



ALDER ECOLOGY UK LTD

Working for the Client - Working with Wildlife

165 St Ediths Marsh, Bromham, Rowde, Wiltshire

AEUK 1733

Preliminary Ecological Assessment

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Project: St Ediths Marsh

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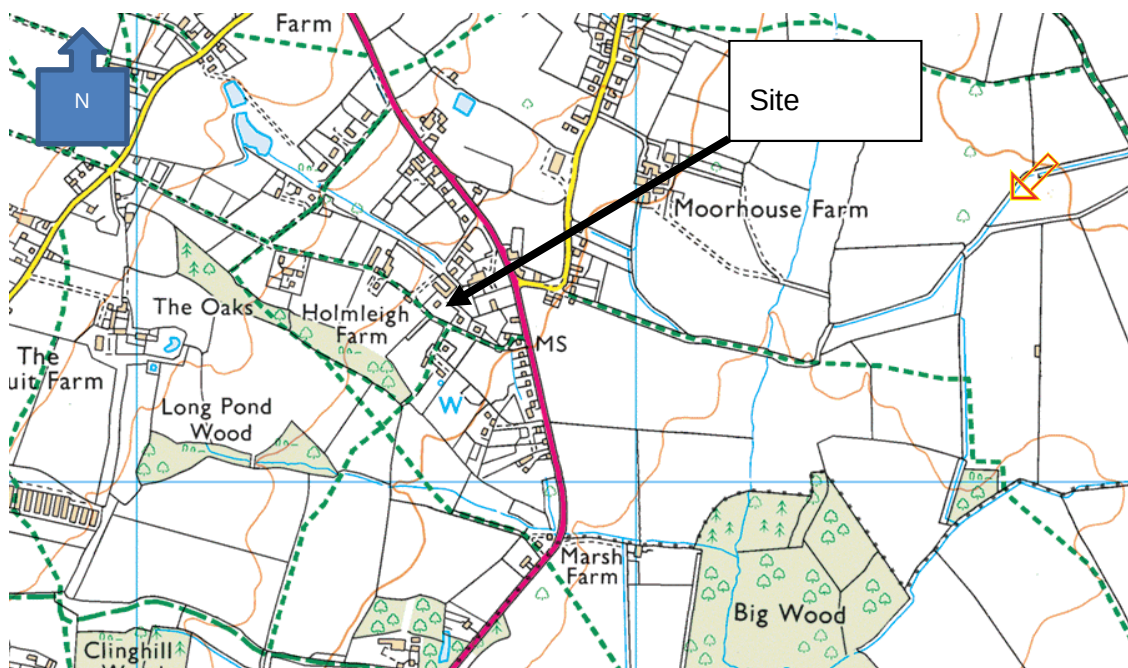
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1. BACKGROUND

Commission

Alder Ecology UK Ltd was commissioned by Mark Burbidge to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment of the site; 165, St Edith's Marsh, Bromham, Rowde, Wiltshire, England, SN15 2DG, with a proposal to provide a single residential accommodation and will be self-build and exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). The commission also looked at the potential of the site to contain protected species or habitats that may be impacted by the proposed works. The site is located at National Grid reference ST 97621 64363 (what3words activity.drummers.driveway) at the approximate site entrance.

The site is a small plot approximately 0.130 hectares (0.322 acres) which is situated within a rural fringe location close to other residential properties. This application relates to the proposed provision of residential accommodation. The site contains amenity grassland, immature and maturing trees, and species poor native and non-native hedgerows.



