



Reybridge Farm Sables
Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA)
For CMS Architects

14th July 2023

South Office
41 Esmead
Chippenham, Wiltshire
SN15 3PR

North Office
292 Portobello High Street
Edinburgh
EH15 2AS

0131 563 9326
info@ellendale-environmental.co.uk



Version

VERSION	DATE	AUTHOR	REVIEWED	APPROVED
CIC v1.0	12/07/23	Stewart Parsons	Emma Parsons	14/07/23

Disclaimer

Copyright © Ellendale Environmental Limited. All rights reserved.

This report has been produced by Ellendale Environmental Limited within the terms and conditions of the contract with the client and taking account of the resources devoted to it by agreement with the client. It has been prepared for the sole use of the client and their professional advisors.

Ellendale Environmental Limited accepts no responsibility for any use of or reliance on the contents of this report by any third party.

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



Contents

Executive Summary	4
1. Introduction.....	6
1.1 Commission.....	6
1.2 Site Details	6
1.3 Survey Objectives	7
2. Methodology	8
2.1 Data Search.....	8
2.2 Phase 1 Habitat Survey	8
2.3 Preliminary Protected Species Walkover	8
2.4 Preliminary Roost Assessment	8
2.5 Survey Area.....	9
2.6 Survey Limitations	9
2.7 Surveyor.....	9
3. Results	10
3.1 Phase 1 Habitat Survey	11
3.2 Preliminary Protected Species Walkover	14
3.3 Preliminary Roost Assessment	15
4. Conclusions	20
4.1 Conclusion.....	20
4.2 Further Surveys.....	21
4.3 Mitigation	21
4.4 Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements	21
5. Target Notes	23
5.1 Botanical Target Notes (TN)	23
5.2 Animal Target Notes (AN).....	23
6. Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map	24



Executive Summary

Ellendale Environmental Limited was commissioned by CMS Architects, on behalf of their clients Mr & Mrs Doel, to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) at Reybridge Farm, Reybridge, Lacock, Wiltshire, SN15 2PE ('the site'). It is proposed to convert an existing stable block on the site into a residential property ('the proposed development').

Surveys undertaken at the site as part of the PEA included a Phase 1 Habitat survey, a protected species walkover and a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA). The Phase 1 Habitat survey was undertaken following a Phase 1 survey methodology to list the plant species associated with each habitat. The preliminary protected species walkover was conducted for the site and the surrounding area, and a PRA was undertaken for the buildings present.

The site is approximately 0.06 hectares in size and is located to the east of Reybridge and to the north of the village of Lacock. It comprises an active stable yard with a large stable block and a smaller stable building, which are both in use ('the target buildings'). In addition, there is an area of hard standing and small area of ruderal vegetation.

The hard standing area does not provide suitable habitat for protected species, and none were found. The ruderal vegetation is small and heavily disturbed which limits its suitability to support protected species and no evidence was found during the survey.

The small area of dense ivy scrub along the south-eastern boundary of the site provides suitable habitat for nesting birds; however, no evidence of nesting birds was found within the trees at the time of the survey. This vegetation is heavily disturbed on both sides with regular activity within the site and vehicles along the road to the south of the site. This limits the suitability of the vegetation to support nesting birds.

Evidence of swallow nests was found in the stable building and these were active at the time of the survey.



There is no suitable habitat within the site to support reptile or amphibian species and these are not considered to be present.

There is no suitable habitat within the site to support mammal species such as badger and no evidence was found within the site or around the boundaries of the site during the survey. These species are not considered to be present.

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

Although no evidence of roosting bats was found in Building 1 during the survey, the external roof structure of the building provides Low Roost Suitability for bats under some lifted tiles. In addition, it was noted during the survey that the building is regularly cleaned, meaning that any evidence of bat activity, such as droppings, would be regularly cleared and therefore one dusk survey is recommended to confirm the presence/likely absence of bats in this building.

Building 2 does not provide suitable habitat for bats and is assessed as providing Negligible Roost Potential. No evidence of bat activity or roosting bats was found during the survey and no further surveys for bats are recommended for Building 2.



