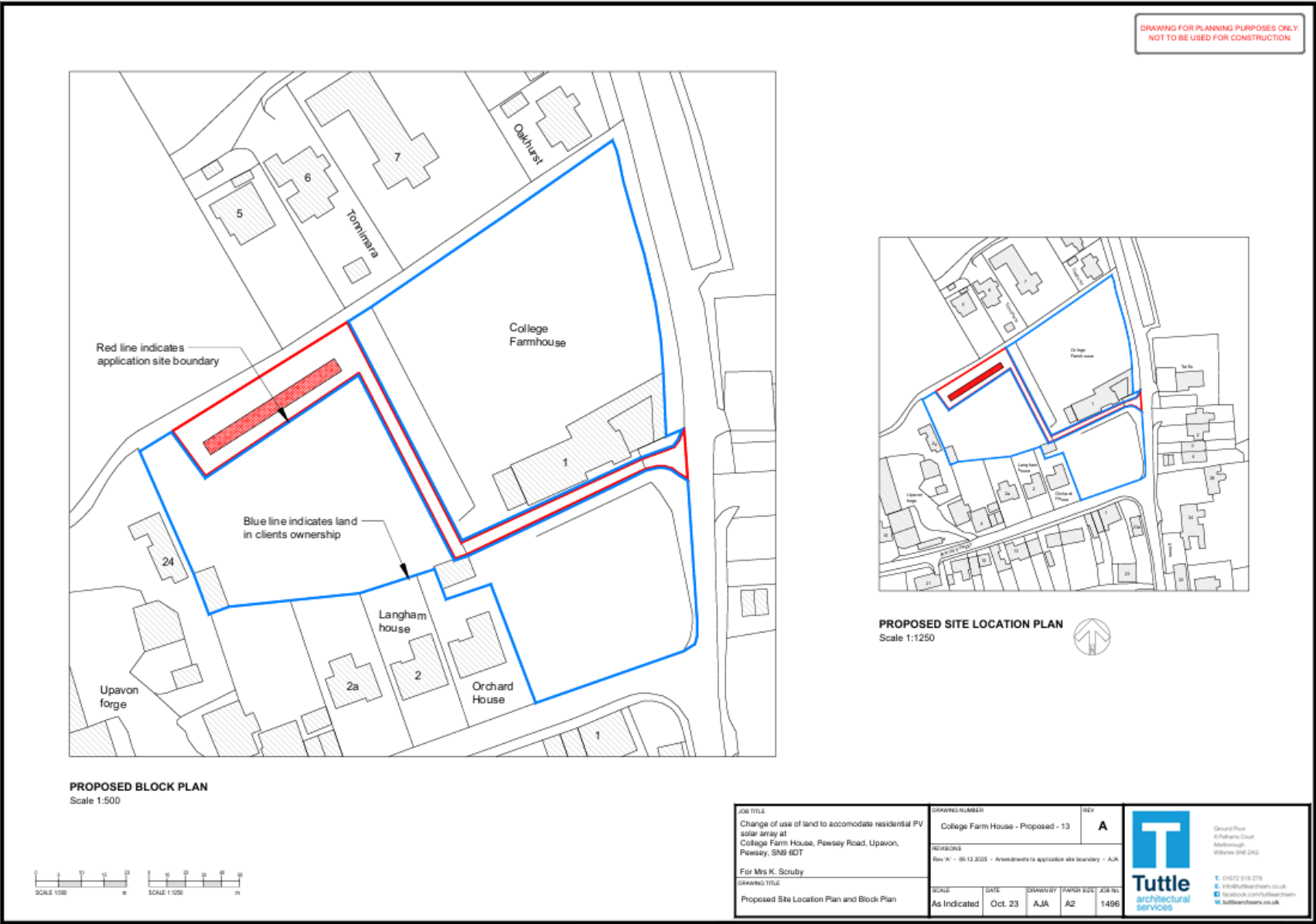
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Appendix A – Site location and existing plans



Appendix B – Proposed plans



Appendix C – Relevant legislation and planning policy

Legislation and UK BAP priority habitats/species

Legislation

In England, all bats, dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*), otters (*Lutra lutra*), white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) and great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) are legally protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

A number of species are also listed under Annex II of the EC Habitats and Species Directive (1992), including barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*), Bechstein's bat (*Myotis bechsteinii*), greater horseshoe (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*), lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*), great crested newt, white-clawed crayfish and otter.

