

Project Spitfire

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Prepared on behalf of Spitfire Enterprises Ltd

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Project Spitfire
Ecology 9034
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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Client is proposing to erect a building amounting to 6,968 sqm GIA (Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8) with associated facilities, access with security, parking, hard and soft landscaping, drainage and associated works; A new roundabout from the A345 with footways and bus stops; A new access to Chemring Countermeasures UK including turning and security; Solar Fields; and associated works. Pro Vision were commissioned in January 2026 to carry out an Ecological Assessment of the site to inform the development proposals.
- 1.2 The ecological appraisal comprised a desk study of existing ecological data in relation to the site, and an assessment of the sites habitats and suitability to support protected species within the application site.
- 1.3 The proposed development is within the zone of influence of Salisbury Plain Special Area for Conservation and Porton Down Special Protection Area. Due to the nature of the proposed development, it is considered unlikely that this will result in an increase in recreational pressure on these sites. However, there is potential that stone curlew, a citation feature of Porton Down Special Protection Area could be impacted. Mitigation in relation to this is provided in **Section 5.0**.
- 1.4 The site is located immediately adjacent to High Post Golf Course Local Wildlife Site. There is potential for indirect impacts to the site during the construction phase. Recommendations have been provided in **Section 5.0** to mitigate impacts to this site.
- 1.5 The site predominantly comprises arable cropland with some areas of developed land, artificial unvegetated unsealed surface and modified grassland. Two hedgerows and a line of trees are also present on site.
- 1.6 The habitats recorded on site are considered to have limited suitability for foraging and commuting bats and there is limited connectivity to habitats of higher suitability. The development will include a sensitive lighting design which will minimise light spill on the boundary features to maintain foraging and commuting routes. This is discussed further in **Section 5.0**.
- 1.7 Habitats on site provide foraging and nesting opportunities for common bird species. It is recommended that any vegetation clearance should avoid the bird nesting season (1st March – 31st August) unless inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works. If the presence of nesting birds is confirmed, any works which may disturb them will be delayed until the young birds have fledged the nest of their own accord. Details regarding this are provided in **Section 5.0**.
- 1.8 Due to the limited extent of suitable habitat, lack of records and isolated nature of the site it is considered highly likely that hazel dormice absent from the site boundary, and therefore no impacts are anticipated.
- 1.9 The grassland provides no suitable habitat for great crested newts or reptiles due to the short sward height and isolated nature of the site. Furthermore, the grassland will be retained within the development therefore no impacts are anticipated.
- 1.10 The development will provide ecological enhancements in line with national and local planning policy to secure net gains on the site. Further details are provided in **Section 5.0**.

2.0 Introduction

Project Background

- 2.1 Pro Vision Ecology were commissioned in January 2026 to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) of The Northern Field, High Post, Salisbury. For the site location refer to **Appendix A**. The proposals for the development include the Erection of a building amounting to 6,968 sqm GIA (Use Classes E(g), B2 and B8) with associated facilities, access with security, parking, hard and soft landscaping, drainage and associated works; A new roundabout from the A345 with footways and bus stops; A new access to Chemring Countermeasures UK including turning and security; Solar Fields; and associated works (**Appendix B**).
- 2.2 This report describes the current ecological baseline of the site based on the findings of the ecological assessment and provides information for further survey requirements and potential mitigation on the site.

Brief

- 2.3 To carry out a PEA of the land within the site boundaries, to inform the Client of any further survey work required and of the ecological implications of their proposals.

Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.4 The key legislative provisions of relevance to this report with respect to the development proposals and their potential effects on ecological features are listed below:
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
 - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
 - The Protection of Badgers Act 1992
 - Environment Act (2021)
- 2.5 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was the Governments response to the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity (The Rio Convention), with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity in the UK. The new UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework replaced the previous BAP and is the government's response to the new strategic plan on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Although the UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework supersedes the UK BAP, the UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats remain an important reference source for identifying habitats and species of principal importance within the UK. Within England, Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) lists species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.
- 2.6 The Government has set out its policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system in the National Planning Policy Framework Section 15 (NPPF, 2024).
- 2.7 The Environment Act 2021 includes the requirement for developments to provide 10% biodiversity net gain, to be evidenced with the use of the statutory metric. Developments are exempt if they are self-build comprising less than nine dwellings on an area less than 0.5 hectares, householder applications or developments below the threshold of impacts to habitats.

- 2.9 The Northern Field, High Post is located in Wiltshire. The Wiltshire Core Strategy – Wiltshire Local Development Framework (Adopted January 2015)) Development Plan Document (adopted 2012) includes Core Policy 50 related to Biodiversity and Geodiversity, which states:

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 resources 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 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.

3.0 Methodologies

Desk Study

- 3.1 The desk study methodology is based upon guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM, 2017). A data-gathering exercise was undertaken to obtain any available information relating to statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites and protected species (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Summary of information sources used for the Desk Study.

