
The Lodge, Hensford Marsh, Warminster

Preliminary Ecology Appraisal

April 2026

Client: FMH Architectural Ltd
Report Ref: SEB3211_01 v2
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Non-Technical Summary

Site Location	The Lodge, Hensford Marsh, Warminster, BA12 9PA: (grid reference: ST 87787 43850).
Scope of Works	Preliminary Ecology Appraisal comprising a Habitat Survey and Suitability Assessment for Protected Species, and HSI assessment of one on-site and one off-site pond. Surveys were supplemented with a web-based desk study.
Survey Methods	The Habitat Survey was undertaken with reference to UKHab Classification (2023) and CIEEM (2018) and the Suitability Assessment for Protected Species included reference to BCT (2023). The HSI assessment was undertaken with reference to Oldham <i>et al</i> (2000).
Lead Personnel	Kate Hayward MCIEEM.
The Proposal	The site is the subject of a prior approval Class MA conversion of a restaurant and upstairs flat to a single residential dwelling.
Site Description and Suitability Assessment	The site lies in a rural location on the south-eastern edge of Warminster. It is approximately 0.4 hectares in size and contains six buildings/structures, modified grassland, ornamental planting, woodland, lines of trees and individual trees, hedgerow, pond, rubble/spoil/brash piles, developed sealed and unsealed surfaces and built linear features. The River Wylfe lies adjacent to the east boundary of the site. The river is covered by the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the River Avon System SSSI. There is Priority Habitat woodland partially on site. The habitats on site provide moderate-quality opportunities for commuting, foraging and sheltering fauna, including bats, birds, amphibians, reptiles and small mammals. The Lodge and outbuilding are assessed as <i>Low</i> suitability to roosting bats. There is potential for great crested newt to utilise the site.
Recommendations	The proposal relates solely to the change of use of the existing building to a single dwelling, with no external alterations and minor alterations to the internal ground floor layout only and therefore no changes to habitats currently proposed. As such, the proposal is considered unlikely to result in adverse impacts to statutory designated sites, habitats or protected species. Protection measures proportionate to the low-level of internal works have been recommended. Sensitive lighting will need to be demonstrated for any new lighting, and biodiversity enhancements have been recommended.



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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 In April 2026, Seasons Ecology was instructed by FMH Architectural Ltd, on behalf of the property owner, to undertake a Preliminary Ecology Appraisal of The Lodge, Hensford Marsh, Warminster, BA12 9PA (grid reference: ST 87787 43850). The site is the subject of a prior approval Class MA conversion of a restaurant and upstairs flat to a single residential dwelling. A pre-application enquiry was made to Wiltshire Council (application number ENQ/2025/01764) in October 2025, and comments received, which are considered in the relevant sections of this report.
- 1.1.2 The Preliminary Ecology Appraisal consisted of a Habitat Survey and Suitability Assessment for Protected Species. The survey was supplemented with a desk study.

1.2 Scope and Objectives of Survey

- 1.2.1 The survey was undertaken to identify and record the habitats on site and to assess the potential of the site to support protected/notable species. The purpose of the survey is to make known any ecological constraints or considerations that may be relevant to the proposal and to inform biodiversity enhancements.
- 1.2.2 This report is based on the findings of a survey undertaken on 23rd April 2026.
- 1.2.3 The report is supported by the following:
- Annex 1: Summary of Legislation and Planning Policy.
 - Annex 2: Habitat Plan.
 - Annex 3: Site Photographs.

1.3 Personnel

- 1.3.1 The survey and reporting were overseen by Kate Hayward MCIEEM. Kate is a Director of Seasons Ecology with over 25 years' experience as a professional consultant. Kate is a level 2 licensed bat surveyor (Class Licence Registration Number: 2025-84486-CL18-BAT) and a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM).
- 1.3.2 The survey was assisted by Emma Shaw, Senior Ecologist and Hayley Evenett, Assistant Ecologist.

2. Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.1.1 This report has been compiled with reference to relevant legislation and national planning policies, which protect wildlife. Annex 1 provides a brief summary of this legislation and policy.



3. Desk Study

3.1 Methods

3.1.1 A web-based desk study was undertaken in April 2026 prior to the survey to provide local information that may be relevant to the proposal. The following online resources were consulted:

- The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website¹, to obtain information on:
 - Statutory designations within 2km of the site and within 4km for designations with bats as a primary feature.
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones and Bat Consultation Zones relevant to the site.
 - Habitats on or adjacent to the site listed on the Priority Habitats Inventory.
 - European Protected Species licences issued within 2km.
 - Other species information that may be relevant to the proposal.
- Google Maps², to view aerial photographs, maps and mapnik data, to assess the ecological context of the site.

