



Follywood Farm
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)
For LPC (Trull) Ltd.

15th April 2026

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The report, and the information contained in it, is intended to be valid for a maximum of 12 months from the date of the survey, providing no significant alterations to the site have occurred.



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1. Introduction

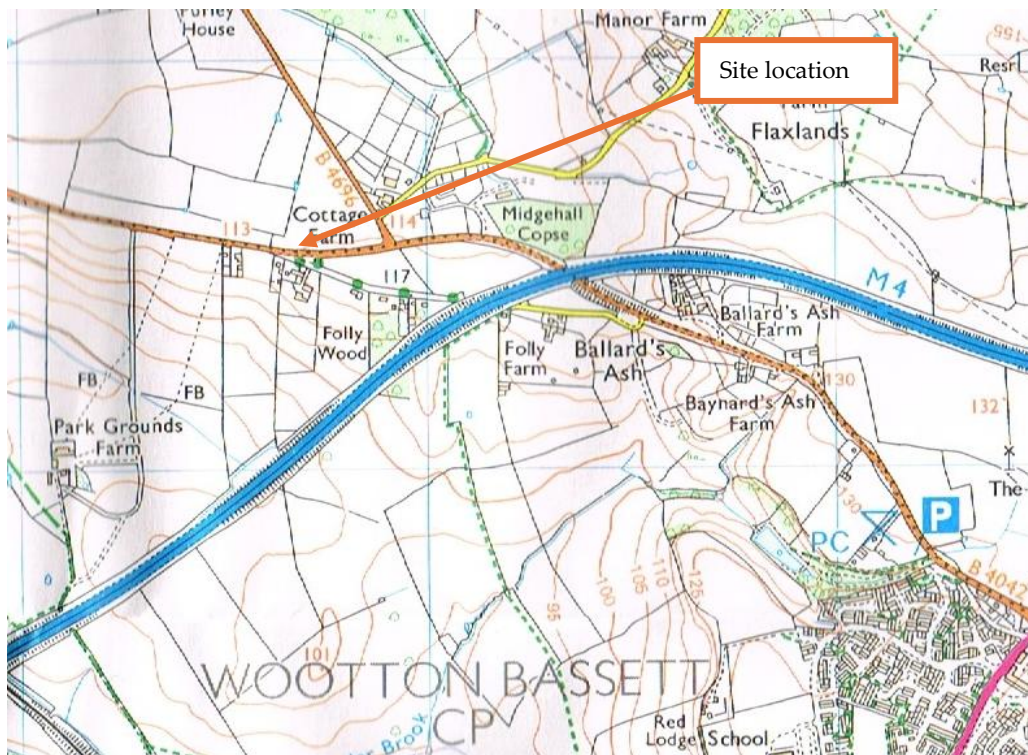
1.1 Commission

Ellendale Environmental Limited was commissioned by LPC (Trull) Ltd., on behalf of their client, to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for an area of land at Follywood Farm, Brinkworth Road, Royal Wootton Bassett, Wiltshire, SN4 8DT ('the site'). It is proposed to build a single dwelling on the site, with the intention for this to be used by an equestrian worker, in lieu of an existing mobile home ('the proposed development').

1.2 Site Details

The site is located to the north of the M4 and east of Swindon, at OS grid reference SU 05787 84456. It is on Brinkworth Road with agricultural land and residential dwellings in the surrounding area.

Figure 1: Site location



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1.3 Survey Objectives

On the basis of the brief provided by the client, Ellendale Environmental conducted an ecological survey of the site and a 50m buffer (where accessible and appropriate) to fulfil the following needs:

- Obtain baseline information on the current habitats and ecological features in and around the site;
- Identify any further specialist surveys that may be required;
- Identify the presence (or potential presence) of any protected species whose disturbance may require consent under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) or the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended); and
- Identify any species or habitats which may require special mitigation during the development of the site.



2. Methodology

2.1 Data Search

Publicly available databases, including using MAGIC and the NBN Atlas were consulted for historical evidence of:

- Statutory land-based designations;
- Non-statutory land-based designations;
- Local Biodiversity Sites; and
- Protected and notable species.

The data search was conducted within a 2km (5km for bats) radius of the site boundaries.

2.2 Phase 1 Habitat Survey

A Phase 1 Habitat survey of the site area was undertaken, and the habitats present on the site were mapped following the Phase 1 survey methodology (JNCC, 2010), listing the plant species associated with each habitat. This methodology was a Phase 1 habitat survey, whereby all habitats were surveyed and recorded onto a base plan, and any habitats that were considered to be of potential interest to nature conservation were recorded through the use of target notes to annotate a Phase 1 habitat map.