Organisation / Source	Information Sought
Wiltshire and Swindon Biodiversity Records Centre (WSBRC)	Records of the presence of key protected and notable species and non-statutory wildlife sites within one kilometre of the site.
MAGIC	Locations of and citations for all national statutory wildlife sites, including SSSI, within two kilometres and all international sites including SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites within five kilometres of the site. Records of European Protected Species Licences and class licence returns within two kilometres.
Ordnance Survey Maps	Large scale habitat information and identification of off-site habitats which may require consideration (such as ponds) within 500m.

Ecological Assessment

Habitats

- 3.2 A site visit was carried out on 4th February 2026 by ecologist David Casson ACIEEM during sunny spells, slightly windy and dry conditions with an ambient temperature of 7°C. The survey employed techniques based on the UK Habitat Classification System.
- 3.3 The collection of botanical information focused on the dominant and/or key indicator species for each habitat, to allow allocation of habitats to hierarchy levels 3 and/or 4 and where relevant to identify any priority habitats which are present on site.

Protected species

- 3.4 The PEA included an assessment of the potential for habitats on or immediately adjacent to the site to support legally protected or conservation-notable species. The location and nature of any signs of the presence of protected species (such as droppings, footprints, burrows, etc.) were documented and mapped accordingly. Indicative survey methods for protected species are outlined below.

Badgers (Meles meles)

3.5 The site and where possible 30 metres outside the site boundary was assessed for its suitability to support badgers. A direct search was undertaken for evidence of badgers. Evidence includes;

- Active or disused setts;
- Diggings;
- Latrines / dung pits;
- Foraging ('snuffle holes');
- Footprints; and
- Badger hairs.

Bats

Buildings

3.6 Bats use features within buildings such as stone crevices or cracks in brickwork, ridge beams, gaps between roofing materials and the main building structure, and any potential access points. An internal and external inspection of the Pillbox was conducted by experienced ecologist David Casson ACIEEM during the site walkover. Any evidence of bats such as droppings, urine staining, claw marks, feeding remains or bats themselves were recorded. An assessment of the potential of the building to support roosts was then made in line with Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines (2023) shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Assessment of buildings to support roosting bats.

Potential	Criteria
None	No features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year
Negligible	No obvious features on site likely to be used by bats
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation significance.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts.

Survey limitations

3.7 Bats will often roost in places that are inaccessible to the surveyor, such as under tiles and crevices within structures. Due to the open access of this building, this was not deemed as a limitation for the survey as all aspects of the building were accessible to the surveyor.

- 3.8 Bats use features in the landscape to navigate and also habitats may provide key foraging areas. Foraging and commuting habitat were assessed based on based on BCT guidelines (Collins, 2023) shown in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Assessment of foraging/commuting habitat.

Suitability	Criteria
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight paths or by foraging bats
Low	Suitable but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats
Medium	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats
High	Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape and is likely to be regularly used bats.

Birds

- 3.9 Any habitat features, for example, scrub and trees, which could potentially be used by nesting birds, were surveyed and any nesting activity was noted. The habitat was also assessed regarding its potential for bird activity.

Great Crested Newts (Triturus cristatus)

- 3.10 Ponds within the vicinity of the site were noted and the potential of the land to act as a commuting route, shelter or foraging resource for great crested newts was assessed.

Hazel dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius)

- 3.11 An assessment of the suitability of the habitat to support hazel dormouse was undertaken in accordance with The dormouse Conservation Handbook (Bright *et al*, 2006). Any small mammal feeding signs were checked and assessed, including:
- Examination of hazel nuts; and
 - Evidence of nest building.

Invasive species

- 3.12 During the survey any invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were noted

Invertebrates

- 3.13 An assessment was undertaken to assess the potential of the habitats recorded on site to support diverse communities of invertebrates, or any Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species. The

assessment was based on the presence of a number of habitat features which may support important invertebrate communities such as:

- An abundance of deadwood;
- Presence of diverse plant communities;
- Presence of varied woodland structure and sunny woodland edge;
- Presence of ponds or watercourses; and
- Presence of free draining soil exposures.

Reptiles

- 3.14 Habitat features that could be suitable as hibernacula, foraging or basking areas were noted. Extant refugia were lifted and examined for evidence of reptiles, including sloughs (shed skins).

