

Cedar Co-op Care Home, Calne

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Survey Report



12th November 2025

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It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to work

Executive Summary

Purpose of the report

To provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the proposed development site, involving,

- Evaluation of its conservation status based on a desktop review that summarises information collated on protected species and nature conservation designations in the area.
- Assessment of habitat composition on site, derived from a UKHabitat survey.
- Assessment of the likelihood of protected, or otherwise notable, species occurring on site.

Context of the development

The proposed development:

- Demolish existing building and construction of a care home.
- Construction of assisted living units.

Methods

The project requirement was to assess the existing ecological value of the site, identify potential ecological issues associated with the proposed development and make recommendations for general mitigation, compensation, enhancement and further surveys, as appropriate. A desk study and a UKHabitat survey were carried out.

Key issues

The wider Site had MODERATE potential for bats, birds, otter and water vole due to the suitable habitats recorded. The building on Site – the former Co-op was assessed originally as to have MODERATE bat roost potential, this was then revised to NEGLIGIBLE bat roost potential.

The scrub habitat on Site and habitats along River Marden running through the Site were suitable for commuting and foraging bats and birds.

There was suitable habitat for water vole and otter along River Marden which may be directly impacted by the proposed works.

There was MODERATE potential for amphibians and reptiles on Site in the scrub habitats and along River Marden. There was also a pond located less than 150m east of the Site which may provide suitable breeding habitat for amphibians.

There was LOW potential for commuting and foraging badger on Site due to the many records and suitable habitat recorded 200m east of the Site.

Further surveys required

A watercourse assessment is required to inform the BNG assessment.

Conclusions

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) should be completed for the project.

Declaration

I confirm that the information provided in this document is truthful and accurate at the time of completion.

Project manager: Daniel Ahern CEnv MCIEEM FLS

Signature:



Lead ecologist & Report writer: Ashleigh Cairns

Signature:



Date: 12th November 2025

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

- 1.1.1. In September 2025, Daniel Ahern Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Cedar Care Home Developments Ltd to undertake an ecological appraisal of a former co-op superstore and its grounds located within Calne, Wiltshire. The purpose of the survey was to provide an assessment of the current ecological conditions and to evaluate the ecological constraints to inform development proposals.
- 1.1.2. Previous ecological reports have been completed for this Site in 2022 and 2023 by The Environment Partnership (TEP). These included an ecological desk study (October 2023), two Phase 1 habitat surveys (April 2021 and October 2023), preliminary roost assessment (April 2021), nocturnal bat emergence/re-entry surveys (May to July 2022), otter survey (May 2022) and water vole surveys (May 2022 and September 2022).
- 1.1.3. There have been many reports of anti-social behaviour, vandalism and the deliberate starting of fires at the Site which poses a serious danger to the surrounding areas. The Calne Neighbourhood Police Team have written to express their strong support for the demolition of the building for the safety and security of the local community.
- 1.1.4. The purpose of this report is to identify key ecological constraints, to inform the project planning such that significant ecological impacts are avoided or minimised. It also aims to highlight any further ecological surveys that may be required to inform any future Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), so that they can be appropriately designed. Finally, the report aims to provide the information required to develop appropriate mitigation or compensation measures.

1.2. Site description

- 1.2.1. The former co-op superstore and its surrounding land, hereafter referred to as 'the Site', measures approximately 0.75ha and is situated on Mill Street, which runs to the south of the site (approximate OS grid reference: ST 99917 71001), see Fig. 1 below.
- 1.2.2. The Site is comprised of a former co-op superstore, two car parks, a disused car park, disused yard and surrounding grounds. The Site of proposed development consists of the disused building, developed land-sealed surface and some areas of scrub.
- 1.2.3. The proposed developments and alterations to the site are as follows:
- Demolish existing building and construction of a care home.
 - Construction of assisted living units.

Figure 1. Site location with the red line boundary.



2. Planning & Legislation

2.2. Legislation

The following legislation informed the survey approach and considerations.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- Environment Act 2021

2.3. Planning policies

- 2.3.1. This report is prepared with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework 2024.

3. Methods

3.3. Desk study

- 3.3.1. The following publicly accessible websites were searched for relevant ecological information:
- <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>
 - <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-1376> (summary of nature conservation legislation)
 - www.ukbap.org.uk (archived 2012)
 - www.gridreferencefinder.com for aerial photography
 - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/magicmap.aspx>
- 3.3.2. Data relating to statutory & non-statutory sites and all protected species records within 2km of the red line boundary was requested from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC).