Habitats were then classified in accordance with the UKHab Primary Hierarchy at the level most appropriate to the features being recorded. In general, all ecosystems have been identified to a Level 3 (Broad Habitat Type) habitat, with the majority of habitats being classified to Level 4 (further splits of Level 3 habitats inc. UK BAP Priority Habitats) or Level 5 (further splits of Level 4 habitats inc. Annex 1 habitats), where appropriate. Secondary codes have been used to further describe habitats.

About UK Habitat Classification

UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) is a hierarchical system for rapidly recording and classifying habitat via satellite imagery and field survey.



The system comprises five levels of Primary Habitats which include ecosystems, broad habitats, and Level 4 habitats including Annex I habitats, along with non-hierarchical secondary codes which provide information on the environment, management and origin of Primary Habitats. The secondary codes are also used to map habitat mosaics and identify notable species features and/or management techniques. The information is used to identify ecologically sensitive features/habitats, inform relevant species surveys, and aid in the recommendation of mitigation and enhancement measures in connection with a proposed development.

The UK Habitat Classification Survey is intended to provide an indication of the main habitats on site and their biodiversity value, which leads to recommendations for management. It is not intended to be a full inventory of species on site.

2.3 Preliminary Protected Species Walkover

The site and surrounding areas were examined for signs of protected species. The presence/potential presence of protected or notable species of conservation concern was recorded using target notes, following the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management guidance (CIEEM, 2012).

2.4 Survey Area

The survey covered the entire site and areas within 50m (where accessible and appropriate).

2.5 Survey Limitations

The aim of this survey was not to record every species present on the site, as one survey acts as a snapshot, recording only those species which are present at the time or whose presence can be indicated through the occurrence of field signs, such as feeding remains, droppings or places used for shelter or foraging. Evidence collected has been used to draw conclusions about the flora and fauna within the boundary of the site and to provide an assessment of their ecological and nature conservation value.

Weather was not a limiting factor to the survey. The prevailing conditions at the time of the survey are summarised in **Table 1**.



Table 1: Survey weather conditions

SURVEY DATE	TEMPERATURE (°C)	WIND SPEED (MPH)	CLOUD COVER / PRECIPITATION
09/03/26	11.6	Ave. 3.6 Max. 5.5	80% cloud cover & dry.

2.6 Surveyor

The survey was undertaken by Douglas Fraser, Consultant Ecologist at Ellendale Environmental. Douglas is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), with experience of undertaking ecological surveys and over six years' experience of environmental project management.

The survey was assisted by Christopher Parsons, Associate of Ellendale Environmental. Christopher holds a bat survey licence (Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), registration number CLS-2019-42561), with respect to the Conservation Regulations 1994. The licence is valid for all counties of England, until 31st December 2030. Christopher has over 10 years' professional experience of undertaking ecological surveys and working with bat species across the UK.



3. Results

3.1 Data Search

A 2km data search for existing designated sites, priority/notable habitats and biological records was undertaken using MAGIC¹ and the NBN Atlas².

Statutory designated sites

Jubilee Lake, a designated Local Nature Reserve, is located 1.2km to the east of the site, which as well as the lake habitat itself, includes wider wetland habitat, ancient woodland and grasslands.

Non-statutory designated sites

The site is in the Great Western Community Forest area.

Local biodiversity sites

The site is within 2km of areas identified for Priority Species for Countryside Stewardship Targeting, including bird species such as lapwing *Vanellus vanellus* and curlew *Numenius arquata*, and for brown hairstreak *Thecla betulae* butterfly. It is also identified as an area important for Grassland Assemblage Farmland Bird species. Within 2km there are also some areas of ancient woodland, lowland meadows and calcareous grassland.

Protected & notable species

The following terrestrial protected species was identified within 2km of the site boundaries by the data search:

¹ Magic database. <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> Accessed on 04/03/26.

² NBN atlas database. [NBN Atlas - UK's largest collection of biodiversity information](#) Accessed on 04/03/26.



- Great-crested newt *Triturus cristatus*³ (10 records, the closest of which is located 1.3km south-west of the site, recorded in 2016).

A further 11 protected and notable species were identified within 2km of the site boundaries; however, due to licencing restrictions, the locations of these species cannot be included in this report: otter *Lutra lutra*, badger *meles meles*, hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, water vole *Arvicola amphibius*, brown hare *Lepus europaeus*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, smooth snake *Coronella austriaca* and adder *Vipera berus*.