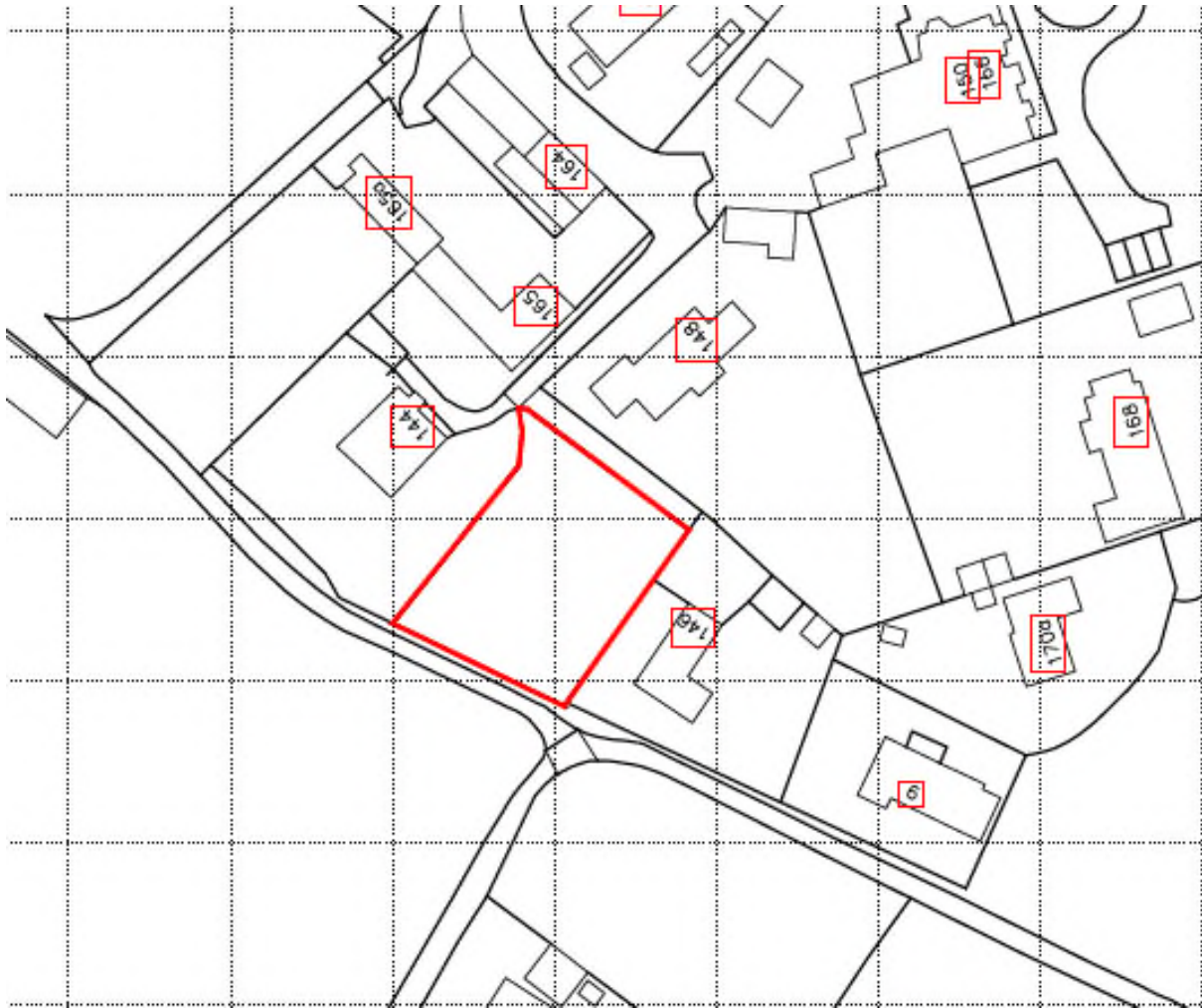
Map 1 shows site of the assessment

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Aerial 1 showing the approximate site footprint for the survey assessment see full submission for details.

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Plan 1 Showing proposed red line boundary for the site see full submission for details.

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2. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the findings of a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) undertaken on 17th April 2026. An assessment has been provided on the potential value of the site for wildlife based on the PEA results obtained. Conclusions have been drawn about the site and an approach has been proposed to the way any development may proceed with enhancements for the site.

Mr Roger Martindale BA (Hons), MSc CEnv, MCIEEM, Ecologist at Alder Ecology UK Ltd who is a full member of The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and Chartered Environmentalist (CEnv), undertook the PEA assessment during April 2026. The surveyor has over 25 years' experience of this type of work.