3.4. Field survey

- 3.4.1. A UKHab 2.0 habitat survey of the site was undertaken with reference to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).
- 3.4.2. The survey was conducted on the 10th September 2025 by Ashleigh Cairns and Daniel Ahern.
- 3.4.3. The weather conditions were good with an average temperature of 16°C.
- 3.4.4. During the survey, dominant plant species were recorded, and habitats were classified according to their vegetation types, as identified in the UKHab 2.0 users handbook. Target notes (TN) were taken to denote species and habitats of conservation interest and to describe the vegetation in areas that were too small to map. Evidence or habitat suitable for any legally protected species was recorded, where appropriate.
- 3.4.5. The presence of any Category 9 invasive non-native plant species was recorded.
- 3.4.6. The results are presented in the standard format with habitat descriptions and a UK Hab 2.0 map (see Figure 3).
- 3.4.7. The site was inspected for direct evidence and habitat suitability for protected and notable species. Particular attention was given to those species listed under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This included searching for signs of badger activity and habitats suitable for amphibians, dormice, bats and reptiles.
- 3.4.8. In the event that habitats suitable for protected species are identified, it may be necessary to undertake further seasonal surveys to confirm

presence/absence. In the event that no suitable habitats or features are identified, a UK Hab 2.0 survey is sufficient to determine the potential impacts associated with a proposed development.

3.5. Limitations

- 3.5.1. The data provided by the online resources were not exhaustive. It is possible that species and habitats not found in the data search occur within the vicinity of the proposed development site.
- 3.5.2. The details within this report will remain valid for a period of 12 months; beyond that date it is advised that a review of ecological conditions is undertaken.

