

The Seven Stars Inn

Ecological Assessment

Prepared on behalf of Meeru Property Services Limited

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The Seven Stars Inn
Ecology 9095
Version 02

Prepared by:	Emma Bennett	V.01	May 2026
Authorised by:	Louisa Standbrook-Jones MCIEEM	V.01	May 2026
Updated by:	Jake Purchase	V.02	June 2026
Authorised by:	Alex Hannam MCIEEM	V.02	June 2026

Pro Vision Ecology

The Lodge
Highcroft Road
Winchester
SO22 5GU

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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 Pro Vision were commissioned in February 2026 to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the land at the Seven Stars Inn, Gores Lane, Bottlesford, Pewsey, SN9 6LW. The plans for the site include redevelopment of the pub alongside providing new facilities and an alternative car park location.
- 1.2 The ecological appraisal comprised a desk study of existing ecological data in relation to the site, and an assessment of the sites habitats and suitability to support protected species within the application site.
- 1.3 The site comprises areas of modified grassland, individual trees, scrub and developed land in the form of three buildings on site and a car park. In addition to this three hedgerows are present on site.
- 1.4 The site is located in close proximity to the River Avon Site of Special Scientific Interest and there is the potential for impacts during construction and further recommendations have been provided in **Section 5.0**.
- 1.5 The Seven Stars Inn was assessed as holding low potential to support roosting bats due to gaps present within the tiles. All other buildings were assessed as either having negligible or no bat potential.
- 1.6 A single emergence survey was conducted on the Seven Stars Inn. No bats were recorded emerging or entering the building during the survey and therefore the building is considered to not contain a bat roost. No further action is required. Mitigation has been outlined in **Section 5.0** to ensure the proposed development does not adversely impact on foraging and commuting bats.
- 1.7 The hedgerows, trees and shrubs provide nesting opportunities for common bird species. It is recommended that any vegetation clearance required should avoid the bird nesting season (1st March – 31st August) unless inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works. If the presence of nesting birds is confirmed, any works which may disturb them will be delayed until the young birds have fledged the nest of their own accord. Details regarding this are provided in **Section 5.0**.
- 1.8 Three waterbodies were identified within 250 metres of the site. Suitable terrestrial habitat is present in the form of scrub and hedgerows. Following a review of Nature Space's impact risk assessment part of the site is located in an amber risk zone. This indicates the site comprises highly suitable habitat, and there is a likelihood of great crested newts being present. eDNA surveys were conducted on the two closest ponds; Pond 1 and Pond 2, with both returning negative results. Great crested newts are therefore considered absent from the site.
- 1.9 The development will provide ecological enhancements in line with national and local planning policy to secure net gains on the site. Details regarding this are provided in **Section 5.0**.

2.0 Introduction

Project Background

- 2.1 Pro Vision Ecology were commissioned in February 2026 to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the land at the Seven Stars Inn, Gores Lane, Bottlesford, Pewsey, SN9 6LW. For the site location refer to **Appendix A**. The plans for the site include redevelopment of the pub alongside providing new facilities and an alternative car park location (**Appendix B**).
- 2.2 This report describes the current ecological baseline of the site based on the findings of the ecological assessment and provides information for further survey requirements and potential mitigation on the site.

Brief

- 2.3 To carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the land within the site boundaries, to inform the Client of any further survey work required and of the ecological implications of their proposals.

Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.4 The key legislative provisions of relevance to this report with respect to the development proposals and their potential effects on ecological features are listed below:
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
 - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
 - The Protection of Badgers Act 1992
 - The Environment Act 2021
- 2.5 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was the Governments response to the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity (The Rio Convention), with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity in the UK. The new UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework replaced the previous BAP and is the government's response to the new strategic plan on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Although the UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework supersedes the UK BAP, the UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats still remain an important reference source for identifying habitats and species of principal importance within the UK. Within England, Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) lists species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.
- 2.6 The Government has set out its policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system in the National Planning Policy Framework Section 15 (NPPF, 2024).
- 2.7 The Environment Act 2021 includes the requirement for future developments to provide 10% biodiversity net gain, to be evidenced with the use of the relevant statutory metric. Developments are exempt if they are self-build comprising less than nine dwellings on an area less than 0.5 hectares, householder applications or developments below the threshold of impacts to habitats.

- 2.8 The development site is located within Wiltshire Council. The Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan (2012-2026), adopted January 2015, includes the Core Policy 50 relating to biodiversity and geodiversity which states:

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Protection

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure not net loss of the local biodiversity resource, and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.

All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

Any development potentially affecting a Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in paragraphs 6.75-6.77 above where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000 network. Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Biodiversity Enhancement

All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character.

Local Sites

Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:

- i. Cannot reasonably be avoided*
- ii. Are reduced as far as possible*
- iii. Are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest*
- iv. Where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements*

Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long term.

3.0 Methodologies

Desk Study

- 3.1 The desk study methodology is based upon guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM, 2017). A data-gathering exercise was undertaken to obtain any available information relating to statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites and protected species (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Summary of information sources used for the Desk Study

Organisation / Source	Information Sought
Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre	Records of the presence of key protected and notable species and non-statutory wildlife sites within one kilometre of the site.
MAGIC	Locations of and citations for all national statutory wildlife sites, including SSSI, within two kilometres and all international sites including SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites within five kilometres of the site. Records of EPSM licences and class licence returns within two kilometres.
Ordnance Survey Maps	Large scale habitat information and identification of off-site habitats which may require consideration (such as ponds) within 500m.

Ecological Assessment

Habitats

- 3.2 A site visit was undertaken on the 26th February 2026 by experienced ecologist Jake Purchase and assisted by Emma Bennett in clear conditions, a light breeze and dry with an ambient temperature of 15°C. The survey employed techniques based on UK Habitat Classification System.
- 3.3 The collection of botanical information focused on the dominant and/or key indicator species for each habitat, to allow allocation of habitats to hierarchy levels 3 and/or 4 and where relevant to identify any priority habitats which are present on site.

Survey limitations

- 3.4 The survey was undertaken in February and outside the optimum time to conduct botanical work. Therefore, some species are likely to have been missed but a suitable assessment of the habitats has been possible to inform the ecological appraisal.

Protected Species

- 3.5 The PEA included an assessment of the potential for habitats on or immediately adjacent to the site to support legally protected or conservation-notable species. The location and nature of any signs of the presence of protected species (such as droppings, footprints, burrows, etc.) were documented and mapped accordingly. Indicative survey methods for protected species are outlined below.

