

Proposed New Pumping Station at Longleat Center Parcs

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

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A report to:

Center Parcs

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

	Feature	Results	Recommendations	Further Surveys
Designated Sites	International, nationally and locally designated sites	Within 2km of the site is Swancombe Meadow LWS and Shearwater LWS. These sites are over 900m from the site and the proposed works are very small scale. As such, no further mitigation measures or recommendations are considered necessary.	None required	None required
Habitats	UKHab habitats	The site consists of a small area of coniferous woodland with a small, fenced pumping station.	As the trees to be removed are quite substantial in size and age, in the first instance it is recommended that the method of works be revisited to try and retain the trees. However, if their removal is essential, in order to offset the loss of the redwood trees, it is recommended that the planting of the same number of native trees should be incorporated into the scheme. In addition, native woodland planting should occur where the decommissioned pumping station is removed.	None required
	Invasive species	Rhododendron was present within the woodland parcel.	Rhododendron is listed on Schedule 9, meaning it is an offence to allow this species to spread into the wild. As such, it is recommended that the rhododendron is removed from the area of works prior to works occurring. Any soil in these areas should be treated as contaminated waste. Care should be taken to avoid the spread of this species with machines.	None required
	Biodiversity net gain	As the planning application will be submitted after the 6 th August 2026, and the red line boundary is less than 0.2ha with no priority habitats present, the site will be exempt from mandatory BNG.	Biodiversity enhancements can be provided through faunal enhancement measures such as bird and bat boxes, and the planting of native trees to replace the non-native trees lost.	None required
Faunal Species	Amphibians (including great crested newts)	Numerous ponds which support great crested newt occur to the north of the village. The closest waterbody to the works is approximately 75m away to the north-east, although no great crested newts have been recorded in this pond during annual monitoring surveys. The habitats within the areas of works were generally considered suboptimal for amphibians with a lack of sheltering habitat noted, including for great crested newt. As only very limited habitat considered suitable for great crested newts will be impacted by the proposals, and the distance from the breeding ponds, a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) will not be required for the works to proceed. However, as there is the possibility of common amphibians being present within the area of works, general mitigation measures will be required.	If any common amphibians are found during the works, they should be removed carefully by hand to areas away from the works, such as under scrub habitat which will not to be affected. Gloves should be worn to avoid touching amphibians by hand. If any great crested newts are found, works should stop and Morph Ecological Consultants should be contacted for further advice.	None required
	Badgers			None required

Feature	Results	Recommendations	Further Surveys
Bats	A single building was present within the survey area, a wood panel shed which houses the existing pumping station. This building was assessed as having Negligible potential for roosting bats due to a lack of potential roosting features. Up to 10 coast redwood trees are required to be removed to facilitate the proposals. These trees were assessed from ground level for their potential to support roosting bats. All had relatively gnarly bark and Tree 1 had the beginnings of a woodpecker hole, however, there were no features which appeared to lead to any substantial gaps and were all assessed as PRF-1 (features could not support multiple bats).	Due to the height of the redwood trees, it is recommended that precautionary working measures are implemented for the removal of the trees. It is recommended that the redwood trees undergo a pre-works inspection by a suitably trained individual. Should any features with suitability to support multiple bats be identified, further surveys may be necessary. To compensate for the loss of potential bat roosting habitat, it is recommended two bat boxes are installed as a part of the scheme.	None required
Birds	No evidence of nesting birds was identified during the survey. The woodland provides potential bird nesting habitat, although given the high level of disturbance in the area, it is extremely unlikely that any specially protected birds would be present in the close vicinity.	As the trees to be removed provide potential bird nesting habitat, felling should avoid the bird nesting season, which runs from March to September (inclusive). As bird nesting opportunities will be lost, compensation will be required to ensure there is no net loss of bird nesting habitat on site. It is recommended that two bird boxes are installed within the scheme, comprising of one open fronted bird boxes and one standard bird boxes. The replacement trees will also provide opportunities for nesting birds.	None required
Reptiles	The areas to be impacted by the proposed works were suboptimal habitat for reptiles. Given the lack of understorey in the coniferous woodland, and the highly disturbed nature of the survey area, it is considered highly unlikely that any reptiles would be present. As such, no mitigation is required.	None	None required
Otters	There are several records of otter being seen at a location 150m away from the area of works. These records are from between September and October 2024. However, the habitat within the area of works is not considered suitable for otters due the woodland lacking an understorey and hence, lack of cover. The site is 75m away from the nearest waterbody and no suitable laying-up sites were noted during the survey.	None	None required
Other species	The site is known to support some species of Local or National importance for three species of invertebrate and one species of plant. Given the works are confined to the coniferous woodland, these species are unlikely to be impacted by the works.	None	None required

1. SURVEY AREA AND PROPOSALS

1.1 Site Location

The site consists of coniferous woodland with a small, fenced pumping station, located at Longleat Center Parcs (approximate grid reference ST 8358 4246). The location of the site is shown on Figure 1 in Appendix 1.

1.2 Proposals

The proposals include the demolition of the existing pumping station, the construction of a new larger pumping station and storage tanks, as well as the diversion of some of the underground services. It is understood that up to 10 coast redwood trees will need to be removed.

1.3 Survey Brief

This report has been prepared by Morph Ecological Consultants for Center Parcs. It is understood that a planning application will be made to Wiltshire Council and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is required.

