

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Survey site:

5 Pretoria Road, Ludgershall, Andover, Wiltshire SP11 9PB

Client:

Mr G Lee

Survey date:

23rd September 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Wiltshire Council. The proposal is described as:

Construction of two residential dwellings with associated driveway and garden.

A plan showing the proposed development is provided in **Appendix 1**.

PEA Survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

The field survey was undertaken by Charlie Drapala BSc (Hons) AMRSB, Consultant Ecologist, Natural England Class 2 Bat Licence					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
23/09/2025	13	56	90	1 - 5	None
Report Validity					
On the assumption that site conditions and habitats remain unchanged, the results of this assessment will remain valid for 18 months from the date of this survey i.e. until March 2027, in accordance with CIEEM guidance in the lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys ¹ . This survey and report should be updated if a planning application has not been submitted within this timeframe.					
Limitations					
It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the searches of historical biological records. Access to areas of land up to 30m from the site to search for signs of badger was not possible, however, land to the north was accessible, and a limited amount of land to the south, east and west was visible from the site. This is not considered to represent a significant constraint however, as a pre-construction badger survey, six weeks before site clearance / construction commences has been recommended. The site has been recently cleared prior to this survey being undertaken. Therefore, assumptions of habitat types that may have been present have been made using information from Google Satellite imagery to assess the impacts.					

¹ <https://cieem.net/resource/advice-note-on-the-lifespan-of-ecological-reports-and-surveys/>

Executive Summary	
<i>Further Surveys required to inform the planning application</i>	
Biodiversity Net Gain	A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment is required to comply with The Environment Act (2021).
<i>Recommended Mitigation Requirements</i>	
Hedgehogs, badgers and reptiles	Precautionary Working Methods to be applied during site preparation and construction, e.g. sensitive clearance of vegetation and cover excavations overnight
Birds	Precautionary Working Methods to be applied during site preparation and construction, e.g. avoid works to vegetation on-site during the bird nesting season.

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey. Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the Project Ecologist for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	The proposed development is provided in Appendix 1, a site location plan in Appendix 2, a site habitat plan in Appendix 3, and site photographs in Appendix 4.
Habitats and flora	
<i>Survey Results</i>	The Site The site is located at National Grid Reference SU 27881 50462 and has an area of c. 0.05ha, comprising of a felled tree and ruderal habitat. From historic aerial imagery, on 31st July 2020, the site formed part of a residential dwelling and garden habitat, and appeared to have a medium sized tree and an area of presumed mixed scrub. The site is bound by residential dwellings with associated garden space to the east, west and south, and Pretoria Road to the north. The wider landscape comprises of residential dwellings with associated garden space, agricultural land, grassland, and pockets of woodland, interspersed by hedgerows and lines of trees. An active railway line is located c. 120m south beyond the A342 (Andover Road). A site location plan is provided in Appendix 2. Habitats recorded on-site include: • 32 – Scattered trees (felled) • 81 – Ruderal

