



53 Redhills, Broad Town, Swindon, SN4 7RD

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



April 2026

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The results of the survey and assessment work undertaken by All Ecology are representative at the time of surveying.

Every endeavour has been made to identify the presence of protected species on site, where this falls within the agreed scope of works.

The flora and fauna detailed within this report are those noted during the field survey and from anecdotal evidence. It should not be viewed as a complete list of flora and fauna species that may frequent or exist on site at other times of the year.

Up to date standard methodologies have been used, which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory conservation bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where these methodologies fail to identify all species on-site.

All Ecology cannot take responsibility where Government, national bodies or industry subsequently modify standards.

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Reference to sections or particular paragraphs of this document taken out of context may lead to misrepresentation.

Summary

In April 2026, All Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of a site known as 53 Redhills, Broad Town, Swindon, SN4 7RD. The site comprises a residential dwelling surrounded by patio and areas of grass.

The site is the subject of a planning application to permit a two storey extension on the west elevation, some new areas of patio and a new access drive.

The habitats on site have limited potential to support protected or notable species. The following species/groups are either present, potentially present, or could be encouraged onto the site and the recommended actions are as follows:

- Bats – The building is of low suitability for roosting bats but potential roosting features would not be affected by the works and foraging activity is expected to be limited. Details for consideration in terms of future use by bats are given, e.g. lighting
- Birds – Nesting and foraging opportunities are present in the garden hedge and the building; House Sparrows are currently nesting in the roof of the house. The hedge will be retained and the works will not impact on nesting sites in the existing roof.

Details of suggested enhancements are given e.g. bat and bird boxes.

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1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 In April 2026, All Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of a site known as 53 Redhills, Broad Town, Swindon, SN4 7RD. The site comprises a residential dwelling surrounded by patio and areas of grassland.
- 1.2 The site is the subject of a planning application to permit a two storey extension on the west elevation, some new areas of patio and a new access drive.

Objectives and Aim

- 1.3 The main objectives and aim of the survey were to identify features of ecological interest, undertake a basic search of habitats present for evidence of use, or potential use, by protected species, and to identify any other possible ecological constraints to the proposed redevelopment.

Site Location



Figure 1: Site location plan.

Aerial Photograph



Figure 2: Aerial view.

2.0 Methodology

Personnel

- 2.1 The survey was carried out by Jacob Richardson BSc Hons, and the work overseen by James Godbeer BSc Hons MCIEEM, an ecologist with over 19 years' experience working as a consultant. James has extensive experience of managing environmental contracts, and particular experience in surveying, assessment and mitigation for rare and protected species. He has considerable knowledge of the development and planning process including Ecological Impact Assessments, sustainable ecological design and he has completed ecology chapters of Environmental Statements. James holds a number of protected species licences including bats (all species, all counties, Class Licence Registration No. 2015-12313-CLS-CLS), and Great Crested Newts (Class Licence Registration No. 2019-44282-CLS-CLS). He has successfully obtained European Protected Species mitigation licences for a number of bat species including Lesser Horseshoe, Greater Horseshoe, Serotine, Brown Long-eared, Common Pipistrelle and Natterer's bats, for a number of roost types including maternity and hibernation sites.

Desk Survey

- 2.2 Online OS maps and aerial photographs were inspected for the presence of ponds in the surrounding area. Additionally, MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside, 2026) was used to establish the distance and direction of statutory and non-statutory designated sites and species records within the search area.
- 2.3 Given the small size and nature of the site, which was buildings and garden, and the nature of the proposals, a request for data from the local records centre was not deemed necessary.

Field Survey

Habitats

- 2.4 The site was visited on the 20th April 2026 and surveyed in accordance with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Phase I Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC, 2010). This technique provides an inventory of the basic habitat types present and allows identification of areas of greater potential that might warrant further study.
- 2.5 In addition to Phase I, UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) methodology was also used to categorise the primary habitat types present within the survey area using a standard set of habitat categories, with associated secondary codes/features identified where applicable (UKHab Ltd, 2023). Details of current management and habitat condition have also been recorded where appropriate.

Fauna

- 2.6 The building was inspected externally and internally following the methodology set out in the Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines. 4th Ed (Collins, 2023).

- 2.7 The site and surroundings, for a minimum distance of 30 m where access was available, were searched for signs of Badgers. These include setts, latrines, dung pits, snuffle marks or hairs caught in hedges or on fencing.
- 2.8 Incidental observations of invertebrates and birds were recorded and a search made for any signs of nesting.
- 2.9 Any refuges on site such as logs or other debris were lifted and inspected for reptiles and amphibians. There are no ponds on site. OS maps indicated that there are no ponds within 250 m of the site.

