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**Land off Quemerford Road, near Calne,
Wiltshire**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

G & S M Wilkins and Son

April 2026



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Summary

This report presents the findings of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for land near Calne, Wiltshire (central Ordnance Survey grid reference SU 02257 7009), in relation to a proposed café and farm shop development with associated parking, service yard, and play area.

The Site covers approximately 2.85 hectares and comprises two grazed agricultural fields. It supports a number of habitats, including modified grassland, a patch of other neutral grassland and a glade within a woodland and defunct internal native hedgerows, with a tree line and dense scrub adjacent to Rivers Brook flowing along the southern boundary. The Site is bounded by urban development to the north, a local road to the west, and a fishing lake and farmland to the south.

The Site was evaluated for habitats and species protected under UK and European nature conservation legislation, including the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended. The findings, along with potential impacts of the development, were documented in accordance with industry standards.

A desk study was conducted to gather ecological data including records of protected species, habitat networks, priority habitats, and designated ecological sites. The sources consulted included the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) and the MAGIC website.

A habitat survey was undertaken by Envance Senior ecologist Jacob Hall and updated in April 2026 by Senior ecologist Hannah Karim. The survey followed UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey methodology (UKHAB Ltd, 2023) and made note of field signs and/or suitable habitat for protected or notable species. A River Condition survey (RiverMorph) survey was undertaken in April 2026 by Hannah Karim.

The following ecological receptors were identified in relation to the development:

- **Habitat Networks:** Design and landscaping should aim to maintain and enhance ecological connectivity, particularly in relation to the adjacent network expansion zone and deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with the Environment Act (2021).
- **Waterbodies and Watercourses:** Pollution prevention measures should be implemented through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to prevent sediment or contaminant runoff into aquatic habitats.
- **Amphibians:** A low risk of encountering great crested newts *Triturus cristatus* and other amphibian species following eDNA survey. An Amphibian RAMS is recommended during construction together with providing habitats suitable for supporting amphibian species within the final layout.
- **Birds:** Vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside of bird nesting season (March-August). Vegetation clearance should be scheduled outside the bird nesting season to avoid disturbance. Should this not be possible, suitable nesting habitat should be checked by an ecologist for birds' nests within 48 hours prior to intended removal and suitable buffers zones established around active nests. Breeding bird surveys may be required if raptor nesting habitat is to be impacted.
- **Badgers:** A pre-commencement badger survey is recommended as a precaution. Badger-sensitive working methods should be included in the CEMP.
- **Bats:** Trees to be felled following a soft felling methodology as a precaution. Construction and operational lighting should follow current BCT/ILP guidance (2023). The final layout will enhance habitats for foraging/commuting/roosting bats through habitat creation/enhancement and installation of roosting provision on retained trees/new buildings.
- **Other mammals:** The Site may support hedgehogs. Avoidance measures should be included in the CEMP and retention of access for the species to suitable habitats considered during landscaping.



design. CEMP to include precautionary RAMS in relation to hazel dormice.

- **Reptiles:** A low risk of encountering common reptile species albeit the suitable habitat largely being retained and enhanced. A Reptile RAMS is recommended during construction together with providing habitats suitable for supporting reptile species within the final layout.
- **Riparian Mammals:** Low risk of encountering riparian mammals during installation of drainage outflow into river. Construction works within 30 m of the watercourse should be preceded by an update survey to determine the presence/absence of these species prior to construction commencing as a precaution.



1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Envance was commissioned by G & S M Wilkins and Son in March 2025 to produce a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Land off Quemerford Road, near Calne, Wiltshire (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SU 02213 70061), hereafter referred to as the 'Site'. The boundary of the Site is shown on **Figure 1**.
- 1.1.2 This PEA has been undertaken to accompany a planning application for the construction of a café and farm shop with associated parking, service yard and play area, hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Development', in line with current best practice guidance (CIEEM, 2017) and includes:
- A desk-based assessment to identify any records of protected or priority habitats and species, and designated nature conservation sites in the vicinity of the Site.
 - A Site survey comprising a UK Habitats classification Survey including the recording of any evidence of the presence of protected, priority and/or Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS).
 - An assessment of the potential impacts of the works on the habitats and species present at the Site and the surrounding areas.
 - The design of suitable mitigation and avoidance measures to ensure ecological impacts are kept to a minimum.
- 1.1.3 This PEA identifies potential ecological constraints to the Proposed Development and indicates where avoidance and mitigation measures are necessary.



2. Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 A desk study was undertaken to inform the requirements for survey and obtain additional ecological information outside the scope of field survey. The following sources were consulted to obtain relevant ecological information from within 2 km of the study area (10 km for designated sites of international importance): Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) and the Multi Agency Geographic Information Centre (MAGIC) website (www.magic.gov.uk). Records were received in July 2025. Only recent records (i.e., from 2014 to 2025) are considered in this report.
- 2.1.2 The following information was sought and considered:
- records of notable protected and priority species;
 - records of Priority Habitats;
 - details of any statutory sites of ecological interest;
 - details of any non-statutory sites of ecological interest; and
 - presence of any ponds or other waterbodies within 500 m.
- 2.1.3 Only ecological features considered to have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Development (ecological constraints) are presented within this report.

2.2 Field Survey

- 2.2.1 A preliminary ecological survey was undertaken by Senior Envance ecologist Jacob Hall on 3rd June 2025 and again by Senior Ecologist Hannah Karim on 6th April 2026. Weather conditions during the survey were dry on both occasions. The survey followed UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey methodology (UKHAB Ltd, 2023), where the habitats and vegetation types present were recorded, together with an indication of their relative abundance using the DAFOR scale (D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional, R = rare). This survey method aims to characterise habitats and communities present and is not intended to provide a complete list of all species occurring across the Site.
- 2.2.2 A river condition assessment using River morph methodology was undertaken on the River's Brook was undertaken by accredited surveyor Hannah Karim and assistant on 6th April 2026 to inform the watercourse baseline of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric.
- 2.2.3 Site habitats were also assessed for their suitability to support protected or notable species. Any signs of the presence of such species were recorded, including observations of tracks, feeding remains, nests and burrows. Notable, rare or scarce plant species were highlighted if present. Invasive plant or animal species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) were recorded as seen.

2.3 Protected and Key Species Survey

- 2.3.1 The likely presence or absence of protected and notable species has been determined by several factors including the availability or suitable habitat, connectivity, known species distribution, local records, and professional judgement based on an understanding of the ecology and habitats requirement of the individual species assessed. Only species likely to be present with the Site based on the local and geographical of the Site and habitats present were considered during the Site visit.



Amphibians

- 2.3.2 Waterbodies on Site or within 500 m of the Site boundary, not separated by major barriers to amphibian dispersal, were searched for using online Ordnance Survey maps and aerial imagery to determine the likelihood of amphibians, including great crested newts (GCN) *Triturus cristatus*, being an ecological constraint. See **Figure 2** for map of pond locations.
- 2.3.3 Letters were issued to identified landowners of all ponds within 500 m of the Site in June 2025 requesting permission to sample the identified pond to determine the presence/absence of GCN using environmental DNA (eDNA). One sample was taken from P6 (SU02409 70092) adjacent to the Site and this was negative for the presence of GCN (see **Appendix 4**). No other access was granted.