	A description of each habitat type is provided below and illustrated on the plan in Appendix 3, and photos are provided in Appendix 4. <u>32 – Scattered tree (felled)</u> There is evidence on-site of a medium sized tree which has been cut down. This is consistent with historic aerial imagery, where the tree is estimated to have been a medium size based on the crown. It is unknown what species the tree was. Individual trees ground condition assessment: good condition, passing all six criteria using the ‘Individual trees’ habitat condition assessment sheet. See Appendix 5 for full condition assessment sheet. Where information was not known for the condition assessment due to the recent clearance, it has been assumed to pass the criteria. <u>81 – Ruderal</u> The majority of the site consists of ruderal habitat following site clearance, with no one species dominant. Species present include: A: Creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i>, Creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i>, rosebay willowherb <i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i> F: Buddleia <i>Buddleja davidii</i>, white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i>, ribwort plantain <i>Plantago lanceolata</i>, broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>, cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i>, O: Bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg., cock’s-foot <i>Dactylis glomerata</i>, great mullein <i>Verbascum thapsus</i>, lungwort <i>Pulmonaria</i> sp., common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>, St John’s wort <i>Hypericum perforatum</i>, <i>Fuchsia</i> sp., broadleaved plantain <i>Plantago major</i> R: Teasel, ragwort <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>, perennial ryegrass <i>Lolium perenne</i> Ruderal / ephemeral condition assessment: good condition, passing all three criteria using the ‘urban’ habitat condition assessment sheet. See Appendix 5 for full condition assessment sheet.
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	<i>The Wider Landscape</i> A review of the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) database was completed to determine the presence of protected and/ or notable habitats within 2km of the site. Protected and/ or notable habitats recorded within 2km and their nearest distance from the site are detailed in Table 2 below. <i>Table 2: Priority habitats within 2km of site.</i> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Priority Habitat</th><th>Distance from Site (approx.)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Lowland mixed deciduous woodland</td><td>Located c. 0.4km southwest, beyond residential dwellings and associated garden space, and the A342 (Andover Road).</td></tr> <tr> <td>Ancient woodland</td><td>Located c. 1.1km south, beyond residential dwellings with associated garden space, the A342 (Andover Road), and agricultural land.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Wood pasture and Parkland BAP</td><td>Located c. 1.3km east beyond residential dwellings with associated garden space and agricultural land.</td></tr> <tr> <td>Traditional orchard</td><td>Located c. 1.3km east beyond residential dwellings with associated garden space and agricultural land.</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Priority Habitat	Distance from Site (approx.)	Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	Located c. 0.4km southwest, beyond residential dwellings and associated garden space, and the A342 (Andover Road).	Ancient woodland	Located c. 1.1km south, beyond residential dwellings with associated garden space, the A342 (Andover Road), and agricultural land.	Wood pasture and Parkland BAP	Located c. 1.3km east beyond residential dwellings with associated garden space and agricultural land.	Traditional orchard	Located c. 1.3km east beyond residential dwellings with associated garden space and agricultural land.
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Traditional orchard	Located c. 1.3km east beyond residential dwellings with associated garden space and agricultural land.										
Foreseen Impacts	<i>The Site</i> The vegetation clearance to facilitate the development has resulted in the loss of one scattered tree, and scrub (information gained from the site visit and historical satellite imagery on Google Earth). <i>The Wider Landscape</i> No direct impacts to any notable habitats will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small-scale size of the development, the distance between them and the site, and intervening land consisting of residential dwellings with associated garden space, and busy roads. Additionally, no public footpaths are present within close proximity to nearby priority habitats.										

<i>Recommendations</i>	Further Surveys / Assessments The loss of one scattered tree and scrub on-site should be offset through creation of replacement scattered trees and scrub habitat. The Environment Act (2021) requires all developments (excluding exemptions) to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity. Therefore, the planning application must be accompanied by a biodiversity net gain report and calculations to ensure the proposed development delivers a 10% net gain. The previous Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Arbtech, August 2023) must be used for the BNG baseline as there has been habitat degradation since 2023.
Designated Sites	
<i>Survey Results</i>	On-site The site is not subject to any designation. Statutory There are no statutory sites within 2km. The site falls within the more distant Salisbury Plain Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone (IRZ), the development does not meet the criteria for impacts that would likely lead to a significant effect on this SSSI. Therefore, no consultation with Natural England and mitigation is required for this SSSI. Non-statutory The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC).
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The site falls within the zone of influence for potential water quality and or nutrient impacts to European sites. Additionally, further information may also be required for potential recreational impacts to European protected sites. The Local Planning Authority (LPA) may be required to undertake a Nutrient Neutrality (NN) and or a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) to determine whether there could be any effect on nearby European sites as a result of the proposed development.

<i>Recommendations</i>	Dependent upon the LPA.
Invertebrates	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The ruderal habitat on-site, likely provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Clearance works to facilitate the proposed development has resulted in the loss of scrub, and one scattered tree from site. Due to the sites location, historic habitats present, and lack of connectivity to habitats of greater suitability within the wider landscape, it is unlikely that specialist invertebrates were present on-site.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Further Surveys None required. Suggested Enhancement Foraging opportunities could also be enhanced for invertebrates through the provision of native, nectar producing plant species within any proposed soft landscaping. Refuge opportunities could be enhanced through the provision of invertebrate houses/ hotels such as the NHBS invertebrate tower² (or similar specification).
Bats	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Desk Study A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted European Protected Species Licenses (EPSL) within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are two EPSLs within a 2km radius of site as detailed in Table 4 below.

² <https://www.nhbs.com/insect-tower>

Table 4: EPSLs within 2km of the site

EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence
2016-25744-EPS-MIT	Brown long-eared <i>Plecotus auratus</i> , common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> , and Natterer's <i>Myotis nattereri</i>	1.7km south	Destruction of a resting place.
2016-25744-EPS-MIT-1	Brown long-eared, common pipistrelle and Natterer's	1.7km south	Destruction of a resting place.

There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site.

Foraging and commuting bats

Habitats recorded on-site are assessed to offer valuable foraging and commuting opportunities for bats, including ruderal habitat. this habitat is likely to create microclimatic conditions to support invertebrate populations, which in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations. Notable, an active railway line is located c. 120m south beyond the A342 (Andover Road), and is connected to a wider hedgerow, tree line network, which in turn also connects pockets of woodland and grassland throughout the wider landscape. This network of habitats is likely to support local bat populations.

