

Pound Farm, Stanley

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey Report

Wood Architecture & Design Ltd



9th January 2026

Document Control

Document:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Project:	Pound Farm, Stanley PEA
Client:	Wood Architecture & Design Ltd
Project number:	5658
Document reference:	5658.1
Date of issue:	9th January 2026
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Executive Summary

Purpose of the report

To provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the proposed development site, involving,

- Evaluation of its conservation status based on a desktop review that summarises information collated on protected species and nature conservation designations in the area.
- Assessment of habitat composition on site, derived from a UKHabitat survey.
- Assessment of the likelihood of protected, or otherwise notable, species occurring on site.

Context of the development

The proposed development:

- Conversion of existing barns into a mixture of commercial buildings, holiday lets, and long-term rentals.

Methods

The project requirement was to assess the existing ecological value of the site, identify potential ecological issues associated with the proposed development and make recommendations for general mitigation, compensation, enhancement and further surveys, as appropriate. A desk study and UKHabitat 2.0 survey were carried out.

Key issues

The Site had LOW potential for terrestrial and breeding amphibians and LOW potential for reptiles and NEGLIGIBLE to LOW potential for terrestrial mammals, including the European badger. It also has LOW roosting potential for bats within building 3 & 4 and NEGLIGIBLE roosting potential within buildings 1 & 2 as well as MODERATE foraging and commuting potential for bats and LOW bird breeding potential within the buildings on Site as well as LOW bird breeding potential within the wider habitats recorded within the redline area of the Site and MODERATE potential for birds to be commuting and foraging on the Site.

Further surveys required

Bat surveys of buildings 3 & 4.

Conclusions

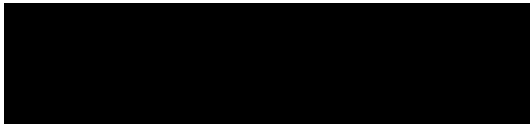
A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) was completed for the project. The proposed development, this shows a net gain of 24.54% within the habitats on-site, see appendices for headline results.

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this document is truthful and accurate at the time of completion.

Project manager: Daniel Ahern CEnv MCIEEM FLS

Signature:



Lead ecologist & Report writer: Megan Conway BSc

Signature:



Date: 9th January 2026

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. In November 2025, Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Wood Architecture & Design Ltd to undertake an ecological appraisal of a set of buildings and the adjacent land located to the southwest of Stanley in Wiltshire. The purpose of the survey was to provide an assessment of the current ecological conditions and to evaluate the ecological constraints in order to inform development proposals.
- 1.1.2. The purpose of this report is to identify key ecological constraints, in order to inform the project planning such that significant ecological impacts are avoided or minimised. It also aims to highlight any further ecological surveys that may be required to inform any future Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), so that they can be appropriately designed. Finally, the report aims to provide the information required in order to develop appropriate mitigation or compensation measures.

1.2. Site description

- 1.2.1. Pound Farm and its surrounding land, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', measures approximately 0.44 ha and is situated on Studley Hill which runs to the northeast of the Site (approximate OS grid reference: ST 95339 72625) see Fig. 1 below.
- 1.2.2. The Site comprised building, other developed land, Arrhenatherum neutral grassland, suburban mosaic of developed / natural surface, dense scrub.
- 1.2.3. The proposed developments and alterations to the site are as followed:
- Conversion of existing barns into a mixture of commercial buildings, holiday lets, and long-term rentals.

Figure 1. Site location with the red line boundary



2. Planning & Legislation

2.1. Legislation

2.1.1. The following legislation informed the survey approach and considerations.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- Environment Act 2021

2.2. Planning policies

2.2.1. This report is prepared with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework 2025.

3. Methods

3.1. Desk study

- 3.1.1. The following publicly accessible websites were searched for relevant ecological information:
- <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>
 - <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1376> (summary of nature conservation legislation)
 - www.ukbap.org.uk (archived 2012)
 - www.google.com for aerial photography
 - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>
- 3.1.2. Data relating to statutory & non-statutory sites and all protected species records within 1km of the red line boundary was requested from the Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC)