Badgers

- 2.3.4 All habitats considered suitable to support badgers within the Site boundary were assessed for their suitability to support badgers.
- 2.3.5 The initial assessment involved searching for field signs of badger activity, including setts (and associated features such as bedding and paths between entrances), latrines (often located near setts or along territorial boundaries), commuting and foraging paths or footprints, and badger hairs snagged on fences or vegetation near sett entrances.

Bats

- 2.3.6 All trees were examined for potential roost features that may form as a result of either disease, decay and/or damage (i.e. animal holes, knot holes, callus rolls, wounds and other similar features). Close focusing binoculars were used from ground level where necessary and any evidence of roosting bats, including live or dead bats, droppings, and staining due to fur oils, was noted.
- 2.3.7 An individual tree may support features of potential interest to roosting bats. It is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature as bats are transient in nature and may be present on one day, with no evidence of occupation present on the next. As such, any tree has been assigned a defined category of roosting potential, based on the potential roosting features present, their associated characteristics (size, shelter, protections, conditions) and the surrounding habitat. Categories of roosting potential are defined as follows:
- No PRF: A tree with no suitable roost features present that are likely to support roosting bats.
 - PRF-I: Trees with roost features suitable for individual roosting bats but are unlikely to be occupied on a regular basis and/or by a significant number of individual bats.
 - PRF-M: Trees with suitable roost features with the characteristics to support multiple individuals.

Birds

- 2.3.8 An initial assessment of habitats was undertaken to determine the likely value to breeding and non-breeding birds. This comprised an appraisal of available food sources, nesting habitat, and proximity to sites of importance to birds.

Reptiles

- 2.3.9 An assessment of the suitability of the habitats present to support reptile species was undertaken. This assessment involved a review of habitats and habitat structure for suitable shelter for reptiles such as areas of scrub and woodpiles, grassland with well-developed and varied structure, areas suitable for basking, large tussocks etc and assessment of habitat connectivity.



Riparian mammals

- 2.3.10 An initial assessment of the habitat on and adjacent to the Site (River's Brook) for suitability to support riparian mammals (otter and water vole) was undertaken. This included an appraisal of the habitat connectivity, suitability of habitat/food sources and identification of records of these species in the local area.
- 2.3.11 The river was considered suboptimal for water vole due to likelihood of bank flooding and otters were considered to have potential for commuting due to their wide home range, although the section of the watercourse to be affected was not considered to be suitable for resting due to the frequent access by livestock and lack of suitable bank structure and shelter. However, as a precaution an otter and water vole survey was undertaken in search of field signs of these species to determine their likely presence or absence on 7th April 2026 during suitable weather conditions. Physical characteristics of the river were noted including the level of artificial modifications (such as the presence of drainage outflow pipes and weirs). Other features such as the presence or absence of aquatic vegetation and the presence of fish were also noted. Any signs such as feeding signs, footprints, droppings, mammal holes etc were recorded if seen.

Other Protected/Notable Species

- 2.3.12 Signs of other notable species were recorded as seen.

Invasive Non-Native Species

- 2.3.13 Consideration was given to the presence of invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); however, this survey does not comprise a comprehensive invasive plant survey and may not have detected emergent stands.

2.4 Policy and Legislation

- 2.4.1 The principal conservation legislation relevant to this report includes the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) was also considered when making assessments.
- 2.4.2 The Local Plan includes the following:
- Wiltshire Local Plan, which requires developers to demonstrate how their proposals will protect, maintain, and enhance biodiversity and ecological networks, in line with Core Policies 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), 52 (Green Infrastructure), and 57 (High Quality Design).
 - Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan, which supports the safeguarding of green infrastructure corridors, local wildlife habitats and sustainable rural development, particularly through policies NE1 (Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity) and BE1 (Sustainable Development).
- 2.4.3 **Appendix 1** provides further details of policy and legislation.

2.5 Limitations

- 2.5.1 This report serves to indicate the value of the Site in nature conservation terms based upon the survey data gathered. As with any survey of this kind, the information collected defines the habitat types present within the Site and their condition and is not intended to be a record of every species present.
- 2.5.2 Information for designated sites is based on site citations provided by the local biological record holder



and no visits have been made to designated sites.

- 2.5.3 Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect the presence of plants and animals, such as the time of year, weather, migration patterns and behaviour.
- 2.5.4 Any absence of desk study records cannot be relied upon to infer absence of a species/habitat as the absence of records may be a result of under-recording within the given search area.
- 2.5.5 The UK Habitats Classification survey does not constitute a full botanical survey, or a Phase 2 pre-construction survey that would include accurate GIS mapping for invasive or protected plant species.
- 2.5.6 Most of the ecological data remains valid for only short periods due to the inherently transient nature of the subject. The survey results contained in this report are considered accurate for one to two years, assuming no significant considerable changes to the site conditions.
- 2.5.7 This report assumes that construction will commence within 1-2 years of the date of the assessment in accordance with the British Standard 42020:2013 unless otherwise stated.



3. Baseline Conditions

3.1 Site Description

- 3.1.1 The survey covered approximately 2.85 ha and covered two previously grazed agricultural fields near Calne, Wiltshire (central Ordnance Survey grid reference; **Figure 1**). The Site is bordered by urban development to the north, a local road to the west and a fishing lake and farm to the south.

3.2 Designated Sites

Statutory

- 3.2.1 One site of international importance for nature conservation was identified within 10 km of the Site: Pewsey Downs Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located c. 8.8 km southeast of the Site as shown in **Table 1**. The SAC is designated for its orchid-rich semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates.
- 3.2.2 Calstone and Cherhill Downs Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located c. 1.47 km to the southeast of the Site and is designated for species-rich chalk grasslands (**Table 1**).

Table 1 – Identified Statutory Sites for Nature Conservation

Name	Description	Approximate Distance from Site
Pewsey Downs SAC	Designated for its orchid-rich semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates. It supports a variety of rare and protected plant species, including the burnt-tip orchid <i>Neotinea ustulata</i> .	c. 8.8 km southeast
Calstone and Cherhill Downs SSSI	A species rich chalk grassland supporting orchids such as bee orchid <i>Ophrys apifera</i> and hosting rare invertebrates including marsh fritillary <i>Euphydryas aurinia</i> .	c. 1.47 km southeast

Non-Statutory

- 3.2.3 There are ten non-statutory sites for nature conservation identified within 2 km of the Site, detailed shown in **Table 2**.