Morph Ecological Consultants brief was to ascertain whether the works would have an impact on protected species and habitats. Morph Ecological Consultants was also commissioned to provide recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures and further surveys, as appropriate. To meet the requirements of the brief, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, consisting of a UKHab survey and a Protected Species Survey, of the site was carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. The approach undertaken pays due regard to The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal' (CIEEM 2017). A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of the site was also carried out.

Legislation relating to protected species is included within Appendix 3.

2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

2.1 Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken of data received on the 28th of July 2025 from Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) (data is obtained annually to inform Center Parcs projects). They were consulted to obtain any existing records of protected and/or notable species and designated conservation sites. Data from a 2km radius of grid reference ST 83602 42984 (approx. central grid reference of the Village) (herby referred to as 'study area') was obtained, including:

- Legally protected and notable species
- Notified sites: Local Wildlife Sites, Local Geological Sites, Protected Road Verges, WWT Reserves, Bat Consultation Zones

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC website) was searched on the 25th March 2026 for information including:

- Statutory sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) survey licence returns
- Great crested newt pond survey data (from 2017-2019)
- Granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences

2.2 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Survey

The survey involved a site walkover and a preliminary assessment of the habitats using the standard UK Habitat Classification System methodology (UKHab 2023) which involves visiting each parcel of land and on the basis of vegetation the habitats were classified to Level 5 where appropriate. Secondary codes were also used. Notes were made on species present, defining the UKHab types.

Target notes were used to record any habitats or features of particular interest. Also, the suitability of habitats to support protected species was recorded and any sightings or signs of protected species were noted. Further details are provided below:

- All evidence of badgers (*Meles meles*) including setts, dung pits, badger hairs, mammal paths, bedding, footprints and scratching trees was recorded. The suitability of the habitats to support badger sett digging, and badger foraging was also noted.
- Trees with features suitable for roosting bats were recorded. Features such as woodpecker holes, cracks and cavities within trunks and branches, gaps behind loose bark and dense ivy growth on trunks were all noted.
- An assessment of the site's potential to support amphibians, including the specially protected great crested newts was made.
- The site's potential to support reptiles was assessed.
- The habitats within the site were assessed for their potential to support nesting birds, including for barn owl (*Tyto alba*).

A UKHab map was produced, and target notes were labelled on the map (Figure 2 in Appendix 1).

2.3 Preliminary Roost Assessment

A preliminary roost assessment was carried out in accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins 2023). The survey involved a licenced ecologist searching the building for evidence of roosting bats, such as bat droppings, feeding remains as well as looking for live bats. The survey also assessed the building for its potential to support roosting bats, which involved identifying features such as cracks, crevices, holes or voids, which could support roosting bats. High powered torches and ladders were used where necessary to aid the investigation to determine if features may support roosting bats.

Each building has been categorised as recommended by the Good Practice Guidelines. If a roost is confirmed to be present, then the categories are still allocated as other roosts may be present but undiscovered. The categorisation assesses the potential suitability for the features to support bats, which are applied using professional judgement.

Suitability	Typical Characteristics	Further Survey Requirements
Negligible	- Lack of potential roosting features for bats - Situated within very poor bat foraging habitat	No further surveys required
Low	- Small number of features that could be used by individual bats opportunistically - Potential roost sites are unlikely to provide appropriate conditions for use on a regular basis by a larger number of bats (e.g. hibernation or maternity) - Generally poor surrounding habitat	One bat emergence survey
Moderate	- Several potential roosting features - Features have potential to support larger numbers of bats or bat usage on a regular basis, but unlikely to be those of high conservation status - Situated near moderate/good foraging habitat	Two bat emergence surveys
High	- Many potential roosting features, which have the potential to support larger numbers of bats on a regular basis - Generally situated within good quality foraging habitat	Three bat emergence surveys
Confirmed Roost	Evidence of bats present during the survey (e.g. sighting of bats, bat droppings, feeding remains, existing record of roost)	Roost characterisation required which typically involves up to three bat emergence surveys

2.4 Ground Level Tree Assessment

A Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) was carried out in accordance with the Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (Collins 2023). The survey involved a licenced ecologist searching the trees for evidence of roosting bats, such as bat droppings, feeding remains as well as looking for live bats. The survey also assessed the trees for their potential to support roosting bats, which involved identifying features such as cracks, crevices, holes or voids, which could support roosting bats. Any features recorded which were accessible from ground level or from ladders, a Potential Roost Feature (PRF) inspection was carried out to allow for a more detailed assessment of their likely suitability for bats and to look for more conclusive evidence of bats. High powered torches and endoscopes were used where necessary to aid the investigation to determine if features may support roosting bats.

Each tree has been categorised as recommended by the Good Practice Guidelines. If a roost is confirmed to be present, then the categories are still allocated as other roosts may be present but undiscovered. The categorisation assesses the potential suitability for the features to support bats, which are applied using professional judgement.

Suitability	Typical Characteristics	Further Survey Requirements
NONE	Either no potential roosting features (PRFs) in the tree or highly unlikely to be any	No further surveys required
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree	Potential roost feature (PRF) inspection survey
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small number of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats	- No further surveys required (unless there are larger number of trees with features categorised as PRF-I) - Appropriate compensation and a Precautionary Working Method Statement required
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony	Three survey visits

		Survey visits may include an aerial inspection or bat emergence surveys should aerial inspections not be possible
Confirmed Roost	Evidence of bats present during the survey (e.g. sighting of bats, bat droppings, feeding remains, existing record of roost)	Roost characterisation required which typically involves up to three PRF Inspection surveys or bat emergence surveys

2.5 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

An assessment was undertaken to determine if the development would require mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain.

