
Land West of North Lodge, Codford St Peter

Update Preliminary Ecology Appraisal

November 2025

Client: Mr R Payne
Report Ref: SEB3172_01
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Non-Technical Summary

Site Location	Land west of North Lodge, High Street, Codford St Peter, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0NJ, (central grid reference: ST 96141 40161).
Scope of Works	Preliminary Ecology Appraisal comprising a Habitat Survey and Suitability Assessment for Protected Species, supplemented with a desk study.
Survey Methods	The Habitat Survey was undertaken with reference to UKHab Classification (2023) and CIEEM (2018) and the Suitability Assessment for Protected Species included reference to BCT (2023).
Lead Personnel	Kate Hayward MCIEEM.
Site Description and Suitability Assessment	The site lies in a rural location approximately 150m north-west of the village of Codford St Peter. The site is approximately 0.4 hectares in size. It comprises tall herbs and ruderals, trees, shrubs, log and brash piles and built linear features, including an ivy-covered stone wall. With consideration to protected/notable species: • The site offers no roosting opportunities for bats. The scattered trees and shrubs offer moderate-quality foraging and commuting opportunities for bats. • The scattered trees and shrubs and ivy-covered stone wall offer suitable nesting bird habitat. • The trees, shrubs and log/brash piles offer refuge for small mammals. Due to the lack of continuous habitat and low connectivity to adjacent habitats, there is negligible potential for dormouse to utilise the site. • The site lies within a Green Risk Zone for great crested newt, with no ponds with recorded presence for this species within 2km of the site and one pond within 500m, assessed as 'average' suitability and separated from the site by a major intervening barrier, the main A36 road. It is therefore considered that there is negligible potential for this species to utilise the site.
The Proposal	The site is the subject of a planning application for the construction of two dwellings.
Recommendations	No further surveys are recommended on site, subject to the proposal adhering to a sensitive lighting scheme. Bat activity surveys will be required if the proposal will increase lighting on habitats that could be used by bats (adjacent Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodlands). Retained trees, shrubs and the adjacent south-east Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland will be protected with tree protection fencing throughout the development. Precautionary protection measures have been provided for pre- and during construction, a sensitive lighting scheme will be required, and biodiversity enhancements have been recommended.



Contents

Non-Technical Summary	2
1. Introduction	4
1.1 Background	4
1.2 Scope and Objectives of Survey	5
1.3 Personnel	5
2. Legislation and Planning Policy	5
3. Desk Study	6
3.1 Methods	6
3.2 Results	6
4. Survey	8
4.1 Method	8
4.2 Site Description	10
4.3 Habitat Descriptions	10
4.4 Great Crested Newt HSI Assessment	11
5. Evaluation	11
5.2 Statutory Designations	11
5.3 Habitats	11
5.4 Protected and Notable Species	11
6. Recommendations	13
6.2 Further Surveys	13
6.3 Habitat Protection	13
6.4 Precautionary Protection Measures	13
6.5 Lighting	14
6.6 Biodiversity Enhancements	14
7. Annexes	15



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In November 2025, Seasons Ecology was instructed by Mr R Payne, to undertake a Preliminary Ecology Appraisal of land to the west of North Lodge, High Street, Codford St Peter, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0NJ, (central grid reference: ST 96141 40161). The site is the subject of a planning application for the construction of two dwellings.
- 1.1.2 The Preliminary Ecology Appraisal consisted of a Habitat Survey and Suitability Assessment for Protected Species. The survey was supplemented with a desk study.
- 1.1.3 This Preliminary Ecology Appraisal is an update survey following on from an initial survey by Chalkhill Environmental Consultants in June 2024. A summary of the previous survey results is provided below:

'The site is an approximate 2050 sq metres of disturbed ground which is becoming colonised by tall ruderal herbaceous and tree and shrub species.

The site is adjacent to a block of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland which may be a remnant of more extensive woodland cover in the area in the past. No records of granted EPS licence applications relating to bats within a 2 km radius was found on a data search. However, the site is likely to be familiar to small local populations of bat species commonly associated with buildings given the village location of the site and may form part of a commuting route and feeding area for these bats. The site does have connectivity to a local network of hedgelines and small blocks of woodland to the south. Although terrestrial connectivity with this network is broken by the A36 main road, other than the impact of street lighting, this would not be a barrier to commuting by bats.