The above named species and adders (*Vipera berus*), slow worms (*Anguis fragilis*), grass snakes (*Natrix natrix*), common lizards (*Zootoca vivipara*), common frog (*Rana temporaria*), palmate newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*), smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), water voles (*Arvicola amphibius*) and several invertebrate species are also protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) (1981) (as amended). Schedule 9 of the WCA (1981) includes non-native, invasive species including (but not limited to) Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and signal crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*). Badgers (*Meles meles*) are legally protected under The Protection of Badgers Act (1992).

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Section 1 of The WCA (1981) (as amended) and it is thus an offence, to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird; intentionally take, and damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built.

A number of sites designated for nature conservation are afforded legal protection due to being of European importance. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) (protected under the EC Habitats and Species Directive (1992), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds (protected under the EC Birds Directive) and Ramsar (Ramsar Convention, 1975). Other protected sites include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Protected Road Verges which are designated under the WCA (1981) and strengthened by The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) (2006).

SPAs and SACs were previously included in the Natura 2000 sites and following amendments to the legislation, are now included under the 'National Site Network'. Ramsar sites do not form part of the 'National Site Network' however, are afforded the same protection. These changes allow the Government to continue commitment to the international commitments under the Bern Convention, the Oslo and Paris Conventions (OSPAR), Bonn and Ramsar Conventions.

Following a consultation in 2019, the Government announced that it would mandate Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for developments in England to reverse the widespread loss of biodiversity. The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 will be amended and the Environment Bill received Royal Assent on 9th November 2021; this legislation was enacted into UK law on 2nd April 2024 for small sites.

Schedule 14 Parts 1 and 2 of The Environment Act 2021 concerns BNG as a condition of planning permission.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, 2024) sets out requirements for the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), and this is supported within Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (updated July 2019). The Natural Environment PPG addresses principles targeting biodiversity conservation, including individual site and species protection through to supporting ecosystem services, and the use of Ecological Networks to support the national Nature Recovery Network. In particular, the PPG promotes the delivery of measurable BNG through the creation and enhancement of habitats alongside development.

UK BAP priority species and habitats

Several species and habitats are listed under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) (JNCC, 2016) as priority habitats/species due to their vulnerability or rarity as listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) and Section 40 places a duty on all public authorities to conserve biodiversity. These are known as habitats / species of ‘principal importance’ under Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).

These include several terrestrial and freshwater habitats, including some hedgerows and streams, and several species such as hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*), barbastelle, Bechstein’s bat, both species of horseshoe bat, brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), water voles, white-clawed crayfish and otter.

National and local planning policy

NPPF – The National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities, 2024) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. In the context of this report, Section 15 of NPPF is relevant and applicable, Section 15 states:

‘Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by, minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.’

New developments and projects are supported where plans promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue measurable net gains for biodiversity.

To ensure this application is compliant with Section 15 of NPPF, habitat enhancements will be required to demonstrate a biodiversity net gain as an outcome of the development.

Section 15 of NPPF also gives consideration to sites with potential to impact on irreplaceable habitats, and states:

‘Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.’

To ensure this application is compliant with Section 15, this application should be accompanied by a suitable arboricultural report to assess the presence of potential ancient or veteran trees.

Wiltshire Core Strategy

The Wiltshire Core Strategy (Wiltshire Council, 2015) was adopted in January 2015 and includes the following relevant policy:

Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Protection

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

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

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

Biodiversity enhancement

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

Local sites

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

- i. cannot reasonably be avoided*
- ii. are reduced as far as possible*
- iii. are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest*
- iv. where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements.*

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

It is the applicant's/landowner's responsibility to ensure that the proposed development proceeds in full compliance with this report and/or any update version report thereafter, that works are undertaken lawfully, in compliance with national and local policy, and in accordance with all conditions of the obtained planning consent(s).