The aim of the PEA is to identify existing habitat types, to determine the existence and location of any ecologically valuable areas and to identify the presence of any protected species or habitats suitable for supporting such species that may be impacted by the scheme.

The objectives of the PEA were to:

- Identify habitat types on site;
- Assess the importance of habitat types;
- Identify the potential presence of any protected species and recommend further survey
- Assess the likely impact areas within any potential development

3. FIELD STUDY

Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA)

This survey consists of a walkover survey of the site observing habitats and if they are considered important or have potential to hold protected species. This is not a Phase 1 Habitat Survey and therefore does not detail species compositions within identified habitat areas or assign them an alpha numeric code. The survey included a search for the presence or evidence of UK protected species and UK priority habitats and species.

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4. LEGISLATIVE AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) affords protection to species of fauna and flora included in schedules 5 and 8 of the act. Additionally section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 lists species and habitats that are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and Wales. Those pieces of legislation together with national, regional and local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) seek to safeguard areas containing protected species and habitats.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, the Section 41 list and the BAPs are used to guide decision-makers such as landowners in implementing their duty to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions. This legislation is further strengthened by the European Habitats directive 1992 which affords special protection to species and habitats of European importance. Protected species and habitats are a material consideration in the planning process and an assessment of their presence/absence from a site and the likely impact of a development on such species or habitats must be undertaken prior to any planning submission.

5. LIMITATIONS TO THE ASSESSMENT

The PEA habitat survey was carried out at an optimal time of year for spring floristic species compositions and given the limited range of habitats on site is thought to be accurate. The timing of the survey may limit the ability of the assessment to recognise seasonal changes on site. Although given the baseline conditions and habitats present it is considered to be accurate. Full access was available for the site survey and a drone was used to aid survey techniques.

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6. DATA REVIEW

Table 1 Protected habitats 5km search SN15 2DG

Site Name	Protected status	Distance from site to closest record	Comment
Roundway down and Covert	SSSI	2.1km E	Grassland/Downland (inside SSSI IRZ)
Kingsplay Hill	SSSI	3.1km E	Grassland/Downland (inside SSSI IRZ)
Spye Park	SSSI	3.6km N	Ancient woodland (inside SSSI IRZ)

NOTE: SSSI Impact Risk Zone (inside SSSI IRZ) LPA needs to consult with Natural England

Salisbury Plain SAC and Pewsey Downs NNR/SSSI are located over 11km and 12km respectively from the site and they will not be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed works or subsequent occupation of the site and the proposed works will not impact the special interest features of either site.

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Table 2 Protected and Notable Species Records 2km search SN15 2DG

Name	Records	Distance from site to closest record	Date of most recent record	Comment
Badger	3	2km	2013	
Bird assemblage	96	2km	2025	See table 3
Brown hare	4	2km	2023	
Brown long eared bat	21	2km	2016	
Common toad	2	2km	No date	
Grass snake	1	2km	No date	
Greater horseshoe bat	4	2km	2024	
Hedgehog	11	2km	2025	
Lesser horseshoe bat	60	2km	2024	
Otter	1	2km	2023	
Serotine bat	31	2km	2024	
Soprano pipistrelle	3	2km	2024	
Water vole	1	2km	2016	

The list of species is limited which is likely due to the rural location and the lack of recent development in the area which can give raise to further background records.

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Bird assemblage

Of the 96 species of bird historically recorded within 2km of the site a total of 19 species are listed on section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 as Species of Principle Importance for Nature Conservation and 6 species listed as schedule 1 species so the area has value in that respect.

Table 3 Priority bird species or schedule 1 bird species are listed below.