For this reason, there is a low risk of a negative impact on bats as a result of spillage of domestic lighting from the new development on a site where, other than street lighting, there has been no artificial nocturnal illumination...

On the site surveyed it would be particularly important to avoid spillage of domestic light on the adjacent edges of the block of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland since this is likely to be an area used by bats commuting to and from the wider landscape and as a local sheltered feeding area during less than optimal weather conditions.

The adjacent edges of the block of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland are likely to be vulnerable to damage and compaction of soil during the proposed construction work.

The shrubby habitat colonising the site and the bushy ivy colonising the tall roadside wall could provide shelter for breeding birds.

Conclusions

There is a low risk of negative impact on bats from spillage of domestic lighting.

There is a low risk of negative impact on breeding birds.

There is a low risk of negative impact on the area of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland as a result of the proposed work.'



1.2 Scope and Objectives of Survey

- 1.2.1 This update survey was undertaken to identify and record the habitats on site and to assess the potential of the site to support protected/notable species. The purpose of the survey is to make known any ecological constraints or considerations that may be relevant to the proposal and to inform biodiversity enhancements.
- 1.2.2 This report is based on the findings of a survey undertaken on 11th November 2025.
- 1.2.3 The report is supported by the following:
- Annex 1: Summary of Legislation and Planning Policy.
 - Annex 2: Habitat Plan.
 - Annex 3: Site Photographs.

1.3 Personnel

- 1.3.1 The survey was overseen by Principal Ecologist, Kate Hayward, who has produced this report. Kate is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and has 25 years' experience as a professional consultant advising on development projects and protected species and habitats, including acting as the named ecologist on European Protected Species licences.
- 1.3.2 The survey was led by Emma Shaw, Consultant Ecologist and Qualifying Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Emma is a level 1 licensed bat surveyor (Class Licence Registration Number: 2024-11842-CL17-BAT) and has over four years' experience in surveying protected species.
- 1.3.3 The survey was assisted by Patrick Ryan, Assistant Ecologist.

2. Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.1.1 This report has been compiled with reference to relevant legislation and national planning policies, which protect wildlife. Annex 1 provides a brief summary of this legislation and policy.



3. Desk Study

3.1 Methods

3.1.1 A web-based desk study was undertaken in November 2025 prior to the survey to provide local information that may be relevant to the proposal. The following online resources were consulted:

- The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website¹, to obtain information on:
 - Statutory designations within 2km of the site and within 4km for designations with bats as a primary feature.
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones and Bat Consultation Zones relevant to the site.
 - Habitats on or adjacent to the site listed on the Priority Habitats Inventory.
 - European Protected Species licences issued within 2km.
 - Other species information that may be relevant to the proposal.
- Google Maps², to view aerial photographs, maps and mapnik data, to assess the ecological context of the site.

3.2 Results

Statutory Designations

3.2.1 There are no statutory designations within 2km of the site or statutory designations for bats within 4km of the site. The closest designation is Stockdon Wood and Down SSSI located approximately 2.6km to the south. The primary features for this designation are habitats, including chalk grassland, scrub and woodland.

SSSI Impact Risk Zones and Bat Consultation Zones

3.2.2 The site itself is not covered by any statutory designations, but it does lie within the Impact Risk Zone for nearby SSSIs. This requires consultation with Natural England for pipelines and underground cables, minerals, oil and gas exploration, large non-residential developments extending outside of existing settlements, residential developments of 100 units or more, air pollution from industrial/agricultural development, general combustion processes, landfill, industrial scale composting, large scale discharge of water and any development needing its own water supply. Therefore, consultation is unlikely to be required.

3.2.3 The site does not lie within a Bat Consultation Zone.

Priority Habitats Inventory

3.2.4 The site lies within an area of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland, which extends beyond the north-west, south-west and south-east boundaries of the site, with four further Priority

¹ <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

² <http://acme.com/planimeter/>



Habitat Deciduous Woodlands located approximately 35m, 310m and 480m south-west, and 390m south-east of the site.

European Protected Species Licences

- 3.2.5 There are no European Protected Species Licences that have been issued within 2km of the site. The nearest licence is for a location approximately 2.1km to the south-east for the species, brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* and soprano pipistrelle *P. pygmaeus*.
- 3.2.6 There is a record for a common pipistrelle maternity roost at a location approximately 1.1km south-east of the site, sourced from the National Biodiversity Network atlas³.