1. Introduction

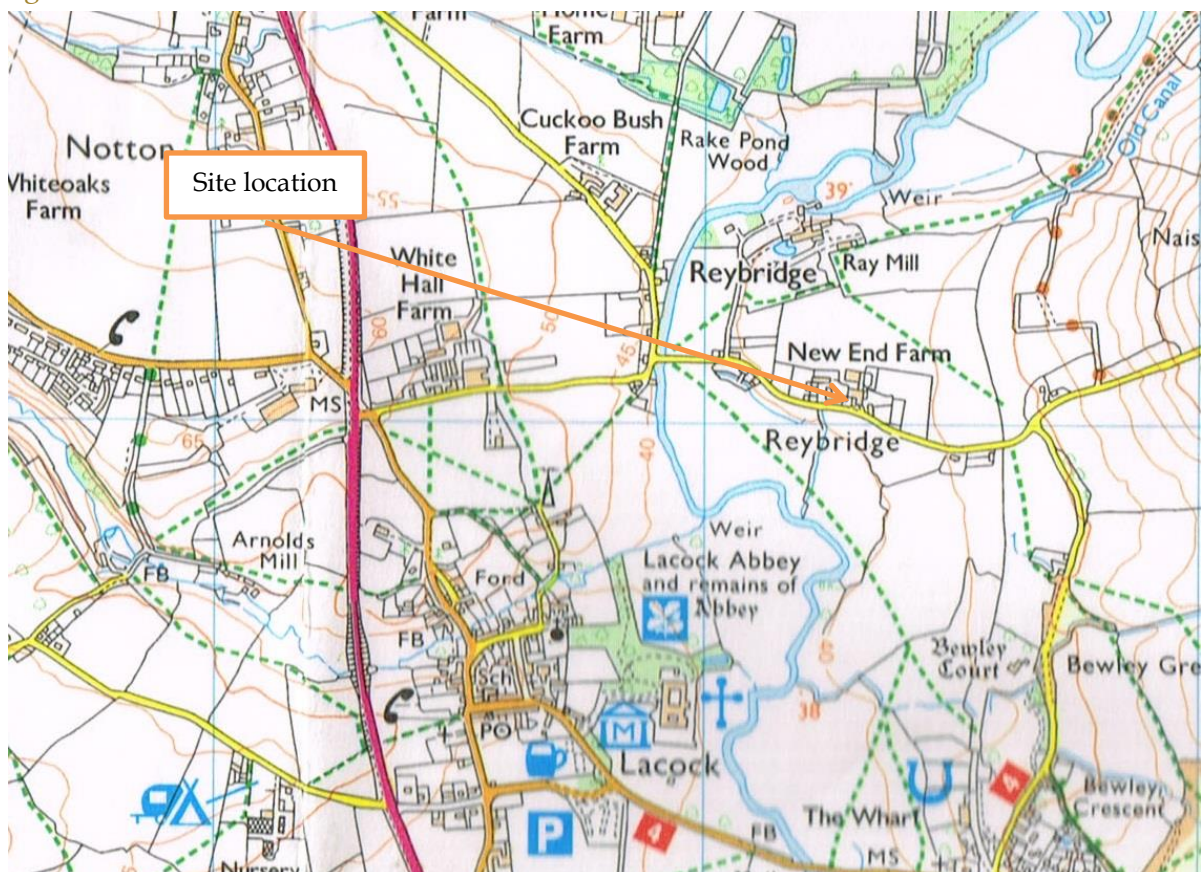
1.1 Commission

Ellendale Environmental Limited was commissioned by CMS Architects, on behalf of their clients Mr & Mrs Doel, to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) at Reybridge Farm, Reybridge, Lacock, Wiltshire, SN15 2PE ('the site'). It is proposed to convert an existing stable block on the site into a residential property ('the proposed development').

1.2 Site Details

The site is located to the east of Reybridge, a hamlet in the county of Wiltshire, approximately one mile north of Lacock, at OS Grid Reference ST 92268 69048.

Figure 1: Site location



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey Mapping Map Explorer 156 Scale 1:25000 by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100054247.



1.3 Survey Objectives

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

- Obtain baseline information on the current habitats and ecological features in and around the site;
- Identify any further specialist surveys that may be required;
- Identify the presence (or potential presence) of any protected species whose disturbance may require consent under The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), The Badgers Act 1991 or the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended); and
- Identify any species or habitats which may require special mitigation during works within the site.



2. Methodology

2.1 Data Search

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

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

The data search was conducted within a 2km radius of the site boundaries. This was extended to 5km for bat species.