3.2. Field survey

- 3.2.1. A UKHab 2.0 habitat survey of the site was undertaken with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).
- 3.2.2. The survey was conducted on the 27th November 2025 by Megan Conway.
- 3.2.3. The weather conditions were good with an average temperature of 11°C.
- 3.2.4. During the survey, dominant plant species were recorded, and habitats were classified according to their vegetation types, as identified in the UKHab 2.0 users handbook. Target notes (TN) were taken to denote species and habitats of conservation interest and to describe the vegetation in areas that were too small to map. Evidence or habitat suitable for any legally protected species was recorded, where appropriate.
- 3.2.5. The presence of any Category 9 invasive non-native plant species was recorded.
- 3.2.6. The results are presented in the standard format with habitat descriptions and a UK Hab 2.0 map (see Figure 3).
- 3.2.7. The site was inspected for direct evidence and habitat suitability for protected and notable species. Particular attention was given to those species listed under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). This included searching for signs of badger activity and habitats suitable for amphibians, dormice, bats and reptiles.
- 3.2.8. In the event that habitats suitable for protected species are identified, it may be necessary to undertake further seasonal surveys to confirm presence/absence. In the event that no suitable habitats or features are

identified, a UK Hab 2.0 survey is sufficient to determine the potential impacts associated with a proposed development.

3.3. Limitations

- 3.3.1. The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive. It is possible that species and habitats not found in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.
- 3.3.2. The details within this report will remain valid for a period of 12 months; beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions is undertaken.

4. Baseline Ecological conditions

4.1. Desk study

- 4.2.3. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there was one statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site, the details of which are in Table 1 below.
- 4.2.4. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were two non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site, the details of which are in Table 1 below.

Table 1. The details of the Non-Statutory Wildlife Sites Within 1km of the site.

Designation	Name
LWS	Stanley Abby Farm meadows
LWS	Bencroft Hill Meadows

- 4.1.1. No EPSLs have been granted within 2km of the site.
- 4.1.2. Protected species records for the following taxa recorded within 2 km of the Site are set out in Table 2, below.

Table 2. Protected species records within 2km of the Site.

Species name	Number of records
Amphibians	
Great crested newt	1
Mammals	
Badger	6
Barbastelle	15
Brown long-eared	15
Common pipistrelle	25
Greater horseshoe	6
Hedgehog	7
Leisler's	6
Lesser horseshoe	10
Noctule	20
Otter	1

Serotine	17
Soprano pipistrelle	25

4.2. Site survey

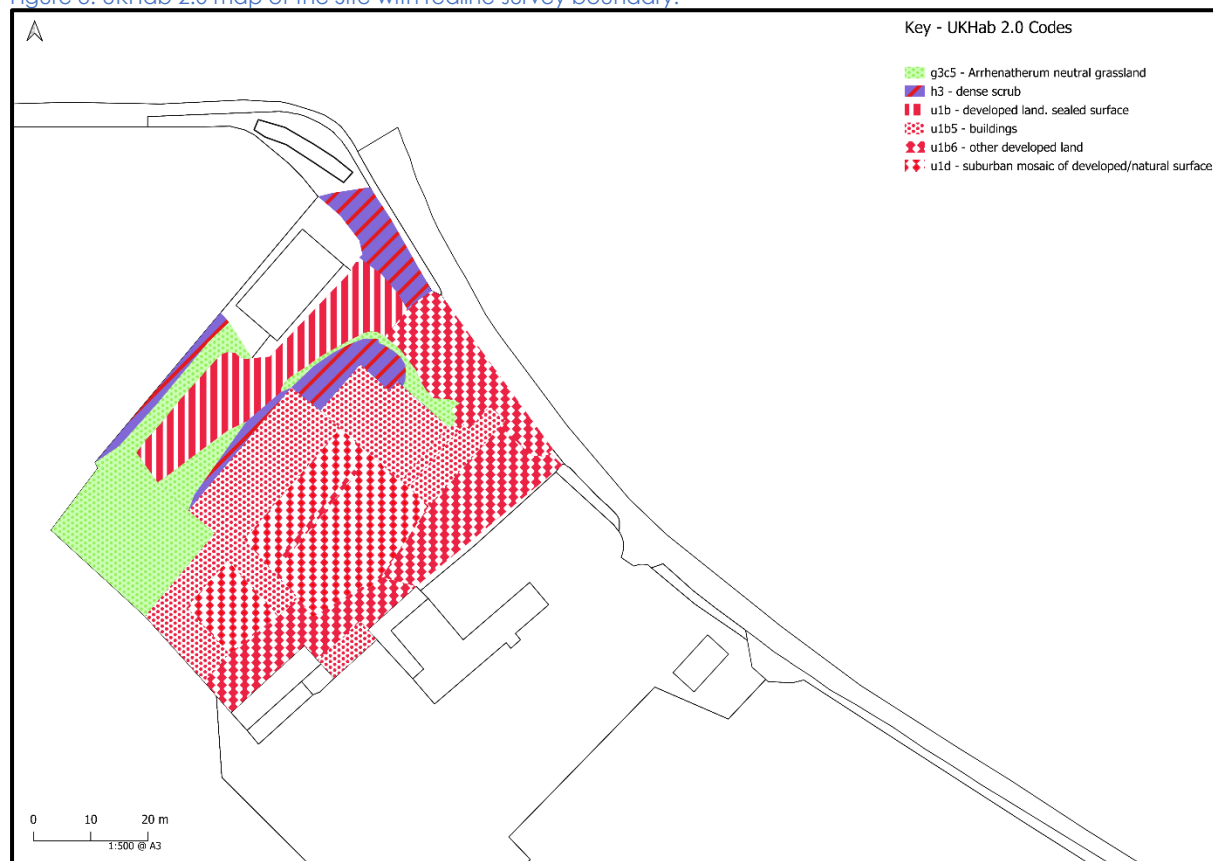
- 4.2.1. Habitat type and areas recorded on and adjacent to the Site are set out in Table 2, below.
- 4.2.2. A UKHab 2.0 map of the site is set out in Figure 3 below. The UKHab symbology does not have a level 4 u1f code, therefore level 4 u1d code was used as an alternative on the UKHab Map below.