Other Species Information

- 3.2.7 The site falls within a Green Risk Zone for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*.
- 3.2.8 There is one great crested newt pond survey (Natural England, 2017-2019) that has been conducted within 2km of the site. This pond survey is for a location approximately 1.2km north-east of the site and recorded absence of this species.

Ecological Context

- 3.2.9 The site lies in a rural location approximately 150m north-west of the village of Codford St Peter. It is surrounded to the south by a strip of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland bounding the main A36 road, to the east and west lies further Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland and to the north is a minor road bounding both arable and pasture fields and a residential property. Beyond in all directions are arable and pasture fields with occasional low density residential dwellings.
- 3.2.10 There is one pond evident within 500m of the site, located approximately 270m to the south-west. The nearest watercourse is a tributary of the River Wylye, which runs approximately 340m to the south-west, at its nearest point.

³ NBN Trust (2025). The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas. <https://nbnatlas.org/>



4. Survey

4.1 Method

Habitat Survey

- 4.1.1 A systematic walkover of the site was undertaken on 11th November 2025. Notes were taken on the habitats present, and their suitability to support protected and notable species. Any incidental evidence of protected and notable species was noted. The survey was carried out with reference to UKHab Classification (2023)⁴, CIEEM 2018⁵ and BS 42020:2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development* (BSI 2013).

Daytime Bat Walkover and Roost Assessment

- 4.1.2 A Daytime Bat Walkover of the site was carried out to observe, assess and record any habitats suitable for bats to roost, commute and forage both on site and in the surrounding area.
- 4.1.3 Trees on site were subject to a Ground Level Tree Assessment to identify Potential Roosting Features (PRF) on the exterior of trees. The trees are then assessed as follows:
- PRF – I: PRF(s) only suitable for individual bats or a very small number of bats either due to their size or a lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
 - PRF – M: PRF(s) suitable for multiple bats and could be used by a maternity colony.
- 4.1.4 The site is assessed as either having no habitat features, or *Negligible, Low, Moderate or High* suitability to roosting, foraging and commuting bats.
- 4.1.5 The walkover and roost assessments were undertaken with reference to BCT, 2023⁶.

Great Crested Newt HSI Assessment

- 4.1.6 A great crested newt HSI assessment was undertaken of the pond located approximately 270m to the south-west of the site, as identified during the desk study. This assessment uses ten variables (Suitability Indices), which are then used in a formula to predict the suitability of the pond to support great crested newt (*Oldham et al. 2000*⁷).
- 4.1.7 The Suitability Indices are:
1. Geographic location – Three zones are identified within England, Scotland and Wales; optimal, marginal and unsuitable.
 2. Pond area – The surface area of the pond.

⁴ The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab) (2023). Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J.

⁵ CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

⁶ BCT (2023): Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

⁷ Oldham, R.S., Keeble, J., Swan, R. J. S., and Jeffcote, M. (2000) *Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the great crested newt (Triturus cristatus)* Herpetological Journal, Vol 10m pp143-155.



3. Permanence – Whether the pond dried annually, sometimes dries, rarely dries or never dries.
4. Water quality – Based on invertebrate diversity and assessed as good, moderate, poor or bad.
5. Shade – Estimated percentage of the pond perimeter that is shaded, to at least 1m from the shore.
6. Presence of waterfowl – Assessed as either absent, minor or major.
7. Presence of fish – Assessed as either absent, minor or major.
8. Pond count – The number of ponds evident within 1km of survey pond.
9. Quality of terrestrial habitat – Assessed as good, moderate, poor and more.
10. Macrophyte cover – Estimated percentage of the pond surface area occupied by macrophyte cover.

Constraints to Survey

- 4.1.8 The survey is not able to record flora or fauna that may appear on the site at other times of the year and were therefore not evident at the time of the survey.



4.2 Site Description

- 4.2.1 The site is approximately 0.4 hectares in size. It comprises tall herbs and ruderals, trees, shrubs, scattered log and brash piles and built linear features.
- 4.2.2 Habitats are mapped on the habitat plan at Annex 2 with Target Notes highlighting features of interest. Site photographs are provided at Annex 3. Habitat descriptions are provided below.