2.6 Criteria for Determining Ecological Importance

The importance of an ecological features was considered within a geological context as per the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM 2019). As such the evaluation of ecological features were defined as the following:

- International (internationally designated sites or sites supporting internationally important species)
- National (nationally designated sites e.g. SSSI or sites supporting populations of nationally important species)
- Regional (sites exceeding county-level designations or supporting features identified in a regional BAP)
- County (county sites or sites meeting the criteria for these sites e.g. Local Wildlife Sites and species/habitats identified within the county BAP)
- District (features identified within a Local BAP or enrich a districts habitat resource)
- Local (areas of habitat considered to enrich the habitat resource within the local area)
- Site (common or low value habitats)

For this survey area, the following was also considered:

- Wildlife Legislation
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)
 - The Countryside and Right of Way (CROW) Act 2000
 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Biodiversity Action Plans
- Habitats and species of principal importance in England listen in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
- Wiltshire and Swindon Local Nature Recovery Strategy

2.7 Survey Details

The survey was carried out by Nikki Morton MSci MCIEEM on the 24th of February 2026.

2.8 Surveyor Experience

Nikki Morton has been an ecologist for over 8 years having carried out numerous Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, UKHab Surveys and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments. Nikki attended a yearlong Plant Identification Skills course at the University of Leicester and achieved a high level 3 (equivalent to the FISC exam). Nikki holds the following licences: great crested newt level 1 (licence number 2025-81278-SCI-CL08), bats level 2 (licence number 2025-85054-CL18-BAT), bats Earned Recognition Registered Consultant (licence number BER0221) and white clawed crayfish (licence number 2026-87949-CL11-WCC).

2.9 Survey Area

The area surveyed is shown on the UKHab map (Figure 2, Appendix 1).

2.10 Survey Constraints

2.10.1 Access

There were no access constraints.

2.10.2 Survey Limitations

Surveying in winter is not an ideal time to carry out ecological surveys, as many faunal species are less active or are dormant and it is outside of the plant growing season therefore some plants may not be visible. However, an experienced surveyor can make reliable judgements about the condition and composition of habitats and their potential to support protected species. A brief site walkover was also undertaken in May 2026 (for a separate project immediately adjacent to the area), as such the condition of the site could be confirmed.

Only a brief assessment of the site was made and no systematic surveys to establish the presence or presumed absence of protected species were undertaken. As such, a lack of evidence of a protected species does not necessarily indicate an absence of the species.

2.10.3 Length of Data Validity

To ensure that survey data remains current and as many protected species move sites frequently, if works have not commenced within 18 months from the survey date, an update may be required to fully assess the impacts of the proposals on protected species and their habitats.

3. SURVEY RESULTS AND EVALUATION

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Designated Sites

Designation	Description
Internationally and National Designated Sites within 2km	There are no internationally or nationally designated sites within the study area. Cley Hill SSSI is the closest, although this lies approximately 2.2km away from the survey area. Due to the distance between the survey area and Cley Hill SSSI and the habitats impacted, it is considered unlikely that the proposals would impact on any Nationally Designated Sites and are not mentioned further within the report.
Locally Designated Sites within 2km	There are two Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within the study area. These are detailed below. <u>Swancombe Meadow LWS</u> Distance from survey area: 960m south-east Description: An area of damp meadow at the head of Shearwater with unimproved neutral grassland and rush-pasture communities bordering a small stream. <u>Shearwater LWS</u> Distance from survey area: 1.1km east Description: A large artificial lake on the Longleat Estate surrounded by woodland and popular for walking and fishing. Due to the distance between the site and the LWS, impacts on these sites are considered extremely unlikely and are not considered further within the report.
Other Sites	<u>Deciduous Woodland</u> 53 parcels with the closest being located within the Village (although none are located within any of the areas of works). <u>Lowland Calcareous Grassland</u> One parcel, 1.35km south-west The woodland within the survey area to be impacted by the works is solely coniferous woodland which fails to meet the criteria of priority habitat woodland. As such, no further mitigation measures or recommendations are considered necessary.

3.1.2 Priority and Protected Species

Species	Description
Amphibians	<u>Ponds</u> The village supports a large lake, as well as artificially connected ribbon lakes which are present around the Center Parcs village.