4.0 Results and Analysis

Designated sites

Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.1 The data search returned three records of international designated sites within five kilometres of the site:
- **River Avon Special Area for Conservation (SAC)** is located approximately 1.4 kilometres west of the development site at its nearest point. The Avon is a large, lowland river system that includes sections running through chalk and clay, with transitions between the two. Five aquatic *Ranunculus* species occur in the river system, but stream water-crowfoot (*Ranunculus penicillatus* ssp. *Pseudofluitans*) and river water-crowfoot (*Ranunculus fluitans*) are the main dominants. Some winterbourne reaches, where *Ranunculus peltatus* is the dominant water-crowfoot species, are included in the SAC. Annex II species present within the SAC include Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*), sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), brook lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) and bullhead (*Cottus gobio*).
 - **Salisbury Plain Special Area of Conservation (SAC)**: This 21465.94 ha site includes a variety of habitats ranging from heath, scrub, and maquis, through dry, humid and improved grassland, to broadleaved, coniferous and mixed woodland. The primary reason for this site's designation is the presence of Annex I habitats: Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands, semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*). The latter are important orchid sites. Annex II species marsh fritillary butterfly (*Euphydryas aurina*) is also present on site. This site lies approximately 4.75 kilometres east of the proposed development.
 - **Porton Down Special Protection Area (SPA)**: Porton Down SPA covers an area of 1562 hectares, and is coincident with Porton Down Site of Special Scientific Interest, consisting of an extensive area of chalk grassland with scrub and woodland, and is one of the largest uninterrupted tracts of semi-natural chalk grassland in the UK. It is important for downland breeding birds and supports important numbers of Stone curlew (*Burhinus oedicnemus*). This site lies approximately 4.75 kilometres east of the proposed development.
- 4.2 The proposed development is within the zone of influence of Salisbury Plain SAC and Porton Down SPA. Due to the nature of the proposed development, it is considered unlikely that this will result in an increase in recreational pressure on these sites. However, there is potential that Stone Curlew, a citation feature of Porton Down SPA could be impacted. Mitigation in relation to this is provided in **Section 5.0**.
- 4.3 The data search returned one record of a National Statutory Designated Site within two kilometres of the site. The River Avon is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is of national and international importance for its wildlife communities. 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. The lower Avon supports a good breeding population of kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), reed warbler (*Acrocephalus scirpaceus*) and sedge warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*). The system as a

whole is well used by water voles and water shrews (*Neomys fodiens*), with occasional recent evidence of otter. The River Avon SSSI is located approximately 1.4 kilometres west of the proposed development.

- 4.4 Due to the nature of the proposed development and intervening distance it is considered that the proposals will not impact the River Avon SAC and SSSI. As the proposals will not lead to an increase in residential units or overnight accommodation it is considered that there will be no increased recreational pressures or nutrient load on the designated sites. No further action is required in regard the River Avon.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.5 The data search returned two records of non-statutory designated sites within one kilometre of the site, which include:
- **High Post Golf Course Local Wildlife Site (LWS):** A large downland links golf course with areas of unimproved calcareous grassland in the rough. Very dense scrub has developed in many areas. This site is located east of the A345 and the sites eastern boundary.
 - **Little Down East LWS:** Small areas of calcareous grassland within a larger mesotrophic field located approximately 0.56 kilometres north west of the site boundary.

- 4.6 Due to proximity of the development to High Post Golf Course LWS there is potential for impacts during the construction phase of the development. Recommendations have been provided in **Section 5.0** to mitigate impacts on this Local Wildlife Site.

Ecological Assessment

Introduction

- 4.7 The results of the PEA are presented below. A Habitat Survey map is provided in **Appendix C**. The map illustrates the location and extent of the sites surveyed, along with additional notable features.

Habitats

Surrounding Habitat

- 4.8 The site is located in High Post, north of Salisbury. The surrounding habitat predominantly comprises arable land and industrial use.
- 4.9 A search of priority habitat within one kilometre of the site boundary has identified the presence of lowland calcareous grassland within the area. The nearest parcel is located to the east of the proposed development (High Post Golf Course LWS).

Developed land; sealed surface

- 4.10 The site includes areas of developed land; sealed surface which includes, parking areas, access roads and the A345 (**Figures 1 and 2**).



Figures 1 and 2: Showing areas of developed land; sealed surface along the access track and around the building

Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface

- 4.11 Other areas of parking and the access track comprise a compacted aggregate the edges of which are colonised by the adjacent grassland.

Ephemeral vegetation

- 4.12 An area of ephemeral vegetation is present in the west of the site where vegetation has colonised the artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface. This area is dominated by springy turf-moss (*Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*) with other species recorded including creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), doves-foot cranesbill (*Geranium molle*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and great mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*)

Modified grassland

- 4.13 Areas of modified grassland form road verges and amenity space (**Figure 3 and 4**). There were maintained at a short sward. Species recorded include perennial rye-grass, cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), red-dead nettle (*Lamium purpureum*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), false oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), ribwort plantain, doves-foot cranes-bill, springy turf-moss, common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), ox-eye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), herb-Robert (*Geranium robertianum*) and creeping buttercup.



Figure 3 and 4: Road verge associated with C292 and amenity space

- 4.14 Another area of modified grassland was present in the west of the site, bordering the arable cropland. Species within the grassland comprised cocksfoot, broadleaf dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), dove foot cranesbill (*Geranium molle*), cleavers, oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echinoides*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), nettle and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) which was dominant towards the northern area.