4.3 Habitat Descriptions

Tall Herbs and Ruderals

- 4.3.1 This is the dominant habitat on site. Species include cleavers *Galium aparine*, herb-Robert *Geranium robertianum*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, wood avens *Geum urbanum*, lesser burdock *Arctium minus*, dandelion *Taraxacum* species, hedge mustard *Sisymbrium officinale*, docks *Rumex* species, prickly sow-thistle *Sonchus asper*, bristly ox-tongue *Helminthotheca echinoides*, petty spurge *Euphorbia peplus*, stinking iris *Iris foetidissima*, willowherb *Epilobium* species, fool's parsley *Aethusa cynapium*, ivy *Hedera helix*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare* and dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* with occasional grasses, including perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne* and red fescue *Festuca rubra*.
- 4.3.2 A freshly excavated small mammal hole was found in this habitat, central to the south-east fringe of the site (Target Note 1, Annex 2).

Trees and Shrubs

- 4.3.3 The site contains a low number of scattered semi-mature to mature trees, particularly along the north-west and south-east boundaries, with species including elm *Ulmus* species, field maple *Acer campestre*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, cherry *Prunus* species and goat willow *Salix caprea*.
- 4.3.4 The boundaries of the site contain a low number of scattered young trees and shrubs, with species including elm, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, hawthorn, wild cherry *Prunus avium*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* and white poplar *Populus alba*.
- 4.3.5 There was one grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis* drey located within a semi-mature field maple in the north-west of the site (Target Note 2, Annex 2).

Log and Brash Piles

- 4.3.6 The site contains scattered log and brash piles throughout, predominantly across the site boundaries. Notably, there is a large area of stacked logs located in the north-west of the site (Target Note 3, Annex 2).

Built Linear Features

- 4.3.7 The site's north-east boundary is formed by a mortared stone wall approximately 2m in height. The stone wall has dense ivy cover. All other boundaries are wire fencing approximately 1m in height.



4.4 Great Crested Newt HSI Assessment

- 4.4.1 The pond located approximately 270m to the south-west of the site, is assessed as 'average' suitability to great crested newt with a HSI score of 0.67.
- 4.4.2 The pond scored highly for its location (A, optimal), shade (0%), presence of waterfowl (absent), presence of fish (absent) and terrestrial habitat (good). The pond scored moderately for number of ponds within 1km (8 ponds). The pond scored poorly for its area (8m²), permanence (dries annually), water quality (poor) and surface cover of macrophytes (0%).

5. Evaluation

- 5.1.1 The site comprises tall herbs and ruderals, scattered trees and shrubs, log and brash piles. The site forms part of the wider rural landscape and is surrounded to the south-west and south-east by Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland and to the north by arable and pasture fields and a residential property. The scattered trees and shrubs, and log and brash piles, offer elements of naturalness, permanence and fragility, which is otherwise absent on site.
- 5.1.2 The tall herbs and ruderals habitat, which occupies the majority of the site, has no value beyond the immediate Zone of Influence and is assessed as Site value. The scattered trees and shrubs have Local value, contributing to the wider network of habitats.

5.2 Statutory Designations

- 5.2.1 There are no statutory designations requiring consideration within the proposal (none within 2km) and no Impact Risk Zones relevant to the proposal. The site does not lie within a Bat Consultation Zone.

5.3 Habitats

- 5.3.1 Referring to the desk study, the site lies in an area of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland. However, the site does not feature woodland habitat being predominantly tall herbs and ruderals, with scattered individual trees, the majority being young and semi-mature, with the surrounding plots appearing as residential gardens or having been cleared of woodland habitat, notably to the north-west of the site. There is a strip of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland still present adjacent to the south-east site boundary, which grows atop an earth bund created as mitigation and screening for the construction of the adjacent main A36 road.
- 5.3.2 There are four further Priority Habitats within 500m, all Deciduous Woodlands and located approximately 35m, 310m and 480m south-west, and 390m south-east of the site. Due to the small scale of the proposal, and the distance between the site and these woodlands, no impacts to these Priority Habitats are predicted as a result of the proposal.

5.4 Protected and Notable Species

- 5.4.1 The potential for protected and notable species is considered below:
- Flora - No notable plant species or communities were recorded on site. The site has potential to support notable plant species owing to it falling within an area of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland.

