

Ecological Impact Assessment

Blind Lane, Southwick

30 September 2026

Ecology
Arboriculture
Land Management



Report Details

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V2	19 February 2026	Anna Galvin BSc MSc	Matthew Davey BSc MSc MCIEEM	Lindsay Taylor BSc MSc MCIEEM	Minor amends following comments from Wain Homes Severn Valley.
V3	30 September 2026	Anna Galvin BSc MSc	Nick Hargreaves BSc MSc MCIEEM	Nick Hargreaves BSc MSc MCIEEM	Design Amends

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Site Details

Site Name and Location	Blind Lane, Southwick
Central OS Grid Reference	ST 83745 54829
Client	Wain Homes Severn Valley

Boundary



Executive Summary

Site Location	The Site is located east of Wesley Lane, on the southern outskirts of the village of Southwick, which lies 3.3km southwest of Trowbridge, Wiltshire. The Site is surrounded by arable and pasture grassland, A and B roads and small residential developments.
Proposals	Application for 90 residential units and associated soft landscaping, access, roads and parking.
Survey Work	Desk-based study, UK Habitat Classification survey, ground level tree assessment, badger survey, bat activity and automated survey, dormouse survey, riparian mammal survey, breeding bird survey, watercourse BNG assessment.
Designated Sites with Potential Impacts	Salisbury Plain Special Area of Conservation (SAC) lies 7km to the southeast, Mells Valley SAC lies 9.9km to the southwest and the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC lies 7.3km to the northwest, and the Site lies within the consultation zone for greater horseshoe core roosts. There is one Local Wildlife Site (LWS) within 2km of the Site. Brokerswood and Hazel Wood LWS lies 1.9km south of the Site. Impacts to the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC through direct loss of foraging habitat for the low number of lesser horseshoe bats utilising the Site, increased lighting and disturbance for the low number of Annex II bats and increased recreational pressures on woodland associated with Bechstein's bats in the absence of mitigation.
Baseline Habitats	The Site comprises a single arable field bound by species poor and species-rich hedgerows. A watercourse runs along the southeastern boundary of the Site. A veteran tree is present within a hedgerow.
Protected/ notable Species	The Site supports commuting and foraging bats including: commuting greater horseshoe bats, lesser horseshoe bats and <i>Myotis</i> species as well as foraging lesser horseshoe and <i>Myotis</i> bats, common amphibians, common reptiles, badger, common invertebrates, hedgehog and a common assemblage of breeding birds.
Mitigation and Compensation	👉 Tree protection fencing will be installed prior to the commencement of construction to protect all retained hedgerows and trees (including the veteran tree), with an appropriate buffer designed in around root protection areas in line with BS5837:2012; 👉 Landscaping to include native tree planting, species-rich grassland, orchard, ponds, modified grassland and mixed scrub within the Site; 👉 Staged habitat removal will be conducted to encourage reptiles, hedgehog and amphibians to move off Site prior to construction commencing; 👉 No vegetation to be removed during the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) unless checked prior to removal by a qualified ecologist; 👉 Wildlife sensitive lighting scheme implemented in line with 'Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (ILP & BCT, 2023) to ensure minimal light spill onto the boundaries and maintain the site's attraction to foraging bats and other nocturnal species; 👉 A buffer to the eastern boundary is proposed in line with Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy guidance to provide suitable new core bat habitat (15m) and dark buffer zone (10m) and extends up to 50m at its widest point. 👉 Installation of 3no. tree mounted bat boxes to compensate for the loss of roosting habitat by the removal of tree (T18); and 👉 A Construction & Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) to be implemented in order to avoid and mitigate environmental impacts during construction.

Biodiversity Net Gain	A separate BNG Statement and Assessment Report is provided (GE Consulting, 2026a).
Enhancements	45no. integrated bird box to be installed on new dwellings (based on a 1:2 box to dwelling ratio); 45no. Integrated bat box to be installed on new dwellings (based on a 1:2 box to dwelling ratio); 2no. reptile/ amphibian hibernacula; and - Hedgehog holes to be cut into all closeboard fencing.

Contents

1.	Introduction	1
1.1	Site Context	1
1.2	Description of Proposed Development.....	1
1.3	Aims	1
2.	Methods.....	1
2.1	Ecological Scoping and Baseline Data Collection	1
2.2	Field Surveys.....	2
2.3	Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.....	2
2.4	Baseline Evaluation and Impact Assessment	2
2.5	Limitations.....	2
3.	Baseline Conditions & Evaluation	3
3.1	Designated Sites	3
3.2	Habitats and Flora.....	4
3.3	Fauna	5
4	Further Survey Work.....	3
5	Impact Assessment and Mitigation	3
5.1	Designated Sites	3
5.2	Habitats and Flora.....	5
5.3	Fauna	6
6	Summary of Assessment and Mitigation	10
7	Biodiversity Net Gain.....	10
8	Enhancements	10
9	Monitoring	12
10	Conclusions	12
11	References	13

Figures

1:	UK Habitat Baseline Map
2:	Enhancements and Mitigation
3:	Automated Bat Survey Results
4:	Bat Activity Survey Results
5:	Breeding Bird Survey Results
6:	Tube Locations and Survey Results
7:	Ground Level Tree Assessment Survey Results

Appendices

Appendix 1 – General Glossary of Terms	22
Appendix 2 – Planning Policy and Legislation	23
Appendix 3 – Extended UK Habitat Classification Survey	26
Appendix 4 – List of Flora and Fauna Mentioned in Text.....	29



Appendix 5 - Bat Activity Surveys.....	30
Appendix 6 – Breeding Bird Survey.....	37
Appendix 7 – Dormouse Survey	38
Appendix 8 – Riparian Mammal Survey	40
Appendix 9 – Tree Assessment for Bats	41

1. Introduction

This report presents the results of an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) for Blind Lane, Southwick in relation to a detailed planning application. The surveys were commissioned by Wain Homes Severn Valley.

The area within the application boundary is hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.

1.1 Site Context

The Site is located south of Blind Lane and east of Wesley Lane, on the southern outskirts of the village of Southwick, which lies 3.3km southwest of Trowbridge, Wiltshire. The Site is surrounded by arable and pasture grassland, A and B roads and small residential developments.

1.2 Description of Proposed Development

A planning application was submitted not Wiltshire Council in March 2026 (ref: PL/2026/01383) for a "development of 90 dwellings with new access from Blind Lane, internal roads and footpaths, areas of open space (including play space), drainage, landscaping and associated plant and works.

1.3 Aims

The aims of this report are to:

- 🦋 Identify and describe the habitats and species likely to be affected by the proposed development and assess the ecological value of these features;
- 🦋 Identify key ecological constraints to the proposed development and evaluate the significance of any potential effects; and
- 🦋 Provide recommendations for mitigation and enhancement opportunities in accordance with relevant planning policy, legislation and other published guidance (see **Appendix 2**).

2. Methods

2.1 Ecological Scoping and Baseline Data Collection

2.1.1 Desk Study

A desk-based study was undertaken in June 2025 whereby:

- 🦋 Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) was contacted for records of protected/notable species and sites designated for nature conservation value within a 2km radius of the Site boundaries. The Wiltshire boundary cuts off a small section of the search zone to the southwest, however given most of the search area is covered this is considered sufficient to provide a robust assessment.
- 🦋 MAGIC (www.magic.gov.uk) was searched for international designated sites (SAC, SPA and Ramsar) within 10km, Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) and EPS Mitigation Licences within or adjacent to the Site;
- 🦋 Previous reports were reviewed with any relevant results provided in the appropriate sub-sections; and
- 🦋 Aerial photography of the wider area was reviewed to identify possible important habitat features.

2.2 Field Surveys

Table 1 summarises the surveys undertaken to provide ecological baseline information for the Site. Full details are provided in the appendices. Surveys for reptiles were scoped out due to the lack of suitable habitat on Site.

Table 1: Summary of Baseline Data Collection Surveys

Survey Type	Date (s)	Relevant Appendix
Extended UK Habitat Classification Survey	January 2025	Appendix 3
Bat Activity Surveys	April – October 2025	Appendix 5
Automated Detector Bat Surveys	April – October 2025	Appendix 5
Breeding Bird Surveys	March – July 2025	Appendix 6
Dormouse Surveys	April – October 2025	Appendix 7
Riparian Mammal Survey	May and October 2025	Appendix 8
Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)	January 2025	Appendix 9

2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

A baseline BNG assessment was undertaken using the statutory biodiversity metric (released in July 2025) to assess the pre-development and indicative post-development value of the habitats on Site following current guidance (Defra 2024). Further details are provided in the BNG Statement and Assessment Report (Ref: 2102-BNG-AG V3) accompanying the application.