Appendix D – Habitat maps and species list

Baseline habitat map

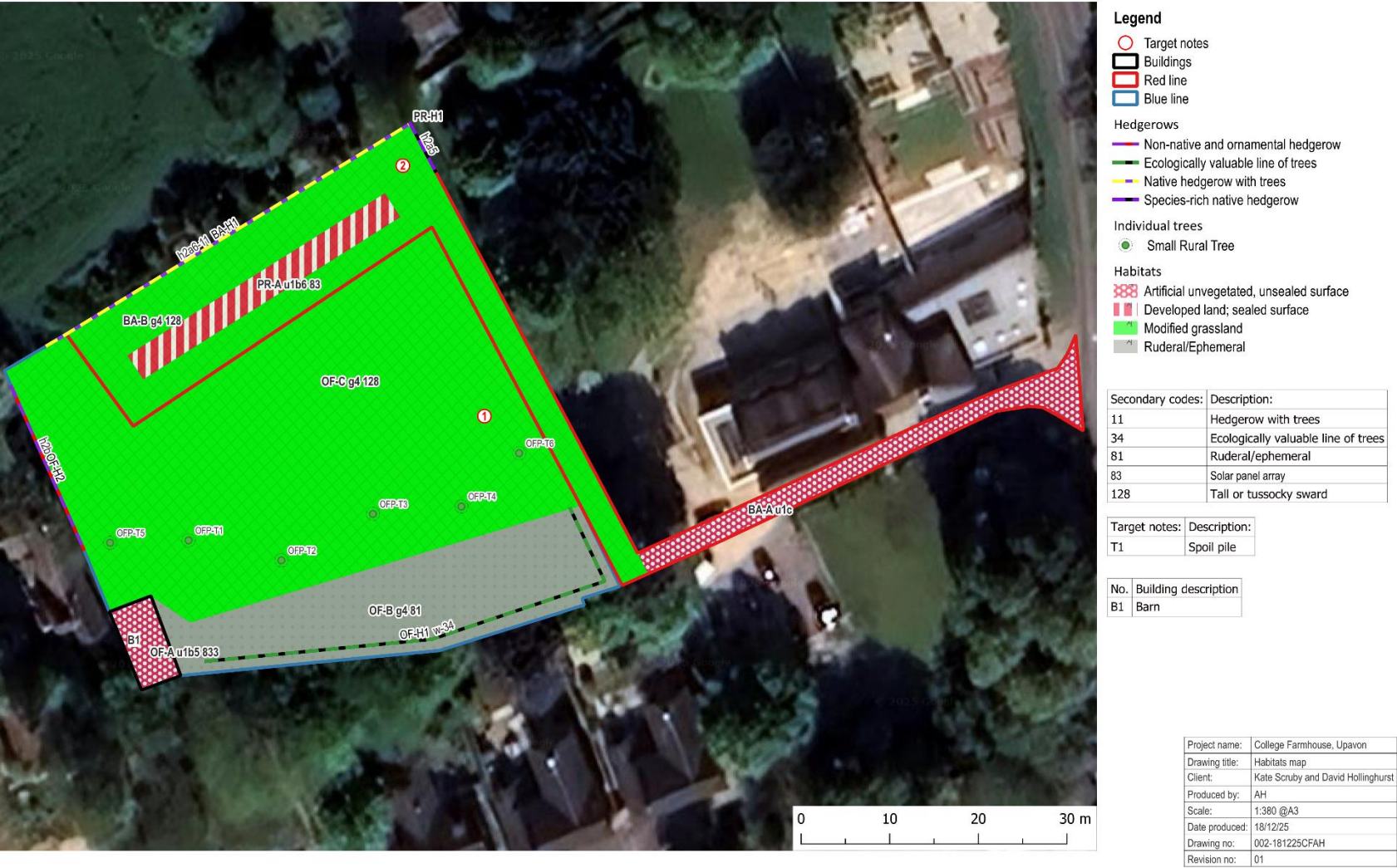


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Common name	Taxonomic name	DAFOR scale abundance
On-site habitats		
Modified grassland (g4 128) (BA-B):		
Annual meadow-grass	<i>Poa annua</i>	Locally occasional
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Locally occasional
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Occasional
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Locally frequent to locally rare
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylus glomerata</i>	Occasional
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Locally frequent to locally occasional
Common comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>	Locally rare
Common daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Locally rare
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Locally rare
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Locally occasional
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Occasional
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Occasional
Dandelion sp.	<i>Taraxacum sp.</i>	Locally frequent to occasional
False oat-grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	Locally dominant to frequent
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Locally occasional
Greater plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>	Locally rare
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Locally rare
Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Locally dominant
Perennial rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Locally abundant to occasional
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Locally dominant to rare
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Locally rare
Smooth meadow-grass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Locally frequent
White dead-nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	Locally occasional
Wild strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Locally frequent
Yorkshire-fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Locally frequent to occasional
Other native hedgerow with trees (h2a6 11) (BA-H2):		
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	Locally dominant
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Occasional
English elm	<i>Ulmus procera</i>	Locally abundant
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Locally dominant
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	Abundant
Wild privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>	Locally dominant
Ground flora species:		
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	Abundant
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Rare
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylus glomerata</i>	Occasional
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Locally abundant to frequent
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Occasional
Dandelion sp.	<i>Taraxacum sp.</i>	Rare
Greater periwinkle	<i>Vinca major</i>	Locally occasional
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	Dominant
Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Dominant
White dead-nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	Rare
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Locally rare
Individual trees		
Birch	<i>Betula sp.</i>	Rare
Off-site habitats		
Ruderal vegetation (g4 81) (OF-B):		
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Locally abundant to frequent
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Abundant
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Locally occasional
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Dominant
Dandelion sp.	<i>Taraxacum sp.</i>	Occasional to rare
Ground-ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Frequent
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Rare to locally abundant
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Occasional
Pendulous sedge	<i>Carex pendula</i>	Locally rare

Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Occasional
Spoil pile (Target note 2):		
Common comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>	Locally rare
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Rare
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Occasional to rare