Species	Description
	<u>Great crested newt</u> There were 27 records returned of great crested newts within the study area. The closest record is located within the Village. The Center Parcs Conservation Rangers undertake annual amphibian surveys of the waterbodies on site and have recorded great crested newt breeding ponds on site. The closest breeding pond to the areas of works is 470m. There are no records of great crested newt class survey licence returns within the study area. <u>Other amphibians</u> Common amphibians are also found in ponds within the village with palmate newts (<i>Lissotriton helveticus</i>), smooth newts (<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>), common frogs (<i>Rana temporaria</i>) and common toads (<i>Bufo bufo</i>) present.
Badgers	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Bats	Numerous records of bats occur for the study area, including records for noctule (<i>Nyctalus noctule</i>), common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>), soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>), brown long-eared bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>), barbastelle (<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>), Daubenton's bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>), whiskered bat (<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>), Natterer's bat (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>), greater horseshoe bat (<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>), lesser horseshoe bat (<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>), Leisler's bat (<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>), serotine (<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>), as well as <i>Myotis</i> sp. (not identified to species). Some records were pertaining to the Village and most were from within the wider Longleat Estate. Known bat roosts are included on the Village's Biodiversity Sensitive Area (BSA) maps. The closest roost record, shown on the BSA maps, is around 70m north-east of the survey area (a known lesser horseshoe bat day roost within the old bird hide). There are two records of bat EPS licences within the study area. One appears to relate to common pipistrelle and one to soprano pipistrelle bats in the village.
Birds	There are 20 records of tawny owl (<i>Strix aluco</i>), the closest of which occurs within the village. There are no records of barn owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>) within the study area. There are numerous records of birds from within the study area, including the hen harrier (<i>Circus cyaneus</i>), red kite (<i>Milvus milvus</i>), kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>), peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>), hobby (<i>Falco Subbuteo</i>), brambling (<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>), black redstart (<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>), firecrest (<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>), and wryneck (<i>Jynx torquilla</i>).
Hazel Dormice	There are 74 records of hazel dormice (<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>) with the closest record occurring within on the southern boundary of the Village, 280m north-east of the survey area. The majority of the dormice records are related to Nockatt Coppice adjacent to the village to the west.
Invertebrates	There are numerous invertebrate records from within the study area, with a vast majority relating to Cley Hills SSSI. Records include the dingy skipper (<i>Erynnis tages</i>), white ermine moth (<i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>), buff ermine moth (<i>Spilosoma lutea</i>), adonis blue (<i>Polyommatus bellargus</i>), small heath (<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>), marsh fritillary (<i>Euphydryas aurinia</i>), and silver-spotted skipper (<i>Hesperia comma</i>).

Species	Description
Otters and Water Vole	There are 19 records of otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>) from within the study area, with the closest records occurring on the southern boundary of the Village, 150m away from the area of works. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] There is one record of water vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>) which occurs 1km south-east from the area of works.
Other Mammals	There are three records of hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>) from within the study area, the closest being 150m north-east from the area of works. There is one record of water shrew (<i>Neomys fodiens</i>) from within the study area which occurs 100m north-west from the area of works. There are 17 records of brown hare (<i>Lepus europaeus</i>) from within the study area, with the closest being 750m southwest from the area of works. There are 36 records of beaver (<i>Castor fiber</i>) from within the study area, with the closest being 670m south-east from the area of works.
Plants	There are numerous records relating to the Wiltshire Rare Plant Register Species from within the study area. Some records appear to relate to both the village and wider Longleat Estate, including spotted medick (<i>Medicago arabica</i>), western gorse (<i>Ulex gallii</i>), nodding bur-marigold (<i>Bidens cernua</i>), green-ribbed sedge (<i>Carex binervis</i>), purple moor-grass (<i>Molinia caerulea</i>), lesser bulrush (<i>Typha angustifolia</i>), and trailing tormentil (<i>Potentilla anglica</i>).
Invasive Species	In addition to the rhododendron known to be present within the village. The Conservation Rangers have identified two invasive species within some of the ponds in the village including New Zealand pygmyweed (<i>Crassula helmsii</i>) and waterweed (<i>Elodea sp.</i>). Virginia creeper (<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>) and shallon (<i>Gaultheria shallon</i>) is also present on site.
Reptiles	There are 68 records relating to reptiles returned from within the study area, including common lizard (<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>), grass snake (<i>Natrix helvetica</i>), and slow worm (<i>Anguis fragilis</i>). Most of the records are from within the Center Parcs village. The closest record is of a common lizard, approximately 90m to the north.

Full desk study data can be supplied upon request.

3.2 UKHab Survey and Condition Assessments

3.2.1 Baseline Habitats

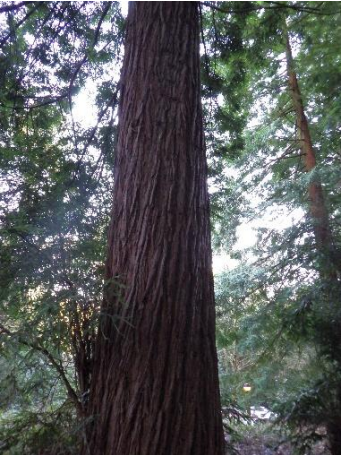
The UKHab habitat types and their descriptions, which were recorded within the survey area are shown in the table below. A map showing the locations of these habitats is shown in Figure 2, Appendix 1. Plant species listed within the text are referred to using their English names. A full list of plant species with their scientific names is provided in Appendix 2. Photographs of the survey area are provided within the table below. A summary of the habitat condition assessment is also detailed in the table below.

Parcel Ref	UKHab Habitat	Description and Value	Condition Assessment	Photographs
1	Other coniferous woodland (w2c)	The woodland canopy was comprised entirely redwood trees (coast redwood), with a sparse understorey of redwood regeneration, rhododendron, and rarely, holly. The ground was mostly bare, with occasional flora including male fern, pendulous sedge, bramble, hart's-tongue fern, honeysuckle, yellow pimpernel, ivy, a violet species and wild strawberry. Towards the edge of the carpark, where more sunlight was available, soft rush, hard rush, wood sorrel and bugle were recorded. Due to the wider connectivity of the woodland, despite a lower value due to the cover of non-native species, it is considered that the woodland is of District value.	<u>Condition Sheet: Woodland</u> A – 2, two age classes present (lacking middle) B – 2, some browsing damage C – 1, rhododendron present D – 1, only one native tree or shrub species present (holly) E – 1, <50% native cover F – 3, 10-20% temporary open space G – 2, lacking larger regeneration H – 3, tree mortality 10% or less I – 2, ground mostly bare but some recognisable woodland flora present J – 1, canopy trees only K – 1, mature but no veteran trees present L – 1, only occasional stumps in some woodland plots M – 1, cables, pipes, tyre marks as well as lodges are present in the woodland This area scores 21 out of 39 points and is therefore assessed as Poor condition.	