3.2 Results

Statutory Designations

3.2.1 The River Wylfe lies adjacent to the east boundary of the site. The river is covered by two statutory designations. These are the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the River Avon System SSSI.

3.2.2 No further statutory designations are located within 2km of the site.

3.2.3 There are no statutory designations for bats within 4km of the site.

Non-Statutory Designations

3.2.4 The pre-application ecology response refers to Eastleigh Farm Meadow County Wildlife Site (CWS), lying adjacent to the site. No further information appears to be available regarding this CWS; however, it is understood to be associated with Eastleigh Farm, which is located approximately 700m to the south-east of the site.

SSSI Impact Risk Zones and Bat Consultation Zones

3.2.1 The site lies adjacent to the River Avon SAC and the River Avon System SSSI. Therefore, consultation with Natural England on this application is likely to be required.

3.2.2 The pre-application ecology response refers to the site lying within the 6.4km buffer zone of the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA), which is primarily in place due to potential recreational impacts on stone curlew *Burhinus oedipnemus*.

3.2.3 The site does not lie within a Bat Consultation Zone.

¹ <http://www.magic.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

² <http://acme.com/planimeter/>



Priority Habitats Inventory

- 3.2.4 A small area of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland is located within the east corner of the site and forms part of a larger wooded area extending to the north-east beyond the site boundary, to include the adjacent riverbank and riparian zone, which lie immediately beyond the site boundary.
- 3.2.5 A small area of Priority Habitat Lowland Fen lies approximately 180m to the south-east of the site. Further areas of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland are located approximately 190m to the south-west and 200m and 350m to the north.

European Protected Species Licences

- 3.2.6 There is one European Protected Species licence issued within 2km of the site. The licence is for bats for the species, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, for a location approximately 1.1km to the north-east.

Other Species Information

- 3.2.7 The site is not located within a great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* Risk Zone.
- 3.2.8 There are two Natural England great crested newt pond surveys (2017-2019) that have been conducted within 2km of the site. One is for a location approximately 1.2km to the south-east, recording absence of this species. One is for a location approximately 1.3km to the south-west, recording presence of this species.
- 3.2.9 The site lies within a Countryside Stewardship Targeting Area for the Priority Species, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*.

Ecological Context

- 3.2.10 The site lies in a rural location on the south-eastern edge of Warminster. The River Wylye lies directly adjacent and to the east, extending to the south and north-east. Immediately to the north is a large pond surrounded by holiday lodges, and beyond are scattered residential properties, areas of amenity grassland and woodland, as well as to the south. The urban area of Warminster lies further to the north. A sewage treatment works lies approximately 390m to the south-west.
- 3.2.11 There are six ponds evident within 500m of the site, with the closest pond located adjacent to the north of the site.



4. Survey

4.1 Method

Habitat Survey

- 4.1.1 A systematic walkover of the site was undertaken on 23rd April 2026. Notes were taken on the habitats present, and their suitability to support protected and notable species. Any incidental evidence of protected and notable species was noted. The survey was carried out with reference to UKHab Classification (2023)³, CIEEM 2018⁴ and BS 42020:2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development* (BSI 2013).

Daytime Bat Walkover

- 4.1.2 A Daytime Bat Walkover of the site was carried out to observe, assess and record any habitats suitable for bats to roost, commute and forage on site.
- 4.1.3 The buildings were assessed for their suitability to roosting bats. This assessment considered the style, construction and condition of the buildings and presence of any suitable access points. Based on these factors, the buildings are assessed as having *Negligible, Low, Moderate* or *High* suitability to roosting bats.
- 4.1.4 A visual inspection was then undertaken of the internal areas/roof spaces to search for signs of bats, such as droppings, staining, scratch marks, feeding remains, and for actual bats. Any signs of nesting birds were also noted. A high-powered torch was used to aid the inspection. Any bat droppings found were collected for later DNA analysis to confirm species.
- 4.1.5 Trees on site were subject to a Ground Level Tree Assessment to identify Potential Roosting Features (PRF) on the exterior of trees. The trees are then assessed as follows:
- PRF – I: PRF(s) only suitable for individual bats or a very small number of bats either due to their size or a lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
 - PRF – M: PRF(s) suitable for multiple bats and could be used by a maternity colony.
- 4.1.6 The site is assessed as either having no habitat features, or *Negligible, Low, Moderate* or *High* suitability to roosting, foraging and commuting bats.
- 4.1.7 The walkover and roost assessments were undertaken with reference to BCT, 2023⁵.

Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Assessment

- 4.1.8 A great crested newt HSI assessment was undertaken of one pond located on site and one pond located adjacent and to the north of the site. This assessment uses ten variables

³ The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab) (2023). Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J.

⁴ CIEEM (2018) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

⁵ BCT (2023): Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.



(Suitability Indices), which are then used in a formula to predict the suitability of the ponds to support great crested newt (Oldham *et al.* 2000⁶).

4.1.9 The Suitability Indices are:

1. Geographic location – Three zones are identified within England, Scotland and Wales; optimal, marginal and unsuitable.
2. Pond area – The surface area of the pond.
3. Permanence – Whether the pond dries annually, sometimes dries, rarely dries or never dries.
4. Water quality – Based on invertebrate diversity and assessed as good, moderate, poor or bad.
5. Shade – Estimated percentage of the pond perimeter that is shaded, to at least 1m from the shore.
6. Presence of waterfowl – Assessed as either absent, minor or major.
7. Presence of fish – Assessed as either absent, possible, minor or major.
8. Pond count – The number of ponds evident within 1km of survey pond.
9. Quality of terrestrial habitat – Assessed as good, moderate, poor and none.
10. Macrophyte cover – Estimated percentage of the pond surface area occupied by macrophyte cover.

Constraints to Survey

- 4.1.10 The survey is not able to record flora or fauna that may appear on the site at other times of the year and were therefore not evident at the time of the survey.
- 4.1.11 Access to the internal area and roof space of an outbuilding was unavailable at the time of survey.
- 4.1.12 There is a small hatch within one roof space (Roof Space 2) of The Lodge (restaurant building), which could not be opened at the time of the survey.

⁶ Oldham, R.S., Keeble, J., Swan, R. J. S., and Jeffcote, M. (2000) *Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the great crested newt (Triturus cristatus)* Herpetological Journal, Vol 10, pp143-155.



4.2 Site Description

- 4.2.1 The site is approximately 0.4 hectares in size. It contains six buildings/structures, modified grassland, ornamental planting, woodland, lines of trees and individual trees, hedgerow, pond, rubble/spoil/brush piles, developed sealed and unsealed surfaces and built linear features.
- 4.2.2 Habitats are described below and mapped on the habitat plan at Annex 2 with Target Notes highlighting features of interest. Site photographs are provided at Annex 3.

4.3 Building/Structure Descriptions

- 4.3.1 The buildings/structures comprise The Lodge (former restaurant building with accommodation on the first floor), an outbuilding (beauty salon), a catering hut, a shed, a mobile home and a metal storage container. The Lodge, outbuilding, catering hut and shed are described below:

- *The Lodge*

Two-storeys, with the first floor in the roof. The building is uPVC and timber-clad with a cross-hipped, gabled, composite-tiled roof with skylights. Two flat, felt-roofed extensions are attached to the south elevation. There are uPVC fascia boards with a small section of timber fascia board and uPVC windows and doors.

Externally, there are a low number of raised roof tiles evident around the skylights on the south-east facing roof pitch (Target Note 1, Annex 2), there are raised roof tiles along the roofline above the south elevation (Target Note 2, Annex 2), there is a hole in a timber fascia board on the north-west corner (Target Note 3, Annex 2), a gap behind the uPVC fascia board on the north-west elevation (Target Note 4, Annex 2), a gap at the apex of the gable end (Target Note 5, Annex 2) and a gap in timber cladding on the south elevation of one of the flat-roofed extensions (Target Note 6, Annex 2).

Internally there are two roof spaces, Roof Spaces 1 and 2, both with a bitumen-type liner and a timber-frame. Roof Space 1 is approximately 5m in length, 3m in width and 1.2m in height, extending into the eaves where it is approximately 6m in length and 1m in width and height. There is a window on the east elevation. Daylight enters via the window and two gaps at the apex (Target Note 7, Annex 2) and via raised roof tiles along the roofline (Target Note 2). Roof Space 2 is approximately 6m in length, 1m in width and 1m in height. No access points were identified into this roof space.

No evidence of roosting bats or nesting birds was present in the roof spaces.