Badgers (Meles meles)

- 3.6 The site and where possible 30 metres outside the site boundary was assessed for its suitability to support badgers. A direct search was undertaken for evidence of badgers. Evidence includes
- Active or disused setts;
 - Diggings;
 - Latrines / dung pits;
 - Foraging ('snuffle holes');
 - Footprints; and
 - Badger hairs.

Bats

Buildings

- 3.7 Bats use features within buildings such as stone crevices or cracks in brickwork, ridge beams, gaps between roofing materials and the main building structure, and any potential access points. Any evidence of bats such as droppings, urine staining, claw marks, feeding remains or bats themselves were recorded. An assessment of the potential of the building to support roosts was then made in line with Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines (2023) shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Assessment of buildings to support roosting bats.

Potential	Criteria
None	No features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year
Negligible	No obvious features on site likely to be used by bats
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation significance.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts.

Survey Limitations

- 3.8 Bats will often roost in places that are inaccessible to the surveyor, such as under tiles and crevices within structures. During the inspection of the building on site for bats, features that have the

potential to support crevice dwelling species were also noted as it is not possible to definitively conclude that bats are absent from these areas.

Emergence Surveys

- 3.9 The emergence survey was conducted in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Best Practice Guidelines (Collins, 2023). One survey was completed on the Seven Stars Inn on the 3rd June 2026. Five surveyors were positioned around the building, ensuring all potential features were in view of the cameras. A summary for the conditions of each survey are provided in **Table 3** below.
- 3.10 Surveys were completed by Dave Casson, Sam Keil, Matthew Norris-Hill, Rachel Richards and Ross Allen.

Table 3: Phase II Bat Survey Details

Date	Start and end times and time of sunset	Structure	Equipment used	Weather Conditions
03.06.26	Start: 21:01 End: 22:46 Sunset: 21:16	Seven Stars Pub	5 x Echo meter Touch 2 Pro 1 x Canon XA15 camera, 2 x 96 LED Infra-Red Illuminator flood lights each 1x Canon XA11 camera paired with Infra-Red Illuminator flood lights 1x Guide TK612 Thermal Scope 1x Sony FDR AX53 1x PixFra Arc A613	Start: 15°C End: 13°C 8/8 cloud cover 2/12 wind Dry
Comments (to include number of surveyors used for each visit): 5 surveyors undertook this survey.				

- 3.11 The surveyors were equipped with Echo Meter Touch 2 Pro and batlogger detectors alongside Canon XA15, XA11 Guide TK612 Thermal Scope, Sony FDR AX53 and PixFra Arc A613 cameras with LED Infra-Red Illuminator flood lights as Night Vision Aids (NVAs). **Figures 1 to 4** shows the coverage of the camera during the survey. Cameras were positioned next to the surveyors watching the building, once it became too dark to see the building the surveyors viewed the building through the camera display. Post survey any emergences or suspected emergences were then reviewed using a computer and VLC media player with the motion detector filter activated to aid footage review. Where necessary footage was slowed down and reviewed frame by frame.
- 3.12 Bat sound analysis was undertaken using Anabat Insight software to confirm the identity of the species recorded.



Figure 1: Still from thermal camera facing the Northwestern elevations.



Figure 2: Still from infra-red camera facing the southeastern elevations.



Figure 3: Still from infrared camera facing the northeastern and northern elevations.



Figure 4: Still from infrared camera facing the northern elevations.

Trees

- 3.13 The majority of bat species roost within trees. Therefore, an assessment of trees recorded on site was undertaken identifying any Potential Roost Features (PRFs). The assessment was undertaken from the ground looking for features which may support bats such as cavities, crevices, and peeling bark. The assessment was based on BCT guidelines (Collins, 2023) shown below in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees to support bat roosts

Suitability	Criteria
None	No PRFs on the tree or highly unlikely to be any present.
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFS are present in the tree.
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present

Foraging and commuting

- 3.14 Bats use features in the landscape to navigate and also habitats may provide key foraging areas. Foraging and commuting habitat was assessed based on based on BCT guidelines (Collins, 2023) shown in **Table 4** below.

Table 4: Assessment of foraging/commuting habitat

Suitability	Criteria
Negligible	Negligible features on site likely to be used by bats
Low	Suitable but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats.
Medium	Habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape and could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape and may be used by significant numbers of bats including annex II species.

Birds

- 3.15 Any habitat features, for example, scrub and trees, which could potentially be used by nesting birds, were surveyed and any nesting activity was noted. The habitat was also assessed regarding its potential for bird activity.

Great Crested Newts (Triturus cristatus)

- 3.16 Ponds within the vicinity of the site were noted and the potential of the land to act as a commuting route, shelter or foraging resource for great crested newts was assessed.
- 3.17 Subsequent eDNA surveys were completed the 3rd June 2026. The survey was completed in line with methodology supplied by SureScreen Scientific and subsequently sent to them for analysis. Surveys were completed by licenced surveyor David Casson (Licence numbers available on request) assisted by Sam Keil.

Hazel dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius)

- 3.18 An assessment of the suitability of the habitat to support hazel dormouse was undertaken in accordance with The dormouse Conservation Handbook (Bullion *et al*, 2025). Any small mammal feeding signs were checked and assessed, including:
- Examination of hazel nuts; and
 - Evidence of nest building.

Invasive species

- 3.19 During the survey any invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were noted

Invertebrates

3.20 An assessment was undertaken to assess the potential of the habitats recorded on site to support diverse communities of invertebrates, or any Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species. The assessment was based on the presence of a number of habitat features which may support important invertebrate communities such as:

- An abundance of deadwood;
- Presence of diverse plant communities;
- Presence of varied woodland structure and sunny woodland edge;
- Presence of ponds or watercourses; and
- Presence of free draining soil exposures.

Reptiles

3.21 Habitat features that could be suitable as hibernacula, foraging or basking areas were noted. Extant refugia were lifted and examined for evidence of reptiles, including sloughs (shed skins).