Figure 5: Modified grassland bordering the arable field

Cropland

- 4.15 The majority of the site comprises cropland which was in an active rotation (**Figure 6 and 7**).



Figure 6 and 7: Cropland

Hedgerows

- 4.16 A native hedgerow is present on the boundaries of the arable field in the west and south of the site. Species recorded in hedgerow 1 (**Figure 8**) include blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), dog rose (*Rosa canina*) and travellers-joy (*Clematis vitalba*).
- 4.17 Hedgerow two (**Figure 9**) was located on the southern boundary of the site and was of a well managed nature, the height of the hedge was approximately 1 metre tall and 0.5 wide. Species within the hedgerow comprised ivy, blackthorn, travellers-joy and small amounts of elder (*Sambucus nigra*), creating a similar composition to hedgerow one.
- 4.18 A double staggered tree line (**Figure 10**) is also present in the centre of the site. Species recorded include ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), pine (*Pinus sp.*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and silver birch (*Betula pendula*).



Figures 8 and 9: Hedgerows 1 and 2



Figures 10: Tree line

Protected and/or notable species

Badgers

- 4.19 The WSBRC data search returned no records for badger within one kilometre of the site boundary.
- 4.20 The modified grassland, scrub and hedgerow understories provide some suitable habitat for badgers for foraging and commuting. The majority of the site is comprised of arable crop land which holds limited potential to support badger due to the well managed and short sward nature. No evidence of badger was identified during the walkover survey, with the only mammal evidence being rabbit holes located in the grassland, on the western most aspect. No badger setts were identified.
- 4.21 The site is partially bordered by wooden post fencing creating access areas into the site, however there was no evidence of mammal paths underneath. No mammal tracks or signs of badger were observed within the site or in neighbouring parcels during the survey. No signs of badger were found during the walkover survey.
- 4.22 Badgers are likely present within the wider landscape; however, the works will not impact badgers directly. No further action is required.

Bats

- 4.23 The WSBRC data search returned no records of bats within one kilometre of the development site.
- 4.24 The Defra run website, MAGIC, was searched for a list of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSL's). Three EPSL's were returned within two kilometres of the development site. These permitted impacts to roosts for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus Pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), greater horseshoe (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*) and serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) bats. One of these allowed the destruction of a maternity roost for soprano pipistrelle or serotine and was located at a distance of 1.4 kilometres northwest of the site boundary. This was also the closest record to the site boundary.

Buildings

- 4.25 There was one building present within the site boundary which was an pillbox (**Figure 11**). The pillbox was comprised of concrete with two gaps present, one forming a door and the other forming a window creating high levels of light ingress. Internally the building was unlined with no beams present. Therefore, the building was assessed as being of **negligible potential** due to a lack of roosting features both internally and externally. This building is due to be retained within the proposed development.



Figure 11: External aspect of the pillbox.

Trees

- 4.26 The trees located within the native hedgerows and line of trees could create some potential for roosting bats due to their size and location. However, all mature trees are to be retained and remain unaffected from the proposed works and therefore no impacts are anticipated.

Foraging and Commuting

- 4.27 The habitats recorded on site are considered to have limited suitability for foraging and commuting bats and there is limited connectivity to habitats of higher suitability. The site includes native hedgerows and a line of trees which provide potential foraging and commuting habitats for bats. The majority of the site is largely unsuitable comprising cropland and short sward grassland as well as developed land. There is potential any external may impact foraging and commuting bats. Recommendations have been provided in **Section 5.0** in accordance with industry best practice.

Birds

- 4.28 The WSBRC data search provided the following records for red list bird species of conservation concern that may be present on the site: swift (*Apus apus*), lapwing (*Vanellus Vanellus*), cuckoo

(*Cuculus canorus*) , grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*), skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*), house martin (*Delichon urbicum*), yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*), linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), spotted flycatcher (*Passer domesticus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*).

- 4.29 The following Schedule 1 and/or Annex I species were returned which may breed in the area: peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), and red kite (*Milvus milvus*).
- 4.30 The mixed scrub, hedgerows and trees on site provide suitable habitat for nesting birds. The modified grassland and cropland are considered suitable for ground nesting birds. Furthermore, the site falls within the zone of influence of Porton Down SPA where stone curlew is a citation feature. Data from the RSPB indicates that the site is likely to support at least 2-3 breeding pairs of stone-curlew and therefore the proposals will impact this species. Mitigation for stone curlew has been outlined in **Section 5.0**.
- 4.31 The building provided some nesting opportunities for birds with evidence of nesting materials on the floor of the building. Mitigation measures will be needed for vegetation clearance and building demolition which are detailed in **Section 5.0**.