- *Outbuilding*

Previously functioning as a beauty salon, this is single-storey and uPVC-clad with a low pitched, felt roof and uPVC ridge tiles, one of which has a gap at the base (Target Note 8, Annex 2).

- *Catering Hut*

A single-storey, timber-clad building with a lean-to, felt roof. There are serving hatches and a door on the south-west elevation and a pizza oven on the south-east elevation. The building is well-sealed with no potential accesses for bats into the interior.

- *Shed*

Timber-clad with a pitched, felt roof, and timber-framed windows and a door. The shed is well-sealed and well-lit internally.



4.4 Habitat Descriptions

Modified Grassland

- 4.4.1 Modified grassland partially surrounds The Lodge (restaurant building) and surrounds the pond. It was managed to a short sward at the time of survey. Species include Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* and fescue *Festuca* species, with a low cover of herbs, including common daisy *Bellis perennis*, ground-ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, common cat's-ear *Hypochaeris radicata*, selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, dandelion *Taraxacum* species, ragwort *Senecio* species, herb-Robert *Geranium robertianum*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, lords-and-ladies *Arum maculatum* and English ivy *Hedera helix*.

Ornamental Planting

- 4.4.2 Growing along the edges of modified grassland, adjacent to the west elevation of The Lodge, are Lavender *Lavandula* species, rose *Rosa* species, greater celandine *Chelidonium majus* and Japanese spindle tree *Euonymus alatus*. Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* shrub planting grows along the south-west site boundary.

Woodland

- 4.4.3 A small area of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland is located in the east corner of the site, forming part of a larger woodland approximately 18.24ha in area, with only two mature white poplar *Populus alba* falling within the site boundary. Along with poplar, the wider woodland contains ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and willow *Salix* species with a shrub layer of hazel *Corylus avellana* and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*.
- 4.4.4 One of the poplars on site has a hole in its branch and is assessed as PRF-I suitability to roosting bats, suitable to low numbers or individual bats (Target Note 9, Annex 2). The other poplar on site has a cavity in the trunk and is assessed as PRF-M suitability to roosting bats, suitable to larger numbers of bats (Target Note 10, Annex 2). Beneath the poplar trees is bare ground.
- 4.4.5 A small wooded area is located in the north of the site, containing immature and semi-mature trees and shrubs, including white poplar, beech *Fagus sylvatica*, cherry *Prunus* species and hazel, with flowering currant *Ribes sanguineum*, and a ground flora comprising English ivy *Hedera helix* and lords-and-ladies with scattered deadwood.

Lines of Trees and Individual Trees

- 4.4.6 Leyland cypress *Cupressus leylandii*, birch *Betula* species, hazel and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* form one line of four trees, located across the west bank of an adjacent pond, and white poplar and sycamore form a second line of four trees, located across the centre of the west site boundary, to the rear of the mobile home and shed.
- 4.4.7 Individual mature trees on site comprise cherry species and white poplar and individual semi-mature trees comprise English oak *Quercus robur*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, sycamore, hazel, willow species and hawthorn, which are scattered across the site and surround the pond.

Native Hedgerow

- 4.4.8 A native hedgerow is located along a partial section of the north-west boundary, between the site and an adjacent road (Hensford Marsh). It is approximately 27m in length, 1m in width and 3m in height. Woody hedgerow species comprise hazel and cherry species. The hedgerow contains gaps. It connects to the wooded area across the north-west of the site at its northern end.



Pond

- 4.4.9 The pond on site is approximately 520m² and has an approximate depth of 1-2m. It has gently shelving banks, which are heavily vegetated with pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*, common nettle *Urtica dioica* and marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre* across the immediate fringes of the pond, with adjacent short, modified grassland. Semi-mature trees also grow on the banks, including hazel, willow species and alder. Aquatic vegetation appears absent except a small patch of waterlily *Nymphaea* species. The pond is partially shaded by the trees and shrubs growing on the banks.

Rubble/Spoil/Brash Piles

- 4.4.10 A rubble pile is located to the west of the mobile home. A spoil heap with brash is located in the wooded area.

Developed Sealed and Unsealed Surfaces

- 4.4.11 A paved seating area/courtyard partially surrounds and extends to the east of The Lodge (restaurant building) and there are concrete paths to the west of the building. There is gravel landscaping across the site, including a parking area.

Built Linear Features

- 4.4.12 Timber-post fencing surrounds the pond and timber-panel fencing bounds sections of the site, between the site and the road (Hensford Marsh) to the west.