2.4 Baseline Evaluation and Impact Assessment

Determining the importance of ecological features was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018). The guidelines recommend a scale of significance from International to Local ecological importance as a frame of reference, however notes that it can be adapted to suit local circumstances. As such, where ecological receptors are assessed to be of less than Local value, an additional valuation of 'Site value' has been included.

An assessment was then made of possible ecological impacts of the proposed development on each feature within the development's likely 'Zone of Influence' (Zol). Where uncertainty exists, a precautionary approach has been adopted.

Measures are described to ensure that any impacts can be avoided, minimised or compensated for by applying the mitigation hierarchy in accordance with NPPF (2026) paragraph 2 of Policy N2 which states:

"If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused."

2.5 Limitations

Care has been taken to ensure that balanced advice is provided on the information available and collected during the study period (s), and within the resources available for the project. However, the possibility of important ecological features being missed due to survey timings, absence during surveys

or the year of survey cannot be ruled out. In addition, the lack of evidence or records of protected species on Site does not preclude their presence from Site.

During the automated data collection in 2025, 45 out of the required 50 survey nights were covered due to equipment failure on the five nights not covered. However, in line with the survey requirements outlined in the Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy (TWBMS), at least 50 survey nights were captured during the automated surveys undertaken in 2023 and 2025 combined. Although the initial surveys were undertaken in 2023, the data is still considered to be valid and provides valuable contextual information to supplement the 45 nights of data collected in 2025. The activity levels and species recorded are considered to be typical of a site of this type in this location, therefore the missing five nights in 2025 are not considered to be a limitation.

3. Baseline Conditions & Evaluation

3.1 Designated Sites

A summary of designated sites within the search area is provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Designated sites records within 2km of Site boundary, 10km for European sites

Site Name	Proximity to Site	Description
<i>National Site Network</i>		
Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	7.3km northwest	Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site: 1304 Greater horseshoe bat <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> This site in southern England includes the hibernation sites associated with 15% of the UK greater horseshoe population and is selected on the basis of the importance of this exceptionally large overwintering population. 1323 Bechstein's bat <i>Myotis bechsteinii</i> Small numbers of Bechstein's bats have been recorded hibernating in abandoned mines in this area, though maternity sites remain unknown. Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection: 1303 Lesser horseshoe bat <i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>.
Salisbury Plain SAC	7km southeast	Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site 5130 Juniperus communis formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands Salisbury Plain represents <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations near the southern edge of the habitat's range on chalk in southern England, where it is particularly rare. This site is the best remaining example in the UK of lowland juniper scrub on chalk.

Site Name	Proximity to Site	Description
		The juniper is juxtaposed with extensive 6210 semi-natural dry grassland and chalk heath. 6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (* important orchid sites) This site hosts the priority habitat type "orchid rich sites". Salisbury Plain in central southern England is believed to be the largest surviving semi-natural dry grassland within the EU and is therefore the most important site for this habitat in the UK.
Salisbury Plain SPA	7km southeast	Nationally important breeding populations of stone curlew, hen harrier, quail and hobby. Other Annex I species include merlin, short-eared owl and Montagu's harrier.
Mells Valley SAC	9.9km southwest	Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site 6210 semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) 8310 caves not open to the public Annex II species that are a primary reason for the selection of this site 1304 Greater horseshoe bat <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> Mells Valley in southern England is selected on the basis of the size of its exceptional breeding population. It contains the maternity site associated with a population comprising about 12% of the UK greater horseshoe bat <i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i> population. A proportion of the population also hibernates at the site, though other hibernation sites remain unknown.
Statutory Designated Sites		
Southwick Country Park LNR	0.6km north	A country park (53.11ha) with a range of protected species present, including a known Bechstein's bat roost. Managed sensitively to encourage diversity.
Local Wildlife Sites		
Brokerswood and Hazel Wood	1.9km south	A fairly large area (31.98ha) of ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland containing a small holiday park.

3.2 Habitats and Flora

The distribution of habitats is shown on **Figure 1** and full details with photographs are provided in **Appendix 3**.

The Site comprises an arable field with narrow modified grassland margins and is bound by native species-poor hedgerows with trees and native species-rich hedgerows with trees, with a watercourse

present along the eastern boundary.. Given the intensive management and limited ecological value of the arable field, is considered to be of **Negligible** importance. Hedgerows are a habitat of Principle Importance (HPI) and are considered to be of **Local** importance. A veteran tree (T3) is present within hedgerow H3. The veteran tree is considered 'irreplaceable habitat' and is therefore considered to be of **National** importance. For the location of T3, please refer to **Figure 1**.

3.3 Fauna

Full survey results are included in the relevant **Appendix**.

3.3.1 Amphibians

Four records of amphibian were returned by the data search within 2km, with only one being of great crested newt (GCN), situated approximately 1.1km east of the Site. There are no granted EPS licences within 2km of the Site, and the closest GCN class survey licence return records lie 2.7km to the east.

No ponds were located on Site, however two offsite ponds were present with 250m of the Site boundary with one located c. 180m southwest of the Site and the other c.190m south of the Site. The Site does not offer optimal terrestrial habitat for GCN other than the hedgerow bases present. While GCN have been known to travel distances of 1000m or more (in specific circumstances), the majority of adults stay within 250m of breeding ponds. The GCN Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature, 2001) seeks to classify these zones as follows:

-  Immediate terrestrial habitat (approx. <50m from breeding pond);
-  Intermediate terrestrial habitat (approx. 50– 250m from breeding pond); and
-  Distant terrestrial habitat (approx. >250m from breeding pond).

Migration is likely associated with high risks due to predation, desiccation and other factors, so this tends to limit migration distances. A study in Western France (Jehle et al. 2011) found that 50% of radio-tracked GCN **remained within 15m of the breeding pond, with 95% of individuals remaining within 63m of the pond**. This indicates that where habitat is suitable, GCN remain in close proximity to their breeding ponds. The two ponds present offsite are c.500m apart and therefore isolated within the landscape. As GCN tend to be associated with groups of ponds, it is unlikely that they would be present in either of these offsite ponds. On this basis, it is considered highly unlikely that GCN would be present on the Site.

It is however considered possible that small numbers of common amphibian species, such as common toad, could be supported by the hedgerow bases on Site and the Site is considered to be of up to **Local** importance for common species of amphibian.

3.3.2 Badger

13 records of badger were returned within 2km of the Site in the last 10 years.

No evidence of badger was recorded during the survey (or any subsequent site surveys) however the Site does provide suitable foraging and commuting habitats via the hedgerows, adjacent woodland and arable fields.

Badgers are not listed as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England and have therefore not been assigned a scale of importance in this case but will be considered further in this assessment in relation to their legal protection only.

3.3.3 Bats

Over 1000 field records of bat were returned within 2km of the Site within the past 10 years. Of these, the most predominant species were common and soprano pipistrelle and myotis species. 23 records of bat roosts were returned within the search, associated with serotine, Natterer's bat, soprano and common pipistrelle, brown long eared and greater and lesser horseshoe bat. The closest record being a record of a Natterer's bat roost c.200m north-east of Site. One granted EPS licence in relation to a bat roost was returned within 2km of the Site, associated with a common pipistrelle, serotine and brown long eared bat roost, 600m north of the Site.

Commuting and Foraging

Whilst the majority of the Site is arable, and not highly suitable for foraging bats, the broad-leaved trees, and hedgerows within the Site provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat, connecting to further suitable habitat (hedgerows, pasture and woodland) beyond the Site boundary. Given the suitability of habitat on and adjacent to Site, it was assessed to be of moderate suitability for commuting and foraging bats.

The Site lies within the Yellow Zone: Medium Risk sensitivity zone for habitat and the Grey Hatched Zone: Medium Risk sensitivity zone for recreational pressure as described in the TWBMS (Wiltshire Council, 2025). See **Plate 1** and **Plate 2** below:

Plate 1: Extract from TWBMS showing the location of the Site within the Yellow Zone: Medium Risk (red star indicates Site location).