Table 2 - Non-statutory Sites within 2 km of the Site

Name	Description	Designation Type	Approximate Distance from Site
Marsh Lane Meadow	A little hay meadow which forms part of a domestic garden. Includes areas of very high diversity and herb cover.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 0.52 km northeast
Old Camp Sandpit	Lower Greensand 8m thick above unconformity at top of Kimmeridge Clay.	Local Geological Site	c. 1 km north
Sands Farm Quarry	A series of active sediment lagoons associated with a large sand quarry and processing plant.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 1.4 km north



Name	Description	Designation Type	Approximate Distance from Site
Calne Without Meadows	A wet meadow along the River Marsden with a large pond.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 1.45 km east
Home Wood	Ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland and historic parkland on rolling chalk land.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 1.7 km northeast
Calstone Wood	A steep-sided woodland at the headwaters of the River Marden with several springs.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 1.8 km southeast
South Farm Coombe	Unimproved calcareous grassland, mostly on steep east-facing chalk lynchets, with mesotrophic grassland below.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 1.9 km southeast
Ranscombe Bottom	Unimproved calcareous grassland on the steep banks of a complex of chalk coombes with associated mesotrophic grassland in valley bottoms.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 2 km southeast
Blacklands Wood	A small ancient broadleaved woodland site on sloping chalk downland.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 2 km southwest
Blacklands Farm Down	Chalk downland, with calcareous grassland on terraced slopes in a deep combe and valley side.	Local Wildlife Site	c. 2 km southwest

3.3 Priority Habitat

3.3.1 Within 2 km of the Site, 83 land parcels of four priority habitat types were identified (**Table 3**). The nearest area of Priority Habitat is lowland mixed deciduous woodland and is located c. 0.32 km north of the Site, separated by urban development.

Table 3 - Priority Habitat identified within 2 km of the Site.

Priority Habitat Type	Location relative to Site	Ecological Connectivity with Site
Ancient Woodland	c. 1.7 km northeast – Home Wood Local Wildlife Site	None identified
Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland	c. 0.32 km north	None identified
Lowland Calcareous Grassland	c. 1.47 km southeast - Calstone and Cherhill Downs SSSI	None identified
Traditional Orchard	c. 1.52 km southeast	None identified



3.4 Habitat Networks

- 3.4.1 The Site lies within a lower spatial priority zone of the Woodland Priority Habitat Network, with ten high spatial priority zones located within 2 km. A network expansion zone lies approximately 0.08 km east of the Site.
- 3.4.2 While the Site does not contribute directly to core woodland connectivity, nearby features such as hedgerows, woodland, the river corridor offer wildlife connective potential.

3.5 Waterbodies

- 3.5.1 Twelve waterbodies were recorded within 500 m of the Site, most of which are separated by urban and agricultural development (**Figure 2**). Five waterbodies are located within 250 m as follows.
- 3.5.2 One waterbody lies partially to the east of the Site boundary (**P6; Figure 2**). Sabre lake, a fishing lake, lies immediately adjacent to the southern boundary (**P1; Figure 2**), separated by River's Brook. Two small ornamental ponds located c. 0.16 km and 0.23 km southeast of the Site (**P4 & P5; Figure 2**), but are separated by the river. A small pond c. 0.03 km west (**P2; Figure 2**), is separated from the Site by a main road.
- 3.5.3 River's Brook flows along the southern boundary of the Site. It connects to the River Marden is part of Calne Town Council's strategic green corridor, areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

3.6 Site Habitats

- 3.6.1 Site habitats recorded during the survey are described in **Table 4** and mapped in **Figure 1**. Photographs are shown in **Appendix 2**.

Table 4 - Description of Site habitats.

Habitat	Description
Modified grassland g4	c. 2.55 ha Grassland fields separated by a defunct hedgerow. Grazed frequently by livestock and hay management. Dominated by rough meadow grass <i>Poa trivialis</i> and Yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i> . Abundant species include perennial ryegrass <i>Lolium perenne</i> , with lesser amounts of crested dog's-tail <i>Cynosurus cristatus</i> , meadow foxtail <i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , cock's-foot <i>Dactylis glomerata</i> , soft brome <i>Bromus hordeaceus</i> , meadow buttercup <i>Ranunculus acris</i> , and creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> (Photograph 1). Broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> , and red clover <i>Trifolium pratense</i> were frequent, with creeping cinquefoil <i>Potentilla reptans</i> , hairy sedge <i>Carex hirta</i> , and meadow barley <i>Hordeum secalinum</i> recorded occasionally.
Other neutral grassland g3c Neutral grassland g3	c. 0.0806 A patch of rough grassland forming over recently disturbed ground at the west of the Site. Dominated by rough meadow grass <i>Poa trivialis</i> , with occasional teasel <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i> , pendulous sedge <i>Carex pendula</i> , wild



Habitat	Description
	carrot <i>Daucus carota</i> , and wood dock <i>Rumex sanguineus</i> (Photograph 2).
Other woodland – broadleaved w1	C. 0.2106 ha An area of planted deciduous woodland at the west of the Site. Dominated by white poplar <i>Populus alba</i> , reaching approximately 40 m in height. Sweet chestnut <i>Castanea sativa</i> , cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> , and elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i> are frequent. Occasional elm <i>Ulmus</i> spp., lords-and-ladies <i>Arum maculatum</i> , box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , wood dock <i>Rumex sanguineus</i> , and privet <i>Ligustrum</i> spp. (Photograph 3).
Mixed scrub h3h Dense scrub h3	c. 0.104 ha. An area of dense scrub bordering River's Brook, at the southern boundary of the Site (Photograph 4). Dominated by grey willow <i>Salix cinerea</i> , with abundant hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> and bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. Elder <i>Sambucus nigra</i> , privet <i>Ligustrum</i> spp., and ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> are frequent.
Native hedgerow h2a	c. 0.142 km H1 A defunct hedgerow runs through the centre of the Site, reduced to scattered blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> and hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> , with some areas of blackthorn scrub. Vegetation is predominantly low growing, with a single taller plant reaching c. 3 m.
Other rivers and streams	River's Book (c.2-4m wide) flowing along the southern boundary. Areas of poaching banksides by livestock accessing riverbanks. Also fenced in areas. Wooded banksides with tall ruderal margins. Earth banks (shallow) with cobble substrate (Photograph 6).

3.7 Protected Species

Amphibians

- 3.7.1 Four European Protected Species Licenses (EPSL) and nine records were returned for the great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* within 2 km of the Site. All licenses and five records relate to Sands Farm landfill, c. 1.2 km northwest.
- 3.7.2 WSBRC returned a further nine recent records for common and widespread amphibians within 2 km of the Site, relating to the common toad *Bufo bufo* (4 records) and common frog *Rana temporaria* (5 records).
- 3.7.3 Twelve waterbodies were identified within 500 m of the Site (**Figure 2**), most of which are separated by urban and agricultural development, limiting connectivity to the Site. Five are located within 250 m of the Site, including a pond adjacent to the eastern boundary (Pond 6; **Figure 2**). This pond was tested using eDNA and was negative for the presence of great crested newt (see **Appendix 4**).
- 3.7.4 Sabre Lake (P1; **Figure 2**) lies immediately adjacent to the southern boundary, separated by River's Brook and considered unsuitable for GCN due to being heavily stocked with fish. Two ornamental



ponds located c. 160 m and 230 m (Pond 5 and Pond 6; **Figure 2**) are also located south of the river acting as a likely barrier to amphibian dispersal. Pond 2 is located c. 30 m west of the Site is separated by a road, likely limiting amphibian dispersal and was dry at the time of survey (May) within the peak breeding season. Pond 3 and Pond 11 are located over 250 m from the Site and separated by the river and the A4 road. Pond 7, 8, 9 and 10 are c. 500 m from the Site and separated by built development. Pond 12 is over 350 m from the Site and separated by agricultural fields.