2.2 Phase 1 Habitat Survey

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

2.3 Preliminary Protected Species Walkover

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

2.4 Preliminary Roost Assessment

An inspection of the inside and outside of the target buildings was undertaken from ground level, looking for evidence of bats, bat roosting sites and possible bat access/egress points.

In examining the buildings for bats, particular attention was given to any crevice in which bats may roost. These were inspected for bat droppings, bat urine, feeding remains, oil staining from the fur of bats (indication of frequent use of a particular



site), and wear of substrates caused by the movement of bats in and out over a long period of time.

2.5 Survey Area

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

2.6 Survey Limitations

The aim of this survey was not to record every species present on the site, as one survey acts as a snap-shot, recording only those species which are present at the time or whose presence can be indicated through the occurrence of field signs, such as feeding remains, droppings or places used for shelter or foraging.

Evidence collected has been used to draw conclusions about the flora and fauna within the boundary of the site and to provide an assessment of their ecological and nature conservation value.

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

Table 1: Survey weather conditions

SURVEY DATE	TEMPERATURE (°C)	WIND SPEED (MPH)	CLOUD COVER / PRECIPITATION
28/06/23	19.8	1.2 Avg. 2.6 Max.	40% cloud cover. Dry with a light breeze.

2.7 Surveyor

The survey was undertaken by Christopher Parsons, Ecologist of Ellendale Environmental, who has experience of ecological surveys across the UK.

Christopher holds a bat survey licence a bat survey licence (Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (Bat Survey Level 2), registration number CLS-2019-42561), with respect to the Conservation Regulations 1994. The licence is valid for all counties of England, valid until June 2025.



3. Results

A 2km data search for existing designated sites and biological records was undertaken from Magic and the NBN Atlas.

Statutory Designated Sites

There are no statutory designated sites located within 2km of the site.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

There are no non-statutory designated sites located within 2km of the site.

Protected and Notable Species

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

- Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (seven records, the closest of which is located 520m north-west of the site, the most recent recorded in 2022);
- Slow worm (two records, the closest of which is located 520m north-west of the site, the most recent recorded in 2016);
- Grass snake *Natrix helvetica* (nine records, the closest of which is located 520m north-west of the site, the most recent recorded in 2017);
- European water vole (nine records, the closest of which is located 520m north-west of the site, the most recent recorded in 1981);
- West European Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* (14 records, the closest of which is located 1km north-west of the site, the most recent recorded in 1922);
- Brown hare *Lepus europaeus* (two records, the closest of which is located 1.1km west of the site, the most recent recorded in 1976);
- Badger *Meles meles* (two records, the closest of which is located 1km north-west of the site, the most recent recorded in 2017);
- Otter *Lutra Lutra* (one records, located 1.3km north of the site, recorded in 2015); and
- Hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanaris* (one records, located 1.5km north-west of the site, recorded in 2022)



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

- Serotine bat *Eptesicus serotinus* (three records, the closest of which is located 1.km west of the site, the most recent recorded in 2021);
- Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii* (eight records, the closest of which is located 680m south of the site, the most recent recorded in 1998);
- Whiskered bat (two records, the closest of which is located 680m south-west of the site, the most recent recorded in 2013);
- Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri* (one record, located 3.8km west of the site, recorded in 1984);
- Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* (26 records, the closest of which is located 520m north-west of the site, the most recent recorded in 2021);
- Soprano pipistrelle bat *Pipistrelle pygmaeus* (81 records, the closest of which is located 680m south of the site, the most recent recorded in 2021);
- Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* (eight records, the closest of which is located 680m south of the site, recorded in 2017);
- Greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* (six record, the closest of which is located 770m west of the site, recorded in 1999); and
- Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros* (16 records, the closest of which is located 770m west of the site, recorded in 2016).

Bird Species

Approximately 81 bird species have been recorded within 2km of the site and are shown on the NBN Atlas; however, none of these records are within the site boundaries.

3.1 Phase 1 Habitat Survey

The site is approximately 0.06 hectares in size and is located to the east of Ryebbridge and to the north of the village of Lacock. It comprises an active stable yard with a large stable block and a smaller stable building, which are both in use ('the target buildings'). In addition, there is an area of hard standing and small area of ruderal vegetation.