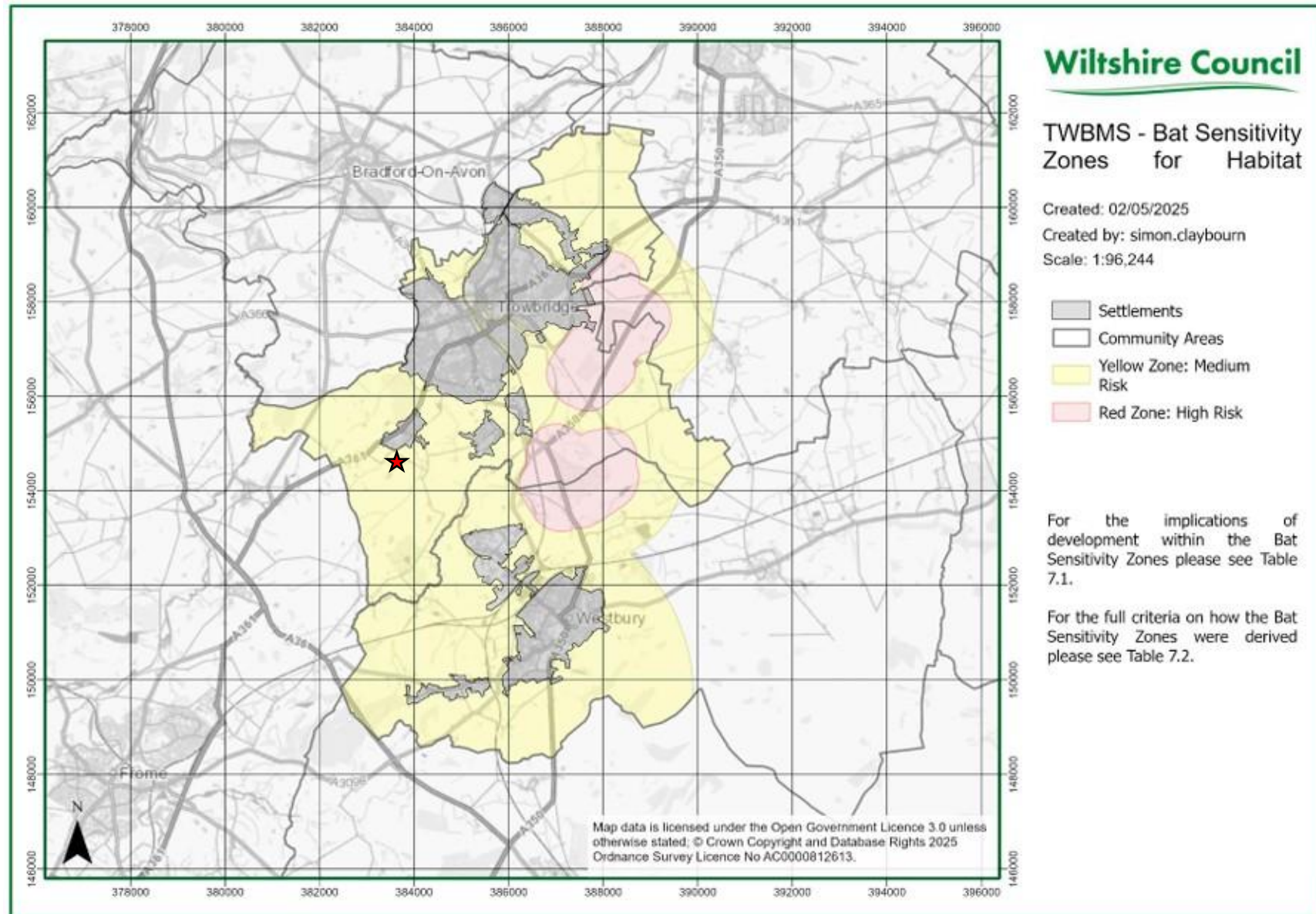
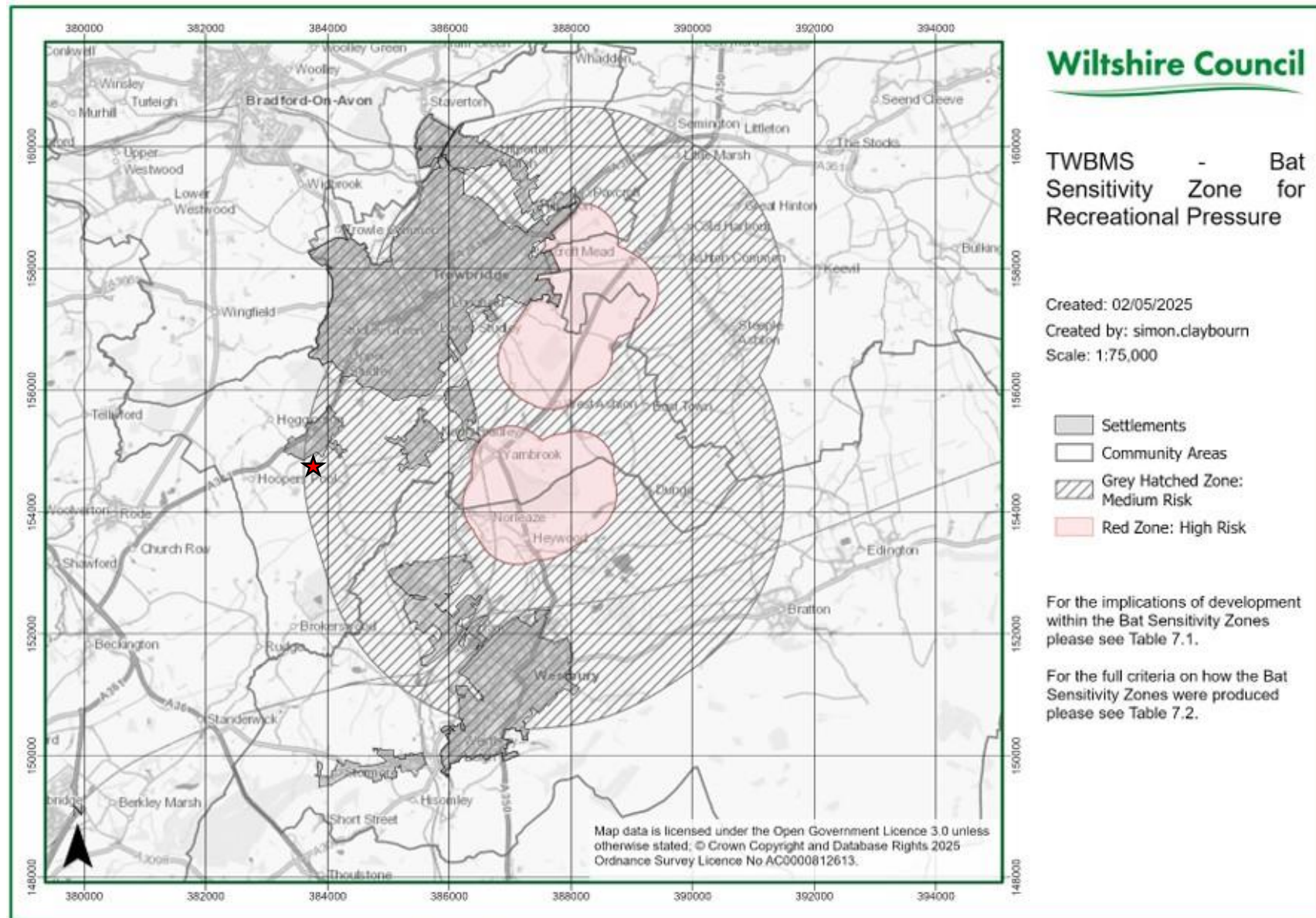


Plate 2: Extract from TWBMS showing the location of the Site within the Grey Hatched Zone: Medium Risk (red star indicates Site location).



Due to the suitability of habitats on Site and potential for Bechstein's and horseshoe bats to be utilising the habitats, in accordance with the survey requirements described in the TWBMS, monthly Nighttime Bat Walkover (NBW) surveys were undertaken April to October 2025, with two conducted in May and July. Automated detector surveys were conducted monthly between April and October 2025, at the same rate of frequency (described in detailed in **Appendix 5**) where a variety of species were recorded with a total of 23,751 registrations recorded during the automated activity surveys.