- 3.7.5 Given that ponds not separated by barriers to amphibian dispersal are either not considered to be suitable for GCN (P1) or tested negative for this species (P6), the risk of encountering GCN is considered to be low. No access was granted from a letter drop for the remaining ponds but given their degree of separation, the distance from the Site and the limited suitability for GCN of terrestrial habitats to be affected by the Proposed Development (largely frequently grazed or cut grassland) the risk of encountering GCN is considered to be low.

Badgers

- 3.7.6 WSBRC returned 22 recent records for badgers *Meles meles* within 2 km of the Site, including badger setts and other signs.
- 3.7.7 No signs of badgers were noted during the Site visit, however, habitats within and adjacent to the Site, including hedgerows and woodland, are potentially suitable for supporting badgers by providing shelter and foraging opportunities. Given how mobile this species is and the ability to establish a sett at any time, badgers are considered to be a potential constraint of the Proposed Development.

Bats

Roosting bats

- 3.7.8 No EPSL relating to bats were identified within 2 km of the Site.
- 3.7.9 WSBRC returned five records of bat roosts within 2 km including two for common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, two for unidentified pipistrelle species *Pipistrellus* sp. and one for brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*. The nearest record, a *Pipistrellus* sp., was located c. 0.61 km east.
- 3.7.10 No trees within the Site to be affected by the Proposed Development was assessed as having greater than 'none' or PRF-I potential to support roosting bats.
- 3.7.11 Two records of foraging/commuting bats were returned by WSBRC, the closest pertaining to the common pipistrelle c. 0.29 km north.
- 3.7.12 Site habitats including hedgerows, treelines, woodland, and River's Brook offer moderately suitable commuting and foraging habitat albeit the majority of the habitat suitable for supporting foraging/commuting bat populations will be retained or enhanced. Foraging and commuting bats are considered likely to be an ecological receptor in respect of the Proposed Development.

Birds

- 3.7.13 WSBRC returned 9,441 records of 92 bird species within 2 km of the Site, including mistle thrush *Turdus viscivorus* (0.23 km south) and red kite *Milvus milvus* (0.25 km southeast). See **Appendix 3** for the full list of notable species.
- 3.7.14 Hedgerows, scrub, and woodland within the Site provide suitable nesting habitat for birds. A raptor nest, likely belonging to red kite *Milvus milvus*, was recorded within woodland in the southwestern part of the Site. The majority of the grassland is subject to grazing or hay cuts and taken together with the surrounding woodland/hedges is not considered to be of value to ground nesting bird species. This is supported by the lack of any nesting birds recorded during the survey visit in April 2026.



- 3.7.15 Due to the large number of records returned by the data search, and the suitable habitats present on Site, nesting birds typically associated with hedges/woodland/trees are considered likely to be an ecological receptor in respect of the Proposed Development.

Reptiles

- 3.7.16 WSBRC returned 17 recent records for reptiles within 2 km of the Site for slow worm *Anguis fragilis* (7 records), grass snake *Natrix helvetica* (5 records) and common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* (5 records). The nearest record was for grass snake c. 1 km northwest at Sands Farm landfill.
- 3.7.17 No reptiles or field signs were recorded during the Site visit; however, areas of rough grassland, defunct hedgerows, and scrub provide some limited suitable basking and refuge opportunities. The scrub bordering River's Brook and adjacent pond offer connectivity and habitat suitable for grass snake, a semi-aquatic species associated with wetland margins and amphibian prey, but this habitat will be retained and enhanced as part of the proposals. The habitat to be lost to accommodate the proposals is grazed/cut grassland which is considered to be suboptimal for supporting reptile species.
- 3.7.18 Due to nearby habitat suitability and nearby records, taking a precautionary approach reptiles are considered to be a potential ecological receptor in respect of the Proposed Development.

Riparian mammals

- 3.7.19 One record of Eurasian beaver *Castor fiber* was returned within 2 km of the Site in 2024. Three records of otter *Lutra lutra* were returned, the closest c. 1.2 km east. One record of water shrew *Neomys fodiens* was located 1.6 km northwest, and two records of water vole *Arvicola amphibius*, the nearest 1.6 km southwest.
- 3.7.20 River Brook flows along the southern Site boundary and offers marginal vegetation, low flow areas, and connectivity to the wider River Marden network, conditions suitable for otter and water vole.
- 3.7.21 During the initial assessment and otter and water vole survey the water was recorded as shallow and no areas suitable for otter holt creation and/or resting places were recorded. The riverbanks were suboptimal for supporting these species due to the shallow bank profile, likelihood of flooding mammal burrows and areas of livestock grazing (**Appendix 2**). No signs of otter or water vole activity were recorded such as feeding remains or prints/droppings. Whilst it cannot be entirely ruled out that otter and water vole may use the watercourse as part of a wider resource, the risk is considered to be low.

Terrestrial mammals

- 3.7.22 The WSBRC returned 148 records for European hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, with the closest being 0.25 km southeast of the Site. Habitats present within the Site such as hedgerows and woodland are considered suitable for the European hedgehog. Due to their mobility, hedgehogs may intermittently occupy the Site and are considered a potential constraint to development.
- 3.7.23 No records of hazel dormouse were identified within 2 km of the Site. The Proposed Development will use an existing access into the Site and the hedgerow to be removed is defunct and lacks connectivity. Taking into consideration the lack of records for this species in the locality hazel dormice are not considered likely to be a receptor with respect to the Proposed Development.

Invasive Non-Native Species

- 3.7.24 WSBRC returned no recent records of INNS within 2 km of the Site, and no INNS were observed during the Site survey.



3.7.25 Therefore, INNS are not considered an ecological receptor for the proposed development and will not be discussed further in this report.



4. Potential Impacts, Recommendations and Mitigation

4.1.1 **Table 5** below sets out the identified ecological constraints, further survey requirements and ecological mitigation and enhancement based on the preliminary plans¹ / surveys undertaken to date. Note that the scope of surveys and mitigation/design considerations may alter as more data is gathered.