Equipment

- 2.10 Equipment used to aid the survey included a high-powered torch, ladder, binoculars and a camera.

Valuation of Ecological Features

- 2.11 The valuation process used in this report follows the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2018).
- 2.12 The value of areas of habitat and plant communities has been measured against published criteria where available. Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) have been searched to identify whether action has been taken to protect all areas of a particular habitat and to identify current factors causing loss and decline of particular habitats. The presence of injurious and legally controlled weeds has also been taken into account.
- 2.13 When assigning a level of value to a species, its distribution and status (including a consideration of trends based on available historic records) has been taken into account. Other factors influencing the value of a species are: legal protection, rarity and Species Action Plans (SAPs). Guidance, where it is available, for the identification of populations of sufficient size for them to be considered of national or international importance has also been taken into account.

Nomenclature

- 2.14 The English name only of flora and fauna species is given in the main text of this report; however, scientific names are used for invertebrates where no English name is available. Vascular plants and charophytes follow the nomenclature of The Botanical Society for the British Isles (BSBI) 2007 database (BSBI, 2007) with all other flora and fauna following the Nameserver facility of the National Biodiversity Network Species Dictionary (<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nbn/>), which is managed by the Natural History Museum.

Limitations

- 2.15 The site was fully accessible with no limitations to undertaking the survey in accordance with the stated methodology.

3.0 Results

Desk Survey

3.1 There are no statutory designated sites within 1 km of the site.

Field Survey

3.2 The following table presents a description of the habitats present.

Table 1: Details of habitats present on and bordering the site.

Habitats	Description
u1b5 – Buildings	There is a semi-detached house on site. Further details of this building are presented below in relation to its potential to support roosting bats.
u1b – Developed land; sealed surface	The house is partially surrounded by concrete pathways.
g4 – Modified grassland	The areas of modified grassland (lawn) on site are dominated by Perennial Rye-grass, with abundant Creeping Buttercup, frequent occurrences of Fescue sp., Yarrow and White Clover, occasional occurrences of Yorkshire-fog, Cock's-foot, Cleavers and Red Clover, and rare occurrences of Ragwort, Daisy, Bluebells, Daffodil, Bristly Oxtongue and Bramble.
BNG1160 - Introduced shrubs	There are some introduced shrubs along the west elevation of the house.
h2b – Non-native hedgerow	There is a Honeysuckle hedge along the south and west boundary.
Fencing	There is concrete post and wire fencing partially enclosing the site on the north boundary.



Photograph 1: North elevation of the building.



Photograph 2: West elevation of the building.



Photograph 3: South elevation of the building.



Photograph 4: Flat roof single storey section.



Photograph 5: Area of garden to the south of the building.



Photograph 6: Front garden to the north of the building.



Photograph 7: Pathway and introduced shrubs adjacent to the house.



Photograph 8: General view of the garden.



Photograph 9: General view of the garden.



Photograph 10: View of the hedge along the south boundary.



Photograph 11: View of the hedge along the west boundary.

Fauna

3.3 The following table presents the nature of the habitats surrounding the building and connectivity into the wider area in relation to their potential importance to bats.

Table 2: Details of habitats in relation to foraging and commuting bats.

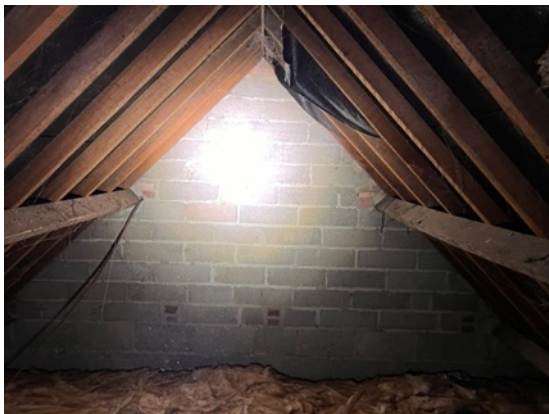
Habitats	Description
Immediate surroundings	The site is immediately surrounded by neighbouring dwellings.
Connectivity	There is limited connectivity through the garden and hedgerow to further hedges in the surrounding residential dwellings and fields, and the pocket of woodland to the north.
Wider Landscape	The wider landscape contains grass fields, arable land, and small pockets of woodland.
Potential for presence on site and site value	The site contains one building, areas of grassland, and a boundary hedgerow. The hedgerow provides habitats for invertebrates and it is expected that at least low numbers common species of bats will forage over the site but any significant value of the site for bats is associated with any potential for roosting.