Great crested newts

- 4.32 The WSBRC data search returned no records of great crested newt presence within one kilometre of the site. The Defra run website, MAGIC, was searched for a list of granted EPSL's within two kilometres with no records were returned.
- 4.33 The majority of the site is unsuitable for great crested newt due to the main habitat comprising short sward arable crop, grassland and hardstanding which provides limited foraging areas and shelter. The hedgerow understory provides suitable habitat for great crested newts as it provides commuting opportunities and shelter, however, these habitats were bordered by roads and short sward arable grassland fields meaning the site was slightly fragmented from habitats of suitable quality, furthermore these habitats will be retained.
- 4.34 A search of MAGIC revealed two waterbodies within 500 metres of the site boundary. Pond one was located 100 metres west and was a lined ornamental pond used for fire safety. Pond two was located 35 metres south of the site boundary and was a man-made pond associated with high post salt store. Due to the man-made nature as well as lack of vegetation, and high risk of predation, these ponds are not seen as suitable habitat for great crested newt. Furthermore, the ponds are located within well-used facilities creating barriers to transport.
- 4.35 Therefore, great crested newts are considered absent from the site based on the lack of suitable habitat present, lack of breeding ponds within 500 metres and a lack of records within one kilometre of the site boundary.

Hazel Dormouse

- 4.36 The WSBRC data search returned no records of hazel dormouse within one kilometre of the site. A search of MAGIC returned no records of granted EPSLs within one kilometre of the site.
- 4.37 There were two hedgerows located within the site boundary, forming boundary habitat of the Chemring site. These contained species which are suitable for dormice including hazel, bramble and blackthorn. The hedgerows had varying density and there were some areas with large gaps

interspersed which broke up the linear connectivity of the habitat. Furthermore, these hedgerows will be retained and unimpacted as part of the proposals, limiting any impacts to dormice.

- 4.38 Mixed scrub was present on the western aspect of the site which could also provide suitable habitat for dormice; however this was also fragmented and only measures approximately 0.05 hectares therefore is considered highly unlikely to support a viable population of dormice.
- 4.39 Due to the limited extent of suitable habitat, lack of records and isolated nature of the site it is considered highly likely that hazel dormice absent from the site boundary, and therefore no impacts are anticipated.

Invertebrates

- 4.40 The WSBRC search did not return any records of notable invertebrates within one kilometre of the site boundary. There were no habitats of note that could support assemblages of rare invertebrates recorded on the site. Therefore, no further action is required.

Reptiles

- 4.41 The WSBRC data only returned one record of a grass snake (*Natrix Helvetica*) in November 1962. No other reptile records were returned.
- 4.42 The grassland recorded on site is considered to have limited suitability for reptiles due to the short sward height. The developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface and cropland are considered unsuitable for reptiles. The site is isolated by other unsuitable habitat in the form of arable land.
- 4.43 Due to the limited extent of sub-optimal habitat, lack of records and isolated nature of the site it is considered highly likely that reptiles absent from the site boundary. Furthermore, the grassland will be retained within the development therefore no impacts are anticipated.

5.0 Impacts and Mitigation

Impacts and Required Mitigation for the Proposed Development

Statutory Designated Sites

- 5.1 The proposed development is within the zone of influence of Salisbury Plain SAC and Porton Down SPA. Due to the nature of the proposed development, it is considered unlikely that this will result in an increase in recreational pressure on these sites.
- 5.2 However, there is potential that Stone Curlew, a citation feature of Porton Down SPA could be impacted.
- 5.3 Due to the application timeline, it is not possible to conduct ground nesting bird surveys required to determine how many pairs of breeding stone-curlew will be impacted by the proposed development. Therefore following consultation with the RSPB it was agreed that a reasonable assumption of the number of pairs that might use the habitat could be made based on the survey information held by the RSPB. Based on their assessment it is considered that between two and three breeding pairs may use the proposed development site.
- 5.4 To mitigate the impact of the development on stone curlew, two fallow plots are required to be managed and maintained for breeding stone-curlew for the lifetime of the proposed development. The location of the proposed plots have been recommended by the RSPB and are indicated in **Appendix D**.
- 5.5 To further mitigate the impact of the proposed development works must be scheduled to avoid peak bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August, although this will vary between species and local conditions) to avoid contravention of protected species legislation; unless inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works.
- 5.6 If the project involves bare ground creation, this might inadvertently provide suitable nesting habitat for stone-curlew. To minimise the chance of stone-curlew using any bare ground, spoil should be placed around the edge of the bare ground to create a buffer, as Stone-curlew rely on open lines of sight to see approaching danger. Additionally, areas should not be left unworked or undisturbed for more than a few days, otherwise they should be checked by an ecologist prior to works recommencing, in case stone-curlew have established a territory.
- 5.7 Stone Curlew are sensitive to noise and light therefore it is recommended that measures to avoid these impacts are provided in a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).

Non-Statutory Sites

High Post Golf Course

- 5.8 The proposed development is immediately adjacent to High Post Golf Course LWS. There is potential that this site could be damaged during the construction stage of the development.