Table 5: Identified Constraints with further survey and mitigation recommendations

Ecological Feature	Description	Recommendations	Timings
Pewsey Downs SAC	Given the distance and degree of separation of the Site from the SAC and the small-scale non-residential nature of the Proposed Development, it is not considered likely that the proposals will adversely affect the SAC.	Standard pollution prevention measures to be employed during construction via a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).	Pre-commencement
Calstone and Cherhill Downs SSSI	Given the distance and degree of separation of the Site from the SSSI and the small-scale non-residential nature of the Proposed Development, it is not considered likely that the proposals will adversely affect the SSSI.	Standard pollution prevention measures to be employed during construction via a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).	Pre-commencement
Local Wildlife Sites	Given the distance and degree of separation of the Site from the identified LWSs and the small-scale non-residential nature of the Proposed Development, it is not considered likely that the proposals will adversely affect any of the LWSs identified.	Standard pollution prevention measures to be employed during construction via a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).	Pre-commencement
Onsite Habitats	The Site supports a range of habitats which provide habitat connectivity and biodiversity at a Site – local level.	Design and landscaping should maintain and enhance habitat connectivity and mitigate the effects of habitat fragmentation and deliver 10% BNG in accordance with the Environment Act (2021).	Pre-commencement
Habitat Networks	The Site lies within a lower priority area of the woodland priority network, close to ten high-priority areas and immediately adjacent to a network expansion zone.	Design and landscaping will maintain and enhance habitat connectivity and mitigate the effects of habitat fragmentation, particularly in relation to the adjacent network expansion zone.	N/A
Waterbodies and Watercourses	River's Brook along the southern boundary and ponds are in close proximity to the Site. Both features are at risk of sedimentation and pollution during construction, potentially impacting aquatic habitats.	Implement pollution prevention measures via a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). See below for protected species.	N/A

¹ NOLANDS – MASTERPLAN M 23.110(b).D.008



Ecological Feature	Description	Recommendations	Timings
Amphibians	Loss of some suboptimal habitat suitable for supporting amphibian species during construction (loss of section defunct hedge and grassland). Potential to enhance site habitats for amphibians through final scheme design. Risk of encountering GCN and other amphibians is considered to be low.	Construction to be undertaken under a Reptile Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement (RAMS) as a precaution. Creation of habitats suitable for amphibians and reptiles as an enhancement to include creation of hibernacula.	Pre-commencement
Badgers	Potential for badgers to establish setts on Site or use the Site for foraging/commuting. Badgers and their setts are legally protected under the Protection of Badgers Act (1992).	A pre-commencement badger survey is recommended. A CEMP should include measures to reduce risk to badgers.	Pre-commencement
Bats	Site habitats such as woodland, hedgerows and scrub may support foraging/commuting bats although they will largely be retained and enhanced through additional hedgerow and pond creation which will be of benefit to the local bat population. In appropriate lighting during construction/operation could adversely affect foraging/commuting bats without additional mitigation. No trees were confirmed to support bat roost potential although bats are highly mobile and require only small crevices for roosting and as such a precautionary approach to felling is recommended.	Final landscape layout to ensure an enhancement of bat foraging habitat and roosting provision through installation of bat boxes on retained trees/new structures. Construction and operation of the Proposed Development to be undertaken following latest best practice guidelines (ILP/BCT, 2023) in relation to lighting of retained/created habitats to minimise impacts on foraging/commuting bats. Any trees to be felled to be soft felled as a precaution under a precautionary working method statement included in the CEMP. Should a bat be found or suspected works should cease and a licensed bat ecologist contacted for further instruction.	Pre-commencement
Birds	A raptor nest (possibly red kite) was observed in the on-site woodland. Hedgerows, trees and scrub may support other nesting birds, which may be disturbed or lost during site clearance without mitigation.	Vegetation clearance outside nesting bird season. If works required during March-August, pre-clearance checks by ecologist. Final landscape layout to ensure an enhancement of bird foraging habitat and nesting provision through installation of bird boxes on retained trees/new structures.	Pre-commencement
Terrestrial mammals	Site habitats may support low numbers of hedgehogs. Unlikely to encounter hazel dormice.	A CEMP should describe how harm to hedgehogs will be avoided during the construction phase. The presence of hedgehogs and retaining access for them to suitable habitat should be	Pre-commencement



Ecological Feature	Description	Recommendations	Timings
		considered in the Landscaping Design. The CEMP should include a precautionary working method statement for vegetation removal in relation to hazel dormice. If a hazel dormouse is found or suspected then works should cease and advice sought from a licensed ecologist.	
Reptiles	Suitable habitats for reptiles present on-site including rough grassland, scrub, defunct hedgerow and connectivity to hydrological habitats.	Construction to be undertaken under a Reptile Reasonable Avoidance Method Statement (RAMS) as a precaution. Creation of habitats suitable for reptiles as an enhancement to include creation of hibernacula and enhancement of riparian corridor as required by BNG.	Pre-commencement
Riparian Mammals	River's Brook flows along the southern boundary of the Site. It is connected to the River Marden corridor and may provide suitable habitat for riparian mammals, including otters and water voles. Riverbanks poached by grazing livestock and no signs of presence was recorded during survey. Low risk of encountering riparian mammals during the construction of an outflow pipe.	Prior to installing the outfall pipe an update otter and water vole survey should be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist as a precaution and should be included in the CEMP. No construction or operational lighting over river corridor.	Pre-commencement



5. References

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6. Figures

Figure 1. Baseline Habitats.



- Legend
- Site boundary
 - Native hedgerow
 - Other rivers and streams
 - Mixed scrub
 - Modified grassland
 - Other neutral grassland
 - Other woodland; broadleaved



0 25 50 75 m

0858 Nolands Farm

Baseline Habitat Map

Date	March/2026
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Scale	1:1000@A3
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Drawing Ref:	0858-BHM-V2
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Unit 9 Acorn Business Park
Heaton Lane
Stockport
United Kingdom
SK4 1AS