Dandelion sp.	<i>Taraxacum sp.</i>	Occasional
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Rare
White dead-nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	Rare
Willowherb sp.	<i>Epilobium sp.</i>	Occasional
Yorkshire-fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Occasional to locally frequent
Non-native and ornamental hedgerow (h2b) (OF-H1):		
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Frequent to occasional
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Rare
Cherry laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	Dominant
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Locally frequent to occasional
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylus glomerata</i>	Rare
Common box	<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Locally dominant
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Locally occasional
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Frequent
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Occasional
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Rare
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Locally occasional
False oat-grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	Locally dominant
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Locally rare
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Locally abundant
Ground flora species:		
Lords-and-ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Locally rare
Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Dominant
Perennial rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Locally abundant
White dead-nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	Locally occasional
Modified grassland (g4 128) (OF-C):		
Annual meadow-grass	<i>Poa annua</i>	Locally occasional
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Locally occasional
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Occasional
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	Locally frequent to locally rare
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylus glomerata</i>	Occasional
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Locally frequent to locally occasional
Common comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>	Locally rare
Common daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Locally rare
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Locally rare
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Locally occasional
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Occasional
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	Occasional
Dandelion sp.	<i>Taraxacum sp.</i>	Locally frequent to occasional
False oat-grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	Locally dominant to frequent
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Locally occasional
Greater plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>	Locally rare
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Locally rare
Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Locally dominant
Perennial rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Locally abundant to occasional
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Locally dominant to rare
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Locally rare
Smooth meadow-grass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Locally frequent
White dead-nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>	Locally occasional
Wild strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Locally frequent
Yorkshire-fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Locally frequent to occasional

Post-development habitat map



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Appendix E – Photographs



Photo 1: Native hedgerow with trees along the northern boundary.



Photo 2: Non-native and ornamental hedgerow along western boundary.



Photo 3: Native hedgerow with trees along the northern boundary.



Photo 4: Rural tree in the northeast.



Photo 5: Modified grassland looking towards the northwest.



Photo 6: Tree line along the southern boundary offsite.



Photo 7: Tree within treeline off-site.



Photo 8: Tree within treeline on southern boundary off-site.



Photo 9: Tree to the neighbouring property to the west.



Photo 10: Trees within treeline on-site off-site..