Overall, the highest bat activity was recorded on the south-eastern boundary (57.31% of all registrations), parallel to the watercourse and hedgerow (Location 3 – see **Figure 3**). Location 3 saw a variety of species showing greater affinity to this feature compared to Location 1 and Location 2, including more light adverse species and Annex II species (barbastelle, greater horseshoe bat and lesser horseshoe bat).

Serotine passes were most frequent (1.3% of all registrations) at Location 1 which runs parallel to Blind Lane. Long-eared species were recorded most frequently along the south-western boundary (Location 2) (0.16% of all registrations).

The Annex II species greater horseshoe, lesser horseshoe and barbastelle were all recorded at the Site, albeit in low proportions of total calls – 0.55% (126 total registrations); 0.29% (67 total registrations); and 0.03% (8 total registrations) respectively. Activity for horseshoe bats was recorded in all seven months of the active period with a peak in September for greater horseshoe bats and October for lesser horseshoe bats. The low number of passes would indicate that very little foraging is occurring on Site and the passes are likely from horseshoe bats commuting through the Site. Additionally, the lack of optimum greater horseshoe foraging habitat and the very small about of lesser horseshoe foraging habitat would suggest these bats are moving through the Site from nearby roosts.

The assemblage of bats recorded during these surveys is considered to be fairly typical given the Site's geographic location and the habitats on and adjacent to the Site, as well as in the context of Site's location in proximity to the Bath and Bradford-on-Avon Bats SAC.

As such, taking into consideration the modest scale of the Site, its context in the landscape, its proximity to the SAC, and the assemblage and numbers of bats identified, the Site is considered to be of at least **Local** importance for bats

Roosting

A ground level tree assessment was conducted where six trees within hedgerows were identified as having bat roost potential (see **Figure 7** and **Appendix 9**). The roosting resource at the Site is considered to be of **Local** importance for roosting bats.

3.3.4 Birds

Numerous bird records were returned by WSBRC from within 2km of the Site. Priority species and species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended) include redwing, barn owl, hobby and green sandpiper.

The hedgerows and trees have suitability for common and widespread species and also have the potential to support a notable breeding bird assemblage. On this basis, breeding bird surveys were conducted between April and July 2025.

A total of 23 species were recorded during the breeding bird survey of the Site. Of these, nine were notable species (at least Amber-listed Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BoCC 5), Species of Principle Importance (SPI), Local Biodiversity Action Plan (Local BAP) or Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (Sch1 WCA)). Results of notable species are detailed in **Appendix 6** and shown on

Figure 5. Most of the possible and probable notable breeders within the Site consisted of hedgerow species such as dunnock, wren, greenfinch and house sparrow. No ground nesting species were recorded within the Site. The diversity and abundance of recorded breeding birds is typical of the habitats described, and therefore the Site is considered to be of **Local** importance for breeding birds.

3.3.5 Dormouse

Only two records of dormouse were returned within 2km in the last 10 years. No granted EPS licences were returned within 2km of the Site.

However, given the broadleaved trees and species-rich and species-poor hedgerows with trees that surround the Site, there is provision of suitable dormouse habitat, which is connected to further suitable habitat (hedgerows, mixed scrub and woodland) beyond the Site boundary. As such, dormouse surveys were conducted. The results of the dormouse survey indicate that dormice are not present on Site. Full details of the dormouse survey are provided in **Appendix 7** and **Figure 6**.

As dormouse have not recorded during the surveys, this species is therefore considered to be **absent** from the Site and are not considered further within this report.

3.3.6 Invertebrates

32 records for invertebrates were returned from WSBRC from within 2km of the Site, although none were related to the Site or adjacent habitats.

Hedgerows and grassland provide habitats suitable to support a range of species. However, as the habitats are common and widespread in the area, the Site is considered unlikely to support a notable invertebrate assemblage and is considered to be of **Site** importance for invertebrates.

3.3.7 Reptiles

Five records of slow worm, four records of grass snake and two records of adder were recorded within 2km with the closest being a record of grass snake 10m north of Site.

However, the preliminary ecological assessment survey found very few suitable habitats for reptile within the Site, and reptile surveys were therefore scoped out on the basis that the Site is unlikely to support a noteworthy population of common reptile species. However, it is possible that small numbers/individuals may be supported by the hedgerow bases and the modified grassland on Site. On this basis the Site is considered to be of **Site** importance for reptiles.

3.3.8 Other Notable Species

Nine otter and 14 water vole records were returned from the data search with WSBRC, the closest being a record of water vole from the brook adjacent to the Site from 2016. The brook has potential for both species currently, so riparian mammal surveys were carried out across the 2025 season. Otters are a wide-ranging species and could use the Site for commuting on occasion, however no evidence was observed during the surveys, indicating that the Site does not appear to be of any particular importance for this species. Further details are provided in **Appendix 8**. Additionally, no evidence of water vole was found on the Site and therefore it's been concluded that the Site is also not of importance to water vole. Therefore, these species are considered **absent** from the Site.

60 records of hedgehog were returned within 2km, the closest being several records from the gardens of homes just to the north of the Site boundary. The hedgerows provide some shelter and foraging opportunities to hedgehog (an SPI under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006), as such the Site is considered to be of no more than **Local** ecological importance for these species.

4 Further Survey Work

No further ecological survey work is considered necessary for this application. However, any changes to the proposed masterplan or if any significant amount of time has passed since the date of this report, a re-appraisal may be required.

5 Impact Assessment and Mitigation

5.1 Designated Sites

5.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

An sHRA has been produced for Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA, Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC and Mells Valley SAC. Please refer to 2102-sHRA-AG V2 for further information.

Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA

The nearest site of international significance (Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA) is located approximately 7km northwest of the Site. It is possible that the development could cause indirect impacts on these sites through incremental increased recreational use. However, given the Site falls outside of the 6.4km visitor catchment, the scale of the proposed development and the availability of alternative recreational opportunities in closer proximity to the Site, it is considered that no likely significant effects on either statutory designated site will occur as a result of the proposed development.

Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats SAC and Trowbridge and Westbury Bat Mitigation Strategy

The Site lies within the greater horseshoe 4000m buffer of the Bath & Bradford on Avon Bats SAC and it is within the Yellow: Medium Risk sensitivity zone for habitat described (see **Plate 1** above) and within the Grey Hatched Zone: Medium Risk sensitivity zone for recreational pressure on the woodlands in which Bechstein's bats roost (see **Plate 2** above) in the TWBMS.

Bat activity surveys and automated detector surveys have recorded both greater and lesser horseshoe bats, as well as *Myotis* bats using the Site throughout the active season, though not in numbers that would suggest that the Site forms a core foraging or commuting resource, or that the Site is integral to maintaining the favourable conservation status of these species in their local range. The hedgerow boundaries of the Site may form a link between suitable foraging and roosting habitat within the wider area.

Impacts in the Absence of Mitigation

The proposals will necessitate the removal of all the arable cropland and areas of modified grassland as well as a short section (c. 13m) of hedgerow which will be removed to facilitate access onto the Site from Blind Lane. Whilst the modified grassland does not provide suitable foraging habitat for greater horseshoe bat or Bechstein's bat (both of which are woodland/hedgerow or pasture specialists), the loss of modified grassland will lead to a direct loss of foraging habitat for lesser horseshoe bats. Additionally, increased lighting and disturbance could occur that would impact Annex II species using the boundary hedgerows for commuting. Recreational pressures on woodlands where Bechstein's roosts are present within the area could increase due to the increase of residents in the area.

Mitigation

The TWBMS describes the mitigation measures considered appropriate for sites within the Yellow sensitivity zone as:

- 🦇 No net loss of habitat within the allocation of the Site boundary as demonstrated by the use of the Statutory Biodiversity Metric;
- 🦇 Retained core bat habitat remains connected to the wider habitat network and is adequately buffered;
- 🦇 Core bat habitat remains relatively undisturbed by the effects of urbanisation; and
- 🦇 A financial contribution is made towards funding the LPA scheme for mitigating residual in-combination effects from loss/degradation of bat habitat.

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric has confirmed that no net loss of habitat is to occur within the Site boundary (Ref: 2102-BNG-AG V3 and 2102-SBM-AG V3). This is being achieved by the creation of other neutral grassland, orchard, mixed scrub, modified grassland, individual trees, native hedgerow and species-rich hedgerow planting. The landscaping proposed will provide suitable foraging habitat and strengthen the already existing corridors through the Site.