4.5 Great Crested Newt HSI Assessment

- 4.5.1 The on-site pond, Pond 1, and a pond to the north of the site, Pond 2, were included in the assessment.

Pond 1

- 4.5.2 The on-site pond (described in the Habitat Descriptions section above) is assessed as 'Good' suitability to great crested newt with an HSI score of 0.75.
- 4.5.3 The pond scored highly for its location (A, optimal), area (520m²) frequency of drying (never) shade (10%) and number of ponds within 1km (six ponds). The pond scored moderately for water quality (moderate), presence of waterfowl (minor), presence of fish (possible) and terrestrial habitat (moderate). The pond scored poorly for its surface cover of macrophytes (5%).

Pond 2

- 4.5.4 This pond is approximately 3,370m² with an approximate depth of 1-2m. It has gently shelving banks and a vegetated island in the centre. Yellow flag iris *Iris pseudacorus* grows along the pond edges. The banks support tall herbs, including common nettle, pendulous sedge, red campion *Silene dioica*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, figwort *Scrophularia* species and marsh-marigold *Caltha palustris*, with hazel saplings also present. Ornamental bamboo *Bambusa* species grows on the island with yellow flag iris and semi-mature willow trees. The pond is partially shaded by nearby mature trees.
- 4.5.5 Birds were present on the pond at the time of survey, including grey heron *Ardea cinerea*, Canada goose *Branta canadensis*, moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* and mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*.
- 4.5.6 Pond 2 is assessed as 'Good' suitability to great crested newt with an HSI score of 0.70.



- 4.5.7 The pond scored highly for its location (A, optimal), frequency of drying (never) shade (30%) and number of ponds within 1km (six ponds). The pond scored moderately for presence of waterfowl (minor), presence of fish (possible) and terrestrial habitat (moderate). The pond scored poorly for its surface cover of macrophytes (5%) and water quality (poor).
- 4.5.8 As Pond 2 is larger than 2,000m², pond area was not included in the HSI calculation.

5. Evaluation

- 5.1.1 The site is a moderate-sized plot (approximately 0.4 hectares) previously functioning as a commercial restaurant use (and subsidiary functions, including a beauty salon) within a predominantly rural setting. Habitats present on site are generally typical and of relatively limited ecological interest in isolation, comprising modified grassland, ornamental planting, treelines and scattered trees, a short section of hedgerow, a small area of woodland, a pond and built structures and surfaces. Collectively, these habitats provide a moderate level of habitat diversity within the local area.
- 5.1.2 The ecological value of the site is elevated primarily by its location immediately adjacent to the River Wylfe corridor, which forms part of the River Avon SAC and River Avon System SSSI. These statutory designations substantially increase the ecological sensitivity of the surrounding landscape and represent the principal ecological constraint associated with the site. The River Wylfe and associated riparian habitats are likely to function as important ecological corridors supporting a range of protected and notable species.
- 5.1.3 The presence of two ponds, one located on site and a second immediately to the north, further increases habitat diversity and ecological connectivity within the wider landscape. Combined with the woodland and mature trees present, these features provide moderate-quality opportunities for commuting, foraging and sheltering fauna, including bats, birds, amphibians, reptiles and small mammals.
- 5.1.4 The Lodge and outbuilding are assessed as *Low* suitability for roosting bats, with a low number of external features and a roof space with access present in The Lodge, together with one external feature on the outbuilding, although no evidence of bats was identified. The remaining buildings are assessed as having *Negligible* suitability. Two trees on site are considered suitable to support roosting bats, one assessed as suitable for low numbers of individual bats and one assessed as suitable for higher numbers of bats.
- 5.1.5 No notable or invasive plant species were recorded on site. Vegetation across the site and The Lodge offer suitability for nesting birds. There are no suitable habitats on site for stone curlew associated with Salisbury Plain SPA, or lapwing, the site lying within a Countryside Stewardship Targeting Area for this species. The small area of woodland and hedgerow are considered suitable for dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*; however, owing to their limited extent and relative isolation, dormouse is considered unlikely to utilise these habitats. The site is also considered suitable to support a low to moderate abundance and diversity of terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates.
- 5.1.6 With consideration to great crested newt, the on-site pond and adjacent pond to the north are assessed as providing 'good' suitability, with a further six ponds located within 500m of the site. Consequently, there is potential for great crested newt to utilise the pond and terrestrial habitats on site.
- 5.1.7 Overall, the site is considered to hold ecological value beyond the immediate Zone of Influence and is assessed as being of Local value.