4. Baseline Ecological conditions

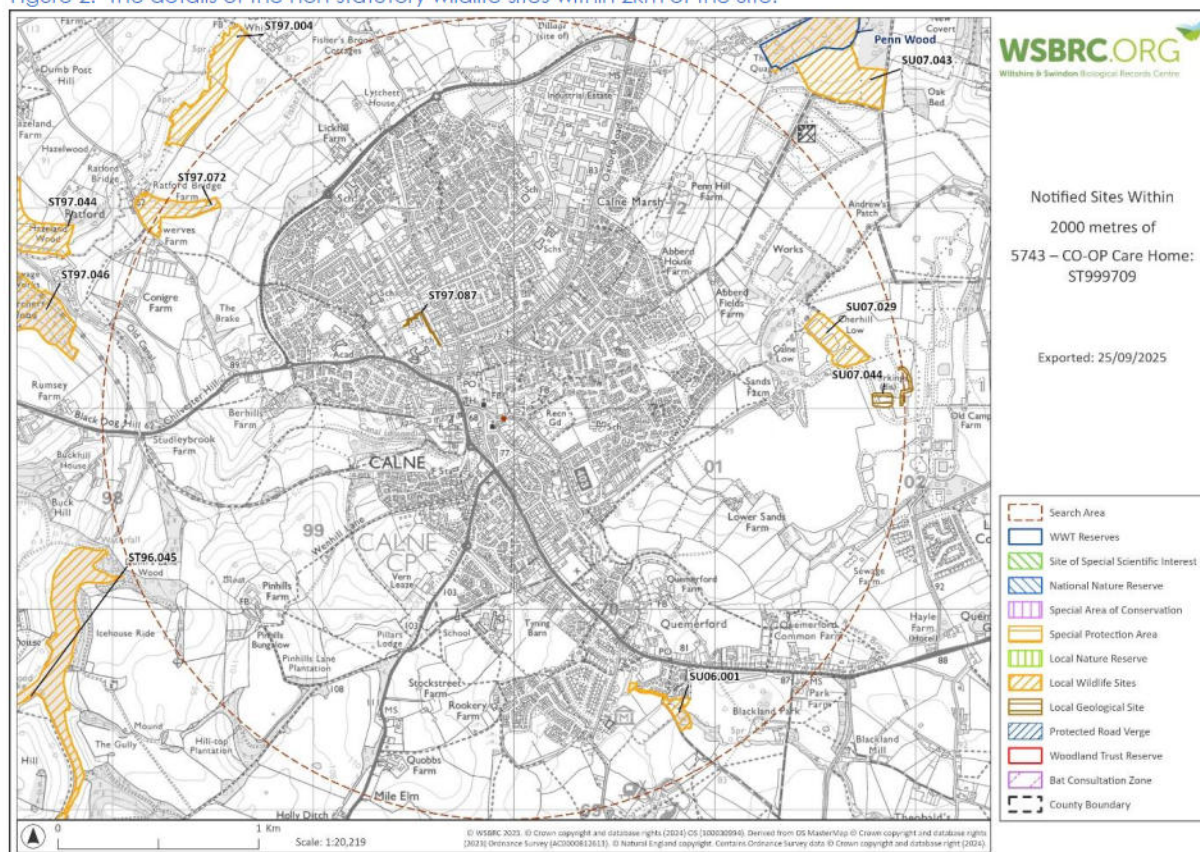
4.3. Desk study

- 4.3.1. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were no statutory wildlife sites recorded within 2km of the Site.
- 4.3.2. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were three non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 2km of the Site, the details of which are in Table 1 and Figure 2 below.

Table 1. The details of the non-statutory wildlife sites within 2km of the Site.

Designation	Name	Area (ha)
LWS	Calne Without Meadows	1.5
LWS	Sands Farm Quarry	3.83
LWS	Swerves Farm Meadow	3.94

Figure 2. The details of the non-statutory wildlife sites within 2km of the Site.



- 4.3.3. Four bat EPSL's have been granted within 2km of the site. The bat licences covered five species: brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*.
- 4.3.4. Three great crested newt EPSL's have been granted within 2km of the site. The details of the EPSL's can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2. The details of EPSL's within 2km of the Site.

Case reference	Species	Distance (m) and direction from site
2020-50391-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle, lesser horseshoe and soprano pipistrelle	250m west
2018-36882-EPS-MIT	great crested newt	1.6km east
2015-9393-EPS-MIT-2	great crested newt	1.6km south
2014-1584-EPS-MIT	great crested newt	1.6km south
2014-6552-EPS-MIT	brown long-eared and common pipistrelle	1.6km south
2015-14158-EPS-MIT	common pipistrelle	1.6km south
2015-9355-EPS-MIT	brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and whiskered	1.6km south

4.3.5. Protected species records for the following taxa recorded within 2 km of the Site are set out in Table 3, below.

Table 3. Protected species records within 2km of the Site.

Species name	Number of records
Amphibians	
common frog	149
common toad	234
great crested newt	78
Birds	
barn owl	10
black redstart	1
brambling	6
Cetti's warbler	1
common scoter	1
crossbill	12
cuckoo	2
fieldfare	190
firecrest	2
goldeneye	1
grasshopper warbler	2
green sandpiper	6
greenfinch	88
greylag goose	3
hawfinch	27
herring gull	4739
hobby	11
house martin	220
house sparrow	550
kingfisher	73
lapwing	327
linnet	120
marsh tit	40
mediterranean gull	1
merlin	2
mistle thrush	40
peregrine	40
pintail	6
pochard	4
red kite	328
redwing	1034
ring ouzel	4
skylark	85
snow bunting	1
spotted flycatcher	35
Starling	5000+
swift	334
tree sparrow	2
turtle dove	2
willow tit	1
woodcock	1

yellow wagtail	2
yellowhammer	39
Mammals	
badger	44
barbastelle	5
beaver	1
brown long-eared	18
brown hare	35
common pipistrelle	65
Daubenton's bat	6
greater horseshoe bat	2
hedgehog	564
Leisler's bat	1
lesser horseshoe bat	57
long-eared bat species	11
myotis bat species	16
Natterer's	1
noctule	26
otter	10
pipistrelle bat species	9
polecat	1
serotine	22
soprano pipistrelle	61
unknown bat species	18
water vole	115
whiskered	4
Reptiles	
grass snake	31
slow worm	225