Foreseen Impacts

Roosting bats

The scattered tree clearance works may have resulted in a loss of likely suitable roosting habitat for bats. It could have also resulted in the harm or death of bats if present at the time of clearance.

Foraging and commuting bats

Scattered tree and scrub clearance works have resulted in a loss of suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats.

<i>Recommendations</i>	<i>Foraging and commuting bats</i> No further surveys are required. However, a low-impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development, which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting <i>Suggested Enhancement</i> Planting up of areas to include native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers will enhance the site's suitability for foraging and commuting bats. It is also recommended that building-mounted bat boxes suitable for crevice-dwelling species are installed on the new buildings, such as a Beaumaris Woodstone Bat Box for crevice dwellers (attach to the sides of the buildings). The boxes should be positioned 3 – 5m above ground level, ideally on a south or southwest facing aspect, in a sheltered location away from artificial lighting.
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Bird interest (nesting) is likely to be confined to the debris pile (Target note, Appendix 3), which provides suitable nesting bird habitat. No birds nests were identified during the survey, however birds nests can appear at anytime during the bird nesting season. The site therefore holds high potential for widespread and common species of nesting bird. The site overall is, however, considered to hold negligible potential for bird species listed as Annex I (Birds Directive) and / or Schedule 1 (WCA). The small size of the site, in conjunction with heavy levels of disturbance mean that the site has negligible potential for notable wintering bird species and assemblages.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Scattered tree and scrub clearance works have resulted in a loss of suitable nesting and foraging habitat for birds. It could have also resulted in the harm or death of birds, and abandonment of nests, if present at the time of clearance. If nesting birds are present during works impacting the debris pile, it could result in the injuring or killing of birds without avoidance measures being implemented.

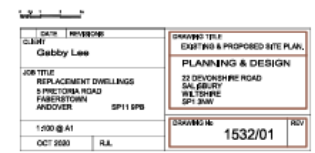
	Overwintering birds None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Owing to the nature of the proposed development, small size of the site and its regular disturbance, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for nesting birds during construction; trim and or remove vegetation (including the debris pile) between September and February (inclusive) to avoid the main breeding bird season. Alternatively, a competent person should check potential nesting habitat immediately before clearance that is scheduled during the breeding season (March to August inclusive). Any active nests identified must be retained in situ with a suitable buffer (to be determined by an ecologist) until the chicks have fledged and the nest is no longer active. Overwintering birds None required. Suggested Enhancement Nesting opportunities at the site could be enhanced through the provision of bird boxes to be installed onto the new building. The bird boxes should be constructed of Woodcrete for longevity, be installed between 3 and 5m, and face a northerly aspect. Suitable bird boxes for the site include (or similar specification): • Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box • Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey</i>	Desk Study
<i>Findings</i>	A search of the Magic.gov.uk database indicates that there have been no granted EPSL pertaining to reptiles within 2km of the site. The Site The site comprises ruderal habitat with a varied sward height and a debris pile. The site is not connected to habitats with greater suitability, although these habitats are present within the wider landscape. Therefore, reptiles are unlikely to be present on-site.

<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	There is low potential for individual reptiles to be present onsite for transient periods. These could be injured or killed without mitigation.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Further surveys are not necessary, however, precautionary action in relation to reptiles is recommended. Clearance of the ruderal habitat and debris pile should ideally avoid the months when reptiles, in the unlikely event that they are present, would be hibernating (November to mid-March inclusive). Outside of this period the site should be cleared when temperatures are 9°C or greater during dry weather, when reptiles will be active, in a precautionary manner by strimming / brush cutting first to a height of 15cm in a directional manner towards the site's eastern boundary as any reptiles' present will be able to disperse of their own accord. After 24 hours, the vegetation should then be strimmed to ground level and maintained as such until works have been completed. The debris pile should be sensitively dismantled by hand.
Amphibians	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Desk Study A search of the Magic.gov.uk database shows no granted EPSL records for great crested newts <i>Triturus cristatus</i> within 2km of the site. Further, no positive class survey license returns, or DLL historic survey data (2017-2019) were present within 2km of the site. The Site There are no ponds on-site or within 500m. Great crested newts exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton <i>et al.</i> 2001). No great crested newt metapopulations are known to be present within 2km of the site boundary, and no waterbodies are present within 500m.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Given the lack of suitably connected breeding ponds within 500m of the site, and an absence of GCN records within 2km of the site, and a lack of connectivity to the wider landscape, no impacts are anticipated to amphibians as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease, and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