No invasive, non-native species were recorded on site.
 - Bats - There are no trees on site with potential roosting features to bats and no overhanging trees with potential roosting features to bats.



The scattered trees and shrubs offer moderate-quality foraging and commuting opportunities for bats. There are local records for brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, Daubenton's bat and soprano pipistrelle, which may use this habitat for foraging and commuting in combination with the wider landscape.

- Nesting Birds - The scattered trees and shrubs offer suitable nesting bird habitat. The ivy cover across the north-east mortared wall boundary also offers nesting opportunities.
- Badger - No evidence of badger *Meles meles* activity or setts were identified on site. The tall herbs and ruderals offer a foraging resource, and the adjacent south-west Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland provides cover and commuting routes for badger.
- Other Mammals – The site itself offers limited refuge habitat for small mammals, being predominantly tall herbs and ruderals. The individual trees, shrubs and log/brush piles (Target Note 3) offer suitable areas of refuge for small mammals across the site, including hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*. A freshly excavated small mammal hole is located within the area of tall herbs and ruderals central to the south-east fringe of the site (Target Note 1). This small mammal hole is likely attributed to rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* or brown rat *Rattus norvegicus*.

The site offers some limited suitable habitat to dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* with foodplants (notably hazel) present on site, although the trees and shrubs are scattered and do not provide continuous habitat required by this species and have poor connectivity to surrounding habitats for this species. There are no European Protected Species licence records for dormouse within 2km of the site, referring to the desk study. Therefore, it is considered that there is negligible potential for dormouse to utilise the trees and shrubs on site.

- Reptiles and Amphibians – The majority of the site offers suitable refuge for reptiles and amphibians, such as common toad *Bufo bufo* and slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, supporting tall herbs and ruderals, trees and shrubs, and including scattered log and brush piles (Target Note 3).

The site offers refuge and commuting habitats for great crested newt. The site lies within a Green Risk Zone for this species and there are no records for this species nearby. There is one pond evident within 500m of the site, located approximately 270m to the south-west, which is assessed as 'average' suitability to great crested newt. This pond is separated from the site by a major road, the A36, which acts as a major intervening barrier to migration. There has been one Natural England great crested newt pond survey carried out approximately 1.2km north-east of the site which recorded absence of this species.

Due to the presence of only one pond within 500m and a major intervening barrier, it is considered that there is negligible potential for this species to utilise the terrestrial habitats on site.

- Invertebrates – The site is suitable to support a moderate diversity and abundance of invertebrates, provided by the scattered trees, shrubs and log/brush piles.



6. Recommendations

6.1.1 The site is the subject of a planning application for the construction of two dwellings. One tree, a semi-mature field maple, several shrubs and an area of tall herbs and ruderals will be lost to the proposal.

6.1.2 With consideration to the proposal, the following is recommended:

6.2 Further Surveys

6.2.1 No further surveys are recommended considering the type and scale of the proposal, subject to a sensitive lighting scheme being followed showing no increase in light spill across retained vegetation, and adjacent Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodlands.

6.2.2 Should an increase in lighting be proposed, owing to the adjacent Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodlands, then it is recommended that bat activity surveys of the site are carried out. Static monitoring is an appropriate method for survey, with recording devices placed at the boundaries of the site and woodland edge for five consecutive nights. The adjacent woodlands offer moderate-quality foraging and commuting habitats to bats; therefore, at least one static monitoring survey should be conducted each season, one in spring, one in summer and one in autumn. Two night-time bat walkover surveys are also recommended, one in the spring/summer (mid-April/May/June) and one in the summer/autumn (July/August/September). This will identify the species using the site and level of activity.

6.3 Habitat Protection

6.3.1 Individual trees and shrubs to be retained in the north-west and south-east of the site and the adjacent south-east Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland, will be protected with appropriate tree protection fencing during the works.