Impacts

The application site is located adjacent to High Post Golf Course LWS. Due to the nature and location of the proposed development and location of the LWS it is considered highly unlikely members of staff will access the LWS during the operation phase of the development. It is considered there is a low risk of impacts during the construction due to the proximity of the LWS to the development site.

Mitigation

- To ensure there are no impacts to the LWS during the construction of the development a Construction Environmental Management Plan will be provided. The following matters will be addressed (but not restricted to) in the CEMP:
- Protect the LWS during construction by installing protective fencing to exclude plant, machinery and operators from the LWS.
- Appropriately store and control materials/chemicals to avoid pollution and siltation incidents (e.g. fit all plant with drip-trays and re-fuel machinery off-site);
- Standard dust suppression methods will be employed as necessary e.g. dampen down with water, or the use of dust sheeting;
- Standard noise suppression methods will be employed as necessary e.g. use of vehicle and plant silencers;
- The storage and removal of waste material on site (e.g the storing of waste material on hardstanding).
- With this mitigation in place there will be no significant impact to High Post Golf Course LWS.

Nesting birds

- 5.9 The building, grassland, mixed scrub, trees and hedgerows provide suitable foraging and nesting habitat for birds. It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use. Any vegetation clearance required must be scheduled to avoid peak bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August, although this will vary between species and local conditions) to avoid contravention of protected species legislation; unless inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works.
- 5.10 If the presence of nesting birds is confirmed, a 5-metre buffer will be implemented and no works will be permitted within this buffer. Works will be able to proceed once the young birds have fledged the nest of their own accord.

Enhancement Measures for the Proposed Development

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 5.11 In accordance with the Natural Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) plans whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

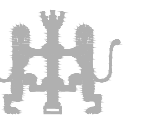
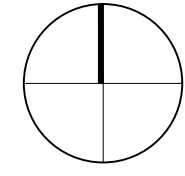
- 5.12 The Environment Act 2021 includes the requirement for developments to provide 10% biodiversity net gain, to be evidenced with the use of the statutory metric. The results of which are detailed within the Biodiversity Net Gain report.
- 5.13 In addition to delivering Biodiversity Net Gain the development will deliver enhancement measures for protected species and will include the following:
- Planting of trees and shrubs for any supplementary planting scheme should incorporate native species which benefit a range of wildlife.
 - Bat boxes will be integrated or installed on the new warehouse.
 - Swift bricks or boxes will be integrated or installed on the new warehouse.
 - An area of scrub will be created on the southeastern boundary increasing the diversity of habitats on site.
 - New native hedgerows will be planted around the solar panel farm.
 - Native trees will be planted on the northern boundary neighbouring the arable land and on the western boundary amongst the scrub.
 - Boundaries will be permeable to hedgehogs so they can continue to forage and commute through the site.

6.0 References and Bibliography

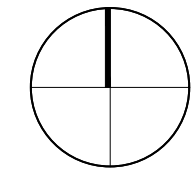
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Appendices