The TWBMS recommends that a 15m new core bat habitat is created where lux levels must be less than 0.2 on the horizontal plane and below 0.4 on the vertical plane which is then buffered by a 15m dark corridor where light levels can reach a maximum of 1 lux.

Additionally, under the TWBMS a financial contribution of £972.03 per dwelling will need to be made towards funding the LPA scheme for mitigating residual in-combination effects from loss/degradation of bat habitat. This would result in a cumulative contribution of £87,482.70 to be secured via section 106 agreement (s106), a section 111 agreement (s111) or unilateral undertaking (UU).

As such, a 15m buffer has been proposed along the eastern boundary (H2) to form the Zone A new core bat habitat through the creation of other neutral grassland, mixed scrub, individual trees and a species-rich hedgerow with hard board fencing to contain any light spill and thus protecting the newly created core bat habitat as well as retaining and protecting the existing core bat habitat (H2). The lux levels within the Zone A new core bat habitat will be less than 0.2 on the horizontal plane and less than 0.4 on the vertical plane (WLC Lighting Design, 2026). A 10m buffer has been proposed parallel to Zone A to form the Zone B dark buffer zone. This dark corridor west of the new hedgerow will have light levels below 1 lux (WLC Lighting Design, 2026 - WLC1460-1300-001). While this is a reduction on the 15m Zone A and 15m Zone B as recommended in the TWBMS, the Lighting Design demonstrates that required lighting levels can be achieved and further to this, the buffer is not uniform in width and extends up to 50m at its widest point. These measures will ensure the baseline conditions are maintained, allowing the numbers of light-averse bats that are currently using the Site to continue to do so.

Mells Valley SAC

The nearest component roost of the Mells Valley SAC lies 9.9km southwest of the Site and the Site does not fall within a consultation zone for the SAC. The Mells Valley SAC is designated for greater horseshoe bats and therefore the mitigation implemented for the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC and TWBMS described above will mitigate any impacts for bats associated with the Mells Valley SAC. Additionally, adult greater horseshoe bats are known to travel up to 8km from maternity roosts to foraging areas (Billington, G. 2003) and therefore bats specifically associated with this component roost are unlikely to be using the Site.

5.1.2 Other Statutory Designations

No other statutory designations are considered likely to be impacted by the proposals.

5.1.3 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

There is only one non-statutory designated site within 2km of the Site, Brokerswood and Hazelwood LWS. Given the spatial separation and the reason for designation, no adverse impacts are anticipated. Standard airborne and water pollution prevention measures will be employed during construction. Such measures should be detailed within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which could be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition.

5.2 Habitats and Flora

In the absence of mitigation there is some risk of degradation to retained habitats during enabling and construction from unsympathetic pruning, and root zone damage/ compaction during construction. To avoid such impacts, Root Protection Areas (RPAs) will be identified, and suitable protective fencing installed where required in line with best arboricultural practice during construction (BS5837:2012). Standard airborne and water pollution prevention measures will be employed during construction. Such measures should be detailed within a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) which could be secured by an appropriately worded planning condition.

The loss of habitats within the Site do not pose an 'in principle' constraint to the development. Measures to restore and enhance existing habitats, to ensure successful establishment of new habitats, and to maintain the value of all ecological features in the long-term will be detailed within a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP) which will be controlled through the Biodiversity Gain condition.

Specific measures in relation to existing habitats are detailed below. Some of the habitats present within the Site require further consideration in relation to supporting protected and notable species as further discussed below in **Section 5.3**.

5.2.1 Hedgerows

The majority of hedgerows within the Site will be retained and protected as part of the detailed proposals (c.940m). However, in order to facilitate access, it will be necessary to breach some hedgerows. The amount of hedgerow loss will be kept to the minimum required and based on the Landscape Proposals (ACD Environmental, 2026) - a total length of 20m is proposed to be lost.

New native species-rich hedgerow (c.220m) and native hedgerows (c.760m) will be planted as part of the proposals. In addition, the new native species-rich hedgerow bases will be seeded with a wildflower mixture.

With the proposed mitigation and compensation measures, no significant impacts are anticipated on hedgerows, with the measures proposed considered to represent a significant enhancement for hedgerow habitat within the Site.

5.2.2 Arable cropland

The proposals will result in the loss of all arable cropland (c.4.17ha). The loss of this habitat will be compensated through the creation of other low distinctiveness habitats such as modified grassland, vegetated garden and introduced shrub. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated.

5.2.3 Modified grassland

Approximately 0.17ha of modified grassland is anticipated to be lost through the development of the Site. This area cannot be feasibly retained due to its location and therefore additional modified grassland creation (c.0.45ha) will be created across the Site. Therefore, no significant impacts are anticipated on modified grassland.

5.2.4 Individual tree

A single tree (T18) was present within H1 at the time of survey. As of November 2025, this tree was removed by the landowner due to health and safety concerns due to the presence of overhead cables running beneath the tree.

5.2.5 Veteran tree

A single veteran tree (T3) was present within H3. Veteran trees are classified as irreplaceable habitat in accordance with The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Use Guide (July 2024) and also of National importance. T3 is proposed to be retained and its RPA is suitably buffered. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated on the veteran tree on Site.

5.3 Fauna

5.3.1 Amphibians

It is possible that common amphibians such as common toad may be present within the Site boundaries and hedgerows. As such, a suitable method statement will be employed to avoid significant impacts on common amphibian species during construction. This is discussed further below in relation to reptiles.

As detailed below, no suitable habitat for hibernating amphibians will be removed over winter (or in poor weather). In the extremely unlikely event that a great crested newt is found, all works will stop while Natural England is contacted for further advice. As detailed above in the baseline section, it is considered extremely unlikely that this species is present in the vicinity of the Site, and as such the risk to this species is considered negligible.

Hibernacula/resting places will be provided which will support these species in areas of POS (**Figure 2**).

5.3.2 Badgers

Badgers and their setts receive protection under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which protects them from deliberate harm and injury.

No badger setts were found on Site therefore it is considered that the species doesn't currently pose a constraint to the proposed development. However, mindful that badgers are highly mobile and frequently establish new setts the following precautionary measures are recommended:

-  Update badger survey of the Site no less than one month prior to works commencing;
-  Exclusion of badgers under a Natural England badger licence should any active setts be discovered that require removal/ disturbance during works; and
-  Good practise construction measures to ensure badgers are either unable to access the construction site or cannot become trapped in excavations (e.g. through covering up at night or inserting an 'escape ramp').

The habitat creation measures proposed across the Site would increase foraging opportunities for badgers, post-development.

5.3.3 Bats

All species of bat and their breeding sites or resting places (roosts) are protected under Regulation 41 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and Section 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

5.3.3.1 Roosting

Six trees were identified to have bat roosting potential within the Site boundary. These trees were subject to ground level tree assessment, but no further surveys were conducted as no impacts were proposed. However, one of the trees identified to have roosting potential, a mature oak (T18), was removed in November 2025 by the landowner due to health and safety concerns due to the proximity of overhead cables. The loss of a potential roost will be compensated through the inclusion of tree mounted bat boxes (3no.) within the Site boundary on retained trees to provide suitable compensatory roosting opportunities see **Figure 2**.

Current proposals are to retain the other five trees identified to have bat roosting potential (T3, T7, T11, T20 and T21) and for them to remain unlit. However, should it be found necessary to remove any of these trees e.g. for health and safety reasons, prior to commencement of works, potential roosting features will be inspected via endoscope, involving aerial assessments where necessary to identify presence/likely absence of roosting bats. In the event that evidence of roosting bats is identified, works will cease, and further information collected in order to inform a mitigation licence application to Natural England.

It should be noted that bat roosts in trees are by their very nature difficult to identify, being hard to locate and often transient in nature. For example, features such as flaking bark (popular as a roosting site for some of our bat species) change in a relatively short period of time. Some of these relatively delicate and short-lived roost types are lost and others appear; hence tree roosting bats move between a number of roosts. Should it be found necessary to remove any more trees e.g. for health and safety reasons, prior to commencement of works, the tree will be subject to ground-level inspection by a licenced ecologist. Should any features be identified, these will be inspected via endoscope, involving aerial assessments where necessary to identify presence/likely absence of roosting bats. In the event that evidence of roosting bats is identified, works will cease, and further information collected in order to inform a mitigation licence application to Natural England.