3.4 The following table presents a description of the buildings in terms of their general characteristics, and their potential for roosting bats.

Table 3: Building description and details in relation to its potential for roosting bats.

Building 1	Description
External	General: Two storey semi-detached residential dwelling. Roof: Gable end tiled roof with a disused chimney stack in the centre of the roof. There is a small single storey flat roof section on the south elevation of the building. Walls: Concrete block wall. Cladding: None. Verges: Mortar verges. Eaves: Box eaves with stone cornice and integrated guttering.
Internal	General: Occupied living space throughout the house with separate enclosed roof void. Enclosed/Separate Roof Voids: Enclosed roof void that is approximately 2 m high, 5 m wide, and approximately 7 m long. Roof Structure: Traditional cut roof, with timber rafters, joists, purlins and a central ridge board. Roof Lining: Bitumen felt. There are some small holes in the roof lining. Insulation: Mineral wool insulation spans the entire roof void.

	Other e.g. Water Tanks, Boilers, AC Units: Old water tank.
Potential access points	There are gaps under multiple roof tiles that have lifted but the roof is otherwise in good condition. There is some lifted lead flashing on the chimney stack.
Potential roosting features	The potential access points above could potentially lead to voids within the fabric of the building e.g. voids between tiles and roof lining, and then into the main roof void though holes in the lining. No evidence of bats was found within the roof void.
Evaluation	No evidence of bats was found within the roof void and it can be confidently concluded that roosting bats are absent from the interior of the roof void. No evidence of bats using external gaps under roof tiles and flashings were noted but such evidence may not persist and is often not evident even for larger roosts. Taking into account the number and nature of potential roosting features, but an absence of any evidence of use, any potential for bat roosts is considered to be low.



Photograph 12: Internal view of the roof space.



Photograph 13: Internal view of the roof space.



Photograph 14: Hole in the roof lining.



Photograph 15: Evidence of birds nesting.



Photograph 16: Gap in the wall.



Photograph 17: Water tank.



Photograph 18: Lifted roof tiles.



Photograph 19: Raised lead flashing.

3.5 The following table assesses the potential for other protected species to be present.

Table 4: Protected Species Assessment

Fauna	Description
Bats	Habitats (roosting): The building has low potential for roosting (see above). Habitats (foraging/commuting): The rest of the site provides limited foraging habitat and may also be utilised by commuting bats, being part of linked gardens, particularly by any bats roosting in the local area.
Badgers	Habitats: The site provides minimal foraging habitat. No evidence or presence of setts was recorded. Presence/absence: Badgers will be generally absent with potential currently limited to passing individual Badgers.
Dormice	Habitats: None present on site. Presence/absence: Absent from the site.

Otters and Water Voles	Habitats: None present. Presence/absence: Absent.
Other Mammals	Habitats: The site provides minimal habitat for small mammals in the small areas of grassland and the boundary hedgerow. Presence/absence: No evidence of presence. Small mammals may be present and notable species e.g. Hedgehogs will be generally absent although they could pass through the site.
Birds	Foraging Habitats: Mostly poor-quality foraging habitats, with the boundary hedge being the most suitable habitats for foraging. Nesting Habitats: The building provides potential for nesting of small common species where accessible and there was evidence of previous nesting. The hedgerow provides suitable nesting opportunities. Presence/absence: House Sparrows were recorded on site exiting and entering the building through gaps in the roof tiles above the eaves on the south elevation. Birds are currently nesting in the building and likely will in future.
Reptiles	Habitats: The open areas of hard standing and grass while being suitable for open basking, are not associated with any areas of cover except the hedge with little ground flora. The site is therefore generally unsuitable for reptiles. Presence/absence: Absent.
Amphibian	Terrestrial Habitats: The majority of the site is buildings, hardstanding and grassland. The hedgerow provides some cover, but overall, the habitats on site are poor for amphibians. Aquatic Habitats: No ponds on site or within 250 m of the site with one pond situated just outside this radius but poorly connected to the site. Presence/absence: Great Crested Newts are likely to be absent from the site.