4.0 Results and Analysis

Designated sites

Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.1 The data search returned four records of International Statutory Designated Sites within five kilometres of the site. These were designated as Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC). The international Designated Sites are:
- **River Avon SAC:** The River Avon is a large lowland river system designated for its watercourse of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation. Annex II species present include Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*), sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), brook lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) and bullhead (*Cottus gobio*). This site lies 3.2 kilometres east of the proposed development.
 - **Pewsey Downs SAC:** This 153 hectare site includes a variety of habitats including heath, scrub, maquis and garrigue, phygrana, dry grassland, steppes and alpine and sub alpine grassland. The primary reason for this sites designation is the presence of Annex I habitats; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*). Annex II species early gentian (*Gentianella anglica*) is also present on site. This site lies 3.3 kilometres north of the proposed development.
 - **Salisbury Plain SPA:** This 19715.99 hectare site is designated due to the presence of four Annex II species. Stone curlews (*Burhinus oedecnemus*), quail (*Coturnix coturnix*) and hobby (*Falco subutteo*) all have a breeding population in this designated site. hen harriers (*Circus cyaneus*) overwinter in the SPA. This site lies 4.7 kilometres south of the proposed development.
 - **Salisbury Plain SAC:** This 21465.94 hectare site includes a variety of habitats ranging from heath, scrub, maquis, through dry, humid and unimproved grassland, to broadleaved, coniferous and mixed woodland. The primary reason for this site's designation is the presence of Annex I habitats: *Juniperus communis* formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands, semi natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*). The latter are important orchid sites. Anex II species marsh fritillary butterfly (*Euphydryas aurina*) is also present on site. This site lies 4.7 kilometres south of the proposed development.
- 4.2 The data search returned one record of a National Statutory Designated Sites within two kilometres of the site. The designated site is the River Avon System Site of Special Scientific Interest which is designated for the presence of Annex I habitats and Annnex II species. The latter include Desmoulin's Whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*), sea lamprey (*Petromyzon marinus*), brook lamprey (*Lampetra planeri*), Atlantic salmon (*Salmo salar*) and bullhead (*Cottus gobio*). This site lies 10 metres to the west of the proposed development.
- 4.3 The site lies in close proximity to the River Avon System SSSI. This is a site of national importance and is considered to be within the zone of influence of the development. Further recommendations are provided in **Section 5.0**.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.4 The data search returned one record of a non-statutory designated site within one kilometre of the development site. This site was designated as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS):
- **Salisbury Avon Headwaters:** A 7.16-hectare river complex above the SSSI which is located approximately 57 metres to the south of site.
- 4.5 The non-statutory designated sites is considered to lie within the zone of influence of the development and further recommendations are provided in **Section 5.0**.

Ecological Assessment

Introduction

- 4.6 The results of the PEA are presented below. A habitat survey map is shown in **Appendix C**. The map illustrates the location and extent of the sites surveyed, along with additional notable features.

Habitats

Developed Land, Sealed Surface

- 4.7 Sections of developed land are present on site in the form of four onsite buildings and hardstanding. The buildings are discussed further in the bat section of the report.

Artificial unsealed surface

- 4.8 A car park is present across the road which is comprised of sand and gravel.

Modified grassland

- 4.9 The majority of the site comprises modified grassland which is managed to a short sward.
- 4.10 The southern half of the pub garden comprises grassland with species recorded including springy turf moss (*Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*). Large logs are present within the parcel along with a woodchip pile and a concrete path. Sections of bare ground are also present (**Figure 5**).
- 4.11 The northern half of the pub garden has sustained large amount of damage with vehicle tracks and mole hills present throughout. Few species are present and include thistle (*Cirsium spp.*), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), moss, lords and ladies (*Arum maculatum*) and cleavers (*Galium aparine*) (**Figure 6**).



Figure 5: Southern section of the pub garden. **Figure 6:** Northern part of the pub garden

- 4.12 An area to the north of the stable building includes daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*), snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*), cleavers, nettle, moss, Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), ground elder (*Aegopodium podagraria*), lord's-and-ladies and ground ivy.
- 4.13 The area of unmanaged grassland in the eastern section of the site contains longer sward areas and tussocks (**Figure 7**). Bramble scrub is also present within the parcel. Species present within this parcel include perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire fog, nettle, ground ivy, cleavers, hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), yarrow, and creeping buttercup. In the sections of bramble scrub, understorey vegetation is present and includes ground elder, hazel (*Corylus avellana*), and snowdrop.



Figure 7: Unmanaged grassland in east of site.

- 4.14 An additional section of modified grassland is present within the car park across the road comprising similar species to the other grassland areas.

Scrub

- 4.15 A section of mixed scrub is present to the east of the main building. Species present include bramble, Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*) and nettle (*Urtica dioica*).
- 4.16 Parcels of bramble scrub are also present within the eastern modified grassland parcel.

Individual trees

- 4.17 Five trees are present on site and are scattered throughout the modified grassland areas. Trees present include elder, willow (*Salix spp.*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and cypress (*Cupressus leylandii*) (**Figures 8 and 9**). A sixth tree, a wild cherry (*Prunus avium*) is present within the modified grassland area on the opposite side of the road.



Figure 8: Cypress tree. Figure 9: Beech tree

Hedgerows

- 4.18 Three hedgerows are present within the site boundaries. Hedgerow one (H1) runs from north to south through the modified grassland in the south. The hedgerow comprises beech, ivy (*Hedera spp.*) and cypress.
- 4.19 Hedgerow two (H2) is comprised of box (*Buxus sempervirens*), bramble and hazel.
- 4.20 Hedgerow three (H3) is an ornamental hedgerow running along the western boundary of the southern modified grassland parcel. It comprises solely of cypress (**Figure 10**).



Figure 10: Hedgerow three

Ornamental planting

- 4.21 A section of ornamental planting is present to the south of the site and comprises mexican orange (*Choisya ternata*), laurel (*Laurus nobilis*), goat willow (*Salix caprea*) and elder.

Protected and/or notable species

Badgers

- 4.22 [REDACTED]
- 4.23 [REDACTED] however the site was thoroughly searched, and no signs or badger setts were recorded on site or within 30 metres of the site boundary. Therefore, badgers are considered absent from the site and no further action is required.

Bats

- 4.24 The WSBRC data search returned 20 records within two kilometres of the site for the following bat species:
- Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*)
 - Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)
 - Pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus* spp.)
 - Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
 - Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)
 - Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*)
- 4.25 The Defra run website, MAGIC, was searched for a list of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSL's), two records were returned, the closest of which allowed for the destruction of a resting place for brown long-eared and serotine bats located 0.4 kilometres north of the development site.