Species	Number of records	Priority species	Schedule 1 species
Barn owl	4		Yes
Brambling	5		Yes
Bullfinch	20	Yes	
Cetti's warbler	1		Yes
Common Cuckoo	4	Yes	
Corn bunting	14	Yes	
Curlew	1	Yes	
Fieldfare	25		Yes
Grasshopper warbler	2	Yes	
Herring gull	8	Yes	
House sparrow	202	Yes	
Kingfisher	4		Yes
Lapwing	14	Yes	
Linnet	8	Yes	

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Marsh tit	1	Yes	
Redwing	22		Yes
Reed bunting	10	Yes	
Skylark	17	Yes	
Song thrush	108	Yes	
Spotted flycatcher	2	Yes	
Starling	246	Yes	
Tree sparrow	5	Yes	
Turtle dove	5	Yes	
Yellow wagtail	8	Yes	
Yellowhammer	19	Yes	

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7. PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES



Plate 1 showing the site looking south east



Plate 2 showing site looking north

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Plate 3 Showing site looking south to open fields



Plate 4 Site grassland, species poor amenity grassland under 4 plants per metre sq

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Plate 5 site fruit trees, vines and immature trees and boundary hedges will not impacted the scheme



Plate 6 former vegetable plot now with pioneer plants and asparagus

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Plate 7 north boundary with a mixture of immature ornamental and native trees will not be impacted by the proposed works



Plate 8 low wildlife value ornamental box hedge will be retained on site

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8. RESULTS

Habitats

Habitat Description

The site supports a limited range of generally low quality natural habitats and is part of a wider residential well maintained garden.

Table 4 Habitats on site

Habitat	National importance	Regional importance	Local importance	Site importance
<i>Hedgerows</i>				Yes
<i>Native</i>				
<i>Hedgerow non native</i>				Yes
<i>Amenity grassland</i>				Yes
<i>Scattered trees</i>				Yes
<i>Ruderal habitat</i>				Yes

Hedgerows

There is a species poor (hawthorn and ivy) native hedgerow running along the south boundary with adjacent fields. The hedge has some value within the site for roosting and breeding birds and is well maintained through flailing at approximately 1.5m in height. The hedgerow will not be impacted by the proposed works and will be maintained as boundary hedge going forwards. The hedgerow is assessed to be of site value.

Hedgerow non native

There is a Leyland cypress (south east boundary) hedge of approximately 30m in length running along the boundary of the site. Such hedges can provide roosting and nesting for local bird species and some shelter but limited foraging opportunities. The hedge is assessed to be of site value and could not be replaced with a native species hedge as it is the boundary of an adjacent property.

Project: St Ediths Marsh*Amenity grassland*

The site contains a large area of amenity grassland typical of residential gardens in the area. This type of grassland (ryegrass) is common within settings such as this but does have some limited value for foraging birds, mammals and reptiles. The amenity grassland will be impacted by the proposed scheme and is assessed to be of site value but is easily re-created and will still be present as a site habitat once the development is completed albeit reduced in size.

Scattered trees

The site contains a mixture of non-native and native scattered trees; eucalyptus, elder, ash, cherry and apple with the majority of specimens being immature and are 5-20 years of age on the north boundary with a lane and residential properties behind. The trees on the boundary will not be impacted by the proposed works and will be retained on site as part of the boundary if safe to do so. The scattered trees are assessed to be of site value.

Ruderal habitat

The site contains ruderal habitat on the north boundary in amongst the ornamental hedge and trees with species such as nettle, docks, and cleavers. The ruderal species are good for insects and can, if controlled in small patches add a mix of habitats for some foraging bird species. The ruderal vegetation has been assessed to be of site value.

Non-Native Invasive Species

The site does not contain any non-native invasive species listed on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

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Protected and Otherwise Notable Species

The site has limited opportunities for low numbers of common species primarily as a foraging resource but opportunities for permanent occupation by wildlife on site are limited due to the habitat types.

Table 5 Potential protected species associated with the site as a foraging resource

	European importance	National importance	NERC section 41 species	Local BAP species
Bats	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bird assemblage		Yes	Yes	Yes
Hedgehog			Yes	Yes
Reptiles			Yes	Yes
Amphibian species			Yes	Yes

Bats

The site has resources for bat foraging but there are very limited/no opportunities for roosting bats on site as none of the trees have suitable features for roosting bats. There are opportunities for foraging in the wider area of other residential gardens and open fields that back on to the site and the area is not well served by municipal lighting which tends to reduce species composition. Further surveys will not be required to determine the use of the site by bat species. The site is assessed to be of low value to foraging bats.