The site is bounded to the north by a garden area and to the east and west by farm buildings. To the south there is an unnamed road, beyond which is agricultural grassland.

There are five Phase 1 habitat types, including boundary features, recorded on site, namely:

- J.4 Bare ground/hard standing;
- J.3.6 Buildings;
- C.3.1 Ruderal vegetation;
- J.2.3.2 Wall; and
- A.2.1 Dense scrub.

J.4 Bare ground

The main area of the site is dominated by hard standing which provides access to the buildings present and is used for car parking.

Photograph 1: showing a view of the site





I.3.6 Built-up areas (buildings)

Two buildings are present within the site and include a large stable block and a smaller stable building. These are further discussed in Section 3.3.

C.3.1 Ruderal vegetation

At southern boundary of the site there is a strip of ruderal vegetation along the boundary wall. Species present include perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, red valerian *Centranthus ruber*, willow herb *Epilobium* sp., ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, cock's-foot grass *Dactylis glomerata*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, daisy *Bellis perennis* and dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*. Small patches of bramble *Rubus fruticosus* L. agg are also present.

A small area of ruderal vegetation is also present at the north-west of the site adjacent to the stable building.

Photograph 2: showing a view of the ruderal vegetation





J.2.3.2 Wall

A dry stone wall is present around the southern and western boundaries of the site.

A.2.1 Dense scrub

A patch of dense ivy *Hedera helix* scrub is present along the wall on the south-eastern boundary of the site.

3.2 Preliminary Protected Species Walkover

The site comprises an area of hard standing, a large stable block and a smaller stable building, with a small strip of ruderal vegetation along the southern boundary of the site and small patch to the north-west. A wall surrounds the site on the southern and western boundaries.

The hard standing area does not provide suitable habitat for protected species, and none were found. The ruderal vegetation is small and heavily disturbed which limits its suitability to support protected species and no evidence was found during the survey.

The small area of dense ivy scrub along the south-eastern boundary of the site provides suitable habitat for nesting birds; however, no evidence of nesting birds was found within the trees at the time of the survey. This vegetation is heavily disturbed on both sides with regular activity within the site and vehicles along the road to the south. This limits the suitability of the vegetation to support nesting birds.

Evidence of swallow *Hirundo rustica* nests was found in the stable building, and these were active at the time of the survey.



Photograph 3: showing the swallow nests within the stable building



There is no suitable habitat within the site to support reptile or amphibian species and these are not considered to be present.

There is no suitable habitat within the site to support mammal species such as badger *Meles meles* and no evidence was found within the site or around the boundaries of the site during the survey. These species are not considered to be present.

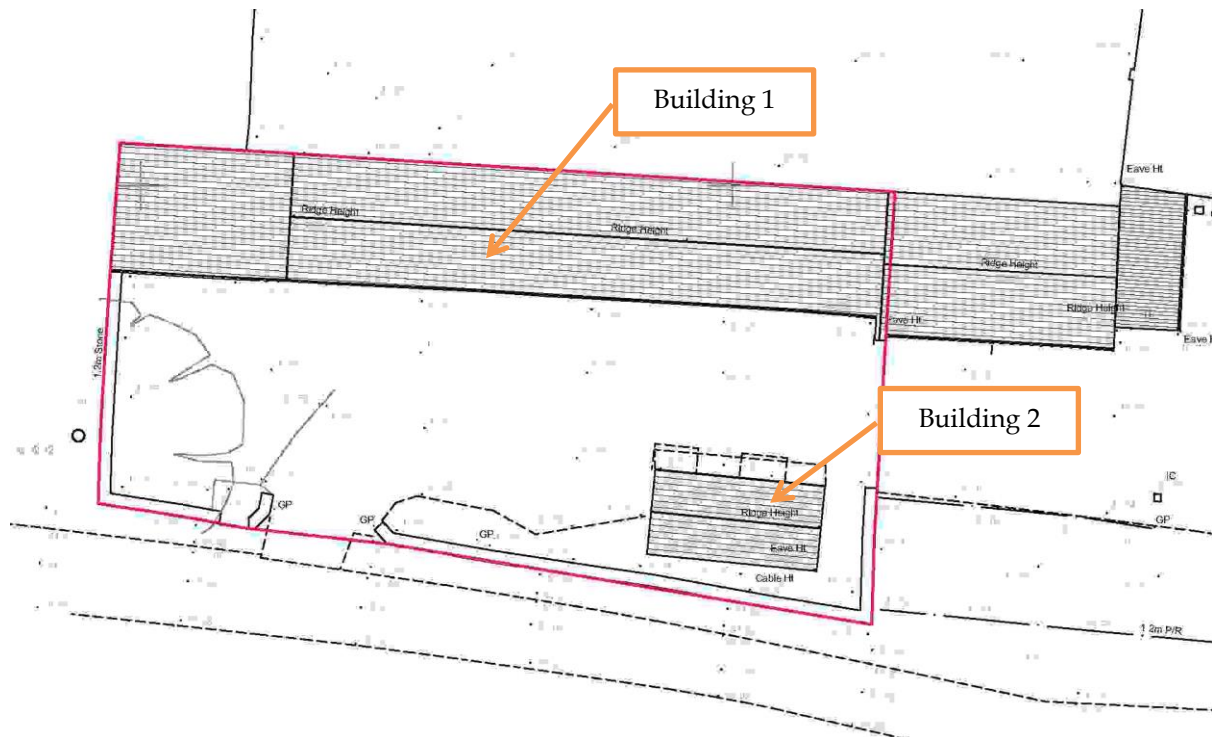
Overall, the site is assessed as providing low suitability to support protected species (excluding bats) and no evidence of protected species was identified during the survey.