Badger	
Summary of Survey Findings	Habitats recorded at the site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for badgers in the form of ruderal habitat. No latrines, or any obvious signs of other mammals, e.g. rabbit droppings, were recorded during the survey. No suitable sett excavation areas are present on-site or within 30m of the site, due to the heavily urbanised nature (e.g. residential dwellings, roads, and private gardens).
Foreseen Impacts	Impacts to foraging and commuting badgers, e.g. falling into excavations, is possible during the construction phase. This could result in death or injury of terrestrial mammals, including badgers, if present.
Recommendations	Precautionary measures A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: - Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. - The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which badgers could use. - Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. If any badgers are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord. Suggested Enhancement Foraging opportunities could be enhanced on-site for badgers through the planting of fruit trees as part of any proposed landscape scheme.
Otters	
Summary of Survey Findings	The site contains no suitable habitat to support otters <i>Lutra lutra</i> .
Foreseen Impacts	None foreseen.
Recommendations	None recommended.
Water vole	
Summary of Survey Findings	The site contains no suitable habitat to support water voles <i>Arvicola amphibius</i> .

<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None recommended.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Desk Study A search of the Magic.gov.uk database indicates that there have been no granted EPSL pertaining to dormice <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i> within 2km of the site. The Site Dormice typically utilise a three-dimensional habitat structure as to commute between feeding and breeding sites whilst avoiding predation. There are no linear habitats on-site, and the ruderal habitat is not well connected to more suitable habitats within the wider landscape (e.g. woodland).
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Owing to the sites small-scale size in nature, lack of connectivity to the wider landscape, and lack of granted ESPLs connected to the site for dormice within 2km, no impacts are anticipated on dormice as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None recommended.
Hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Habitats recorded on-site are assessed to provide foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for hedgehogs <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i> , in the form of ruderal habitat. However, no evidence indicating use of the site by hedgehogs was recorded. Although no evidence indicating the presence of hedgehogs was recorded, hedgehogs can access the site and thus their presence on-site when seeking refuge and for transient periods when foraging and commuting cannot be discounted. Features such as the debris pile (Target note, Appendix 3), also offer hedgehogs a place of refuge and shelter.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Vegetation clearance works have resulted in a loss of foraging and refuge habitat for hedgehogs (scrub and scattered tree). It could have also resulted in the harm or death of hedgehogs if present at the time of clearance. Impacts to foraging and commuting hedgehogs, e.g. falling into excavations, is possible during the construction phase of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Further Surveys None recommended.