Buildings

- 4.26 The buildings on site comprise an Inn and garage alongside two outbuildings which comprise a shed and stable.

The Steven Stars Inn – external inspection

- 4.27 The old public house and hotel building is a vacant two storey building with brick elevations and a mesh covered thatch roof on the southern section of the building. The northern section of the property comprises a pitched slate tiled roof with clay ridge tiles (**Figures 11 and 12**). External chimneys constructed of brick are present.



Figure 11: Southern elevation of building. **Figure 12:** Northern elevation of building.

- 4.28 The northern, tile roofed section of the building contains multiple potential roosting features including missing mortar at the ridge and eaves of the northern gable end, as well as multiple gaps underneath the ridge tiles present along the length of the roof (**Figure 13**).



Figure 13: Gaps present under tiles

The Seven Stars Pub – internal inspection

- 4.29 The building comprises one large void that covers the entirety of the building, with four access hatches present. The eastern section of the void contains a motion sensor light. The void is an 'A

frame' void comprised of timber. The southern section of the void is thatched and then lined with bitumen felt (**Figures 14 and 15**). Lots of cobwebs are present within the entirety of the void. The section to the north is newer with breezeblock construction and breathable membrane lining the void.



Figure 14: Internal view from the eastern section. **Figure 15:** Internal view from the southern section

- 4.30 Flank voids are present on the southern and eastern elevations. Bare timbers and bitumen felt are present within the flank voids. The flank voids are very drafty and comprise a plywood floor (**Figure 16**). Cobwebs and fibre glass insulation are also present in other sections of the flank voids with rat droppings present (**Figure 17**).



Figure 16: Internal view of southeastern eaves **Figure 17:** Internal view of flank void with insulation material

Concrete garage – external inspection

- 4.31 A concrete garage is present to the north of the property. It comprises concrete elevations with a corrugated metal roof. Timber beams are present internally (**Figures 18 and 19**).



Figures 18 External view of the concrete garage. **Figure 19:** Internal view of the concrete garage.

Storage shed – external inspection

- 4.32 A storage shed is present to the west of the pub building and is a corrugated metal shed used for storage, the shed was padlocked at the time of the survey, so no internal access was possible (**Figure 20**).



Figure 20: Storage shed

Stable – external inspection

- 4.33 The stable building is a dilapidated wooden building once used for horses which has since partially collapsed (**Figure 21 and 22**). This building is now largely just external walls with no roof or covered areas.



Figure 21: External view of the Stable building **Figure 22:** Internal of the Stable building

Covered Patio – external inspection

- 4.34 A covered patio lies southwest of the main pub building within the amenity space (**Figure 23**). The structure comprises wooden frames supporting a corrugated roof and single-skin wood clad walls on the northern and western elevations but is open faced on the south and east.



Figure 23: External view of the Stable building

Summary

- 4.35 The Seven Stars Inn was assessed as holding low potential to support roosting bats due to the presence of external features such as the missing mortar on the northern gable end and gaps under the ridge and roof tiles on both elevations of the tiled roof section of the building. The interior of the building also comprises large loft spaces with complex roof structures that provide multiple roosting locations that could be utilised by bats.
- 4.36 The garage was assessed as having negligible potential due to the single skinned construction and high ambient light levels. Whilst access is still available through the open elevation it is considered likely the building suffers severe temperature fluctuations making it unsuitable for bats. The shed, stable, and covered patio were assessed as holding no potential to support roosting bats due to a lack of features present and the structures are comprised of materials that would likely lead to severe temperature fluctuations.

Emergence Surveys

- 4.11 One emergence survey was conducted on the Seven Stars Inn; the results are provided in **Appendix D** and summarised below.

3rd June Dusk Emergence

- 4.12 No bats were recorded emerging from the buildings during this survey.
- 4.13 Continuous foraging and commuting activity by common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle bats was observed by all surveyors, starting at 21:35 until the end of the survey. The majority of the calls were brief and were heard and not seen.
- 4.14 Noctule bats were recorded commuting over the site periodically between 22:27 and 22:41, with a single long-eared (*Plecotus sp.*) bat seen at 22:01 foraging within the open space to the north of the building. A single myotis (*Myotis sp.*) bat was heard but not seen by the surveyor to the Northwest of the building at 22:19, likely commuting through the site to the north of the building. A single serotine bat was also heard but not seen by the same surveyor at 22:37.

Summary

- 4.15 No bats were recorded emerging from the buildings during the survey. Therefore, the Seven Stars Inn does not contain a bat roost, no further action is required.

Trees

- 4.37 The trees on site were assessed for their potential to support roosting bats. None of the trees on site contained any features that are suitable, with the majority of the trees being semi-mature coniferous trees. The mature beech tree contains some signs of damage but there are no cavities, scars or lifted bark that could be utilised by bats.

Foraging and Commuting

- 4.38 The site comprises moderate quality habitat in the form of the linear features including the hedgerows that provide commuting habitat, as well as open areas of grassland and shrubs that provide foraging areas. The site also contains some individual trees, and lies within an area that is heavily wooded and adjacent to a river and therefore the site may provide an important through-route between suitable habitats adjacent to the site.
- 4.39 The proposed development will result in a loss of poor quality habitat with the retention of the higher quality boundary habitats.
- 4.40 Bat activity recorded during the emergence survey was low with intermittent foraging and commuting recorded by common and widespread species in Wiltshire.
- 4.41 Recommendations have been provided in **Section 5.0** to retain and enhance suitable habitat outside the development area and maintain connectivity across the site post development. Recommendations for bat friendly lighting have also been provided.

Birds

- 4.42 WSBRC provided records for the following bird species of conservation concern that may be present on the site: skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), house martin (*Delichon urbicum*), corn bunting (*Emberiza calandra*), linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*), grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*) and lapwing (*Vanellus Vanellus*).
- 4.43 In addition to these records the following Schedule 1 and/or Annex I species which breed in the area were returned: red kite (*Milvus milvus*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) and barn owl (*Tyto alba*).
- 4.44 The scrub and trees on the site are considered suitable for nesting birds. The site is considered unlikely to support populations of ground nesting birds due to the short sward grassland. Mitigation measures will be required for the clearance of any vegetation and have been provided in **Section 5.0**.