3.3 Preliminary Roost Assessment

Two buildings are present on the site, comprising a large stable block to the north of the site boundary ('Building 1') and a smaller stable building ('Building 2') to the south-east, as shown in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: Target buildings



Building 1

Building 1 is a block built, single storey stable block with a pitched, tiled roof along the northern boundary of the site. The building is 43m long by 5m wide and 3m tall; however, it is only proposed to develop approximately 32m of the building, with the remainder of the building continuing with its current use.

Externally the walls of the building were noted to be in a good condition with no areas of missing mortar where bats could gain access for roosting. No evidence of bat activity was found on the outer walls of the building during the survey. On the southern elevation of the building there are stable doors which are usually open and provide access to the internal spaces.

The roof of the building is covered with tiles on the southern side and by slate tiles on the northern side. These were noted to be in a good condition at the time of the survey, but a few slightly lifted tiles were found to be present on the northern side of the barn.



Internally the roof is lined with bitumen felt that was found to be in a good condition.

Photograph 4: showing a view of Building 1



The building is used for horses and for storage, and is regularly cleaned, meaning that any evidence of bat activity, such as droppings, would be regularly cleared.

No evidence of bat activity was found during the survey of Building 1; however, the roof structure does provide low roost suitability for bats and one dusk survey is recommended to confirm the presence/likely absence of bats.



Photograph 5: showing a view of the rear (northern) view of Building 1



Building 2

Building 2 is located along the south-eastern boundary of the site and is a wooden stable building approximately 8m long by 5m, wide with a pitched roof covered in corrugated sheets. The building was found to be open with windows and doors present on the north and south side.

The building was found to be limited in its suitability to support bats, with no opportunities for roosting in the walls of the building and no evidence of bat activity was found during the survey.

The roof structure of the building does not provide suitable roosting habitat for bats and no evidence of bat activity was found.



Photograph 6: showing a view of Building 2



Open windows and doors on the building will allow in wind and rain making the internal structure cold and damp and therefore unsuitable for roosting bats that require dry and stable conditions for roosting. The building does not provide suitable roosting habitat for bat species.

It is therefore assessed as providing Negligible Roost Potential and no evidence of bat activity or roosting bats was found during the survey. Internally and externally, there was no evidence of roosting bats in the building, and it is considered unsuitable for roosting bats. No further surveys for bats are recommended for Building 2.



4. Conclusions

4.1 Conclusion

The site is approximately 0.06 hectares in size and is located to the east of Ryebriidge and to the north of the village of Lacock. It comprises an active stable yard with a large stable block and a smaller stable building, which are both in use ('the target buildings'). In addition, there is an area of hard standing and small area of ruderal vegetation.

The hard standing area does not provide suitable habitat for protected species, and none were found. The ruderal vegetation is small and heavily disturbed which limits its suitability to support protected species and no evidence was found during the survey.