4.2. Site survey

4.2.1. Habitat type and areas recorded on and adjacent to the Site are set out in Table 4, below.

4.2.2. A UKHab 2.0 map of the site is set out in Figure 3 below.

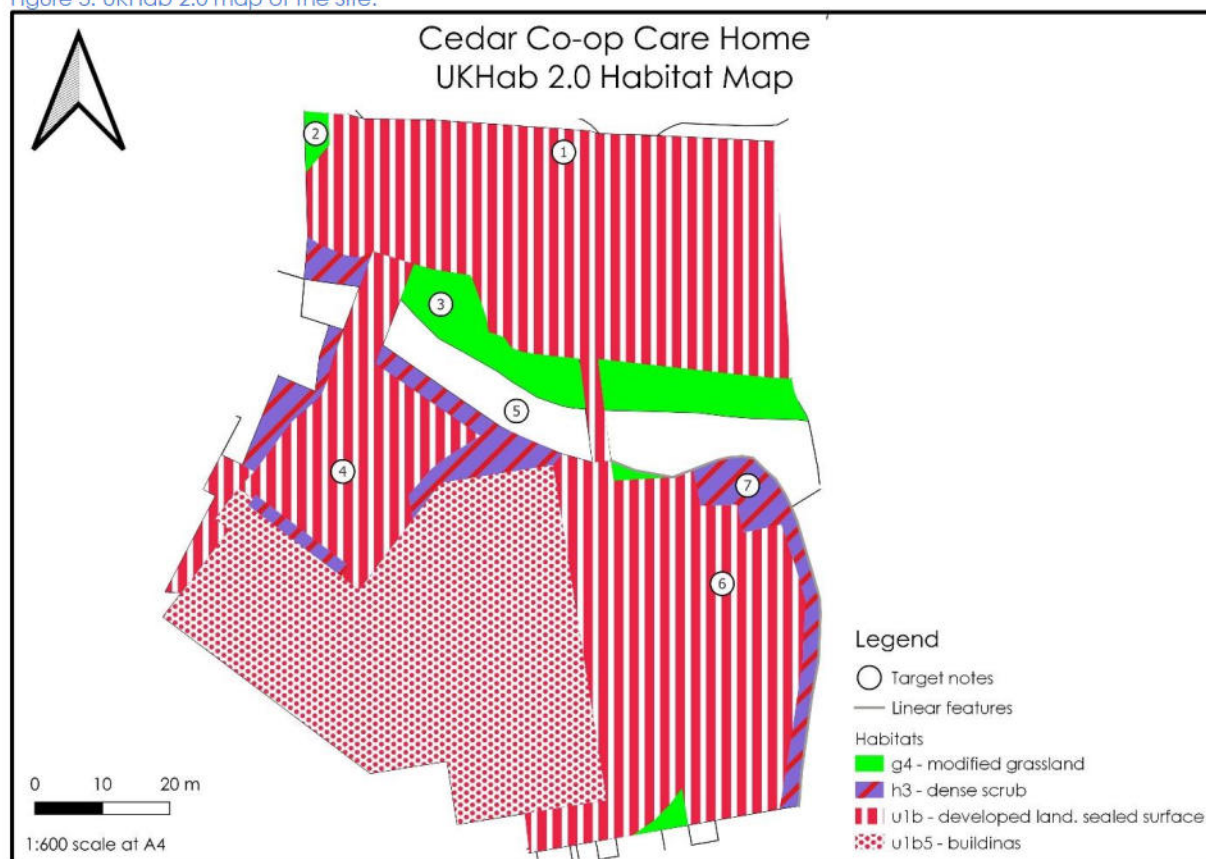
Table 4. UKHab 2.0 types recorded on or adjacent to the Site.

UKHabitat type	Species recorded	Percentage present
g4 – 10 - 200 modified grassland – scattered scrub - individual tree Target notes: 2 – Whitebeam tree and cotoneaster species 3 – Scrub encroaching onto grassland	Perennial Rye-grass - <i>Lolium perenne</i>	80%
	Cocksfoot grass - <i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	5%
	Common nettle - <i>Urtica dioica</i>	5%
	Bramble – <i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	5%
	Broad leaved dock – <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	1.25%
		1.25%

	Creeping thistle – <i>Cirsium arvense</i>	1.25%
	Greater plantain – <i>Plantago major</i>	1.25%
	Common dandelion – <i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	
h3 – dense scrub Target notes: 7 – Field maple tree <i>Acer campestre</i>	European black elderberry - <i>Sambucus nigra</i>	30%
	Bramble – <i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	30%
	Butterfly bush – <i>Buddleja davidii</i>	30%
	Rosebay willowherb – <i>Chamaenerion angustifolium</i>	10%
u1b - developed land, sealed surface Target notes: 1 – Field maple tree <i>Acer campestre</i> 4 & 6 – Butterfly bush scrub patch	-	-
u1b5 - buildings	-	-
Target note 5 – River Marden, lined with many broadleaved trees.	-	-

4.2.3. Butterfly bush *Buddleja davidii* was abundant on Site. There was a species of cotoneaster recorded (target note 2).