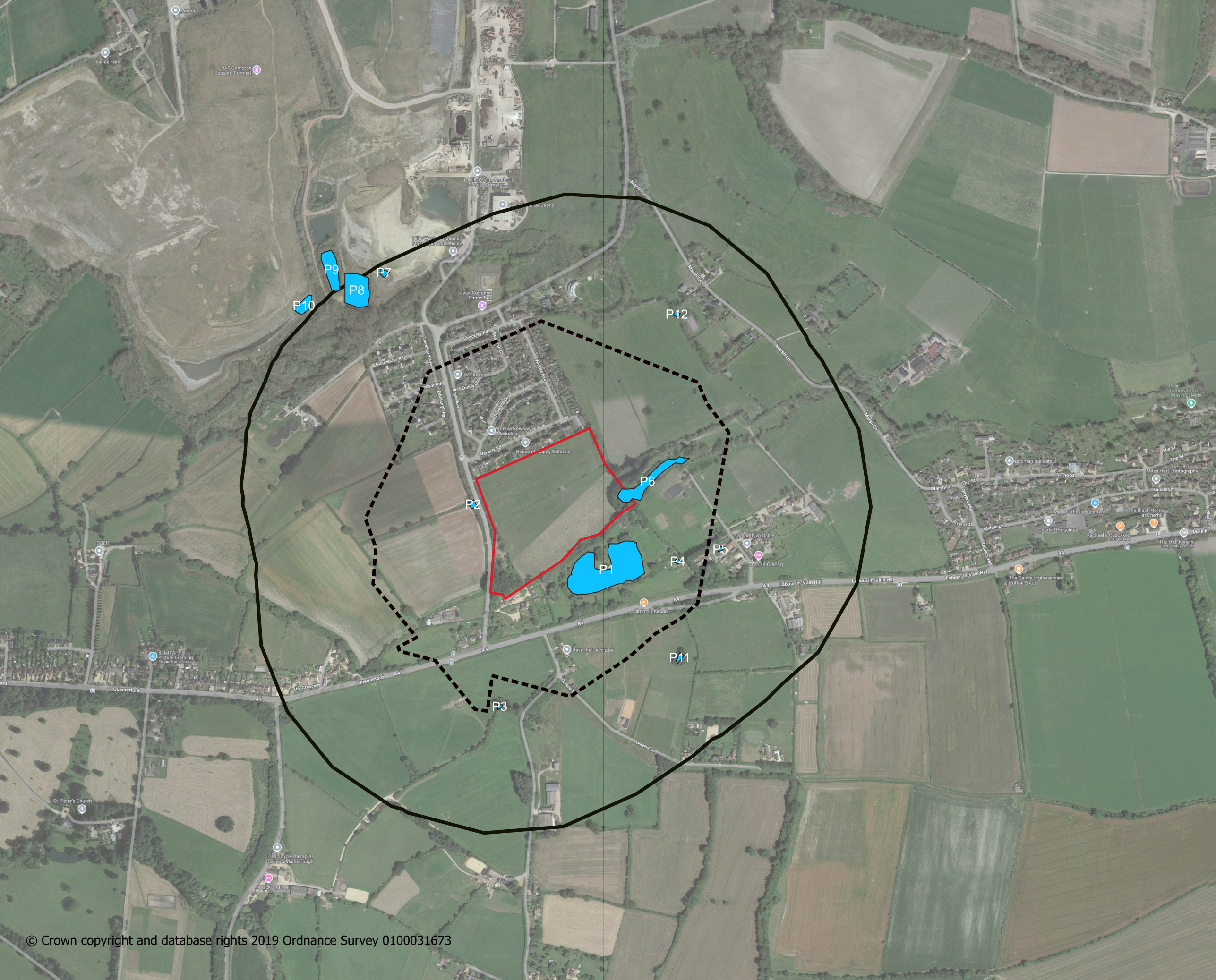
0161 327 1 723

enquiries@envanceuk.com

www.envanceuk.com



Figure 2. Ponds identified within 500 m of the Site. NTS. Source www.google.co.uk



- Site boundary
- Pond
- ▭ 500M buffer
- ▭ 250M Buffer

POND MAP

Date	28/05/2025
Scale	NOT TO SCALE
Job No:	0858

INTERNAL USE



Appendix 1. Summary of Legislation and Policy

Legislation

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) allows for the designation of National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), to protect areas containing habitats and species of national or international importance.

The 1981 Act also provides for the protection of certain species. These include nesting birds, with additional special protection for birds listed within Schedule 1, as well as a range of other protected animals listed in Schedule 5 (including reptiles, water vole and certain species of invertebrates). A number of protected plant species are also listed within Schedule 8.

The Conservation of Species and Habitats 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) provide domestic implementation of the EU Habitats Directive 1992. Under the Regulations, species listed in Annex II of the Directive are given strict protection in the UK as European protected species and it is an offence intentionally or recklessly to disturb or to harm a European protected species.

Projects which are likely to affect European protected species are subject to assessment criteria. Under Part 5 of the Regulations a licence may be granted for a project affecting a European protected species for specific purposes.

Natural England is the licensing authority for derogation licenses. A derogation licence may only be granted, provided:

- that there is no satisfactory alternative; and
- the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of a European protected species at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.

All public authorities are required to have regard to the provisions of the Habitats Directive in the exercise of their functions under Regulation 9 of the Habitats Regulations. Guidance on the application of the Habitats Regulations is set out in the Joint ODPM and Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) circular 06/2005 & 01/2005.

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1st October 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the NERC Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 all badgers and their setts are protected from disturbance. The Act also includes provisions to allow Natural England to grant licences permitting interference with a badger sett in the course of development. Such a licence will normally incorporate conditions to ensure that undue disturbance and suffering to badgers is avoided during the development works.

Hedgerow Regulations 1997

Under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, provision is made for the notification of “important” hedgerows. To



qualify for notification, hedgerows must fulfil a range of criteria relating to their historical, landscape or wildlife character. In accordance with the Regulations, the intention to remove any hedgerow should be notified to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) via a hedgerow removal notice. The LPA may issue a Hedgerow Retention Notice to prevent the loss of an “important” hedgerow. Where permission is granted to remove an “important” hedgerow, the LPA may impose conditions to mitigate the loss.

The Environment Act

In England, biodiversity net gain is now required under statutory frameworks introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). Under this framework, every grant of planning permission will be deemed to have been granted subject to a general biodiversity gain condition (a pre-commencement condition) that requires developments to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value (relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of all onsite habitats). The condition requires a Biodiversity Gain Plan to be submitted and approved before works can be commenced, but after planning permission has been granted.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Section 15 of the NPPF deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Habitats and biodiversity are specifically referenced in paragraphs 187 to 195, as copied below.

187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
 - e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
188. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.



189. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.
190. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes, permission should be refused for major development⁶⁷ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:
 - a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
 - b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
 - c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.
191. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 189), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.
192. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
 - a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity⁶⁸; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁶⁹; and
 - b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.
193. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:
 - a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
 - b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
 - c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁷⁰ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
 - d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be



supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

194. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:
- a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
 - b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
 - c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.
195. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

Wiltshire Local Plan - Wiltshire Council (2015)

- 6.1.1 The Wiltshire Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted January 2015) provides the overarching framework for development across Wiltshire, aiming to balance growth with environmental protection and enhancement up to 2026 and beyond. The Plan emphasises sustainable development that safeguards Wiltshire's distinctive rural character, biodiversity, and green infrastructure networks.
- 6.1.2 Key strategic policies relevant to the Site and its ecological context include:
- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity - This policy commits to conserving and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity across Wiltshire. Development proposals are required to:
 - Protect, restore, and enhance designated sites, priority habitats, and priority species as listed under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) and the Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan.
 - Avoid adverse impacts on ecological networks and provide appropriate mitigation and compensation where impacts are unavoidable.
 - Deliver biodiversity net gain in accordance with national policy expectations.
 - Incorporate green infrastructure measures that contribute positively to biodiversity and ecosystem services.
 - Core Policy 51: Landscape - This policy ensures that new development respects and enhances the landscape character of Wiltshire, especially its AONBs, rural countryside, and locally distinctive features such as woodland, hedgerows, watercourses, and historic landscapes. Development must:
 - Demonstrate an understanding of the local landscape context through Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments where necessary.
 - Protect and enhance key landscape features and avoid visual intrusion into sensitive areas.
 - To Core Policy 57: Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping - This policy supports the delivery of well-designed developments that integrate sensitively with local character and the natural environment. It promotes:
 - Use of sustainable construction techniques.



- Incorporation of landscaping that supports biodiversity.