5.3.3.2 Commuting and foraging

Without appropriate mitigation, the loss and/or fragmentation of boundary hedgerows and an increase in lighting during both construction and operation have the potential to adversely impact light averse species of bats that forage and commute within the Site.

To minimise the impacts on commuting and foraging bats, the majority of boundary vegetation will be retained, protected and suitably buffered as part of the scheme. Where boundary vegetation is to be lost to facilitate access into the development this will be compensated for through the creating new hedgerows in locations that contribute to maintaining and enhancing habitat connectivity through the Site.

Additionally, a buffer to the eastern boundary (H2) has been proposed in line with the TWBMS guidance. A 15m Zone A new core bat habitat will be created directly parallel to H2. This will consist of other neutral grassland, mixed scrub and tree planting. A new species-rich hedgerow (H23) with hard board fencing

will be installed along the 15m buffer, running parallel to H2. A 10m Zone B dark buffer is proposed parallel to Zone A to reduce the light levels. This will comprise other neutral grassland with unlit public footpaths. The southern boundary and northern boundary have also been suitably buffered to continue to allow the Site to be used by commuting bats.

The removal of habitats deemed necessary for the proposals, i.e. cropland, grassland and hedgerows, will reduce the foraging and commuting opportunities on Site. The landscape buffer along the northern and southern boundaries, and the creation of new core bat habitat and dark corridor to the eastern boundary will however allow the low numbers of light-intolerant species currently utilising the existing habitats to continue to commute through the Site once developed. This buffer also provides protection of any roosting bats utilising the trees within the hedgerow (H1, H2 and H3). In addition, the introduction of a variety of flowering planting on Site will encourage invertebrate populations and will, in turn, ensure a foraging resource for bats is present within the development.

A sensitive lighting strategy has been developed for the construction and operational phases by a lighting professional (WLC Lighting, 2026). The lighting scheme has been designed to ensure that no light is directed onto boundary hedgerows or bat and bird boxes. A suitable lighting scheme has been designed in accordance with the TWBMS to ensure the buffer to the eastern boundary remains unlit. Principles of the sensitive lighting scheme are outlined below and are in line with best practice guidance.

During the construction phase, the following mitigation measures will be implemented:

- 🔦 All works will be undertaken during daylight hours, with works commencing no earlier than 30 minutes prior to sunrise and finishing no later than 30 minutes after sunset. No artificial lighting will be left on outside of normal working hours; and
- 🔦 Where security lighting is required, it is recommended that these are motion activated with hooded luminaires, and these must be directed away from boundary hedgerows and bat and bird boxes.

During the operational phase, the following mitigation measures will be implemented:

- 🔦 Luminaires will not be directed at sensitive habitats, boundary vegetation or onto bat and bird boxes. Where required, lights can be fitted with hoods, baffles or louvres to reduce back-spill;
- 🔦 Only luminaires with an upward light ratio of 0% will be used, and low-level bollard lighting will be used where feasible to retain darkness above the luminaire;
- 🔦 All external luminaires used on site will lack UV elements and will be warm-white coloured (<2700 Kelvin) to reduce blue-light components;
- 🔦 LED luminaires will be used due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour retention and dimming capability; and
- 🔦 Where security lighting is installed this will be motion-activated.

It is therefore anticipated that the habitat retention and creation measures described will maintain the Site's capacity to support bats and could provide greater diversity and quality of habitats within the Site. The future management of the Site under the provisions of the HMMP will ensure successful establishment and long-term management of these features and have the potential to increase their value to foraging and commuting bats.

5.3.4 Birds

In the absence of mitigation, there is a risk that the loss /fragmentation of the hedgerows and associated trees will lead to a negative impact on the breeding bird population within the Site. In addition, if construction takes place during the breeding bird season, increased disturbance caused by construction noise, dust and vibration is likely to affect the ability of birds to hold territory and breed

successfully within habitats adjacent to the works area. To mitigate for this, all hedgerows (with exception for losses to facilitate access) will be retained and protected as part of the development. Retained hedgerows will be clearly marked through Heras fencing (or similar) and will be subject to regular checks throughout construction to ensure they are still intact.

New hedgerow planting, mixed scrub, other neutral grassland, orchard and tree planting will be created within the Site to compensate for the loss of suitable breeding bird habitat. This will provide a number of new opportunities for breeding and foraging once established.

Given the protection afforded to all breeding birds, their nests, eggs and young, any vegetation clearance, including the future management of habitats, should be undertaken outside of the breeding bird season (March to August inclusive). If this is not practicable, then works should be preceded by a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist within 48 hours of the commencement of works. If nesting birds are found to be present then an appropriate buffer will be implemented around the nest, in which no works can take place until all birds have fledged.

5.3.5 *Reptiles and common amphibians*

Common species of reptile are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This makes it illegal to intentionally kill or injure them. In addition, all native species of reptile as well as common toad are SPIs under the NERC Act 2006.

The Site has limited potential to support common species of amphibian and reptile, however the hedgerow bases and modified grassland field margins may provide some opportunities and so should be considered. As a precaution, during construction and enabling works, a precautionary approach to the removal of suitable habitats, including sensitive timings and phased habitat clearance, will be adopted.

-  Habitat manipulation will be undertaken to encourage reptiles to disperse to areas of retained habitat around Site margins and beyond the boundary hedgerows. These works will only be undertaken during the reptile active season of April to October inclusive, in suitable weather conditions when temperatures exceed 10°C.
-  Habitat suitability will be reduced by strimming vegetation using a staged cutting process;
-  Initially, the grassland margins and hedgerow vegetation will be cut to approximately 150mm, (starting from the south and working north) with the arisings removed and habitats left for a minimum of 48 hours in suitable weather conditions i.e. no rain or high winds;
-  A further cut will then be made to 50mm, beginning at one end of the Site and moving in one direction (from south to north), to encourage any remaining reptiles/ amphibians towards the retained areas of suitable habitat.
-  Once complete, the vegetation will be maintained at a low-level (<50mm) until the start of development works.

5.3.6 *Hedgehog*

During the construction and enabling works, there is potential to harm hedgehog. The measures outlined above for reptiles and badgers will also ensure that hedgehogs will be safeguarded. Any individuals encountered during enabling works will be moved to a place of safety, namely the eastern boundary.

The retention of the majority of hedgerows will ensure foraging and commuting opportunities on Site are maintained. Close board fencing within the development will incorporate 15cmx15cm holes at bases to allow site permeability for the species.

5.3.7 Invertebrates

Although a notable invertebrate assemblage is not considered likely to be present within the Site, the habitats within the Site do provide suitable habitat for invertebrates.

Without appropriate mitigation, the loss and/or fragmentation of the hedgerows and associated trees and modified grassland has the potential to negatively impact any invertebrate assemblage that is present within the Site. To mitigate for this, all hedgerows (with exception for losses to facilitate access), will be fully retained and protected as part of the scheme.

New habitats will be created within the Site to compensate for the loss of suitable invertebrate habitat. Habitats to be created will comprise modified grassland, hedgerows, other neutral grassland, orchard, ponds, mixed scrub and individual trees.

With the proposed mitigation and compensation measures no significant impacts are anticipated for invertebrates, with the measures proposed considered to represent an enhancement for invertebrates within the Site.

5.3.8 Riparian mammals

While riparian mammals were not recorded on Site and aren't considered to make significant use of the Site, otters might commute through the Site on rare occasions. Otters have been safeguarded through the creation of the buffer along the watercourse which will improve the Site for riparian mammals.

6 Summary of Assessment and Mitigation

The above illustrates the avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures required to minimise significant impacts to ecological features. This demonstrates that the mitigation hierarchy has been adhered to by focusing on the **avoidance** of ecological features of greatest importance, mitigating unavoidable impacts and, as a last resort, providing **compensation**.

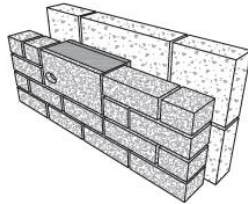
7 Biodiversity Net Gain

The baseline units for the Site comprise 9.60 habitat units, 11.23 hedgerow units and 2.58 watercourse units. An indicative BNG assessment suggests that the Site is unlikely to be capable of delivering 10% onsite. Further details are provided in the BNG Statement and Assessment Report (Ref 2102-BNG-AG V3), which provides the BNG information required to support the planning application under Article 7 of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 as well as local information required by Wiltshire LPA, and in the submitted statutory biodiversity metric (Ref 2102-SBM-AG V3).