Figure 3. UKHab 2.0 map of the Site.



4.2.4. Table 5 contains details of the potential for protected species and groups to be present.

Table 5. Protected species potential on Site.

Species (group)	Habitat availability	Records	Impact assessment
Amphibians	MODERATE	common frog, common toad and great crested newt.	River Marden runs through the middle of the Site, and there is a pond located less than 150m east of the Site. This pond connects to the river. Records of amphibians and EPSL's for great crested newts within 2km of the Site. The river was too fast flowing to provide a suitable breeding habitat for great crested newt.
Badgers	LOW	yes.	No suitable habitat recorded on Site and no evidence recorded on or adjacent to the Site. Suitable habitat for foraging and commuting badger in recreation ground 200m east of Site, therefore LOW potential for badger to pass through Site.
Bats	MODERATE foraging and commuting NEGLECTIBLE roosting	barbastelle, brown long-eared, common pipistrelle, Daubenton's, greater horseshoe, long-eared species, myotis	There was suitable foraging and commuting habitat along River Marden which runs through the Site.

		species, noctule, species, soprano unknown whiskered.	Natterer's, pipistrelle serotine, pipistrelle, species,	The building was initially assessed to have MODERATE bat roosting potential due to the many potential roost features under lifted tiles and flashing, missing mortar in brickwork, multiple gaps in ceiling and windows providing entry into the building. There was potential for both crevice and void dwelling species. The previous ecological assessment in 2022 assessed the building to have HIGH bat roost potential. However, three bat emergence surveys were carried out, and no bat roosts were identified within the building and a licence was not required at the time for demolition to occur. Since these surveys were carried out over a year ago, they would not normally be referenced. However, due to the increasing occurrence of anti-social behaviour and fires within the building, the suitability of roosting habitat has decreased and the previous ecological reports have been taken into consideration. Since the 2022 emergence surveys recorded no bat roosts, no evidence of bats was recorded within the building during the 2025 ecological survey and there are increasing numbers of fires and antisocial behaviour occurrences within the building, the bat roost potential has been assessed as NEGLIGIBLE.
Birds	MODERATE	yes, see table 3.		Suitable habitat for nesting birds within the building, in the scrub on Site and in the trees along River Marden. There was suitable foraging and commuting habitat on Site along the river and in scrub on Site.
Dormice	NEGLIGIBLE	no.		No suitable habitat recorded on Site.
Otter	MODERATE	yes.		Suitable habitat for otter in the river which runs through the Site and records of otter within 2km of the Site. No evidence of otter found on Site.

Reptiles	MODERATE	grass snake and slow worm	Suitable habitat on Site in the scrub and along the river running through the Site.
Water vole	MODERATE	yes.	Suitable habitat for burrow creation in the river which runs through the Site and records of water vole within 2km of the Site. No evidence of water vole found on Site.

5. Ecological constraints and opportunities

5.3. Designated nature conservation sites

- 5.2.1. The WSBRC data search confirmed that there were no statutory and three non-statutory wildlife sites recorded within 2km of the Site. The nearest non-statutory wildlife site, Calne Without Meadows, is located approximately 1.5km to the southeast of the Site boundary.
- 5.2.2. It is considered highly unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant negative impact to the conservation status of any of the non-statutory wildlife sites present within 2km of the Site.

5.3. Habitats

- 5.3.1. The proposed development of the Site will result in the modification of developed land and loss of the building and some scrub habitats. These habitats are widespread in the area, as such the impact is assessed to be restricted to Site level.
- 5.3.2. River Marden runs through the middle of the Site. A watercourse assessment is required to inform the BNG assessment.
- 5.3.3. The river may be indirectly impacted by the works by dust pollution, run-off and light spill. The river should be protected prior to the start of the proposed works and throughout the entire project.
- 5.3.4. In order to protect River Marden during works, a detailed CEMP should be followed and the following measures should be implemented:
- Chemicals and fuel stored securely on Site in a designated area a minimum of 10m away from the watercourse. Spill kits should be available at all times and Site staff made aware of locations and how to deploy them.
 - Waste liquids should be stored and removed from Site in an appropriate manner (e.g. foul sewer or tanker to be taken off Site).
 - Refuelling should take place in a designated area on an impermeable surface, a minimum of 10m away from the watercourse.
 - Protective fencing installed prior to commencing works.
 - Dust suppression measures during dry conditions.