- 6.1.3 Consideration of climate change adaptation and mitigation, including natural flood management.
- 6.1.4 In accordance with these policies, developers must submit supporting ecological assessments, such as Preliminary Ecological Appraisals and detailed species/habitat surveys, with planning applications. Proposals should demonstrate how potential impacts on biodiversity and landscape are avoided, mitigated, or compensated. Where appropriate, developers should seek to provide biodiversity net gain, guided by Defra's Biodiversity Metric and national policy (NPPF).

Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan (CCNP2)

- 6.1.5 The Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan 2 (CCNP2), currently at Regulation 16 stage, forms part of the statutory development plan for the area surrounding Calne and Calne Without. As a 'made' neighbourhood plan (subject to referendum and adoption), it provides local planning policy that developers must follow for planning applications within the plan area.
- 6.1.6 Key environmental policies relevant to this development include:
- Policy NE1 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity - Requires new development to respect and enhance biodiversity networks, landscape connectivity, and existing wildlife habitats. Proposals should avoid contributing to habitat fragmentation, particularly along identified wildlife corridors and Local Green Space.
 - Policy NE4 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows - Development proposals must avoid the loss of ancient woodland or veteran trees and apply appropriate protection buffers in accordance with current Natural England guidance. Where tree or hedgerow removal is unavoidable, replacement planting must follow the standards set out in the Neighbourhood Plan Tree Topic Paper (2022), ensuring canopy cover is increased and biodiversity value is maintained or enhanced on- or off-site.
 - Designation of Local Green Spaces - CCNP2 proposes safeguarding 27 areas as Local Green Spaces (e.g. Castlefields Country Park extension, Abberd Brook corridor, Quemerford Wood). Although designation does not grant public access rights, it ensures these areas are automatically protected from inappropriate development.
 - Policy BE1 - Sustainable Rural Development - Supports small-scale rural enterprises (e.g. cafés, farm shops) provided they are sensitive to local character and demonstrate minimal ecological impact. Developments are encouraged to incorporate landscaping, native species planting, and retain natural features such as hedgerows, woodlands, and watercourses.
- 6.1.7 Developers must demonstrate conformity through planning submissions:
- Show how the proposed development protects and enhances wildlife habitats and ecological connectivity in line with Policy NE1.
 - Avoid adverse impacts on areas designated or eligible as Local Green Spaces, particularly riparian corridors and woodland blocks identified in CCNP2.
 - Align with design codes, emphasising low-impact, nature-inclusive design that complements the character of Calne and mitigates climate and biodiversity risks.



7. Appendix 2. Photographs

	Photograph 1. Modified grassland fields separated by defunct hedgerow.
	Photograph 2. Other neutral grassland within woodland glade.
	Photograph 3. Other woodland at southwest of the Site.



Photograph 4. Mixed scrub bordering River's Brook, south of the Site.



Photograph 5. Large pond offsite.



Photograph 6. River's Brook



Pond 2 (dry in May)



8. Appendix 3. Bird Species Recorded within 2 km of Site

Recent records of bird species from within 2 km of the Site. Red = species listed as of 'red' conservation concern within the Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BOCC5; Stanbury *et al.* 2021). Amber = species listed as of 'amber' conservation concern with the BoCC5. Green = species listed as of 'green' conservation concern within the BoCC5. Sch1 = species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Sch9 = invasive non-native species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). S41 = species listed as of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Table 6. Bird species recorded within 2 km of Site by WSBRC.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Legal/Conservation Status
Barn Owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Green, Sch1
Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	Amber
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	Green, Sch1
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Amber
Common Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>	Red
Common Sandpiper	<i>Actitis hypoleucos</i>	Amber
Common Tern	<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Amber
Corn Bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>	Red, S41
Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	Green, Sch1
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Red, S41
Curlew	<i>Numenius arquata</i>	Red, S41
Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>	Amber
Dunlin	<i>Calidris alpina</i>	Red
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber, S41
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Red, Sch1
Firecrest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	Green, Sch1
Gadwall	<i>Mareca strepera</i>	Amber



Common Name	Scientific Name	Legal/Conservation Status
Grasshopper warbler	<i>Locustella naevia</i>	Red, S41
Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	Red
Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	Amber, Sch1
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Red
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	Red, Sch1, S41
Grey Wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>	Amber
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	Amber, Sch1
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	Red, S41
Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	Red, Sch1, S41
Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Red, S41
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	Green, Sch1
House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>	Red
House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Red, S41
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	Amber
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Green, Sch1
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Red, S41
Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	Amber
Lesser Redpoll	<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>	Red
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Red, S41
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber
Marsh Harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	Amber, Sch1
Marsh Tit	<i>Poecile palustris</i>	Red, S41



Common Name	Scientific Name	Legal/Conservation Status
Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>	Amber
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>	Red, Sch1
Mistle Thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>	Red
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Amber
Nightjar	<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Amber, S41
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Amber, Sch1
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Green, Sch1
Pied Flycatcher	<i>Ficedula hypoleuca</i>	Amber
Quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>	Amber, Sch1
Red Kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Green, Sch1
Redshank	<i>Tringa totanus</i>	Amber
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>	Amber
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Amber, Sch1
Reed Bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Amber, S41
Ring Ouzel	<i>Turdus torquatus</i>	Red, S41
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Amber
Sedge Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>	Amber
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>	Amber
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Red, S41
Snipe	<i>Gallinago gallinago</i>	Amber
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	Amber, Sch1
Song Thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Amber, S41



Common Name	Scientific Name	Legal/Conservation Status
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	Amber
Spotted Flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Red, S41
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red, S41
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>	Red
Tawny Owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	Amber
Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Amber
Tree Pipit	<i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Red, S41
Tree Sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>	Red, S41
Turnstone	<i>Arenaria interpres</i>	Amber
Wheatear	<i>Oenanthe oenanthe</i>	Amber
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>	Red, Sch1
Whinchat	<i>Saxicola rubetra</i>	Red
Whitethroat	<i>Curruca communis</i>	Amber
White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Red, S41
Willow Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>	Amber
Woodcock	<i>Scolopax rusticola</i>	Red
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	Green, Sch1, S41
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Amber
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Amber
Yellow Wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Red, S41
Yellow-browed Warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>	Amber
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Red, S41



Common Name	Scientific Name	Legal/Conservation Status
Yellow-legged Gull	<i>Larus michahellis</i>	Amber



9. Appendix 4: eDNA Results

- 9.1.1 When great crested newts (GCN), *Triturus cristatus*, inhabit a pond, they continuously release small amounts of their DNA into the environment. By collecting and analysing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
3095	Pond 6	SU 02409 70092	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12

- 9.1.2 The samples detailed above have been analysed for the presence of GCN eDNA following the protocol stated in DEFRA WC1067 'Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt, Appendix 5.' (Biggs et al. 2014).

- 9.1.3 Each of the 6 sub-sample tubes are first centrifuged and pooled together into a single sample tube which then undergoes DNA extraction. The extracted sample is then analysed using real-time PCR (qPCR), which uses species-specific molecular markers to amplify GCN DNA within a sample. These markers are unique to GCN DNA, meaning that there should be no detection of closely related species.