Table 3. UKHab 2.0 types & Species recorded on or adjacent to the Site.

Habitat type	Species recorded	Percentage present
u1b5 – buildings	N/A	N/A
u1d – suburban mosaic of developed / natural surface	False oat grass – <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> Bramble- <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> Moss sp. Common groundsel – <i>Senecio vulgaris</i> Buddleia – <i>Buddleja davidii</i> Rosebay willowherb – <i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i> Red Clover – <i>Trifolium pratense</i> White Clover - <i>Trifolium repens</i> Bare ground	15% 10% 15% 5% 5% 10% 5% 10% 20%
u1b6 - other developed land	N/A	N/A
h3 – dense scrub	Bramble – <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> Elder – <i>Sambucus nigra</i> Hawthorn – <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> Blackthorn – <i>Prunus spinosa</i> Field maple – <i>Acer campestre</i>	50% 10% 10% 20% 10%
g3c5 – <i>Arrhenatherum</i> neutral grassland	False oat grass – <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> Cocksfoot – <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> Perennial rye grass – <i>Lolium perenne</i> Red fescue - <i>Festuca rubra</i> Red Clover – <i>Trifolium pratense</i> White Clover - <i>Trifolium repens</i> Creeping buttercup - <i>Ranunculus repens</i> Nettle – <i>Urtica dioica</i>	15% 20% 15% 15% 5% 5% 10% 15%

- 4.2.3. No category 9 invasive plants were recorded within the survey area.

Figure 3. UKHab 2.0 map of the Site with redline survey boundary.



4.2.4. Table 4 contains details of the potential for protected species and groups to be present.

Table 4. Protected species potential on Site.

Species (group)	Habitat availability	Records	Impact assessment
Amphibians	LOW	Common toad, common frog, smooth newt, palmate newt, great crested newt.	The site has been judged as having LOW potential for being used by amphibians on the Site, as well as there being some suitable foraging, dispersal and refuge habitat for amphibian species. two ponds seen within the 500m boundary of the Site but they were crossing a road so there is potentially a risk or mortality to be using the Site terrestrially.
Badgers	LOW	Yes.	no evidence recorded on or adjacent to the Site
Bats	LOW foraging & commuting	Barbastelle, brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, greater horseshoe, lesser horseshoe, leislars, noctule, serotine, soprano pipistrelle	NEGLIGIBLE roosting potential in b MODERATE potential for foraging & commuting bats across the Site.
Birds	MODERATE foraging and commuting	Redstart, Willow warbler, House sparrow, Spotted flycatcher,	LOW potential for the buildings on-site to be used by nesting birds as well as potentially using

		house martin, yellowhammer.	the dense scrub on site for nesting. MODERATE potential for birds to be foraging and commuting on Site.
Dormice	NEGLIGIBLE	No.	NEGLIGIBLE suitability at the lack of larger connected habitats that are more suitable bordering the Site whilst there is dense scrub on the site with a lack of better habitat it is assumed that the species would be absent from the Site.
Otter	NEGLIGIBLE	Yes.	no evidence recorded on or adjacent to the Site.
Reptiles	LOW	No.	LOW suitability for this group within the nature of unmanaged grassland as well as dense scrub on site but there is a lack of records within 1km.
Water vole	NEGLIGIBLE	No.	no evidence recorded on or adjacent to the Site.