Parcel Ref	UKHab Habitat	Description and Value	Condition Assessment	Photographs
2	Other developed land (u1b6)	This parcel comprised of a hardstanding car park entirely lacking any vegetation. This developed land was considered important at a Site level only.	This habitat is automatically assigned as 'N/A - Other'.	
3	Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)	This parcel comprised of bare ground with some electricity boxes present and occasional hardstanding, within a wood panel fenced compound. This developed land was considered important at a Site level only.	This habitat is automatically assigned as 'N/A - Other'.	See below
4	Building (u1b5)	A single building was present within the survey area which houses the existing pump, located within the fenced compound. This building was considered important at a Site level only.	This habitat is automatically assigned as 'N/A - Other'.	

3.3 Protected and Notable Species

Species	Description
Amphibians	Numerous ponds which support great crested newt occur to the north of the village. The closest of these is approximately 470m to the north of the proposed area of works. The closest waterbody to the works is approximately 75m away to the north-east, although no great crested newts have been recorded in this pond. The habitats within the areas of works (primarily coniferous woodland with a sparse understory and little ground vegetation) were generally considered suboptimal for amphibians, including for great crested newt. Due to the distance between the nearest breeding pond and the area of works, and the suboptimal habitat for amphibians within the area of works, a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) will not be required for the works to proceed. However, as there is the possibility of common amphibians being present within the area of works, general mitigation measures will be required.
Badgers	[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Bats	A single building was present within the survey area, a wood panel shed which houses the existing pumping station. It has a pitched felt roof, overhanging at the gables and the sides. There is some deterioration to the soffit in places although this does not provide access to a cavity. There was no evidence of bats on the interior and no features, such as gaps or holes, providing access to the interior. As such, this building was assessed as having Negligible potential suitability for roosting bats. Up to 10 coast redwood trees are required to be removed, with three of the trees proposed for removal as part of routine woodland management thinning and then up to 7 trees to facilitate the development. It is hoped that one of the trees can be retained through project design. These trees were assessed from ground level for their potential to support roosting bats (see photographs below). All had relatively gnarly bark and Trees T43 and T19 (as per the arboricultural report) had the beginnings of woodpecker holes; however, there were no features which appeared to lead to any substantial gaps and were all assessed as PRF-I (the features could not support more than just individual bats). Due to the height of the trees, it is recommended that precautionary working measures are implemented. It is considered that no further survey work will be required and an EPS Licence for bats from Natural England will not be required before works begin. However, due to the size of the trees to be removed, it is considered possible that potential roosting features in the upper parts of the trees may have been obscured during the survey. Therefore, as per the recommendations within the bat survey guidelines, a precautionary method of works will be required when these trees are felled.

Species	Description
	   <i>T19 assessed as PRF-I</i> <i>T18 assessed as PRF-I</i> <i>T15 assessed as PRF-I</i>    <i>T14 assessed as PRF-I</i> <i>T13 assessed as PRF-I</i> <i>T12 assessed as PRF-I</i>    <i>T43 assessed as PRF-I</i> <i>T16 assessed as PRF-I</i> <i>T17 assessed as PRF-I</i>

Species	Description
	 <i>T20 assessed as PRF-I</i>
Hazel Dormice	Dormice are known to be present on the southern boundary of the Village, approximately 280m away from the proposed works. However, given the lack of understorey in the coniferous woodland, and the highly disturbed nature of the survey area, there are unlikely to be any dormice present. As such, it is considered highly unlikely dormice would be impacted by the proposed works and therefore are not considered further within the report.
Nesting Birds	No evidence of nesting birds was identified during the survey. The woodland provides potential bird nesting habitat within the trees, although given the high level of disturbance in the area, it is extremely unlikely that any specially protected birds would be present in the close vicinity. Nonetheless mitigation measures are required to avoid impacts to common nesting species.
Otter	There are several records of otter being seen at the main lake 150m away from the area of works. These records are from between September and October 2024. However, the habitat within the area of works is not considered suitable for otters due the woodland lacking an understorey and hence, lack of cover. The site is 75m away from the nearest waterbody and no suitable laying-up sites were noted during the survey. Otter will therefore not be considered further within the report as they are extremely unlikely to be present within the area of works (although the mitigation measures for badgers will also apply to other large mammals such as otters).
Reptiles	The areas to be impacted by the proposed works offered suboptimal habitat for reptiles. Given the lack of understorey in the coniferous woodland, and the highly disturbed nature of the survey area, it is considered highly unlikely that any reptiles would be present. As such, no mitigation is required, and reptiles are not considered further within the report.
Invasive Species	Rhododendron is present throughout the whole Center Parcs Village and was noted within the woodland area surveyed. The presence of the invasive species reduces the ecological value of the woodland areas. As Rhododendron is listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (making it illegal to cause it to spread into the wild), mitigation will be required during works.
Other Species	The site is known to support some species of Local or National importance for three species of invertebrate and one species of plant. Given the works are confined to the coniferous woodland, these species are unlikely to be impacted by the works and therefore are not considered further within the report.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are applicable for the current proposals on site. Should plans change on site, and further surveys are considered necessary, the outcome of these further surveys may require additional mitigation, compensation or protected species licences above what is outlined below. The recommendations apply the mitigation hierarchy (CIEEM 2019) whereby in first instance avoidance of impacts should be sought. If avoidance is not possible negative effects should be minimised through mitigation measures. As a last resort, impacts should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures. Enhancements should also be implemented to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above the requirements.