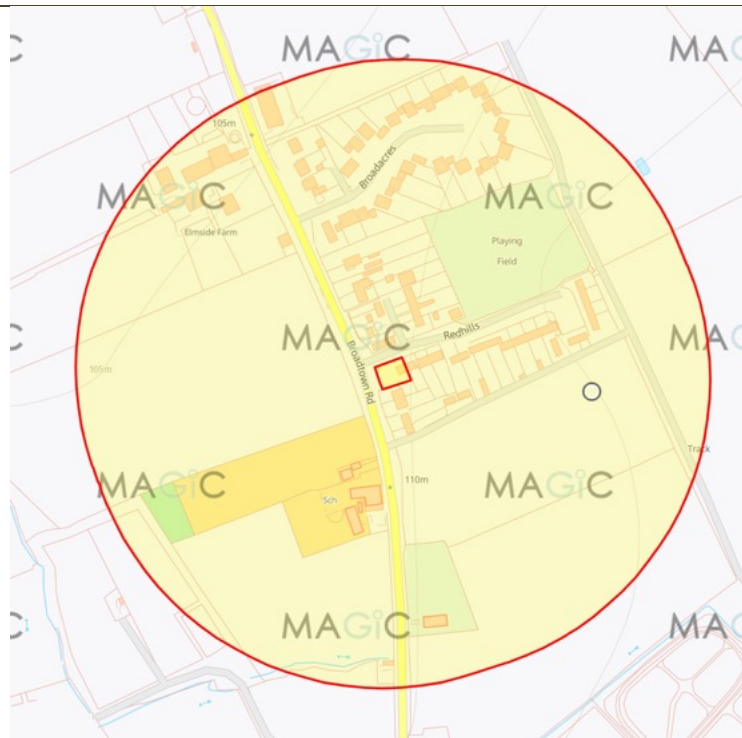


Figure 3: Pond location plan.

Invertebrates	Habitats: Buildings and hard standing are poor habitats and vegetation is minimal. Presence/absence: Common assemblages of invertebrates are expected to be present in the wider gardens but the site itself is poor and the potential for notable species to be present is negligible.
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4.0 Development Constraints and Recommendations

Development Proposals

- 4.1 The existing site is the subject of a planning application to permit a two storey extension on the west elevation, some new areas of patio and a new access drive. The extension will be off the west elevation gable wall of the house, joining below existing verge.

Habitats

- 4.2 Any impacts as a result of loss/changes to habitats are considered to be negligible.
- 4.3 The NERC Priority Habitats include all hedgerows with at least 80% cover of at least one woody UK native species (JNCC, 2019). The hedge on site does not qualify under this criterion and in any case, will be retained.
- 4.4 The grassland on site was identified as amenity grassland (modified grassland). In order to qualify as a NERC Priority Habitat, grassland typically has to be unimproved (good semi-improved grassland can also qualify) and would have to be examples of grasslands such as lowland calcareous grassland or lowland dry acid grassland, habitats not present on site.
- 4.5 The remaining habitats on site are common, of low ecological value and easy to replace. Any impacts as a result of loss/changes to these habitats in terms of their vegetation alone are considered to be negligible.
- 4.6 If any new trees or shrubs are to be planted, native tree and shrub species should be used as these are most beneficial to invertebrates, and many also produce seeds, nuts and berries that are food for native mammals and birds. Planting of non-native plant species should be limited to those that are not invasive and should prioritise those that provide a good source of nectar for invertebrates.

Fauna

Bats

Table 5: Impact Assessment.

Building	Impact Assessment
Building 1	Roost damage/destruction: The new extension will connect below the verge on the west elevation of the house. The extension will therefore not impact the roof and therefore is unlikely to impact any roosts, if present, within the building. Roost modification: Building will be modified, but it will not impact the areas of the building that offer roost potential, or any potential access points. Roosts, if present, will not be modified. Roost disturbance: Works can have the potential for disturbing bats, if present, through noise and vibration, causing them to fly during the day making them vulnerable to predation.

	However, in this instance the potential for this negligible given the separation between the works and potential roosting features and access points. Effect on foraging/commuting: The habitats on and surrounding the site provide limited habitat for bats. Any activity is expected to be limited and no impacts to bats are expected as a result of any alterations to the building.
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- 4.7 Where a building contains evidence of bats or cannot fully be inspected or the presence of bats entirely ruled out, and the proposed works could impact on known roosts or potential roosting features, the building should be subject to presence/absence/roost characterisation surveys, which take the form of dusk emergence surveys with the use of night vision aids as described in the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition. If all areas (including voids, cracks and crevices) of a structure have been inspected and no evidence found (and is unlikely to have been removed by weather or cleaning or be hidden, then further surveys are not appropriate (Collins, 2023).
- 4.8 The recommended minimum number of survey visits to give confidence in a negative result and their timings are presented in the table below.