5. Ecological constraints and opportunities

5.1. Designated nature conservation sites

- 5.1.1. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there was one statutory and two non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 1km of the Site. The nearest statutory wildlife site, Bencroft Hill Meadows, was located c890m to the northeast of the Site boundary. The nearest non-statutory wildlife site, Stanley Abbey Farm Meadows was located c450m to the southeast of the Site boundary.
- 5.1.2. It is considered unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant negative impact to the conservation status of any of the statutory or non-statutory wildlife sites present within 1km of the Site.

5.2. Habitats

- 5.2.1. The proposed development of the Site will result in the modification and loss of some of the existing habitats on Site, principally areas of u1b5 – buildings, u1b6 – other developed land, u1d – suburban mosaic of developed / natural surfaces, h3d – bramble scrub and g3c5 – Arrhenatherum grassland
- 5.2.2. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) was completed for the project. The proposed development, this shows a net gain of 11.83% within the habitats on-site, see appendices for headline results.
- 5.2.3. None of the habitats adjacent to the Site are being affected with this development.

5.3. Fauna

- 5.3.1. The Site had LOW potential for terrestrial and breeding amphibians and LOW potential for reptiles and NEGLIGIBLE to LOW potential for terrestrial mammals, including the European badger. It also has LOW roosting potential for bats within building 4 & 3 and NEGLIGIBLE roosting potential within buildings 1 & 2 as well as MODERATE foraging and commuting potential for bats and LOW bird breeding potential within the buildings on Site as well as LOW bird breeding potential within the wider habitats recorded within the redline area of the Site and MODERATE potential for birds to be commuting and foraging on the Site.

6. References

- CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*; CIEEM
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- Gunnell, K., et al (2010) *Designing for Biodiversity: A technical guide for new and existing buildings*. (2nd edn). RIBA.
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- HMSO (1981) *The Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended)*; London
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- HMSO (2000) *The Countryside and Rights of Way Act*; London
- HMSO (2010) *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (as amended)*; London
- Mitchell-Jones, A. J. (ed.) (2004) *Bat Workers' Manual* (3rd edn). JNCC.
- Rose, F. (1981) *The Wild Flower Key*; Frederick Warne
- Rose, F. (1989) *Colour Identification Guide to the Grasses, Sedges, Rushes and Ferns of the British Isles and North Western Europe*; Viking
- UKHab Ltd (2023) *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (<https://www.ukhab.org/>)

7. Appendices

APPENDIX 1 - Photos

Photo 1 – u1b5 – building 1 and 2 as well as u1b6 – other developed land and u1d – suburban mosaic of developed / natural surface.



Photo 2 – u1d – suburban mosaic of developed / natural surface and u1b5 – building 3.



Photo 3 – u1b5 – building 4 and u1d – suburban mosaic of developed / natural surface



photo 4 – g3c5 – Arrhenatherum neutral grassland and h3d – bramble scrub.



Photo 5 – u1b5 – building 2 and h3d – bramble scrub.



Photo 6 – u1b5 – building 4 as well as u1d – suburban mosaic of developed / natural surface and u1b6 – other developed land.



APPENDIX 2

Statutory metric result for the proposed development.

Pound Farm		Return to results menu	
Headline Results			
Scroll down for final results ▲			
On-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.71	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.89	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.18	24.54%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Off-site baseline	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Off-site net change (units & percentage)	Area habitat units	0.00	0.00%
	Hedgerow units	0.00	0.00%
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%
Combined net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.18	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions	Area habitat units	0.00	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Ensure bespoke compensation has been agreed where stated ▲			
FINAL RESULTS			
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	0.18	
	Hedgerow units	0.00	
	Watercourse units	0.00	
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Area habitat units	24.54%	
	Hedgerow units	0.00%	
	Watercourse units	0.00%	
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓		

APPENDIX 3

A UKHab 2.0 map of the proposed development.