4.1 Habitats

Up to 10 coast redwood trees will require removal, with three of the trees proposed for removal as part of routine woodland management thinning and then up to 7 trees to facilitate the development. It is hoped that one of the trees can be retained through project design. Whilst these trees are non-native, they are mature in nature and provide habitat for species (such as nesting birds and foraging bats). Ideally the works should be redesigned to avoid needing to remove the trees (given it appears they are only being lost due to the rerouting of underground services). However, if it is essential that the trees are removed, therefore, the loss of these trees should be compensated for by replacement planting of native trees.

4.1.1 Replacement Tree Planting

In order to offset the loss of the redwood trees, it is recommended that the planting of native trees should be incorporated into the scheme (the same number should be replanted that is lost).

Recommended species include:

Trees

Silver birch (*Betula pendula*)
Field maple (*Acer campestre*)
Wild cherry (*Prunus avium*)
Bird cherry (*Prunus padus*)
English oak (*Quercus robur*)
Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*)

Given the mature age of the trees to be lost, it is recommended that older trees are also planted (rather than just whips), to enable the ecological functionality to resume sooner.

As the old pumping station will be decommissioned, it is recommended that the area be reinstated with native woodland planting, it is recommended that a mixture of native shrubs be planted and can also be a location where some of the canopy trees are planted.

Shrubs

Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)
Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)
Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)
Dog-rose (*Rosa canina*)
Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*)

In addition, the bare ground areas should be sown with an appropriate native woodland seed mixture, such as Naturescape's N10 Woodland Meadow Mixture.

4.1.2 *Adjacent Woodland*

The adjacent woodland areas should be protected during works. Care should be taken to avoid disturbing ground flora by avoiding repetitive walked routes and creating desire lines. Vehicles should not track through the woodland other than using the existing hardstanding. Vehicles or machinery should not be parked beneath the drip zones of trees unless on existing hardstanding.

Care should be taken to avoid spilling any fuel or possible pollutants into the ponds. Any refuelling should occur on hardstanding, with a spill kit at the ready. Ideally refuelling should also occur over a plant nappy or a drip tray.

4.2 **Protected Species**

4.2.1 *Amphibians*

If any common amphibians are found during the works, they should be removed carefully by hand to areas away from the works, such as under scrub habitat which will not to be affected. Gloves should be worn to avoid touching amphibians by hand. If any great crested newts are found, works should stop and Morph Ecological Consultants should be contacted for further advice.

4.2.2 *Badgers*

General good working practices should be adhered to, such as the trenches dug during works are left open over night, they should be left with a sloping end or ramp to allow any badgers or other animal that may fall in to escape. Also, any pipes over 200mm in diameter should be capped off at night to prevent animals entering. Materials such as netting should not be left on site.

4.2.3 *Bats*

The redwood trees which are proposed to be removed to facilitate the works were assessed as having PRF-I suitability for roosting bats. Due to the height of the trees, there is a risk of further potential roosting features being present beyond view from a ground level tree assessment and the risk that any potential roosting features could develop (such as the woodpecker hole). As such, it is recommended that these trees undergo a pre-works inspection by a suitably trained individual to determine that there has been no development of potential roosting features since the previous survey. Should any features with suitability to support multiple bats be identified, further surveys may be necessary. Any features should be checked with a torch and/or endoscope if required. If no evidence of bats is present, the trees should be soft felled carefully.

There is already lighting present throughout the area, therefore it is recommended that any lighting incorporated the scheme follows the bats and lighting guidance (Bat Conservation Trust & Institution of Lighting Professionals 2023) and there is no additional light levels beyond what is there currently. To summarise, lighting should be low lighting, with cowls or hoods attached to avoid light onto the trees. Lighting should be warm white (2700Kevlin or lower) rather than blue white lighting.

To compensate for the loss of potential bat roosting habitat, it is recommended two bat boxes are installed as a part of the scheme. The location of the bat boxes should be advised by the village's Conservation Rangers, and then they can be added to their annual bat box checks. Bat boxes should be positioned where sunlight will warm up the box throughout the day, and should be positioned at least 3m above ground. The bat boxes should not be lit by security lighting and there should be a clear access to the bat box entrance.



*Greenwood's Ecohabitats
Two Crevice Bat Box*

4.2.4 *Birds*

As the trees proposed to be removed provide potential bird nesting habitat, felling should avoid the bird nesting season, which runs from March to September (inclusive).