6. Recommendations

6.1.1 The site is the subject of a prior approval Class MA conversion of a restaurant and upstairs flat to a single residential dwelling. The proposal relates solely to the change of use of the existing building to a single dwelling, with no external alterations and minor alterations to the internal ground floor layout only and therefore no changes to habitats currently proposed. As such, the proposal is considered unlikely to result in adverse impacts to statutory designated sites, habitats or protected species.

6.1.2 With consideration to the proposal, the following is recommended:

6.2 Bats

6.2.1 The Lodge is assessed as *Low* suitability to roosting bats and no evidence of roosting bats was identified. As there will be no external work, no work to the roof spaces and no internal alterations on the first floor, no further bat surveys are considered necessary. Should any future external works or work to the roof spaces be required, then further consideration will need to be given to roosting bats.

6.3 Nesting Birds

6.3.1 Should any future works affect the roof spaces, outbuildings or vegetation across the site, then consideration will need to be given to the nesting bird season (generally the nesting bird season is considered to be from 1st March to 31st August), either avoiding this season or a pre-works nesting bird check should be undertaken by an Ecological Clerk of Works.

6.4 Great Crested Newt

6.4.1 Should any future external works affecting habitats surrounding The Lodge be proposed, a great crested newt presence absence survey should be undertaken of the on-site pond and adjacent pond to the north. At this time, only internal works to The Lodge are proposed; therefore, all potential great crested newt habitat will not be impacted.

6.5 Lighting

6.5.1 The site lies in a rural location adjacent to The River Wylfe and supports habitats suitable for bats to use for foraging and commuting. Therefore, for any new external lighting and where there is potential for increased light spill from internal sources (large, glazed windows, for example), a sensitive lighting scheme should be demonstrated.

6.6 Protection Measures

6.6.1 Taking into account the low level of internal ground floor work only, it is recommended that noisy activities and operations cease one hour before sunset to minimise any disturbance to wildlife.

6.7 Biodiversity Enhancements

- 6.7.1 The proposal provides opportunity to create general enhancements for wildlife. The following is recommended:
- Two bat boxes and two bird boxes could be attached to mature trees within the wider site. The bat boxes should be positioned on south-facing aspects of a tree at between 3m and 5m height. The bird boxes should be positioned on north or east-facing aspects of trees at between 1.5m and 2m height.



- Two insect hotels could be attached to the buildings or trees to provide nesting sites for solitary bees.
- One partially-buried log pile could be created near to the pond to provide refuge for reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.



7. Annexes

Annex 1: Legislation and Planning Policy

A summary of relevant legislation and national policy is provided below. For each individual case, it is advised to consult the relevant documents in full and obtain legal advice, where appropriate.

There are several UK legislation tools, which are listed below. European legislation has not been included as it is incorporated in UK legislation by domestic provisions.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit)

In 1992, the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC)⁷ came into force. This provides for the creation of a network of protected wildlife sites across the European Union, known as 'Natura 2000'. This network consists of designated sites, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC)⁸. These sites form part of a series of measures aimed at conserving important and threatened habitats and species.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 commonly known as 'the Habitat Regulations' transpose the Habitats Directive into national law and set out the provisions for the protection and management of species and habitats of European importance, including Natura 2000 sites. The Regulations have been amended in England in relation to candidate SACs and SPAs. These are sites submitted by the Government for consideration as part of the Natura 2000 network, and are also now defined as European Sites. All European Sites are of national importance and have been notified as SSSIs.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as Amended in Quinquennial Review and by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000⁹

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981¹⁰ provides the foundation for much of the statutory wildlife protection in the UK. Part I deals with the protection of plants, birds and other animals and Part II deals with the designation of SSSIs.

The following broad areas are covered by the Act:

Nature Conservation - Protecting those sites which are National Nature Reserves (NNR) and SSSIs.

Wildlife - Listing endangered or rare species in need of protection and creating offences for killing, disturbing or injuring such species. The disturbance of any nesting bird during the breeding season is also noted as an offence.

The Act also makes it an offence to cause to grow in the wild certain plant species or to release certain fauna into the wild. The Act is enforced by local authorities.

⁷ European Commission (1992). Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. European Commission, Brussels.

⁸ European Commission (1979). Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds, European Commission, Brussels.

⁹ Secretary of State, 2000. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

¹⁰ Secretary of State, 1981. Wildlife and Countryside Act. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.



Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 provides a new statutory right of access to the countryside and improves upon the rights of way system, providing stronger protection for both wildlife and countryside.

Part III of the Act - Nature Conservation and Wildlife Protection: A number of measures to promote and enhance wildlife conservation are detailed, including improving protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and increasing penalties for deliberate damage to SSSIs. The Act affords statutory protection to Ramsar Sites which are wetlands designated under the International Convention on Wetlands.

National Planning Policy Framework, 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and revised in July 2021. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system and how these are expected to be addressed. The NPPF is a material consideration for the purposes of planning decision-making.

The NPPF places a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The NPPF has an environmental objective to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The presence of a legally protected species is a material consideration for a local authority dealing with planning applications for any development that would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and geological conservation¹¹, prepared in support of the former PPS9, is still relevant and provides more guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation.

Biodiversity Action Plans

In 1994, the Government produced the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)¹², a national strategy for the conservation of biodiversity. Regional and District/Borough BAPs apply the UK BAP at a local level. The 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework' succeeded the UK BAP in July 2012¹³. The UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats remain, however, important and valuable reference sources. Notably, they have been used to help draw up statutory lists of priorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In England, there are 56 habitats of principal importance and 943 species of principal importance.

¹¹ ODPM Circular 06/2005 Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Importance within the Planning System.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7692/147570.pdf

¹² Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1994. Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan. London.

¹³ JNCC and Defra (on behalf of the Four Countries' Biodiversity Group). 2012. UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. July 2012. Available from: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6189>



Species/species group	Legal protection and policy
Flora	A number of plant species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit). It is an offence to deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot or destroy these wild plants. It is also an offence for any purpose to possess, sell or exchange such a plant. In addition, a number of plant species are species of principal importance in England (formerly referred to as UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species), LBAP priority species and/or notable species that are a material consideration in planning.
Bats	Bat species in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill bats; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which bats use for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Seven of the 18 species of bats occurring in the UK are species of principal importance in England and many are also included in LBAPs.
Badgers	Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1979. Under this legislation it is illegal to kill, injure or take badgers or to interfere with a badger sett in any way.
Otters	Otters in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill an otter; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb otter; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which an otter uses for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Otter is a species of principal importance in England.
Water voles	Water voles in England and Wales are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill a water vole; • Intentionally disturb water vole in their breeding or resting places; and • Deliberately damage, destroy or obstruct of a breeding site or resting place. Water vole is a species of principal importance in England.