- 9.1.4 If GCN DNA is present, the DNA is amplified up to a detectable level, resulting in positive species detection. If GCN DNA is not present then amplification does not occur, and a negative result is recorded. Analysis of eDNA requires attention to detail to prevent the risk of contamination. True positive controls, negative controls, and spiked synthetic DNA are included in every analysis and these have to be correct before any result is declared and reported.

GCN eDNA Analysis

Summary

When great crested newts (GCN), *Triturus cristatus*, inhabit a pond, they continuously release small amounts of their DNA into the environment. By collecting and analyzing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
3095	Nolands Farm Pond 6	SU02409 70092	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12

Interpretation of Results

- 9.1.5 **Sample Integrity Check:** When samples are received in the laboratory, they are inspected for any tube leakage, suitability of sample (not too much mud or weed etc.) and absence of any factors that could potentially lead to inconclusive results. Any samples which fail this test are rejected and eliminated before analysis.
- 9.1.6 **Degradation Check:** Pass/Fail. Analysis of the spiked DNA marker to see if there has been degradation of the kit or sample between the date it was made to the date of analysis. Degradation of the spiked DNA marker may lead indicate a risk of false negative results.



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- 9.1.7 **Inhibition Check:** Pass/Fail. The presence of inhibitors within a sample is assessed using a DNA marker. If inhibition is detected, samples are purified and re-analysed. Inhibitors cannot always be removed, if the inhibition check fails, the sample should be re-collected.
- 9.1.8 **Result:** Presence of GCN eDNA (Positive/Negative/Inconclusive)
- 9.1.9 **Positive:** GCN DNA was identified within the sample, indicative of GCN presence within the sampling location at the time the sample was taken or within the recent past at the sampling location.
- 9.1.10 **Positive Replicates:** Number of positive qPCR replicates out of a series of 12. If one or more of these are found to be positive the pond is declared positive for GCN presence. It may be assumed that small fractions of positive analyses suggest low level presence, but this cannot currently be used for population studies. In accordance with the WC1067 Natural England protocol, even a score of 1/12 is declared positive. 0/12 indicates negative GCN presence.
- 9.1.11 **Negative:** GCN eDNA was not detected or is below the threshold detection level and the test result should be considered as evidence of GCN absence, however, does not exclude the potential for GCN presence below the limit of detection.
- 9.1.12 **Inconclusive:** Controls indicate inhibition or degradation of the sample, resulting in the inability to provide conclusive evidence for GCN presence or absence.



10. Appendix 5: Metric Data and Condition Sheets

Modified Grassland

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	y	Indicative species of reseeded and nutrification
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	n	
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	y	
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	n	Areas of livestock impacts
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens)².	n	localised poached areas



F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	y	
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	y	
Essential criterion achieved (Yes or No)			y
Number of criteria passed			4



Scrub

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range). ¹ - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species ² , - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> , sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> (only in its restricted native range), or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , which can be up to 100% cover).	Y	Native
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ³) shrubs are all present.	N	
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) and species indicative of suboptimal condition ⁶ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Y	
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	Y	
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	Y	



Other neutral grassland

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). ¹ Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	y	
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	y	
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ² .	n	
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	n	bramble scrub present
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition ³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	y	
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	n	
Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		n	
Number of criteria passed		3	0



Other Woodland

Condition Assessment Criteria						
Indicator		Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score per indicator	Notes (such as justification)
A	Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes ¹ present.	Two age-classes ¹ present.	One age-class ¹ present.		
B	Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland ² .	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland ² .	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland ² .		
C	Invasive plant species	No invasive species ³ present in woodland.	Rhododendron <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> or cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> not present, and other invasive species ³ <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ³ ≥10% cover.		
D	Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel.	Three to four native tree or shrub species ⁴ found across woodland parcel.	Two or less native tree or shrub species ⁴ across woodland parcel.		
E	Cover of native tree and shrub species	>80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native ⁵ .	50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understory shrubs are native ⁵ .	<50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native ⁵ .		
F	Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted ⁷ .	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ .	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space ⁶ . But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category ⁷ .		



G	Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland ⁸ ; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland ⁸ .	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland ⁸ .		
H	Tree health	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback ⁹ .	11% to 25% tree mortality and or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present ⁹ .	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present ⁹ .		
I	Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community ¹⁰ at ground layer present.		
J	Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots, or a complex woodland ¹¹ .	Two storeys across all survey plots ¹¹ .	One or less storey across all survey plots ¹¹ .		
K	Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees ¹² per hectare.	One veteran tree ¹² per hectare.	No veteran trees ¹² present in woodland.		
L	Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities ¹³ .		



M	Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident ¹⁴ .	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area, and or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ .	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground ¹⁴ .		
Total Score (out of a possible 39)						
Condition Assessment Result				Condition Assessment Score	Result Achieved	



Hedgerow					
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C, D and E)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Criteria description	Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core groups - applicable to all hedgerow types					
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	The average height of woody growth estimated from base of stem to the top of the shoots, excluding any bank beneath the hedgerow, any gaps or isolated trees. Newly laid or coppiced hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice). A newly planted hedgerow does not pass this criterion (unless it is >1.5 m height).	y	
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	The average width of woody growth estimated at the widest point of the canopy, excluding gaps and isolated trees. Outgrowths (such as blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> suckers) are only included in the width estimate when they are >0.5 m in height. Laid, coppiced, cut and newly planted hedgerows are indicative of good management and pass this criterion for up to a maximum of four years (if undertaken according to good practice).	y	
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	This is the vertical 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow, and its distance from the ground to the lowest leafy growth. Certain exceptions to this criterion are acceptable (see page 65 of the Hedgerow Survey Handbook).	y	



B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m	This is the horizontal 'gappiness' of the woody component of the hedgerow. Gaps are complete breaks in the woody canopy (no matter how small). Access points and gates contribute to the overall 'gappiness' but are not subject to the >5 m criterion (as this is the typical size of a gate).	n	
C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: · Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and · Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least).	This is the level of disturbance (excluding wildlife disturbance) at the base of the hedgerow. Undisturbed ground is present for at least 90% of the hedgerow length, greater than 1 m in width and must be present along at least one side of the hedgerow. This criterion recognises the value of the hedgerow base as a boundary habitat with the capacity to support a wide range of species. Cultivation, heavily trodden footpaths, poached ground etc. can limit available habitat niches.	y	
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	The indicator species used are nettles <i>Urtica</i> spp., cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i> and docks <i>Rumex</i> spp. Their presence, either singly or together, does not exceed the 20% cover threshold.	y	
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ³) and recently introduced species.	Recently introduced species refer to plants that have naturalised in the UK since AD 1500 (neophytes). Archaeophytes count as natives. For information on archaeophytes and neophytes see the JNCC website ⁴ , as well as the BSBI website ⁵ where the 'Online Atlas of the British and Irish Flora' ⁶ contains an up-to-date list of the status of species. For information on invasive non-native species see the GB Non-Native Secretariat website ⁷ .	y	



D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	This criterion addresses damaging activities that may have led to or lead to deterioration in other attributes. This could include evidence of pollution, piles of manure or rubble, or inappropriate management practices (for example, excessive hedgerow cutting).	y	
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Watercourse

Modified Grassland

See separate Excel spreadsheet