8 Enhancements

In addition, the enhancements detailed in **Table 2** are recommended in line with national guidance and local planning policy. Locations are shown in **Figure 8**.

Table 2: Enhancement Features

Quantity & Type	Illustrations	Description & Installation
Approx. 45no. integrated bird nest boxes	 WoodStone Build-in Swift Nest Box Deep (nhbs.com)  Installation – integral nestbox installed in outer leaf of brickwork in a traditional cavity wall construction	✎ Density: one box per two dwellings. N.B. Swifts and house sparrows are colony nesters so multiple can be put on same building as long as >50cm apart. ✎ Fully integrated boxes to be built into the fabric of the building. ✎ Suitable models include the PRO UK Rendered Build-in Swift Box or the WoodStone Build-in Swift Nest Box Deep which can be chosen to suit the finishing of the building. Suppliers include www.nhbs.com and www.wildcare.co.uk. ✎ Swift boxes are recommended as they are considered a universal box suitable not only for swifts but also for house sparrows and other small birds (CIEEM, 2021). ✎ Install at the highest point of the building, ideally at least 5m above ground level. ✎ To be sited under the shelter of eaves or overhanging roofs where possible. ✎ Entrance out of direct sun and the prevailing weather and away from perches/ledges where birds are at risk from predators. ✎ See swift-conservation.org for additional advice.
Approx. 45 no. integrated bat boxes	 Vivaro Pro Build-in Woodstone Bat Box and Habibat Bat Box 	✎ Density: one box per two dwellings. ✎ Fully integrated boxes to be built into the fabric of the building. Install within the cavity of house walls. The entrance hole can sit flush to a course of bricks. ✎ Suitable models include the Vivaro Pro Build-in Woodstone Bat Tube, Habibat Bat Box or similar approved which can be chosen to suit the finishing of the building. Suppliers include www.nhbs.com and www.wildcare.co.uk. ✎ Position a minimum of 3m above the ground. ✎ Locate where there is a clear, unlit flight path for bats to linear vegetation (e.g. hedgerows) and away from windows. ✎ Install away from any lighting.

Quantity & Type	Illustrations	Description & Installation
Hedgehog holes		- Include 13cm x 13cm cut out through close-boarded fences (or equivalent gaps under fences) to allow hedgehog movement throughout site. - These can be holes created during fence construction, or purpose made products such as the Durapost Hedgehog Hole and Hedgehog Gravel Boards (or similar) available from suppliers including www.jacksons-fencing.co.uk or www.wickes.co.uk. - To reduce the risk of these being blocked by future residents, a small 'Hedgehog Highway Sign' should be attached. Available from www.nhbs.com. - Further information is available at: https://www.hedgehogstreet.org/help-hedgehogs/link-your-garden/

9 Monitoring

Monitoring should be undertaken to ensure that the mitigation described in this report has been undertaken to a satisfactory standard. This applies to both the construction and operation phases of the development.

10 Conclusions

In summary the Site is of low to moderate ecological interest, comprising arable cropland and modified grassland which is separated by native species-poor and species-rich hedgerows. It is located in the vicinity of Sailsbury Plain SAC/SPA, Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC and Mells Valley SAC. In the absence of mitigation, negative impacts are possible to several ecological receptors, namely bats and birds.

Mitigation and compensation have been incorporated into the design to ensure that the proposal and work programme is designed to minimise adverse impacts on ecological features. Measures included within a CEMP would protect a range of ecological features during the construction phase of the development. Created habitats would be protected and maintained as defined within a HMMP as part of the BNG assessment.

Enhancement features have also been described with the aim of providing an increase in wildlife opportunities on Site post-development, contributing to the aims of National Planning Policy Framework and local policy. An indicative Biodiversity Metric has been supplied which shows a net gain in habitat units is not achievable on Site. The assessment will be updated based on final plans for the development, as part of the pre-commencement BNG condition.

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Key:

- Site Boundary
- Native Hedgerow with trees
- Native Species Rich Hedgerow
- Native Species Rich Hedgerow with trees
- Ornamental Hedgerow
- c - Cropland
- g4 - Modified grassland
- Irreplaceable habitat - veteran tree
- Habitat degradation - removal of T18

Scale at A4: 1:1,780



Imagery ©2026 CNES / Airbus, Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies. Map data ©2026 Google

Figure 1:
UK Habitat Baseline Map

Project:
Blind Lane, Southwick

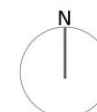
Client:
Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:
19/2/2026

Ref:
2102-EclA-F1

Drawn:
AG

Revision:
-





Key:

- ◆ 45no. Integrated Bird Box
- 45no. Integrated Bat Box
- 2no. Habitat Piles
- Tree Mounted Bat Box

Hedgehog holes to be included in all close-boarded fences to allow hedgehog movement throughout site.



2056_1100A Planning Layout, Place By Design.

Figure 2:
Enhancements and Mitigation

Project:
Blind Lane, Southwick

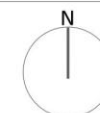
Client:
Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:
29/9/2026

Ref:
2102-EclA-F2

Drawn:
AG

Revision:
R1





Key:

- Site Boundary
- All bats
- All bats excluding pipistrelle species
- Light averse species
- Annex II species

Circles are indicative of the average number of bat passes per night for monthly surveys conducted between April and October



Imagery ©2026 CNES / Airbus, Getmapping plc, Infoterra Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies. Map data ©2026 Google

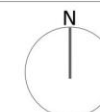
Figure 3:
Automated Bat Detector Survey Results

Project:
Land at Southwick

Client:
Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:
27/1/2026
Ref:
2102-EclA-F3

Drawn:
HD
Revision:
-





Key:

- Site Boundary
- Key Foraging Areas
- Common Pipistrelle
- Soprano Pipistrelle
- Serotine
- Nyctalus Species
- Lesser Horseshoe
- Greater Horseshoe
- Myotis Species



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Figure 4:
Bat Activity Survey Results

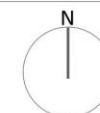
Project:
Land at Southwick

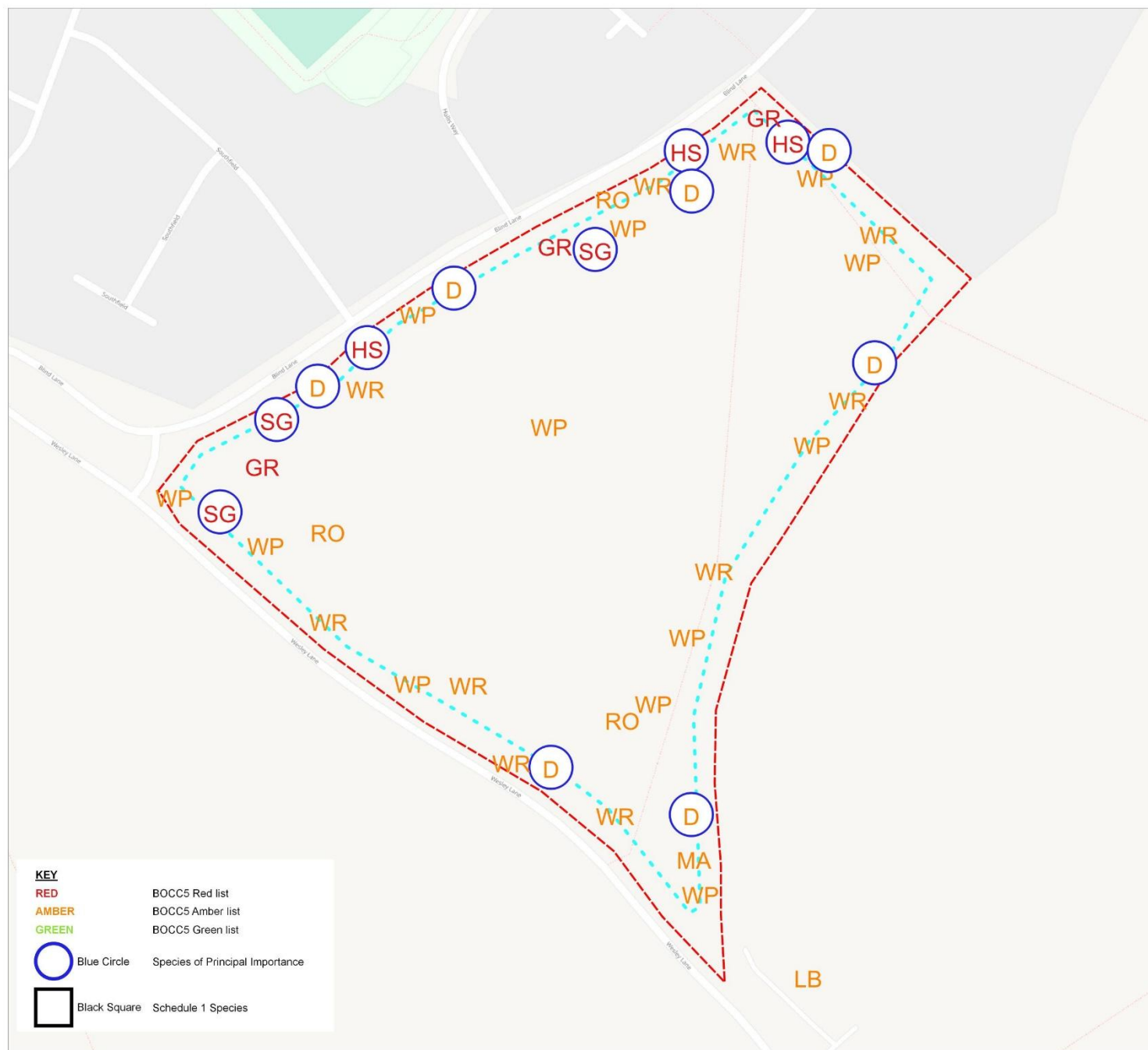
Client:
Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:
27/1/2026