Great Crested Newts

- 4.45 The WSBRC data search returned no records of great crested newt within one kilometre of the development site. The Defra run website, MAGIC, was searched for a list of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSL's) within two kilometres of the site and no records were returned.
- 4.46 Following a review of Natural England GCN Risk Zone Map for Wiltshire and Swindon the site is located in an amber risk zone indicating a likelihood of great crested newts being present.
- 4.47 The grassland across the site has low suitability for great crested newts as it is maintained at a short sward height and includes areas of bare ground. The areas of scrub and unmanaged grassland have a higher suitability and may provide cover for great crested newts.
- 4.48 There are three ponds located within 250 metres of the site boundary (**Appendix E**), this includes two within the wider landownership and one on adjacent land. Pond 1 is a circular pond located within an area of woodland 51 metres north of the site boundary (**Figure 24**). Pond 2 is an elongated water-filled ditch that lies within an area of dense scrub and trees. Pond 3 appears to be a man-made pond lying within the amenity space on a farm to the north of the development site.



Figure 24: Pond 1 to the north of the site

- 4.49 An eDNA survey was completed on Pond 1 and 2. These were returned as negative for great crested newt presence. Access was not granted for Pond 3 and therefore an eDNA survey could not be conducted on the pond, this is not considered to be a significant limitation however as they have been proven absent in the other ponds therefore it is considered highly unlikely, they will be present in this pond. It is therefore considered that great crested newts are likely absent from the proposed development site, therefore no further action is required.

Hazel Dormouse

- 4.50 The WSBRC data search returned no records of hazel dormouse, within one kilometre of the site. The Defra run website, MAGIC, was searched for a list of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSL's) within two kilometres of the site, no records were returned.
- 4.51 The scrub across the site has low suitability to be used by hazel dormice however the extent of this habitat is limited, and the available habitat is isolated from other areas of suitable habitat.
- 4.52 Due to the limited extent and isolated nature of the suitable habitat on it is considered highly unlikely any hazel dormouse would be present. Hazel dormice are considered absent from the site boundary.

Invertebrates

- 4.53 The WSBRC data search provided three records of small heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*) and one record of common darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*) within one kilometre of the site and post-2009.
- 4.54 The habitats on the application site are not considered suitable to support these species or any other notable invertebrate species.

Reptiles

- 4.55 The WSBRC data search returned no records of reptiles within one kilometre of the site.

- 4.56 The grassland on site is managed at a short sward making it unsuitable for reptiles. A section of grassland and scrub in the northeast of the site is not managed to a short sward, however it is of limited size and is isolated from further suitable habitat, with urban land and managed habitats located to the west, south and east, and arable farmland to the north. Therefore, reptiles are considered likely absent from the site and no further action is required.

5.0 Impacts and Mitigation

Impacts and Required Mitigation for the Proposed Development

Statutory Sites

- 5.1 The site is in close proximity to the River Avon SSSI which is an area of high ecological value. The development will therefore require measures to ensure this nationally designated site is not impacted.
- 5.2 All works on the site will be completed over ten-metres from the riverbank to avoid any direct impacts during construction. Once operational the works are considered unlikely to result in additional impacts as the plans do not include a change of use from the existing use.
- 5.3 There is potential for pollution incidents from surface water run-off and dust deposition during the construction phase on the River Avon SSSI. These will be mitigated through the implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP).
- 5.4 The following matters will be addressed (but not restricted to) in the CEMP:
- Protection fencing to ensure works are not undertaken within 10 metres of the riverbank.
 - Appropriately store and control materials/chemicals to avoid pollution and siltation incidents (e.g. fit all plant with drip-trays and re-fuel machinery off-site);
 - Avoid working at night to minimise disturbance to wildlife;
 - Standard dust suppression methods will be employed as necessary e.g. dampen down with water.
 - Traffic control to ensure the movement of plant is located away from any designated sites.
 - A toolbox talk should be provided to all contractors to outline the importance of the nearby designated sites and contractors will be prohibited from entering them.
- 5.5 Furthermore, construction workers should ensure that fuel, oil and chemical storage on site is secure. The storage should be sited on an impervious base within a secondary containment system such as a bund. The base and bund walls should be impermeable to the material stored and able to contain at least 110% of the volume stored. The storage area should be sited above any flood water level and where possible away from high-risk locations (such as within ten metres of the wet ditch), to minimise the risk of a spill entering the aquatic environment.
- 5.6 Fresh concrete and cement are very alkaline and corrosive and can cause severe pollution. Concrete and cement mixing and washing areas should:
- Be sited ten metres from any watercourse or surface water drain to minimise the risk of run off entering a watercourse.
 - Have settlement and re-circulation systems for water reuse, to minimise the risk of pollution and reduce water usage.
 - Have a contained area for washing out and cleaning of concrete batching plant or ready-mix lorries.

Wash waters should be collected and, where necessary, discharged to the foul sewer (permission from the local sewerage provider is required for this), or contain wash water for authorised disposal off site.

Trees

- 5.7 Any native trees on site to be retained should be protected during construction in-line with BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction. This will include provision of Heras fencing or similar to prevent root compaction from the movement of vehicles and potential damage with a minimum two metre buffer.

Bats

- 5.8 The site is located near the River Avon which is likely used as a commuting corridor for the local bat populations. The habitats within the site itself are considered to be of relatively low value comprising maintained grassland and patches of scrub. The emergence survey conducted on the Seven Stars Inn recorded both commuting and foraging activity in and around the site by six common and widespread species in Wiltshire. To prevent impacts to bats from additional lighting on the site lighting will follow guidelines (ILP, 2023).:
- Minimise light spill on the adjacent river corridor.
 - LED luminaires should be used of a warm white spectrum (<2700 Kelvin) which will feature peak wavelengths higher than 550 nm.
 - Internal luminaires should be recessed to reduce light spill outside the property.
 - Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, should be considered.
 - Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
 - Where appropriate, external security lighting should be set on motion sensors and set to as short as possible.

Birds

- 5.9 The buildings, scattered trees and scrub habitats provide suitable habitat for nesting birds. It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use. Any anticipated clearance must be scheduled to avoid peak bird nesting season (1st March to 31st August, although this will vary between species and local conditions) to avoid contravention of protected species legislation; unless inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works.
- 5.10 If the presence of nesting birds is confirmed, a 5-metre buffer will be implemented, and no works will be permitted within this buffer. Works will be able to proceed once the young birds have fledged the nest of their own accord.