The following bat species were identified within 5km of the site boundaries by the data search:

- Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*⁴ (three records, the most recent of which is located 4.7km east of the site, recorded in 2023); and
- Noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula*⁵ (four records, the most recent of which is located 4.7km east of the site, recorded in 2024).

An additional two species of bat were recorded within 5km of the site; however, due to licencing restrictions, the location of these species cannot be included in this report: common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* and brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*.

Bird species

Approximately 120 bird species have been recorded within 2km of the site and are shown on the NBN Atlas; however, none of these species are located within the site boundary.

³ NBN Trust (2026). *Triturus cristatus* on the NBN Atlas: [Triturus cristatus](https://ror.org/00mcxye41) on The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas. <https://ror.org/00mcxye41> [Page visited 04/03/26].

⁴ NBN Trust (2026). *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* on the NBN Atlas: [Pipistrellus pygmaeus](https://ror.org/00mcxye41) on The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas. <https://ror.org/00mcxye41> [Page visited 04/03/26].

⁵ NBN Trust (2026). *Nyctalus noctule* on the NBN Atlas: [Nyctalus noctula](https://ror.org/00mcxye41) on The National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas. <https://ror.org/00mcxye41> [Page visited 04/03/26].



3.2 Phase 1 Habitat Survey

The site is on a farm with a stable, yard, paddocks and surrounding agricultural fields. It is bordered by hedgerow, woodland and main roads including the M4 motorway to the south. There is a landfill and waste processing site approximately 600m to the south-west, and Royal Wootton Bassett is 1.5km to the south-east. The wider landscape is a mixture of predominantly agricultural land, hedgerow and woodland habitat.

Seven Phase 1 Habitat types were recorded, including boundary features, as detailed in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Phase 1 Habitat types & UKHab classification

Phase 1 Vegetation Category	UKHab Vegetation Category
J4 Bare ground	510 Bare ground
J2.3.4 Fence	u1e Built linear features
B6 Poor semi-improved grassland	g4 Modified grassland
J2.3.8 Earth bank	111 Earth bank
J.3.6 Buildings	u1b5 Buildings
J2.2.2 Defunct hedge	h2a6 Other native hedgerow
J2.3.6 Dry ditch	50 Ditch

J.4 Bare ground (UKHab: 510 Bare ground)

Entering the site from the west via a side lane off Brinkworth Road, an access track leads to the stables, yard, paddock, menage and an existing caravan, and is bare ground consisting of earth, gravel, stone and a hardstanding area. To the north-east there is another access track into the site.

J.2.3.4 Fence (UKHab: u1e Built linear features)

The site has fences along the entire perimeter, and multiple fences are present in the centre to create separate grazing paddocks. The fences are all stock-proof post and wire with some gates for access.



B.6 Poor semi-improved grassland (UKHab: g4 Modified grassland)

The paddocks and field areas that comprise most of the site consist of poor semi-improved grassland (TN3). There are patches of unvegetated ground and exposed earth where horses have been, and the grass is grazed and managed. The dominant species was perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, with some creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* and common nettle *Urtica dioica*.

J.2.3.8 Earth bank (UKHab: 111 Earth bank)

There are areas of relatively good condition semi-improved neutral grassland (TN2 and TN4). The main area is on top of two earth banks, one that borders the south-west of the site, and the other that is between the north-western paddock and the caravan. The earth banks rise to approximately 3m and have a width of approximately 2-2.5m. The sward height here is greater, extending to approximately 50cm.

There are also areas of grassland in similar ecological condition around the margins of the site and access track, though sward heights are much lower, likely related to grazing and mowing, with sward heights reaching approximately 20cm.

Species here included red deadnettle *Lamium purpureum*, white deadnettle *Lamium album*, daisy *Bellis perennis*, common nettle, creeping buttercup, thistle *Cirsium spp.*, daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*, grape hyacinth *Muscari spp.*, groundsel *Senecio vulgaris* and dandelion *Taraxacum sect. Ruderalia*.

J.3.6 Buildings (UKHab: u1b5 Buildings)

There is a prefabricated static caravan, used as a temporary dwelling, which would be replaced by the proposed single-storey residential dwelling for an equestrian worker.



Photograph 1: showing a view of the site & existing caravan (facing north)



J.2.2.2 Defunct hedge (UKHab: h2a6 Other native hedgerow)

Along the northern boundary of the site there is a defunct hedgerow with taller trees within it (TN5), with species including pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, dog-rose *Rosa canina*, ivy *Hedera helix* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* L. agg. The ground flora included broad-leaved dock, daisy, common nettle, cleavers *Galium aparine* and red deadnettle.