Appendix A: Site Location



Appendix B: Proposed Plans





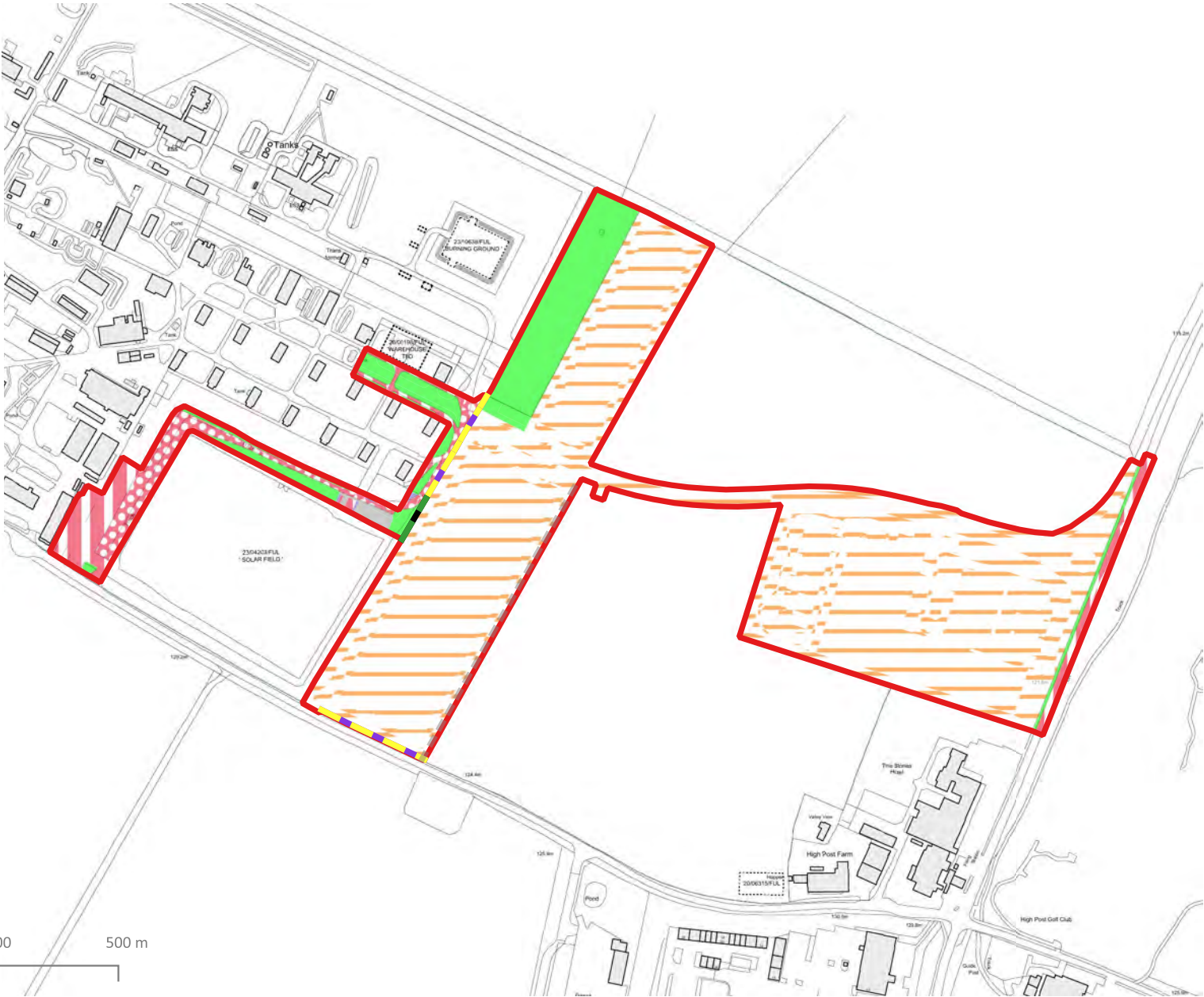
Appendix C: Habitat Map

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

The proposal presented here is subject to review by specialist consultants, and is to be read in conjunction with all relevant specialist's drawings and information where available. Any discrepancies between this and any other consultant's drawings and information should be reported to Pro Vision immediately.

Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Line of Trees
- Native Hedgerow
- Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface
- Cereal Crops
- Developed Land; Sealed Surface
- Mixed Scrub
- Modified Grassland
- Ruderal/Ephemeral



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	25.02.26	Map Created	MC	AH

CLIENT:	Spitfire Enterprises Ltd		
PROJECT:	Project Spitfire		
DRAWING:	Baseline Map	1:5000	
NUMBER:	9034-XX-E0-01	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	25.02.26	



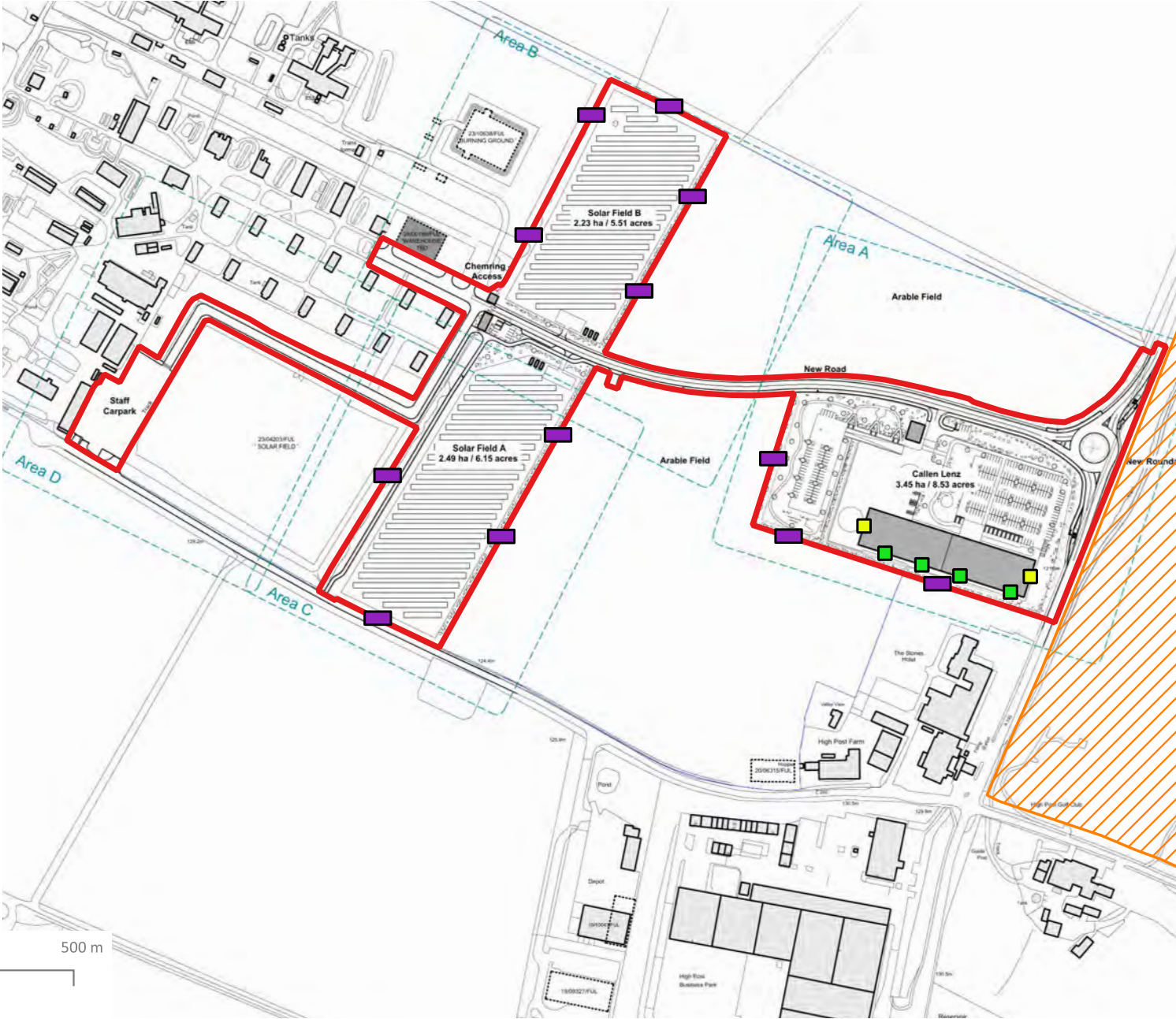
Appendix D:Mitigation and Enhancement Plan