Enhancement Measures for the Proposed Development

Biodiversity Enhancement

- 5.11 In accordance with the Natural Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) plans whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- 5.12 The Environment Act 2021 includes the requirement for developments to provide 10% biodiversity net gain, to be evidenced with the use of the statutory metric. Details regarding this will be provided in the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment report.
- 5.13 To provide enhancements and to secure net gains which are specific to protected species on the site the following measures should also be included within the development design:
- A minimum of 4 Integrated bird boxes should be included within the development. These should target species such as house sparrow and swift. They should be placed on an elevation sheltered from the glare of the sun; they should also have ample air space to allow for their flight paths. Alternatively, bird boxes could be attached to retained trees within the development. Indicative locations are shown in **Appendix F**.
 - A minimum of 4 Integrated bat boxes should be included within the development. The boxes should ideally be placed against green corridors and on the southern elevations for maximum thermal gain. Alternatively, bat boxes could be attached to retained trees within the development. Indicative locations are shown in **Appendix F**.

6.0 References and Bibliography

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- UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (at <https://www.ukhab.org>).
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- WSBRC (2026) *Data Search – The Seven Stars Inn*

Appendices

Appendix A: Site Location

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

The proposal presented here is subject to review by specialist consultants, and is to be read in conjunction with all relevant specialist's drawings and information where available. Any discrepancies between this and any other consultant's drawings and information should be reported to Pro Vision immediately.

Legend

 Red Line Boundary



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	21.04.26	First issue	EB	LSJ

CLIENT:	Meeru Property Services Limited		
PROJECT:	The Seven Stars Inn		
DRAWING:	Site Location	1:5000	
NUMBER:	9095-XX-E0-01	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	21.04.26	



Appendix B: Proposed Development



Key

1. Pub Entrance
2. Pub
3. Beer Garden
4. Kitchens
5. Restaurant
6. Dining Terrace
7. Lounge & Private Dining
8. Courtyard Garden
9. Guest Rooms: Barn
10. Plant
11. Guest Rooms: Stables
12. Housekeeping & Plant
13. Yoga Barn
14. Parking - 29 Spaces
15. Parking - 10 Spaces
16. Deliveries & Refuse
17. Pizza Bar
18. Play Area
19. Wessex Water property
20. 10m Protection zone from stream



milton architects



Milton Architects Ltd
Old Stables Court The Parade
Marlborough Wiltshire SN8 1NE

Telephone 01672 514354
Email mail@miltonarchitects.co.uk

Project : The Seven Stars
Gores Lane, Bottlesford
Extension and alterations

Date : March 2026

Scale : 1:500

Size : ISO A3

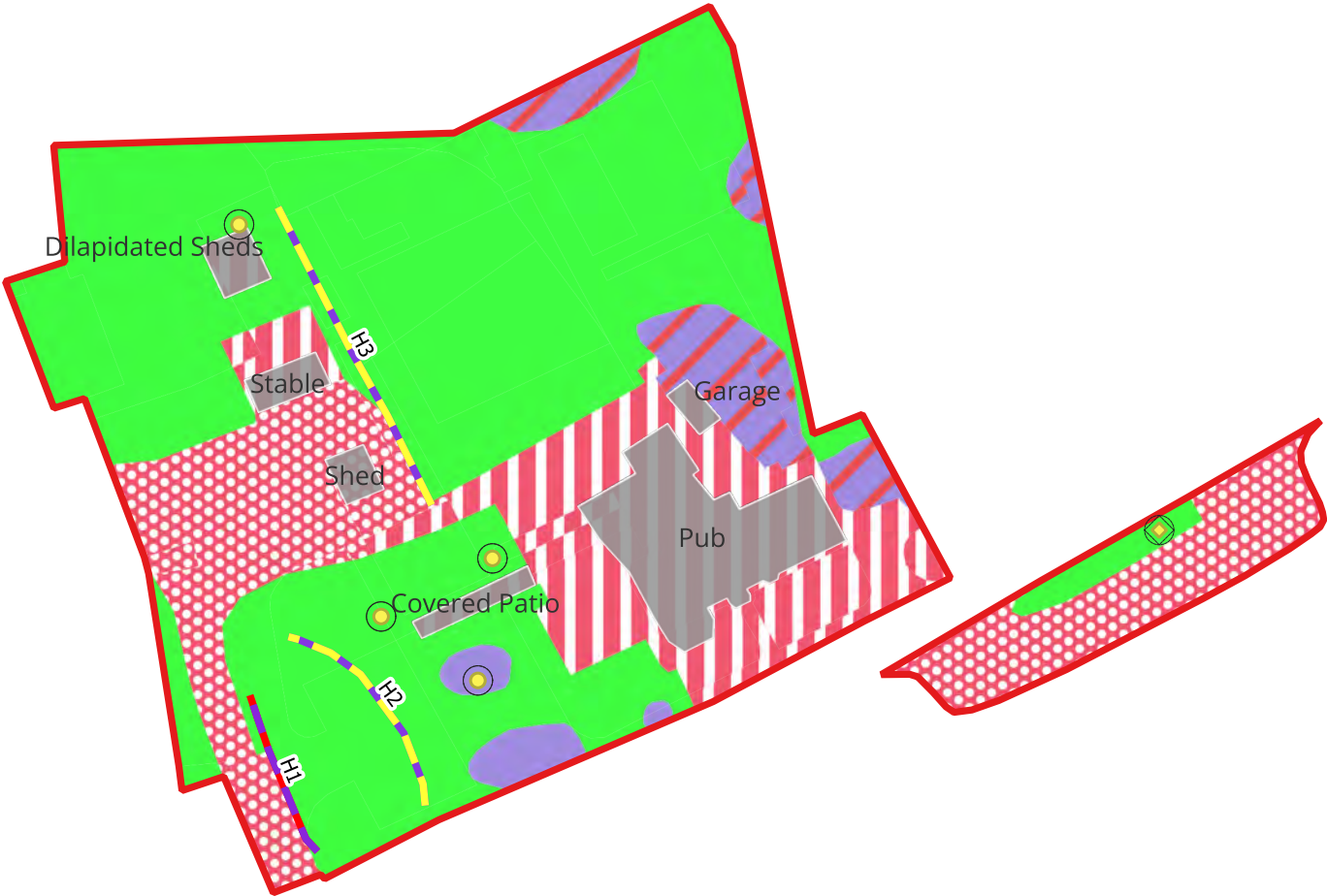
Contents: PROPOSED - Site Plan

Drawing : **2601 / 3_101**

Appendix C: Habitat Survey Map

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Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Building
- Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface
- Bramble Scrub
- Developed Land; Sealed Surface
- Introduced Shrub
- Mixed Scrub
- Modified Grassland
- Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow
- Native Hedgerow
- Existing Medium Rural Tree
- Existing Small Urban Tree
- Existing Small Rural Tree