Birds

The wider landscape (within 2km) has records of a total of 19 species which are listed on section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 as Species of Principle Importance for Nature Conservation and 6 species listed as schedule 1 birds. The site does not have sufficient habitats or connection to the wider landscape to support all such species for breeding and a limited ability to support some of the species listed for occasional foraging. The general area has potential to hold low numbers of common foraging bird species and seven species were recorded on site (robin, dunnock, greenfinch, wood pigeon, blackbird, blackcap and goldfinch) and has potential to support breeding birds within the hedgerows and potentially trees on site. The site

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is assessed to be of local value to common, NERC and schedule 1 bird species as a limited foraging resource and low value as a breeding site within the hedgerows. The hedgerows and boundary trees will not be impacted by the proposed works.

Hedgehog

There are local records (11) of hedgehog within 2km of the site and they are likely to occur close to the site or even on site as they will forage in the amenity grassland of this site and other residential gardens and fields in close proximity. The habitats on site have value for foraging hedgehog within the amenity grassland, and amongst the trees and hedgerow. The proposed works are unlikely to significantly impact upon hedgehog habitat or breeding provided the works are undertaken with ecological guidance. The site has been assessed to be of low value for foraging and breeding hedgehog.

Reptiles

The site does contain habitat which is used by reptile species such as slow worms especially associated with the boundary habitat. But the amenity grassland reduces the foraging opportunities for reptiles but the links to other residential gardens and open fields can provide enough habitat mixes for reptiles especially species such as slow worms which have unfortunately not been locally recorded. The proposed works will not impact directly or indirectly upon reptile habitat or breeding sites but local reptile species will benefit from the retention of deadwood habitat and ruderal species in the boundary. The site has been assessed to be of low value for reptile species.

Amphibian species

The site does contain suitable foraging habitat for common amphibian species but contains no areas suitable for breeding amphibian species and the local area does not contain ponds suitable for breeding amphibians. The site is assessed to be of low value to foraging amphibians and negligible value to breeding amphibians.

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9. CONCLUSIONS

The PEA concludes that any proposed development of the site will not significantly adversely change the ecological baseline or impact directly or indirectly on ecological receptors and that further surveys will not be required for the site.

The site is located inside the Natural England SSSI, Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) and will therefore require NE consultation to ensure any risk to the SSSI's located within 5km of the site can be assessed (see Table 1 for potentially affected sites). Salisbury Plain SAC and Pewsey Downs NNR & SSSI are located over 11km and 12km respectively from the site and they will not be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed works or subsequent occupation of the site and the proposed works will not impact the special interest features of either site.

The site does not contain habitats that are nationally or locally significant and does not contain any priority habitats as listed in the NERC Act 2006. The remaining habitats on site are of very limited conservation value and easily re-created. The site does not sit adjacent to habitats or sites that are locally or nationally significant and any proposed development of the site will not on its own or in combination affect the integrity or designatory features of such sites and will not lead to permanent habitat loss of significant habitats.

The proposed works does not have the potential to significantly impact upon protected species, species of principle importance for nature conservation and locally listed BAP species in the long term.

Overall the site has been assessed as being of low ecological value although the site does provide opportunities for foraging wildlife as part of the larger residential garden complex and open fields locally. Any development of the site as is currently proposed will not significantly impact on local ecological resources and will not significantly adversely change the ecological baseline. If the scheme implements the recommendations below then the ecological baseline can be enhanced and become more beneficial for local wildlife.