6.4 Precautionary Protection Measures

6.4.1 The following protection measures prior to and during construction should be implemented:

- Should works commence during the nesting bird season (generally the nesting bird season is from 1st March to 31st August), then a pre-works nesting bird check by an Ecological Clerk of Works should be undertaken of the trees and shrubs in the vicinity of the works.
- Protection fencing should be installed prior to any works, including bringing materials and machinery onto the site.
- Site office/welfare facilities should be located away from the scattered trees in the north-west and south-east of the site.
- Hand searches should be undertaken by an Ecological Clerk of Works during soil stripping with any animals found relocated to a vegetated boundary away from the works.
- During construction, any trenches left open overnight should include a means of escape for animals. A plank angled from the bottom to the top of the trench, will allow animals (such as hedgehog and badger) to escape.
- Noisy machinery should cease one hour before sunset to minimise any disturbance to wildlife.
- In the event of a protected species being discovered at any stage during the works, then works should stop and advice sought from an Ecologist.



6.5 Lighting

- 6.5.1 A sensitive lighting scheme should be demonstrated. Lighting should not illuminate the retained on-site habitats, including the scattered trees and shrubs, or the adjacent higher quality Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodlands.

6.6 Biodiversity Enhancements

- 6.6.1 The site is predominantly tall herbs and ruderals with limited value to local wildlife, with a few trees and shrubs, which offer higher value habitat. The proposal provides opportunity to enhance biodiversity on the site. The following biodiversity features are considered appropriate to the type and scale of the proposal:

- Roosting bats - Two bat boxes should be built-in to the proposed two dwellings, one within each of the dwellings. These should be located on a south-east, south-west or south-facing elevation at a height of between 3m and 5m off the ground with a clear flight path provided in front and below the bat boxes.
- Nesting birds - Two bird boxes should be built-in to the proposed two dwellings, one within each of the dwellings. These should be located on a north or east-facing elevation at a height of between 3m and 5m off the ground.
- Common and widespread species of reptiles, amphibians and small mammals - Two log piles should be created along the north-west boundary to offer refuge and hibernation habitat for these species. These will also form the receptor sites for any reptile, amphibian or small mammal species discovered during supervision/clearance works.
- New habitat creation will be required to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain, and a 30-year Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan implemented for new, retained and enhanced habitats.



7. Annexes

Annex 1: Legislation and Planning Policy

A summary of relevant legislation and national policy is provided below. For each individual case, it is advised to consult the relevant documents in full and obtain legal advice, where appropriate.

There are several UK legislation tools, which are listed below. European legislation has not been included as it is incorporated in UK legislation by domestic provisions.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit)

In 1992, the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)⁸ came into force. This provides for the creation of a network of protected wildlife sites across the European Union, known as 'Natura 2000'. This network consists of designated sites, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC)⁹. These sites form part of a series of measures aimed at conserving important and threatened habitats and species.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 commonly known as 'the Habitat Regulations' transpose the Habitats Directive into national law and set out the provisions for the protection and management of species and habitats of European importance, including Natura 2000 sites. The Regulations have been amended in England in relation to candidate SACs and SPAs. These are sites submitted by the Government for consideration as part of the Natura 2000 network, and are also now defined as European Sites. All European Sites are of national importance and have been notified as SSSIs.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as Amended in Quinquennial Review and by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000¹⁰

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981¹¹ provides the foundation for much of the statutory wildlife protection in the UK. Part I deals with the protection of plants, birds and other animals and Part II deals with the designation of SSSIs.

The following broad areas are covered by the Act:

Nature Conservation - Protecting those sites which are National Nature Reserves (NNR) and SSSIs.

Wildlife - Listing endangered or rare species in need of protection and creating offences for killing, disturbing or injuring such species. The disturbance of any nesting bird during the breeding season is also noted as an offence.

The Act also makes it an offence to cause to grow in the wild certain plant species or to release certain fauna into the wild. The Act is enforced by local authorities.

⁸ European Commission (1992). Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. European Commission, Brussels.

⁹ European Commission (1979). Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, European Commission, Brussels.

¹⁰ Secretary of State, 2000. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

¹¹ Secretary of State, 1981. Wildlife and Countryside Act. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.



Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 provides a new statutory right of access to the countryside and improves upon the rights of way system, providing stronger protection for both wildlife and countryside.

Part III of the Act - Nature Conservation and Wildlife Protection: A number of measures to promote and enhance wildlife conservation are detailed, including improving protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and increasing penalties for deliberate damage to SSSIs. The Act affords statutory protection to Ramsar Sites which are wetlands designated under the International Convention on Wetlands.

National Planning Policy Framework, 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and revised in July 2021. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system and how these are expected to be addressed. The NPPF is a material consideration for the purposes of planning decision-making.