- Reduction of light spill by directing lighting only where needed, not facing upward and away from the watercourse.
 - Use sensitive construction practices including no routine night-time working.
- 5.3.5. Butterfly bush *buddleja davidii* was found across the Site and a species of cotoneaster was found at target note 2. These species should be removed and disposed of appropriately to prevent the spread across the Site and wider area.
- 5.3.6. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is required for this project.

5.4. Fauna

- 5.4.1. The building was initially assessed as having MODERATE bat roost potential due to the number of potential roost features recorded. There were lifted tiles, flashing, missing mortar in brickwork, multiple gaps in the ceiling and windows providing entry into the building. There were potential roost features for both crevice and void dwelling species, however no evidence of bats was recorded internally or externally.
- 5.4.2. Previous ecological reports from 2022-2023 from The Environmental Partnership assessed the building as having HIGH bat roost potential and completed three bat emergence surveys. There were no bat roosts recorded at this time and a licence was not required to complete demolition. Since these reports were published, there has been an increasing number of antisocial behaviours, vandalism and fires reported within the building from local police.
- 5.4.3. Since there were no bat roosts recorded during the surveys in 2022 and the suitability of the building for bat roosts has been diminished due to the antisocial behaviour, vandalism and fires set within the building, the bat roost potential was decreased to NEGLIGIBLE.
- 5.4.4. There was MODERATE potential for foraging and commuting bats through the Site due to the suitable scrub habitat on Site and River Marden that runs through the Site. There were many records of multiple species of bats within 2km of the Site.
- 5.4.5. There should be no additional external lighting to ensure that there is no change to the ambient night time light levels as a result of the proposed development.
- 5.4.6. There was MODERATE potential for nesting birds in the building and scrub on Site, as well as along the river through the Site. Care should be taken when removing the building and scrub and should happen outside of bird nesting season (October-February). Should it become necessary to remove vegetation within bird nesting season, an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECow) is required and a staged process to vegetation should be employed.

- 5.4.7. The River Marden runs through the middle of the Site and had suitable habitat for water vole and otter along parts of the water course. There were multiple records within 2km of the Site, but no evidence of either species was recorded during the field survey. The otter and water vole surveys carried out in 2022 did not identify any evidence of either species. However, since they are mobile species the Site was assessed to have MODERATE potential for otter and water vole.
- 5.4.8. There was MODERATE potential for amphibians and reptiles on Site due to the suitable scrub habitat on Site, the river running through Site and a pond located less than 150m northeast from the Site. There also were many records of amphibians and reptiles within 2km of the Site and three EPSL's were recorded within 2km of the Site for great crested newt. However, the river was too fast flowing to provide a breeding habitat for great crested newt. Therefore, no further survey work is required for great crested newt.
- 5.4.9. During scrub and vegetation removal, a fingertip search by a suitably qualified ecologist should take place immediately prior to works.
- 5.4.10. The Site had LOW potential for commuting and foraging badger due to the high number of records within 2km of the Site and suitable habitat to the east of the Site.
- 5.4.11. Any ground excavation works should be fenced off at the end of the work day with Herris fencing to prevent access to terrestrial mammals. Any excavation works should include a ramp to installed as an exit route for any animals that may fall in.
- 5.4.12. If any protected species are found during construction, works should stop immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist should be contacted.

6. References

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7. Appendices

APPENDIX 1

Photo 1 – external view of disused co-op building, east elevation



Photo 2 – internal view of ground floor



Photo 3 – internal view of first floor



Photo 4 – internal view of hole in ceiling on first floor



Photo 5 – external view of slipped and broken tiles



Photo 6 – external view of broken and slipped tiles



Photo 7 – view of disused yard facing south with scrub habitat



Photo 8 – view of disused car park facing south



Photo 9 – view of car park on southeast corner of building



Photo 10 – view of west bridge facing north



Photo 11 – view of east bridge facing north with butterfly bush



Photo 12 – view of River Marden which runs to the north of building