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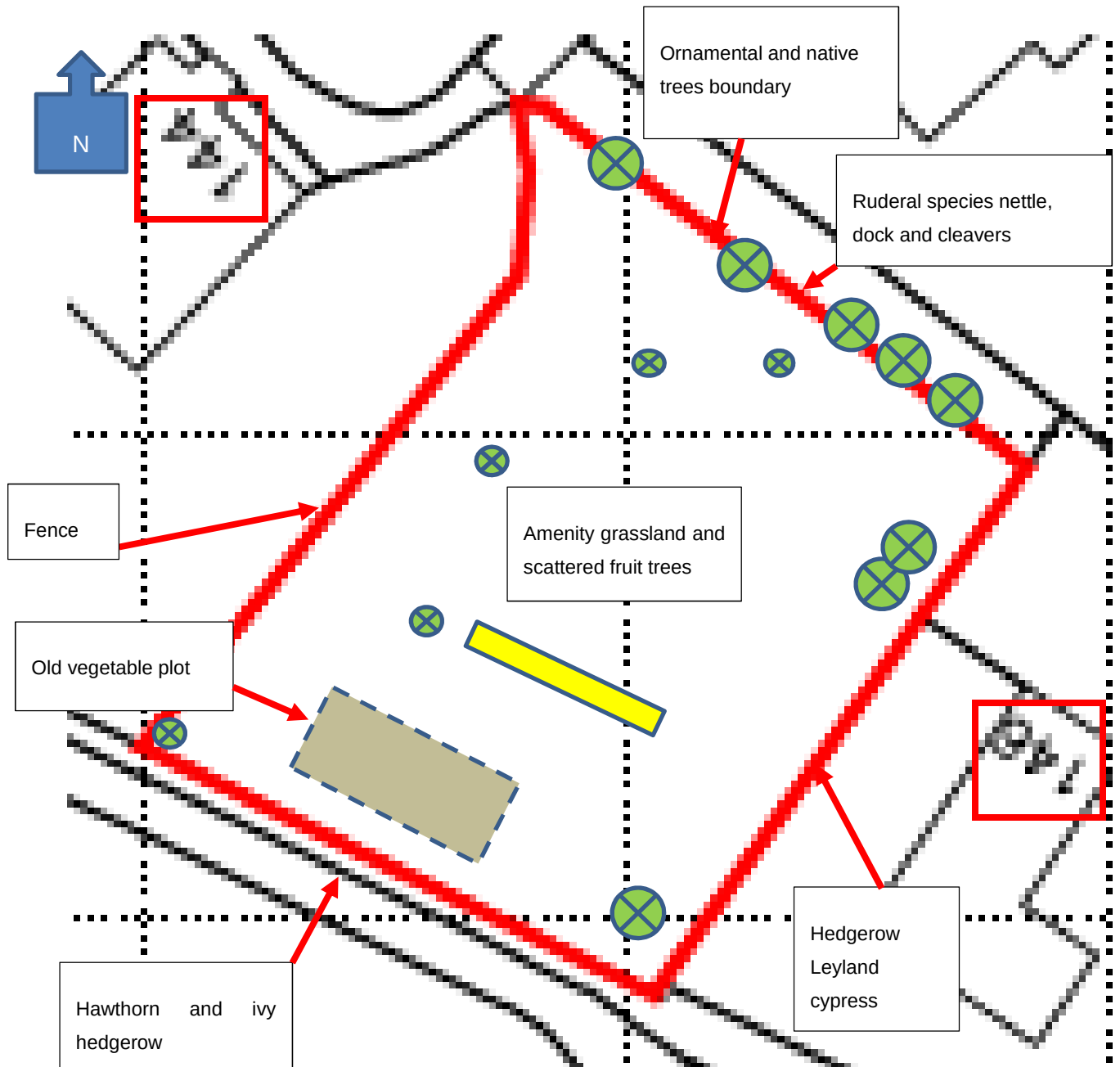
10.RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made for the site:

- Any development of the site provides biodiversity net gain by providing locally x2 bird boxes for common bird species such as house sparrow which are locally abundant.
- Any development of the site provides biodiversity net gain by providing locally x2 bat boxes suitable for pipistrelle species located on the new built structure or adjacent trees and positioned to avoid light spill from the property or local municipal lighting.
- Provide x2 insect hotels/bug boxes to provide opportunities for local insect population.
- Provide x1 hedgehog box on the north boundary
- Any landscape design for the site should where possible aim to use 50% native species in any design to help local native wildlife species.

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11.APPENDIX 1 - Habitat Map



Key

Scattered trees



Old grape vine



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12.Appendix 1 ecological enhancements

House sparrow nest box mounted at approx. 2.5m east or north facing



Bat box suitable for pipistrelle bats mounted at approx. 3m south or west facing



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Hedgehog nest box