Photo 11: Spoil pile in the southeast off-site. off-site.



Photo 12: Log pile to the northeast of the site with potential for reptiles.



Photo 13: Within the barn in the southwest corner off-site.



Photo 14: Barn owl box within the barn.



Photo 15: Barn owl pellet and feather within the barn from previous survey.



Photo 16: The barn 'B1' off-site.



Photo 17: Ruderal vegetation under the treeline in the south off-site.



Photo 18: Northern hedgerow looking west.

Appendix F – Habitat Condition Assessments

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)			
UKHab Habitat Type:			
Grassland - Modified grassland			
UKHab – see UK Habitat Classification			
On-site or off-site, site name and location:	On-site and off-site, College Farmhouse	Survey date and surveyor name:	Amy Parsons ACIEEM and Russell Hoyle ACIEEM– 29 th April 2025
Central grid reference of habitat:	SU 13405 55255	Habitat parcel reference:	BA-C and OF-B
Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey):	-	Limitations (if applicable):	
Condition Assessment Criteria		Condition Achieved (Y/N)	Notes/Justification
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	N	Only four species on average based on five quadrats undertaken.
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	Some shorter areas with longer areas.
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y	No scrub recorded.
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	Several bare ground patches present exceeding 5%.
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Y	Cover of bare ground exceeding 5% but considered to be under 10% overall.
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y	No bracken recorded.
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Y	No invasive species recorded.
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No):			No
Number of criteria passed:			5
Condition Assessment Result (out of 7 criteria)		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓
Passes 6 or 7 criteria including passing essential criterion A		Good (3)	

Passes 4 or 5 criteria including passing essential criterion A	Moderate (2)	
Passes 3 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 4 - 6 criteria (excluding criterion A)	Poor (1)	✓
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score		
Footnotes:		
Footnote 1 – Creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i>, spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>, curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i>, broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>, common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>, creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i>, greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i>, white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>. Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover. Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement. Footnote 4 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).		

Condition Sheet: LINE OF TREES Habitat Type			
Habitat Types:			
Line of trees Line of trees – associated with bank or ditch Ecologically valuable line of trees Ecologically valuable line of trees – associated with bank or ditch			
<i>Please see the separate Individual trees condition sheet for linear blocks and groups of trees in an <u>urban</u> setting. You should only use this Line of trees condition assessment and record this habitat type in <u>rural</u> locations.</i>			
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide. This assessment is based on the Hedgerow Survey Handbook ¹ . For further clarifications please refer to the Handbook. Where ancient and veteran trees are present within the line of trees, see Footnote 2 for standing advice.			
On-site or off-site, site name and location:	Offsite, College Farmhouse	Survey date and surveyor name:	Amy Parsons ACIEEM and Russell Hoyle ACIEEM– 29 th April 2025
Central grid reference of habitat:	SU 13417 55234	Habitat parcel reference:	OF-H3
Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey):	-	Limitations (if applicable):	
Condition Assessment Criteria		Condition Achieved (Y/N)	Notes/Justification
A	At least 70% of trees are native species.	Y	
B	Tree canopy is predominantly continuous with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide.	Y	

C	One or more trees has veteran features and or natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates, such as presence of standing and attached deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Y	
D	There is an undisturbed naturally-vegetated strip of at least 6 m on both sides to protect the line of trees from farming and other human activities (excluding grazing). Where veteran trees are present, root protection areas should follow standing advice ² .	N	Southern side backs onto private gardens which are managed.
E	At least 95% of the trees are in a healthy condition (deadwood or veteran features valuable for wildlife are excluded from this). There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.	Y	
Number of criteria passed:		4	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/✓	
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score:			
Footnotes:			
Footnote 1 – DEFRA (2007) <i>Hedgerow Survey Handbook: A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK</i> . 2nd ed [online]. Defra, London. PB1195. Available from: Hedgerow Survey Handbook (publishing.service.gov.uk).			
Footnote 2 – Where ancient and veteran trees are present, see gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and: Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)			