J.2.3.6 Dry ditch (UKHab: 50 Ditch)

A dry ditch is located along the northern boundary of the site adjacent to Brinkworth Road and the defunct hedgerow.



3.3 Preliminary Protected Species Walkover

The site and surrounding habitats were examined for signs of protected and notable species and the following assessment has been made for the potential for these species to be present.

3.3.1 Protected Species

Badger

The surrounding countryside is suitable for badger, with some foraging opportunities within the site such as the areas of defunct hedgerow and grassland. However, no evidence was found such as setts, latrines, snuffle holes (digging) or footprint tracks. Access into the site for badgers is limited, particularly to the south by the M4, and this species is not considered to be present.

Birds

There are some potential foraging and nesting opportunities for birds, such as in the hedgerow and grassland margins; however, no old bird nests were found during the survey.

Species were heard and observed around the farm area including jackdaw *Coloeus monedula* (AN1), rook *Corvus frugilegus*, greenfinch *Chloris chloris*, goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*, dunnoek *Prunella modularis* and robin *Erithacus rubecula*. These observations show there is some habitat value to areas around the site for birds, primarily the hedgerows, which offers notable nesting opportunities.

Bats

The hedgerow and grassland areas would provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bat species; however, no potential roost features or suitable locations were found around the site. Furthermore, the taller trees within the hedgerow did not have potential features suitable for roosting bats such as cracks, crevices or broken limbs.

The static caravan and the stable to the east did not have features that are likely to support bat roosting (AN2 and AN3).



The stable, comprised of concrete block walls and a corrugated metal roof, is an open and cold structure, and the metal roofing is not ideal for bats to grasp onto.

The caravan appears to have a prefabricated structure, with timber cladding, a metal and bitumen roof, and PVC materials used for the window and door frames, and guttering. The active use of the caravan means that the interior was not entered, but from a view of the space during an external inspection, there were no internal potential roost features. Furthermore, no potential access or egress points were identified around the caravan's exterior.

No evidence of bats such as droppings, feeding remains or staining was found around the building or trees across the site. Overall, the site is assessed as providing negligible roosting potential for bats.

Brown hare

The grasslands and associated high sward present within the site may provide suitable habitat for foraging, commuting and breeding brown hare. No evidence of this species was observed within the site at the time of the survey; however, this species has been recorded in the local area and may therefore pass through the site.

Great crested newt (GCN)

The habitats around the site may provide some terrestrial habitat for GCN for commuting and foraging, in particular the hedgerow, grassland margins, and a brash pile to the south (AN4). However, there are no ponds or waterbodies present within or adjacent to the site that provide suitable breeding habitat for GCN.

There are ponds in the wider area that have records of GCN from 2014, but these are located over 500m away from the site, as with most known ponds in the area. Two ponds are located to the north and south-east of the site approximately 450m away, but the intervening habitat is fragmented by Brinkworth Road and the M4 respectively.



Photograph 2: showing brash pile to the south of the site



3.3.2 Notable Species

Common reptiles & amphibians

The habitats within the site may provide some terrestrial habitat for commuting and foraging for common amphibians; however, the proximity of the M4 and Brinkworth roads, and the limited number of nearby waterbodies, limits the ability of these species to access the site. Furthermore, since there are no ponds or waterbodies present within or adjacent to the site, there is no suitable breeding habitat for amphibians. These species could breed in ponds in the wider landscape, but the fragmented habitat reduces the likelihood that they could enter the site. There are no local records of common amphibian species within 2km of the site and no evidence was observed at the time of the survey. Amphibians are therefore considered unlikely to be present within the site.



No hibernacula suitable for reptiles was observed within the site, and no evidence of reptiles was observed during the survey. However, reptile species may utilise the site's refugia habitat during the summer, in areas such as the brash piles and vegetation at the margins, while open areas of grassland offer basking opportunities. This includes those with historic records in the area, such as grass snake and common lizard.

West European hedgehog

The grassland and hedgerows provide suitable foraging and sheltering habitat for hedgehogs. No signs (such as droppings) were noted at the time of the survey; however, hedgehog have been recorded locally and it is likely that this species may pass through the site.



4. Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

The site is comprised of an existing static caravan structure, a bare ground access track and hardstanding yard, and semi-improved grassland, with the wider area surrounded by hedgerows, scattered trees, fencing and a stable.

Seven Phase 1 Habitat types were recorded (including boundary features and built structures), most notably some areas of semi-improved neutral grassland in better ecological condition and a hedgerow.