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	12.05.26	First Issue	JP	U

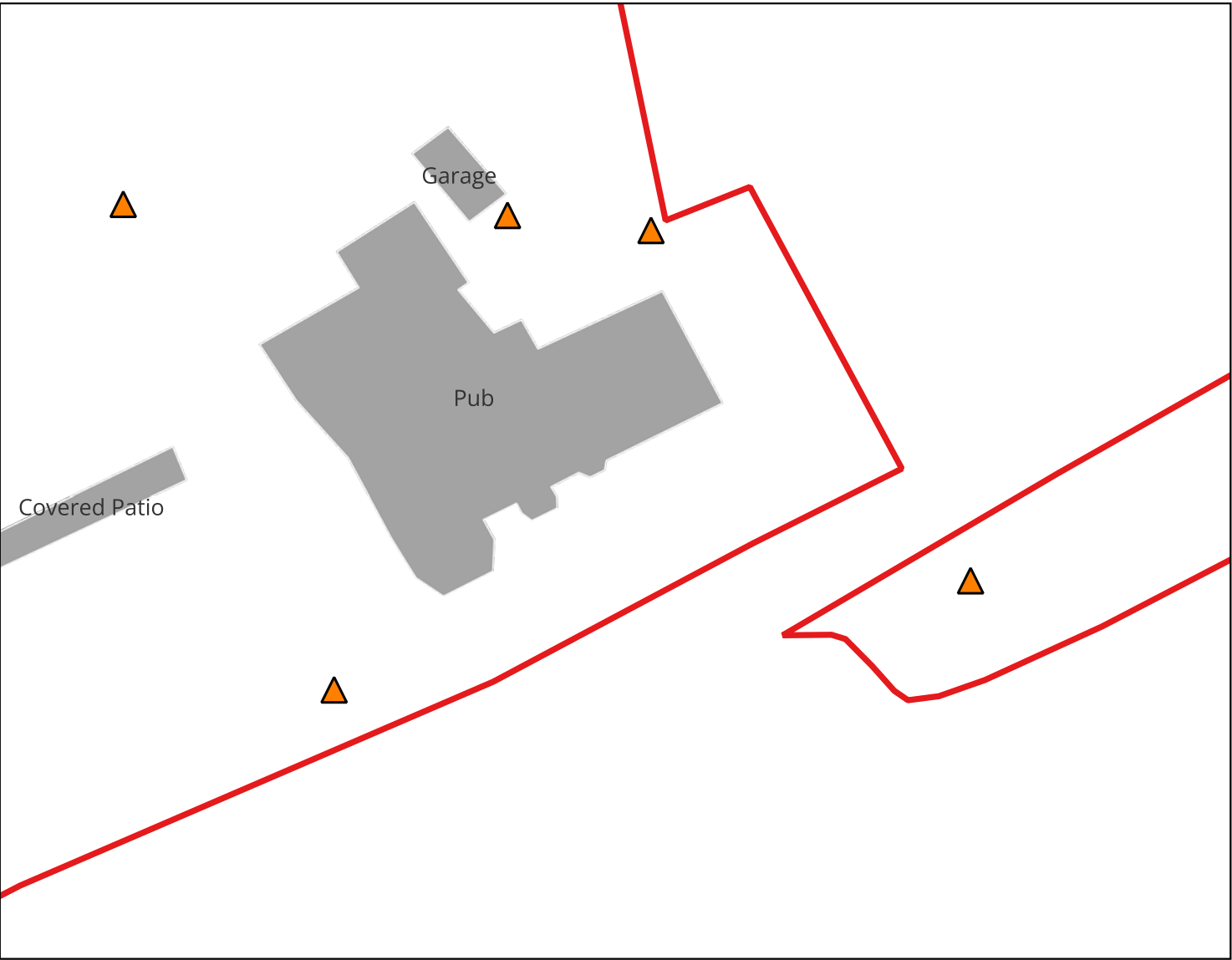
CLIENT:	Meeru Property Services Limited		
PROJECT:	The Seven Stars Inn		
DRAWING:	Habitat Map		1:700
NUMBER:	9095-XX-E0-02		A4
ISSUE:	v1		12.05.26



Appendix D: Emergence Survey Results

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Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Surveyor & Camera Location
- Building



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	24.06.26	First Issue	JP	U

CLIENT:	Meeru Property Services Limited		
PROJECT:	The Seven Stars Inn		
DRAWING:	Emergence Survey Results	1:350	
NUMBER:	9095-XX-E0-04	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	24.06.26	



Date:	03.06.26	Surveyors:	David Casson, Sam Keil, Matthew Norris-Hill, Rachel Richards & Ross Allen
Time	Species	Description	
21:26	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	
21:32	Common pipistrelle	Commuting southwards	
21:35	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen – Faint call	
21:39	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen – Commuting	
21:53	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen – Commuting	
21:58	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen – Commuting	
22:01	Long-eared bat	Commuting westwards to the north of the building	
22:06	Soprano pipistrelle	Commuting northwards past the eastern elevations	
22:19	Myotis	Heard not seen - Commuting	
22:20	Soprano pipistrelle	Foraging north of the building	
22:24	Noctule	Heard not seen – Faint call	
22:27	Noctule	Heard not seen – Commuting	
22:35	Noctule	Heard not seen – Foraging	
22:37	Soprano pipistrelle	Heard not seen - Foraging	
22:37	Serotine	Heard not seen – Faint call	
22:41	Noctule	Heard not seen – Faint call	
22:41	Common pipistrelle	Heard not seen	