Condition Sheet: HEDGEROW Habitat Types			
Habitat Type:			
Native hedgerow with trees			
UKhab – see UK Habitat Classification			
On-site or off-site, site name and location:	Offsite, College Farmhouse	Survey date and surveyor name:	Amy Parsons ACIEEM and Russell Hoyle ACIEEM– 29 th April 2025
Central grid reference of habitat:	SU 13402 55281	Habitat parcel reference:	OF-H1
Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey):	-	Limitations (if applicable):	
Condition Assessment Details:			
A series of ten attributes, representing key physical characteristics are used for this assessment. Each attribute is assigned to one of five functional groups (A – E) and the condition of a hedgerow is assessed according to the number of attributes from these functional groups which pass or fail the ‘favourable condition’ criteria. This assessment is based on the Hedgerow Survey Handbook¹ and Favourable Conservation Status document². For further clarification please refer to the Hedgerow Survey Handbook. Best practice would be to record the species, age, spacing and other key information about all trees present along a hedgerow within the 'Habitat Description' box, as well as other key features of the hedgerow.			
Hedgerow favourable condition attributes:			

Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No):	Notes (such as justification):
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types:					
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the 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	
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 (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >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	
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	

			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).	N	Gaps are considered to exceed 10% of total length.
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 hedgerow (at least).	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow. This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow 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.	Y	
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica spp.</i> , cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex spp.</i> Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	N	>20% nettles within base of hedgerow along length.

D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ³) and recently introduced species.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website ⁵ where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website ⁷ .	Y	
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 (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	Y	
Additional group - applicable to hedgerows with trees only:					
E1.	Tree class	There is more than one age-class (or morphology) of tree present (for example: young, mature, veteran and or ancient ⁸), and there is on average at least one mature, ancient or veteran tree present per 20 - 50m of hedgerow.	This criterion addresses if there are a range of age-classes or morphologies which allow for replacement of trees and provide opportunities for different species.	Y	
E2.	Tree health	At least 95% of hedgerow trees are in a healthy condition (excluding veteran features valuable for wildlife). There is little or no evidence of an	This criterion identifies if the trees are subject to damage which compromises the survival and health of the individual specimens.	N	

		adverse impact on tree health by damage from livestock or wild animals, pests or diseases, or human activity.			
The hedgerow condition assessment generates a weighting (score) ranging from 1 - 3, which is used within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The scores for each are set out in the tables below:					
Condition categories for hedgerows without trees:					
Category	Category Requirements	Metric 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; AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and C2 = Moderate condition).	2			
Poor	Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; OR <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1			
Score achieved:		N/A			
Condition categories for hedgerows with trees:					
Category	Category Requirements	Metric Score			
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; AND No more than 1 failure in any functional group.	3			
Moderate	No more than 5 failures in total; AND <u>Does not fail both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1, C2 and E1 = Moderate condition).	2			
Poor	Fails a total of more than 5 attributes; OR <u>Fails both attributes</u> in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).	1			
Score achieved:		2 (moderate)			
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score:					
Footnotes:					

Footnote 1 – DEFRA (2007) Hedgerow Survey Handbook. A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK. [online] Available on: [layout \(hedgeline.org.uk\)](http://layout.hedgeline.org.uk)

Footnote 2 – STALEY, J.T. ET AL. (2020) Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows. [online] Available on: [Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows - RP2943 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](http://Definition of Favourable Conservation Status for Hedgerows - RP2943 (naturalengland.org.uk))

Footnote 3 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Footnote 4 – CHEFFINGS, C. M. et al. (2005) The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain. Species Status 7: 1-116. [online] Available on: [The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain \(Species Status No. 7\) | JNCC Resource Hub](http://The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain (Species Status No. 7) | JNCC Resource Hub)

Footnote 5 – BOTANICAL SOCIETY OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND (BSBI). Definitions: wild, native or alien? [online] Available on: [Definitions: wild, native or alien? – Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland \(bsbi.org\)](http://Definitions: wild, native or alien? – Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (bsbi.org))

Footnote 6 – BSBI and Biological Records Centre (BRC) (2022) Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora. [online] Available on: [Acknowledgements | Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora \(brc.ac.uk\)](http://Acknowledgements | Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora (brc.ac.uk))