The NPPF places a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The NPPF has an environmental objective to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The presence of a legally protected species is a material consideration for a local authority dealing with planning applications for any development that would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and geological conservation¹², prepared in support of the former PPS9, is still relevant and provides more guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation.

Biodiversity Action Plans

In 1994, the Government produced the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)¹³, a national strategy for the conservation of biodiversity. Regional and District/Borough BAPs apply the UK BAP at a local level. The 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework' succeeded the UK BAP in July 2012¹⁴. The UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats remain, however, important and valuable reference sources. Notably, they have been used to help draw up statutory lists of priorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In England, there are 56 habitats of principal importance and 943 species of principal importance.

¹² ODPM Circular 06/2005 Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Importance within the Planning System.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7692/147570.pdf

¹³ Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1994. Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan. London.

¹⁴ JNCC and Defra (on behalf of the Four Countries' Biodiversity Group). 2012. UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. July 2012. Available from: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6189>



Species/species group	Legal protection and policy
Flora	A number of plant species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit). It is an offence to deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy these wild plants. It is also an offence for any purpose to possess, sell or exchange such a plant. In addition, a number of plant species are species of principal importance in England (formerly referred to as UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species), LBAP priority species and/or notable species that are a material consideration in planning.
Bats	Bat species in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill bats; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which bats use for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Seven of the 18 species of bats occurring in the UK are species of principal importance in England and many are also included in LBAPs.
Badgers	Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1979. Under this legislation it is illegal to kill, injure or take badgers or to interfere with a badger sett in any way.
Otters	Otters in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill an otter; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb otter; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which an otter uses for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Otter is a species of principal importance in England.
Water voles	Water voles in England and Wales are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill a water vole; • Intentionally disturb water vole in their breeding or resting places; and • Deliberately damage, destroy or obstruct of a breeding site or resting place. Water vole is a species of principal importance in England.