Table 6: General presence/absence survey specification for structures.

Roost Suitability	Survey Specification
Negligible	No further surveys required.
Low	Number of Survey Visits: One survey visit. One dusk emergence survey. Timing: May to August.
Moderate	Number of Survey Visits: Two survey visits. Two dusk emergence surveys. Timing: May to September with a least one of the surveys between May and August. Surveys should be at least two weeks apart.
High	Number of Survey Visits: Three survey visits. Three dusk emergence surveys. Timing: May to September with a least two of the surveys between May and August. Surveys should be at least two weeks apart.
	Dusk Survey Times: Start at 30 minutes* before sunset and end at 1.5 – 2 hours after sunset. Dawn Survey Times: Start at 1.5 – 2 hours before sunrise and end at 15 minutes after sunrise *Bat Conservation Trust – Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines state that dusk surveys should begin 15 minutes before sunset but repeated/the start times of subsequent surveys adjusted if bats are already in flight. 30 minutes is therefore specified to reduce the risk of having to repeat a survey as species such as pipistrelles will often emerge well before sunset.

Table 7: Required presence/absence surveys for the structures on site.

Building	Further Surveys
53 Redhill	Number of Surveys: None. The building was assessed as having low suitability for bat roosts; however, the proposed works will impact potential roosting sites or access points and work can proceed without the need for any further survey. Required Number of Surveyors: N/A.

4.9 No further surveys are required but during the works the contractor should be advised to adhere to the following procedures in the highly unlikely event that bats are found during works:

- If the roost is still in the structure and bats are not injured, stop work and contact a licensed ecologist. If help is not available, allow bats to fly out of harm's way.
- If material containing a roost has been removed, the roost is not exposed and the bats are not injured, temporarily seal and isolate the roost, stop work and seek advice from a licensed ecologist. If advice is not readily available, re-open it and allow bats to relocate of their own accord.
- If the roost has been exposed, and especially if bats have been injured, stop work, collect bats in a secure box or bag (using a glove) and contact a licensed ecologist.

Habitat Creation

4.10 No specific habitat creation for bats is required in this instance. However, the proposed extension provides an opportunity to enhance the site for bats by including new roosting sites within/on the building and the local planning authority will usually expect to see such enhancements included where possible. There are many ways in which a building can be enhanced for crevice-dwelling species without any significant design considerations. Bat panels, such as the Schwegler Bat Access Panel 1FE, or bat tubes such as the Schwegler 1FR Bat Tube can be incorporated into the building exterior with little visual impact. Roosts such as the Schwegler Bat Roost 1FQ can be erected externally after works are complete or if integrating roosts is not practical. The apices of gable ends are generally the most suitable locations and, in this instance, the new west gable end would be the most suitable location as it is away from light sources, facing the garden.

4.11 In general the building extension should include a suitable lighting design. Measures should include the use of lighting only where absolutely necessary utilising highly directional warm white LED lighting, an example being down spots at 2.5 m high using warm white (2700 K) 8W LED lamps, 550 lumens, 35 degree beam angle. These could be individually activated by PIR sensors on a 1 minute cut off to further reduce their impacts. These will assist in lighting only the areas where lighting is required and minimising light spill either directly or through reflected light.

Birds

4.12 The site provides poor quality foraging habitats but there are nesting habitats and House Sparrows were recorded on site exiting and entering the building through gaps in the roof tiles above the eaves on the south elevation. Nesting material was also noted in the roof void. Birds are currently nesting in the building and likely will in future.

- 4.13 Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and amendments). No further surveys for birds are required at this time and the works will not directly impact on the current nesting sites. There is no requirement to time the works to avoid the nesting season.
- 4.14 The existing nesting sites will be retained and be available for use in the future but the proposed extension could include enhancements for nesting and foraging birds to generally enhance the site. It is recommended that any new planting on site should concentrate on species that are native to the area and ideally produce a range of seeds and berries at varying times of the year. Nectar rich plants could also be used encourage invertebrates on to the site, which in turn provide food for birds as well as other species such as bats.
- 4.15 The following options could be explored for inclusion on the north side of the building:
- House Martin nests could be provided under the eaves or on the north to east sides of the building.
 - Individual boxes, such as the Schwegler Bird Home 1MR, could also be installed at a height of at least 2 m.
 - Groups of multiple small bird boxes could also be installed at a height of least 2 m to provide nesting sites for birds such as House Sparrows.

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6.0 Plans

Site Location and Block Plan