Footnote 7 – GB NON-NATIVE SPECIES SECRETARIAT (GBNNS) (2022) Available on: [Home » NNSS \(nonnativespecies.org\)](http://Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org))

Footnote 8 – See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from: [Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](http://Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)) and [Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk))

Condition Sheet: URBAN Habitat Types			
Habitat Types:			
Sparsely vegetated land - Ruderal/Ephemeral			
See the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide for green roofs and UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) for other habitats: ukhab – UK Habitat Classification			
On-site or off-site, site name and location:	Offsite, College Farmhouse	Survey date and surveyor name:	Amy Parsons ACIEEM and Russell Hoyle ACIEEM– 29 th April 2025
Central grid reference of habitat:	SU 13428 55241	Habitat parcel reference:	OF-B
Survey reference (if relating to a wider survey):	-	Limitations applicable: (if)	-
Condition Assessment Criteria		Condition Achieved (Y/N)	Notes/Justification
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.	Y	Structure is varied throughout.
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.	N	Mostly dominant common nettle present.
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) ² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area ³ . Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Y	No non-native species recorded.
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land only:			
D	The parcel shows spatial variation and forms a mosaic of bare substrate PLUS: - At least four early successional communities (a) to (i); Communities: (a) annuals; (b) mosses/liverworts; (c) lichens; (d) ruderals; (e) inundation species; (f) open grassland; (g) flower-rich grassland; (h) heathland, (i) pools.		

Additional Criteria - must be assessed for Bioswale and SuDS habitat types only:			
E1	Plant species are mostly native. If non-native species are present, they should not be detrimental to the habitat or native wildlife ⁴ .		
E2	The vegetation is comprised of plant species suited to wetland or riparian situations.		
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Intensive green roofs only:			
F	The roof has a minimum of 50% native and non-native wildflowers. 70% of the roof area is soil and vegetation (including water features).		
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for Biodiverse green roofs only:			
G	The roof has a varied depth of 80 – 150 mm; at least 50% is at 150 mm and is planted and seeded with wildflowers and sedums or is pre-prepared with sedums and wildflowers. Note – to achieve Good condition some additional habitat, such as sand piles, stones, logs etc. are present.		
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No):			
Number of criteria passed:			
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only (all listed urban habitats except Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, Bioswale, SuDS and Green roofs):			
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)		
Results for Green roofs and Open mosaic habitat on previously developed land (requiring assessment of 4 criteria only - core criteria plus additional criterion specified for habitat type):			
Passes all 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C; AND Passes additional criterion relevant to specific habitat type (D, F or G)	Good (3)		
Passes 2 or 3 of 4 criteria; OR Passes 4 of 4 criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C	Moderate (2)		
Passes 0 or 1 of 4 criteria	Poor (1)		
Results for Bioswale or SuDS (requiring assessment of 5 criteria - core criteria plus additional criteria specified for habitat type):			

Passes all 3 core criteria; AND Meets the requirements for Good condition within criterion C; AND Passes all additional criteria relevant to specific habitat type (Group E)	Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria; OR Passes 5 of 5 criteria but does not meet the requirements for Good condition within criterion C	Moderate (2)		
Passes 2 or fewer of 5 criteria	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score:			
Footnotes:			
Footnote 1 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).			
Footnote 2 – Sources of information about detrimental non-native species can be found on the GB Non-native Species Secretariat (GBNNS) website: Home » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org) and Natural England Access to Evidence page should also be checked for up-to-date information: Horizon-scanning for invasive non-native plants in Great Britain - NECR053 (naturalengland.org.uk)			
For criterion C – For green roof habitat types only – buddleia <i>Buddleja davidii</i> should be assessed alongside Schedule 9 species. This species impairs the health of the local ecosystem and reduces the biodiversity potential of the roof. It is also a sign that a roof has not been planted and seeded correctly in subsequent years.			
Footnote 3 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement.			
Footnote 4 – Use professional judgement. Sources of information about non-native species that are not detrimental to native wildlife can be found on the GBNNS website: Alternative plants » NNSS (nonnativespecies.org)			

Appendix G – Biodiversity mitigation and enhancement plan

2 x '1B Schwegler Nest Box' are to be installed on a mature tree each on the southern boundary within the client's ownership.