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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Legend

-  Red Line Boundary
-  High Post Gold Course LWS to be protected during construction
-  Intergrated/surface mounted bat boxes
-  Cluster of four swift bricks/boxes
-  Hedgehog access point



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	03.03.26	Map Created	MC	AH
v2	13.03.26	Map updated	AH	

CLIENT:	Spitfire Enterprises Ltd		
PROJECT:	Project Spitfire		
DRAWING:	Mitigation and Enhancement Plan		1:5000
NUMBER:	9034-XX-E0-02		A4
ISSUE:	v2		13.03.26



The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

The proposal presented here is subject to review by specialist consultants, and is to be read in conjunction with all relevant specialist's drawings and information where available. Any discrepancies between this and any other consultant's drawings and information should be reported to Pro Vision immediately.

Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Indicative Stone Curlew Nesting Plots



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	03.03.26	Map Created	MC	AH
v2	13.03.26	Map updated	AH	

CLIENT:	Spitfire Enterprises Ltd		
PROJECT:	Project Spitfire		
DRAWING:	Stone Curlew Plots	1:15000	
NUMBER:	9034-XX-E0-03	A4	
ISSUE:	v2	13.03.26	

Appendix E: Relevant Legislation

THE CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations) transpose Habitats Directive into UK legislation. The Habitats Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European Protected Species. European Sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which form part of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas across Europe.

European Protected Species (EPS) are those listed under Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations and include dormouse, great crested newt, otter and all species of bat. The regulations prohibit the deliberate capture, killing or disturbance of any EPS; it is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any of these species. In order to carry out a lawful operation (e.g. development work which has full planning permission) that may result in an offence under the Habitats Regulations, it is necessary to obtain a licence from Natural England. EPS Licences will only be granted after Natural England has been satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternative and that there will not be any adverse impacts on the favourable conservation status of the species.

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the principal piece of legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Various amendments have occurred since the original enactment. The Wildlife and Countryside Act contains both habitat and species protection. Certain bird, animal and plant species are afforded protection under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. Measures for the protection of the countryside, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are also included within the Act.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES ACT 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 improved wildlife protection by amending the WCA. The main function of the NERC Act was to raise the profile of biodiversity amongst public authorities. Section 40 (S40 of the Act places a 'Biodiversity Duty' on all public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions.

THE PROTECTION OF BADGERS ACT 1992

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 consolidates previous legislation (including the Badgers Acts 1973 and 1991 Badgers (Further Protection) Act 1991). It makes it a serious offence to:

- kill, injure or take a badger;
- attempt to kill, injure or take a badger; or
- to damage or interfere with a sett.

The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as "any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger".

ENVIRONMENT ACT 2021

The Environment Act 2021 received royal assent in November 2021 and introduces new environmental protection regimes. This includes the creation of the Office for Environmental Protection who will oversee the framework. The Act includes several measures which impact on the planning application process to provide measures to ensure developments result in a net gain in biodiversity. The Act includes the mandatory requirement of 10% net gain for new developments, unless listed within the exemptions, which includes householder applications, self-build and developments below the threshold of impacts. Biodiversity net gain must be evidenced with the use of the statutory metric and associated documents.