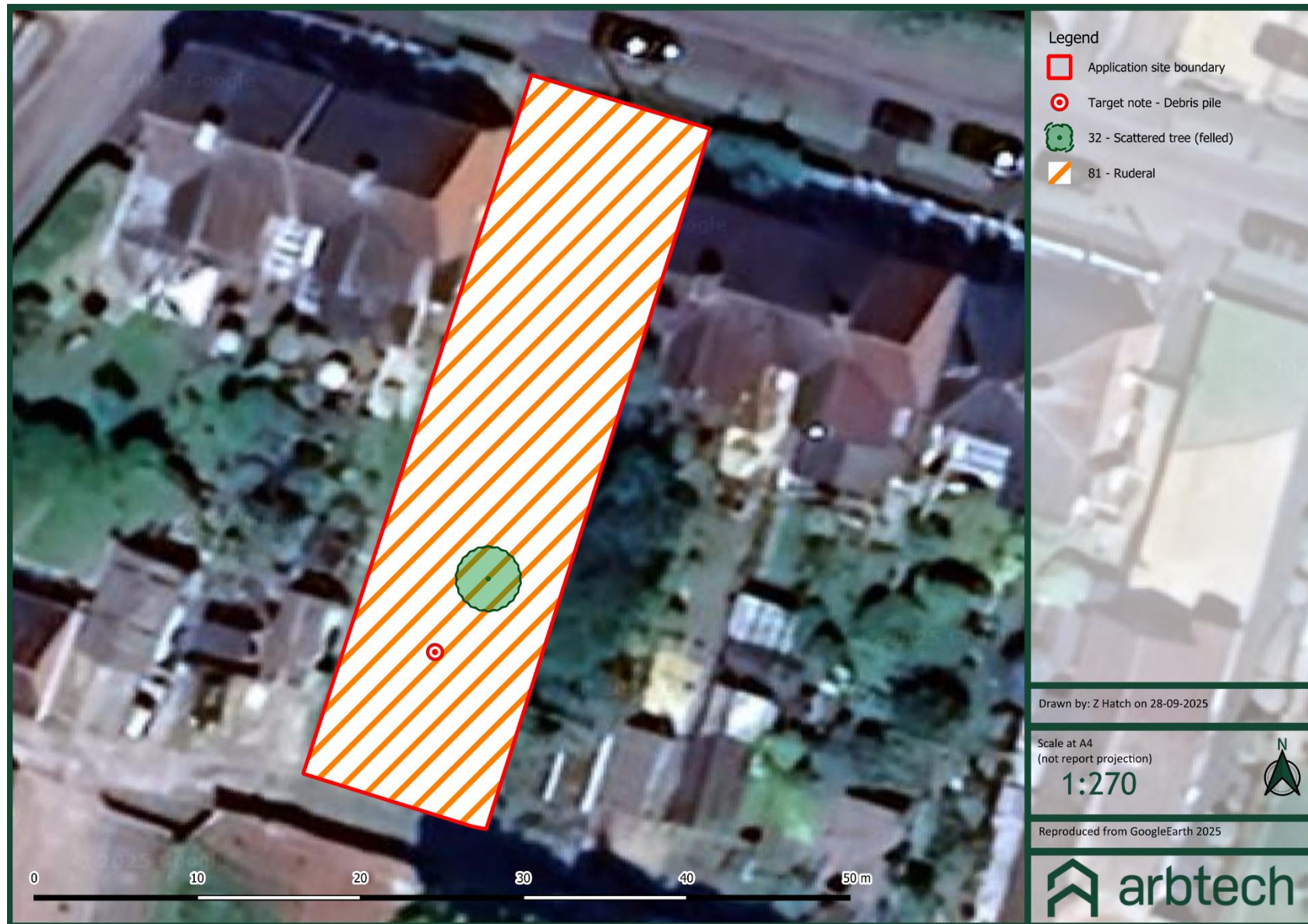
	<i>Precautionary measures</i> A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: • The debris piles on-site should be sensitively dismantled by hand to avoid causing risk to hedgehogs (if present) • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. <i>Suggested Enhancement</i> The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs: • Installation of gaps under boundary fencing to enable hedgehogs to move freely through the site • Foraging opportunities could be enhanced on-site for hedgehogs through the planting of fruit trees as part of any proposed landscape scheme.
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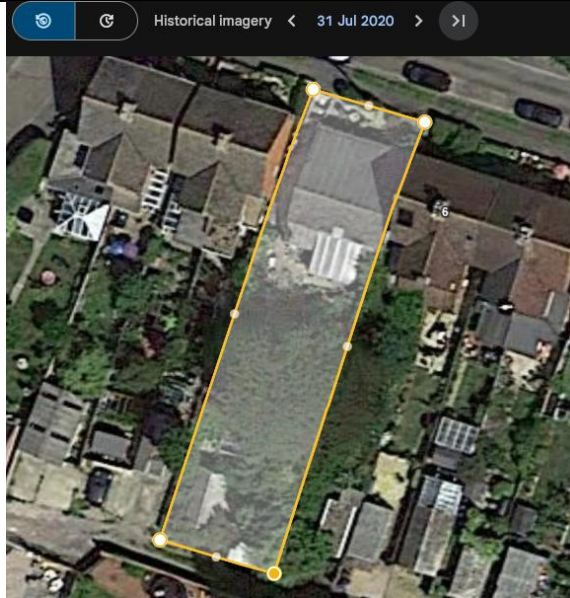
Appendix 2: Site Location Plan



Appendix 3: UK Habitat Plan



Appendix 4: Site Photographs

Photo 1: Historic aerial imagery of the site from Google Earth, dated 31st July 2020*Photo 2: Ruderal habitat, facing south.**Photo 3: Debris pile showing the scattered tree felled, facing east.**Photo 4: Ruderal habitat, facing north.*

Appendix 5: Baseline habitat condition assessment sheets**Individual Trees Condition Assessment**

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes	Assumed to have been native
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Individual trees automatically pass
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	Yes	Assumed to have been mature
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes	No evidence of adverse impact by human activities assumed prior to trees being felled
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Yes	Natural ecological niches assumed to have been present
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	>20% canopy assumed to have over sailed vegetation prior to recent clearance
Number of criteria passed		6	
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)	✓	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	X	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	X	

Ruderal / ephemeral Condition Assessment

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
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.	Yes	Variation within vegetation structure and no species accounts for >80%
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.	Yes	A range of plant species present
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA¹) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement)² cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area³. Note - to achieve Good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Yes	No non-native invasive plant species present
Number of criteria passed			3
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)	X	
• Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria.	Poor (1)	X	

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