The small area of dense ivy scrub along the south-eastern boundary of the site provides suitable habitat for nesting birds; however, no evidence of nesting birds was found within the trees at the time of the survey. This vegetation is heavily disturbed on both sides with regular activity within the site and vehicles along the road to the south. This limits the suitability of the vegetation to support nesting birds.

Evidence of swallow nests was found in the stable building, and these were active at the time of the survey.

There is no suitable habitat within the site to support reptile or amphibian species and these are not considered to be present.

There is no suitable habitat within the site to support mammal species such as badger and no evidence was found within the site or around the boundaries of the site during the survey. These species are not considered to be present.

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

Although no evidence of roosting bats was found in Building 1 during the survey, the external roof structure of the building provides Low Roost Suitability for bats under some lifted tiles.



In addition, it was noted during the survey that the building is regularly cleaned, meaning that any evidence of bat activity, such as droppings, would be regularly cleared. Therefore, one dusk survey is recommended to confirm the presence/likely absence of bats in this building.

Building 2 does not provide suitable habitat for bats and is assessed as providing Negligible Roost Potential. No evidence of bat activity or roosting bats was found during the survey and no further surveys for bats are recommended.

4.2 Further Surveys

A further survey for bats should be undertaken of Building 1 to confirm the presence/likely absence. A single dusk survey of the building should be undertaken during the optimal survey period, which is May to September, and in line with the Bat Conservation Trust guidelines.

Additional surveys for bats will then be required if species of bats are identified emerging from or roosting in the building during the survey.

4.3 Mitigation

Nesting Birds

Should any vegetation around the boundaries of the site require removing and/or if any buildings require to be demolished, this should be undertaken out with the breeding bird season (March – August, inclusive), as all nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

If works are undertaken within this period, a nesting bird survey would be required no more than 24 hours prior to the works. If nesting birds were found, these areas of the site would need to be protected from disturbance until the young have fledged naturally.

4.4 Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements

The following recommendations are made for modest post-development ecological enhancements at the site that are proportionate with the low level of environmental impact from the proposed development:



- Additional bird nesting boxes (both small-hole and open-fronted) should be placed within the site, if possible, to create nesting opportunities for small bird species as part of the overall design;
- Bat boxes should be placed on or around the site boundaries, if possible, to create roosting opportunities for bat species as part of the overall design; and
- Planting of native shrubs in appropriate areas of the site such as the eastern boundary will bolster the existing habitat and provide connectivity between existing habitats. Species beneficial to wildlife include hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, holly *Ilex aquifolium* and cherry *Prunus avium* L.

These measures aim to increase the diversity of species present on the site after the completion of the works.



5. Target Notes

5.1 Botanical Target Notes (TN)

TN1 – Dry stone wall along the western boundary of the site. Beyond this are mature broadleaved trees in the adjacent site.

TN2 – An area of ruderal vegetation that has established on the broken hard standing.

TN3 – Building 1 is a large stable block to the north of the site boundary.

TN4 – The main area of the site is dominated by hard standing.

TN5 – Building 2 is a timber building located at the south-east of the site.

TN6 – An area of dense ivy scrub along the boundary wall.

TN7 – An area of ruderal vegetation that has established along the boundary wall.

5.2 Animal Target Notes (AN)

AN1 – Nesting swallow identified within the stable building.