As bird nesting opportunities will be lost, compensation will be required to ensure there is no net loss of bird nesting habitat on site. It is recommended that two bird boxes are installed within the scheme, comprising of one open fronted bird boxes and one standard bird boxes. Bird boxes should be installed at least 3m high and on a north or shaded elevation. Open fronted bird boxes should be installed lower down (approximately 2m high) within or adjacent to dense vegetation. Durable materials such as Woodcrete are recommended to provide longevity of the potential nesting habitat. A range of bird boxes can be purchased from www.nhbs.com, examples are listed below but other equivalent brands are available. The replacement tree planting will also provide opportunities for nesting birds.



*1B Schwegler Nest Box
(either 32mm or 26mm hole)*



2H Schwegler Robin Box

4.2.5 *Invasive Species*

Rhododendron was noted around the clusters. Rhododendron is listed on Schedule 9, meaning it is an offence to allow the species to spread into the wild. Biosecurity measures should be established to ensure that the species are not spread as a part of the works.

The following precautions are made to ensure that the plant is not spread offsite, and legislation potentially breached.

- Details of the plant, its location, the legislation and propose mitigation should be included in toolbox talks for contractors.
- The area should be fenced off before any works commence on site (heras type fence installed around the area) and signs added to warn contractors of plant.
- Personnel should clean footwear before leaving site to prevent the spread of the plants.

Soils containing the plant are classified as controlled waste, and therefore should any soils from the area with the rhododendron must not be removed from site (as if it was this will need to be disposed of at licensed landfill). As such, in order to avoid any potential breaches of the legalisation, soil should not be removed (unless treated as contaminated waste). It is recommended that the rhododendron be removed by hand tools with ecoplugs inserted into the remaining stumps. This can be undertaken by the Rangers, who undertake invasive species removal across the Village.

5. FURTHER SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Currently no further survey work is considered necessary; however, if the proposals change, further surveys may be required.

6. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

It is understood that the planning application will be submitted after the 6th August 2026. The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Amendments and Transitional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2026 state that, provided no priority habitat will be impacted onsite, if the development is carried out on a site which has an area no larger than 0.2 hectares then the development is exempt from mandatory BNG. As the red line boundary of the development is <0.2h and there are no priority habitats onsite, the development is exempt from mandatory BNG.

7. ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS SUMMARY

It is considered that the impacts of works are minimal on protected species given that the mitigation measures outlined within the report are followed. However, the loss of mature trees (up to 10 trees) within the woodland is a negative loss. It should attempt to be redesigned in the first instance, but if this is not possible then replacement of the individual trees with the planting of the same number of native trees (older than whips). In addition, focus should be given to mitigation measures for common amphibians, badgers, bats and invasive species. There is opportunity to enhance the survey area post works by incorporating bat and bird boxes into the scheme.

REFERENCES

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Morph Ecological Consultants 2026 *Longleat Center Parcs: Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan*. Report under contract to Center Parcs.

UKHab 2023 *The UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 2.0* at www.ukhab.org

Wiltshire and Swindon Local Nature Recovery Strategy Available Online: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/8288/Wiltshire-and-Swindon-Local-Nature-Recovery-Strategy>