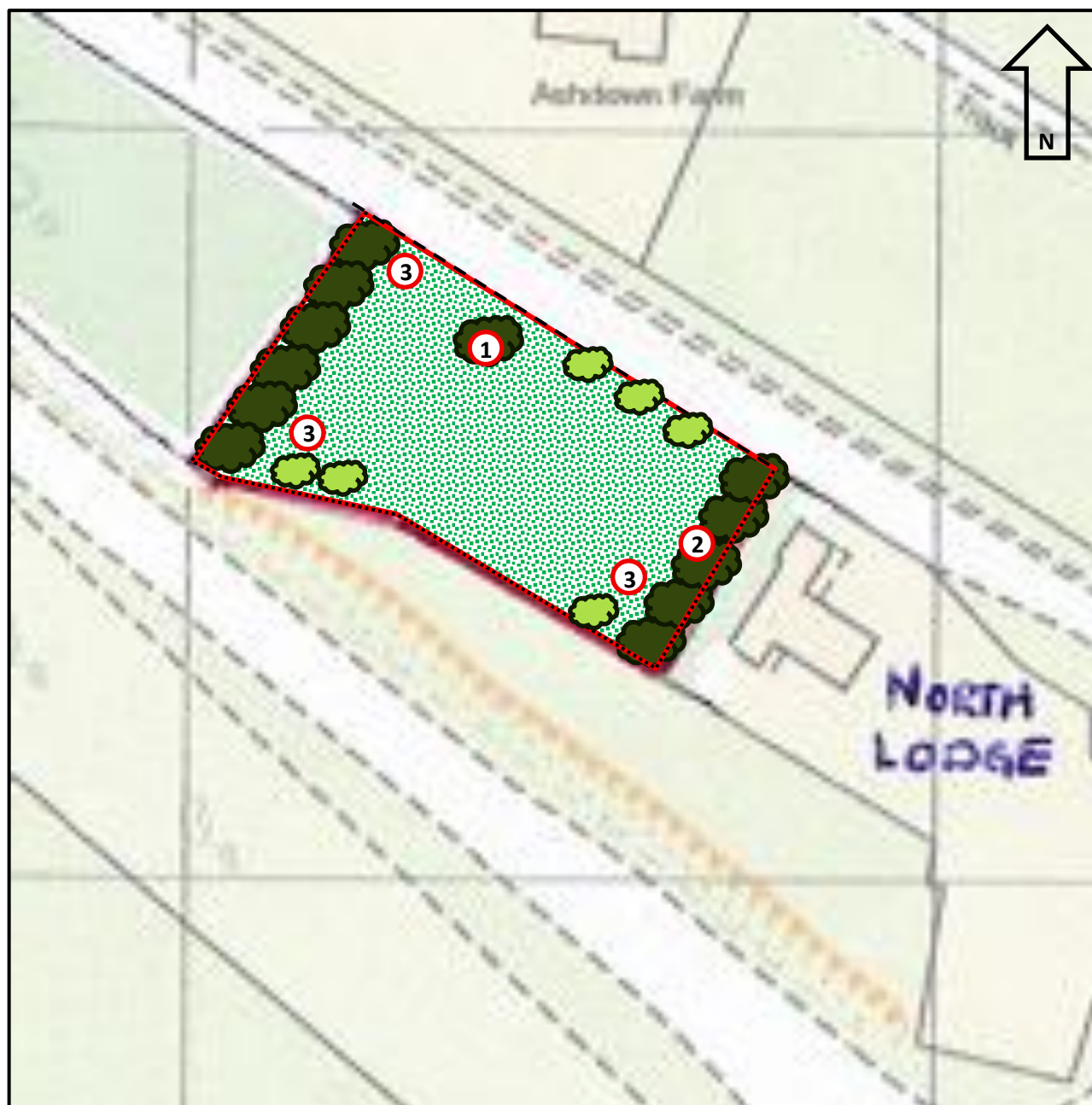
Dormice	Dormice in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill a dormouse; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb dormice; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a dormouse uses for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Dormouse is a species of principal importance in England.
Other mammals	Several other species of mammals, whilst not afforded specific legal protection, are of note and consideration to such species is necessary in respect to planning in accordance with national and often local policy. Such species are typically identified as species of principal importance in England and/or LBAPs. Species of principal importance in England include brown hare and hedgehog.
Birds	All wild birds in England and Wales are granted legal protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Kill, injure or take any wild bird; • Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; and, • Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird. Bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act are afforded further protection and it is illegal to disturb such species while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird. A number of bird species are also included as species of principal importance in England and LBAPs.
Reptiles	Smooth snakes and sand lizards in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill a smooth snake or sand lizard; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb a smooth snake or sand lizard; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a smooth snake or sand lizard use for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Widespread species of reptile (slow worm, common lizard, grass snake and adder) are protected against killing, injury and sale. Reptile species are also species of principal importance in England and often LBAP species.
Amphibians	Great crested newts and natterjack toads in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to:



	• Deliberately capture, injure or kill a great crested newt or natterjack toad; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb a great crested newt or natterjack toad; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a great crested newt or natterjack toad use for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Great crested newt, pool frog, natterjack toad and common toad are species of principal importance in England. These and other amphibian species are also often included in LBAPs.
Invertebrates	45 species of invertebrate are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Intentional kill, injure or take such species; • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place used by such species; and, • Disturb such species when occupying such a structure or place. A further 24 species are only afforded partial protection (typically only against sale). Stag beetle for instance is only protected against sale. Eight species and their habitats are also afforded further protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit). 398 species of invertebrate are included as species of principal importance in England and such species are often also included within LBAPs.



Annex 2: Habitat Map (November 2025)



Key	Target Notes
 = Site boundary  = Tall herbs and ruderals	1 = Small Mammal Hole
 = Trees	2 = Squirrel Drey
 = Shrubs	3 = Log and Brash Piles
 = Stone wall	
 = Wire fence	
 = Target Note	



Annex 3: Site Photographs (November 2025)

Photograph 1: A view of the site looking north-east showing the tall herbs and ruderals.



Photograph 2: A view of the site looking north showing the tall herbs and ruderals, scattered trees/shrubs (left) and the mortared stone wall (right).



Photograph 3: Log piles in the north-west of the site.



Photograph 4: Scattered trees, log and brash piles (Target Note 3) in the north-west of the site, facing west.



Photograph 5: Squirrel drey within a semi-mature field maple.



Photograph 6: Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland (off-site), adjacent to the south-west site boundary, facing south.



Photograph 7: Pond (off-site), situated approximately 270m south-west of the site.