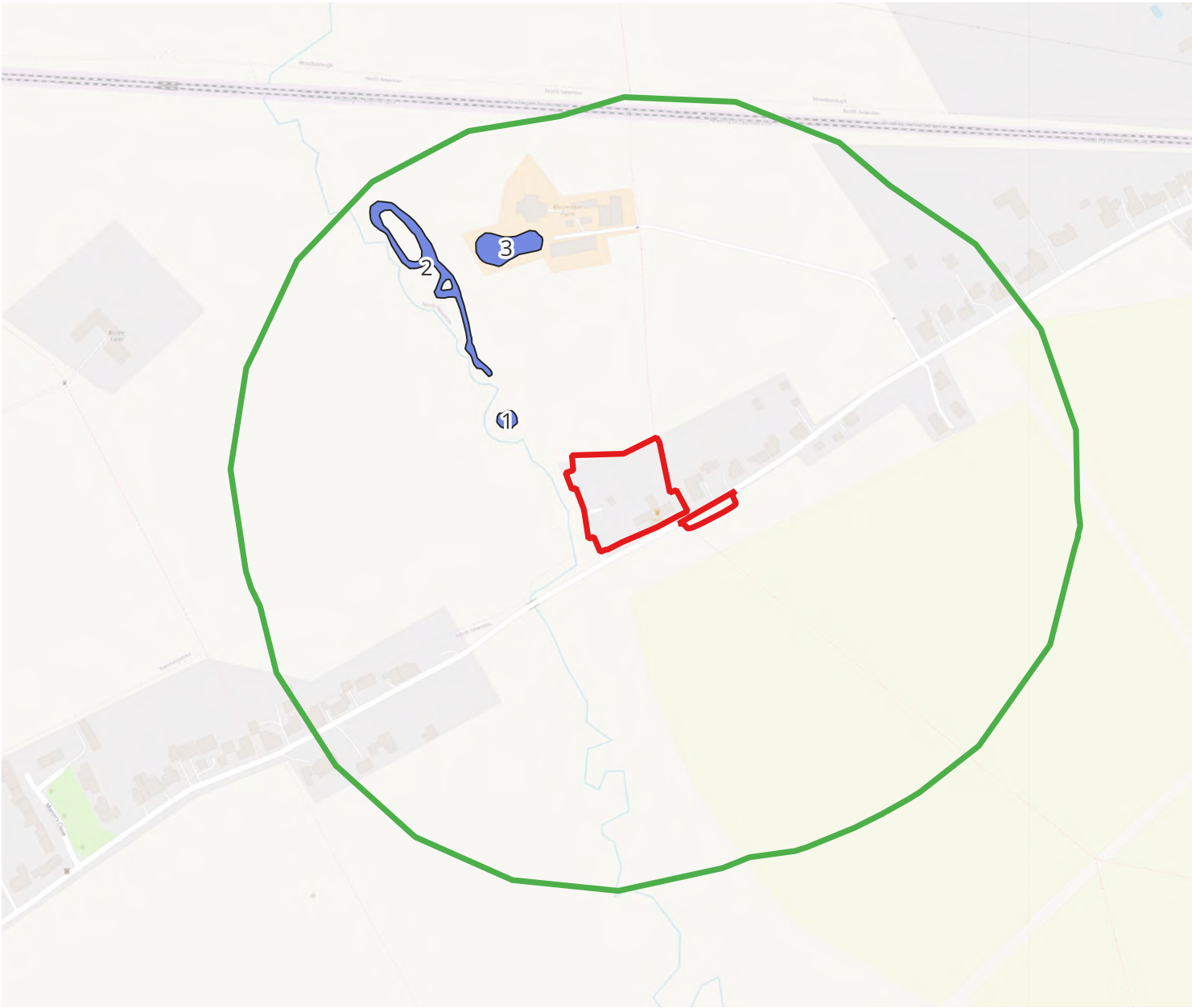
Appendix E: Waterbody Location Plan

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Legend

-  Red Line Boundary
-  250 metre buffer
-  Ponds



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	12.05.26	First issue	EB	LSJ

CLIENT:	Meeru Property Services Limited		
PROJECT:	The Seven Stars Inn		
DRAWING:	Waterbody Location Plan	1:4500	
NUMBER:	9095-XX-E0-03	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	12.05.26	



Appendix F: Mitigation & Enhancement Plan

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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Legend

-  Red Line Boundary
-  Indicative Bird Box Location
-  Indicative Bat Box Location



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	25.06.26	First Issue	JP	U

CLIENT:	Meeru Property Services Limited		
PROJECT:	The Seven Stars Inn		
DRAWING:	Mitigation & Enhancement Plan	1:700	
NUMBER:	9095-XX-E0-05	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	25.06.26	



Appendix G: Relevant Legislation

The Conservation of Habitats and Species 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations) transpose Habitats Directive into UK legislation. The Habitats Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European Protected Species. European Sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which form part of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas across Europe.

European Protected Species (EPS) are those listed under Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations and include dormouse, great crested newt, otter and all species of bat. The regulations prohibit the deliberate capture, killing or disturbance of any EPS; it is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any of these species. In order to carry out a lawful operation (e.g. development work which has full planning permission) that may result in an offence under the Habitats Regulations, it is necessary to obtain a licence from Natural England. EPS Licences will only be granted after Natural England has been satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternative and that there will not be any adverse impacts on the favourable conservation status of the species.

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the principle piece of legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Various amendments have occurred since the original enactment. The Wildlife and Countryside Act contains both habitat and species protection. Certain bird, animal and plant species are afforded protection under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. Measures for the protection of the countryside, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are also included within the Act.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES ACT 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 improved wildlife protection by amending the WCA. The main function of the NERC Act was to raise the profile of biodiversity amongst public authorities. Section 40 (S40 of the Act places a 'Biodiversity Duty' on all public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions.

THE PROTECTION OF BADGERS ACT 1992

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 consolidates previous legislation (including the Badgers Acts 1973 and 1991 Badgers (Further Protection) Act 1991). It makes it a serious offence to:

- kill, injure or take a badger;
- attempt to kill, injure or take a badger; or
- to damage or interfere with a sett.

The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as "any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger".

ENVIRONMENT ACT 2021

The Environment Act 2021 received royal assent in November 2021 and introduces new environmental protection regimes. This includes the creation of the Office for Environmental Protection who will oversee the framework. The Act includes several measures which impact on the planning application process to provide measures to ensure developments result in a net gain in biodiversity. The Act includes the mandatory requirement of 10% net gain for new developments, unless listed within the exemptions, which includes householder applications, self-build and developments below the threshold of impacts. Biodiversity net gain must be evidenced with the use of the statutory metric and associated documents.