Several bird species were observed foraging and were heard during the survey including greenfinch, goldfinch, dunnock, robin, rook and jackdaw. No old birds' nests were found in close proximity (up to 40m) of the caravan, but there is some potential for nesting and foraging birds particularly in the hedgerow habitat.

There is some habitat suitable for badger and brown hare; however, no evidence of these species was found within the site such as droppings, footprints or badger setts, and they are not considered to be present.

The hedgerow vegetation and brash pile refugia next to more open grassland provide potential habitat for hedgehogs, amphibians and reptiles; however, no evidence of these species was found during the survey. There are no ponds within the site that GCN and other amphibians could breed in. While there are ponds in the wider landscape, including some within 500m, the terrestrial habitat is fragmented which would restrict GCN from reaching the site. Moreover, the closest GCN records are for ponds located 1.3km from the site.

No features around the site were identified as being viable for bat roosting, and no evidence of bats were found such as feeding signs or droppings.

The existing caravan and stable do not have potential roost features or ideal conditions for bats, or any notable access or egress points.



None of the taller trees within the hedgerow had clear features such as cavities, hollows, split limbs or woodpecker holes. The structures and trees are therefore assessed as having negligible roost potential.

Overall, the site is assessed as providing low suitability to support protected species (excluding nesting birds) and no evidence of protected species was found during the survey.

Recommendations have been made for modest mitigation measures and post-construction ecological enhancements at the site that are proportionate with the low level of environmental impact from the proposed development.

4.2 Mitigation

General

Site personnel should be made aware of protected species and if any are recorded on site, all works should stop, and a suitably qualified ecologist contacted.

Birds

It is recommended that the hedgerow is retained, with site access for the new dwelling via the existing lane and farm tracks.

Should any vegetation of the site require removing, this should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (March – August, inclusive), as all nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Therefore, the project will aim to remove any trees, bushes or shrubs that may provide suitable nesting habitat outside the bird-breeding season to minimise this risk (i.e., September to February).

If this is not possible, all suitable nesting habitat will be checked for nesting birds not more than 24 hours prior clearance by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist. If nesting birds are found, a 5m protection zone will be created with a fence to prevent disturbance and works will only progress in that area once birds have fledged.



Small mammals, reptiles & amphibians

To reduce risk of harming small mammals such as hedgehogs, as well as reptiles and amphibians that might be hibernating and sheltering on the site, any vegetation clearance or removal of brash piles and other refugia should be conducted gradually, if required for the works to proceed. Retention (and enhancement) of the wider grassland will support nesting and foraging opportunities.

GCN

While no evidence of GCN was observed during the survey and they are considered unlikely to be present, it is recommended that precautionary working methods are used during the redevelopment of the site given the historic records of this species and presence of ponds in the wider landscape. Should GCN be identified all works should stop and further advice be taken from a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist.

4.3 Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements

It is considered that the proposed redevelopment of the site and the development of the new single dwelling is below a 'de minimis' threshold and therefore exempt from the current Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) regulations. This exemption is designed to ensure that BNG does not apply to either very small-scale development or development which does not impact habitat, through loss or degradation within the redline boundary.

The new single dwelling will largely be constructed on the existing footprint within the site. A small area less than 25m² will be utilised in the development; however, this is not considered to be 'Priority' habitat. No priority habitats will be impacted by the proposed development and there are no non-priority linear habitats (such as native hedgerows) that will be impacted by the proposed development.

Notwithstanding this, the following measures would benefit the development by introducing ecological enhancements and should be encouraged:



- Bird nesting boxes (both small-hole and open-fronted) should be placed on the new building roof and on existing trees around the site, to create nesting opportunities for small bird species;
- Bat boxes (e.g., pole-mounted) should be placed on or around the site boundaries, if possible, to create roosting opportunities for bat species; and
- It is encouraged that low-lux lighting is used during construction and use of the building, which will help minimise disturbance for wildlife including hedgehogs and bats (foraging and/or sheltering).



5. Target Notes

5.1 Botanical Target Notes (TN)

TN1 – Semi-improved neutral grassland margins to access track and paddocks in relatively good condition.

TN2 – Poor modified grassland in the paddock areas.

TN3 – Good semi-improved neutral grassland with greater sward height along the tops of the earth banks.

TN4 – Defunct hedge and scattered trees, including oak.

5.2 Animal Target Notes (AN)

AN1 – Jackdaw pair seen flying over the site.

AN2 – Modern prefabricated static caravan, with no potential roost features for bats.

AN3 – Stable with horses; no potential roost features for bats.

AN4 – Brash pile, which could provide refugia shelter for reptiles, amphibians and small mammals; horse exerciser next to it.



6. Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map