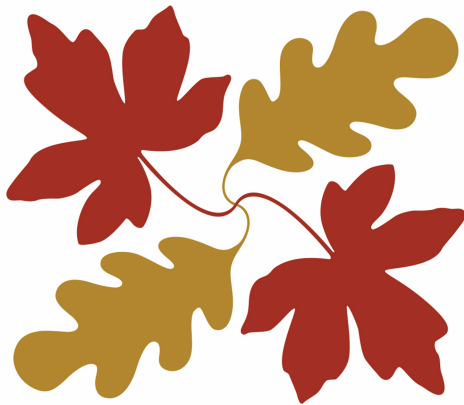
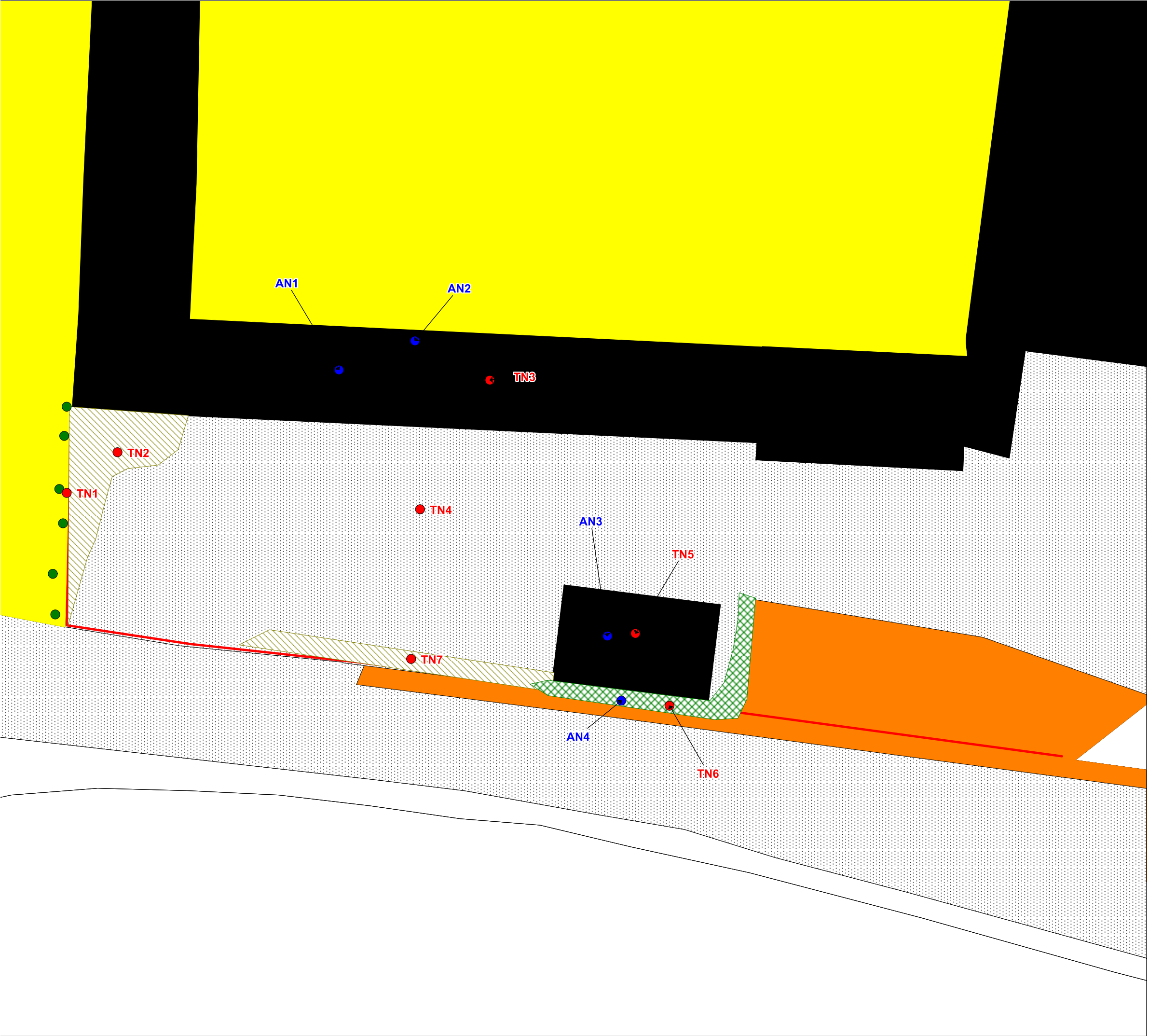
AN2 – Lifted tiles on the rear of the building may provide some suitable roosting opportunities for bat species.

AN3 – No evidence of bats was found in building 2 and no further surveys are recommended.

AN4 – Dense Scrub provides suitable habitat for nesting birds.



6. Extended Phase 1 Habitat Map



ELLENDALE
ENVIRONMENTAL

Drawing Title;
Reybridge Farm Stables
Extended Phase 1 Map

Client;
CMS Architects

Date;
13/07/23

Drawn By;
SP

Project Number;
EEL639

Version Number;
v1.0

Target Note

● TN

Animal Note

● AN

Woodland and Scrub

● Broad-leaved Tree

■ Dense Scrub

Tall Herb and Fern

■ Ruderal Vegetation

Miscellaneous

— Wall

■ Building

■ Hard Standing

■ Amenity Grassland

Grassland

■ Neutral Grassland