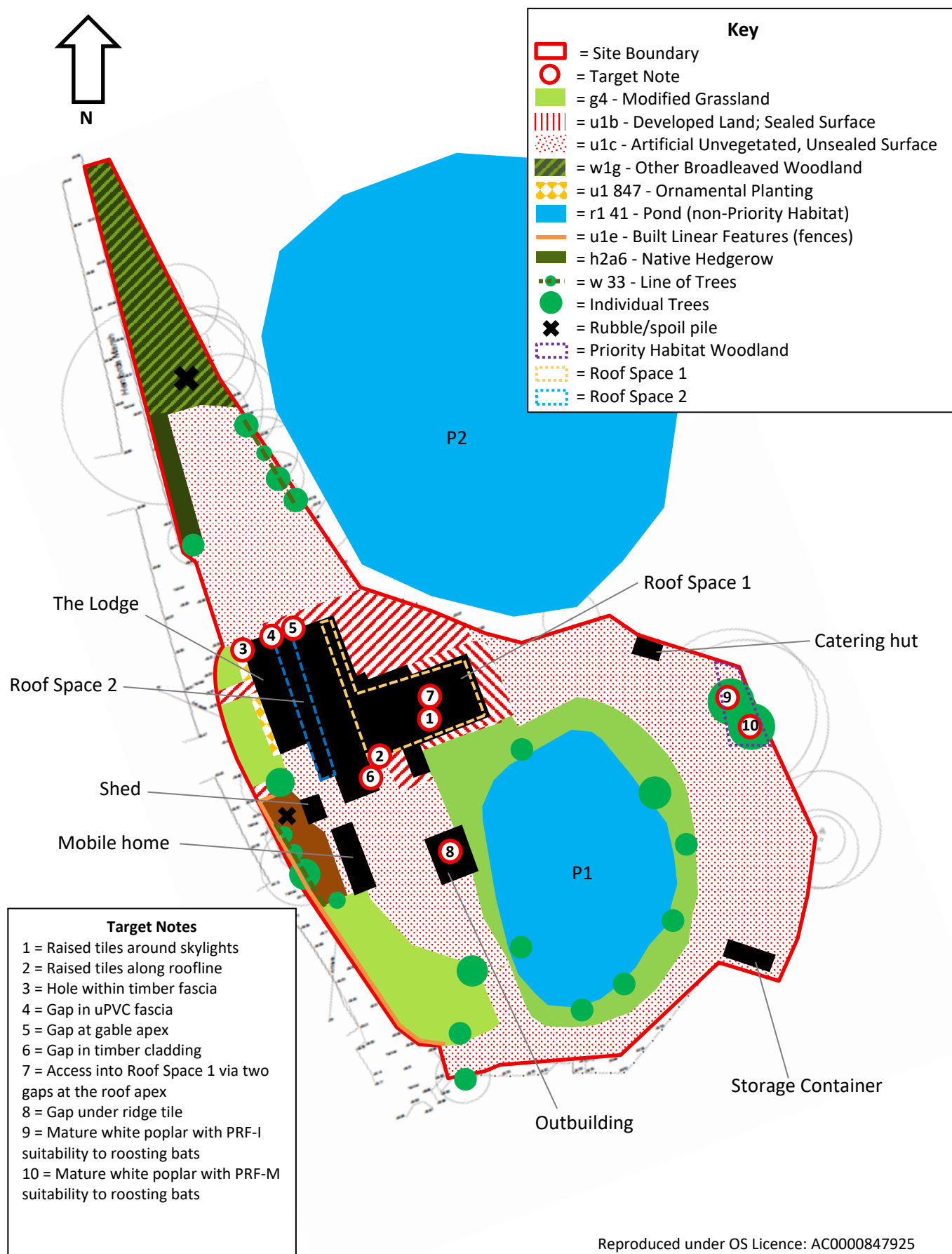
Dormice	Dormice in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill a dormouse; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb dormice; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a dormouse uses for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Dormouse is a species of principal importance in England.
Other mammals	Several other species of mammals, whilst not afforded specific legal protection, are of note and consideration to such species is necessary in respect to planning in accordance with national and often local policy. Such species are typically identified as species of principal importance in England and/or LBAPs. Species of principal importance in England include brown hare and hedgehog.
Birds	All wild birds in England and Wales are granted legal protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Kill, injure or take any wild bird; • Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; and, • Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird. Bird species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act are afforded further protection and it is illegal to disturb such species while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird. A number of bird species are also included as species of principal importance in England and LBAPs.
Reptiles	Smooth snakes and sand lizards in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Deliberately capture, injure or kill a smooth snake or sand lizard; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb a smooth snake or sand lizard; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a smooth snake or sand lizard use for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Widespread species of reptile (slow worm, common lizard, grass snake and adder) are protected against killing, injury and sale. Reptile species are also species of principal importance in England and often LBAP species.
Amphibians	Great crested newts and natterjack toads in England and Wales are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to:



	• Deliberately capture, injure or kill a great crested newt or natterjack toad; • Intentionally or recklessly disturb a great crested newt or natterjack toad; • Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a great crested newt or natterjack toad use for shelter or protection; and • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place. Great crested newt, pool frog, natterjack toad and common toad are species of principal importance in England. These and other amphibian species are also often included in LBAPs.
Invertebrates	45 species of invertebrate are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Intentional kill, injure or take such species; • Deliberately damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place used by such species; and, • Disturb such species when occupying such a structure or place. A further 24 species are only afforded partial protection (typically only against sale). Stag beetle for instance is only protected against sale. Eight species and their habitats are also afforded further protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) (EU Exit). 398 species of invertebrate are included as species of principal importance in England and such species are often also included within LBAPs.



Annex 2: Habitat Map (April 2026)



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Annex 3: Site Photographs (April 2026)

Photograph 1: The north-west (front) elevation of The Lodge (former restaurant building).



Photograph 2: The west elevation of The Lodge.



Photograph 3: Roof Space 1 of The Lodge.



Photograph 4: Roof Space 2 of The Lodge.



Photograph 5: The courtyard area adjacent to The Lodge.



Photograph 6: The wooded area in the north of the site.



Photograph 7: The former catering hut.



Photograph 8: The outbuilding.



Photograph 9: The shed.



Photograph 10: Two mature white poplars on site (suitable to roosting bats) forming part of a larger Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland.



Photograph 11: The on-site pond P1.



Photograph 12: The off-site pond P2.



Photograph 13: The adjacent River Wylfe.