APPENDIX 1: FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location Plan

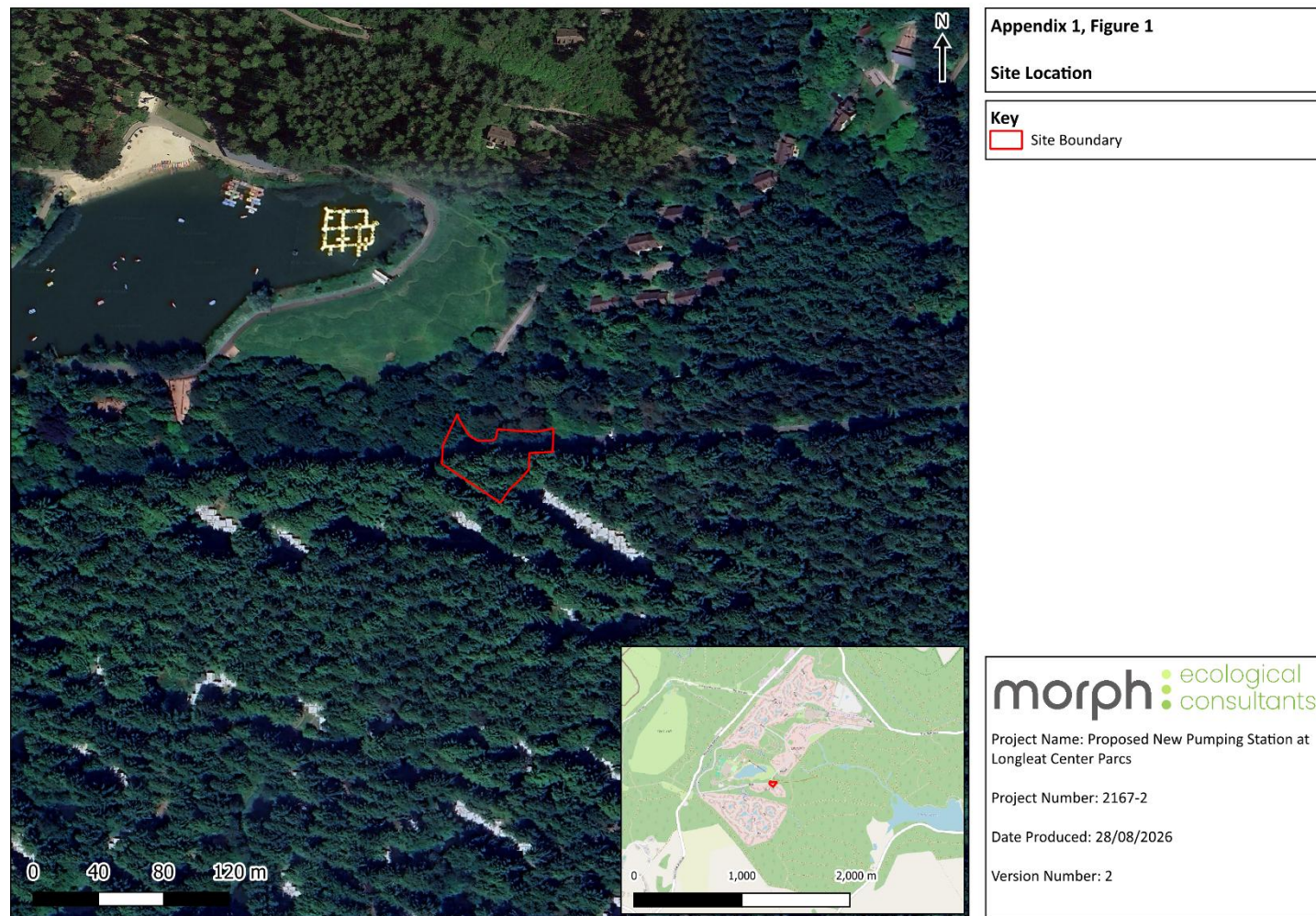


Figure 2: UKHab Baseline Map



Figure 3: Assessment Areas



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consultants

[illegible]

APPENDIX 2: BOTANICAL SPECIES LIST

Common Name	Scientific Name (Kent/Stace)
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.
Bugle	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
Coastal Redwood	<i>Sequoia sempervirens</i>
Common Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i> ssp. <i>helix</i>
Hard Rush	<i>Juncus inflexus</i>
Hart's-tongue	<i>Phyllitis scolopendrium</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>
Male Fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> agg.
Pendulous Sedge	<i>Carex pendula</i>
Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron ponticum</i>
Soft Rush	<i>Juncus effusus</i>
a violet	<i>Viola</i> sp.
Wild Strawberry	<i>Fragaria vesca</i>
Wood-sorrel	<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>
Yellow Pimpernel	<i>Lysimachia nemorum</i>
Giant Redwood	<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i>

APPENDIX 3: LEGISLATION

Plants

All wild plants are protected against unauthorised, intentional uprooting under Section 13 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Plants listed in Schedule 8 of the Act are afforded additional protection against picking, uprooting, destruction and sale.

Invasive and Non-Native Species

It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild a plant which is included in Part II of Schedule 9. Under this Act, it is also an offence to release or allow escape into the wild an animal which is not ordinarily a resident in Great Britain, or is included in Part I of Schedule 9.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of a minimum of 10% unless exempt.

Badgers

Badgers and their setts are protected by law. A badger sett is defined by law as 'any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger'.

Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 it is an offence to:

- Take, injure, or kill a badger (or attempt to do so);
- Cruelly ill-treat a badger;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a badger when it is occupying a badger sett.

Bats

All bat species are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately take, kill or injure a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats.

A bat roost is defined in the legislation as "any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection". Roosts are protected whether or not bats are present at the time.

Birds

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it illegal to intentionally:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or in use;
- Take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird; and
- Possess or control any wild bird or egg unless obtained legally.

Birds listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are afforded additional protection, which makes it an offence to disturb a bird while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Hazel Dormice

Hazel Dormice are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally take, kill or injure a dormouse;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter or protection by a dormouse; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a dormouse while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

Great Crested Newts

Great crested newts and their habitat are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, kill, disturb or injure a great crested newt;
- Disturb a great crested newt whilst it is occupying a structure or place for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to habitats used by great crested newts for protection or sheltering;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead great crested newts.

Reptiles

Slow-worm, common lizard, adder and grass snake are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or take slow-worm, common lizard, adder or grass snake; and
- Sell, transport or advertise for sale.

Smooth snake and sand lizard are afforded additional protection as European Protected Species and therefore are also protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, kill, disturb or injure a smooth snake or sand lizard;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to habitats used by smooth snake or sand lizard for protection or sheltering;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a smooth snake or sand lizard whilst it is occupying a structure or place for shelter or protection;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead smooth snake or sand lizard.

Water Voles

The water vole is fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a water vole;
- Possess or control a live or dead water vole, or any part of a water vole;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place which water voles use for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb water voles while it is occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead water voles.

Otters

Otters are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are classified as a European protected species under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This makes it offence to:

- Deliberately capture, kill, disturb or injure an otter;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place otters use for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb otters while it is occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead otters.

White-clawed Crayfish

White-clawed crayfish are partially protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally take white-clawed crayfish; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead white-clawed crayfish.

Quality Assurance

Quality Information

Project	Proposed New Pumping Station at Longleat Center Parcs: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Contract Number	2167-2
Description	Final Report
Prepared by	Zoe Jackson MSc & Helen Chambers MSc ACIEEM
Checked by	Nikki Morton MSci MCIEEM
Date Sent	16 th May 2026

Revision History

Version	2	3	
Version Date	18 th June 2026	13 th September 2026	
Details	Update following arboricultural report	Update following resubmission	
Prepared by	Nikki Morton	Nikki Morton	

Disclosure

The information, data, evidence, advice and opinions which have been prepared and provided are true, and have been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

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