Ref:
2102-EclA-F4

Drawn:
HD
Revision:
-





Key:

- Site Boundary
- Transect
- D Dunnock
- GR Greenfinch
- HS House Sparrow
- LB Lesser Black-backed Gull
- MA Mallard
- RO Rook
- SG Starling
- WP Woodpigeon
- WR Wren



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Figure 5:

Breeding Bird Survey Results

Project:

Blind Lane, Southwick

Client:

Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:

23/1/2026

Drawn:

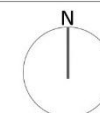
ET

Ref:

2102-EclA-F5

Revision:

-





Key:

- Site Boundary
- Dormouse Tubes



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Figure 6:
Dormouse Tube Locations and Results

Project:
Blind Lane, Southwick

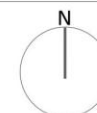
Client:
Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:
27/1/2026

Ref:
2102-EclA-F6

Drawn:
AG

Revision:
-





Key:

- Site Boundary
- Potential Roost Feature - Multiple Bats



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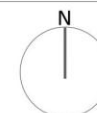
Figure 7:
Ground Level Tree Assessment Survey Results

Project:
Blind Lane, Southwick

Client:
Wain Homes Severn Valley

Date:
27/1/2026
Ref:
2102-EclA-F7

Drawn:
AG
Revision:
-



Appendix 1 – General Glossary of Terms

Annex I	Threatened bird listed on Annex I of the EC Birds Directive/ Habitats listed on Annex I of the EC Habitats Directive
Annex II	Species of community interest whose conservation requires the designation of SACs
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BMCL	Bat Mitigation Class Licence
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
BoCC	Bird of Conservation Concern
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CWS	County Wildlife Site
DBW	Daytime Bat Walkover
EPS	European Protected Species
GLTA	Ground Level Tree Assessment
HPI	Habitat of Principal Importance required under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006
HSI	Habitat Suitability Index
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
GCN	Great crested newt
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservation Committee
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LEMP	Landscape and Ecology Management Plan
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
NBW	Night-time Bat Walkover
NE	Natural England
NERC Act	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NVA	Night Vision Aid
NVC	National Vegetation Classification Survey
OSWI	Other Site of Wildlife Interest
pCWS	Potential County Wildlife Site
PRA	Preliminary Roost Assessment
PRF	Potential Roost Feature
Ramsar	A wetland site designated to be of international importance under the Ramsar Convention
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPI	Species of Principal Importance required under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
UWS	Unconfirmed Wildlife Site
WCA	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981(as amended)
ZOI	Zone of Influence

Appendix 2 – Planning Policy and Legislation

Habitat and Species Legislation

Species and habitats receive legal protection in the UK under various legislation, including:

- 🦋 The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended);
- 🦋 The Countryside Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- 🦋 The Hedgerows Regulations 1997;
- 🦋 The Protection of Badgers Act 1992; and
- 🦋 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Where relevant, this report takes into account the legislative protection afforded to specific habitats and species.

Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act 2021 operates as the UK's legal framework for environmental protection and provides legislation on environmental governance, principles, targets and improvement plans, waste and resource efficiency, nature protection, and water and air quality.

Part 6 of the Environment Act 2021 requires a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain for all new developments (with specified exemptions), and amends Schedule 7a (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021) to mandate this in England. This will apply to most major developments from 12th February 2024 and to small sites from 2 April 2024.

The biodiversity net gain regulations most directly relevant to planning are:

- 🦋 The Environment Act 2021 (Commencement No. 8 and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (2024)
- 🦋 The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations (2024)
- 🦋 The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Modifications and Amendments) (England) Regulations (2024)
- 🦋 The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations (2024).

In addition, there are regulations for the Biodiversity Gain Site register established under section 100 of the Environment Act 2021 for registered off-site biodiversity gains.

National Planning Policy Framework 2026

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how local planning authorities should incorporate them into their own policies and plans. Section 19 of the NPPF contains several policies targeted at enhancing the natural environment and requires local authorities to consider how impacts on biodiversity can be minimised and provide net gains in biodiversity.

Policy N2 states that:

1. *“To contribute positively to the natural environment, and support nature’s recovery, development proposals should:*
 - a. *Consider the environmental qualities of land proposed for development, including habitats, landscape character and the natural beauty of the countryside, and identify opportunities for those qualities to be conserved or enhanced (including through requirements for biodiversity net gain where these apply);*

- b. Take into account the quality of agricultural land (including that classified as best and most versatile agricultural land, and its grade), and if significant development of agricultural land is necessary, use areas of poorer quality land where possible;*
 - c. Take suitable opportunities to connect to and strengthen ecological networks that extend beyond the site, drawing on the measures proposed by Local Nature Recovery Strategies, National Forest Strategies and Community Forest Plans, where present, and other relevant assessments;*
 - d. Conserve and enhance existing natural features of visual, historic or nature conservation value (such as established trees and hedgerows) where possible; and use appropriate landscaping to help create a well-designed place and integrate the development into its surroundings;*
 - e. Use green infrastructure provided as part of the scheme and nature-based solutions to secure multiple benefits: such as for biodiversity; surface water and pollution management (including maintaining flow rates and water quality); climate change mitigation and adaptation, and recreation;*
 - f. Minimise any adverse impacts on biodiversity and include features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs. Development proposals should incorporate integrated nest boxes (commonly known as swift bricks) into their construction unless there are compelling technical reasons which prevent their use or would make them ineffective; and*
 - g. Ensure that green infrastructure and other features to support nature are located and designed to minimise risk of future failure, and that appropriate measures are in place for any necessary long-term management.*
- 2. If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for, then the development should be refused.*
- 3. Development proposals may incorporate biodiversity enhancements which exceed the statutory objective for biodiversity net gain, but this should only be a requirement where it is set out in up-to-date development plan policies for specific site allocations. Decisionmakers should not give weight to other development plan policies which require biodiversity gains which go beyond the statutory framework, including where a policy requires gains for development proposals which are exempt."*

In addition, Policy N3 states that:

- 1. "In recognition of the benefits which trees can provide for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the character and quality of the built environment, development proposals should:*
 - a. Make new streets tree-lined (unless there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate in specific streets), and incorporate trees in other suitable locations, such as in parks and through the provision of community orchards;*
 - b. Ensure that the selection of species and their placement is compatible with highways and other infrastructure requirements and the needs of different users of public spaces; and will be effective in helping to adapt to the effects of climate change and delivering other environmental benefits. Suitable arboricultural advice should be sought, and proposals*

discussed with highways and trees officers where necessary, so that the right trees are planted in the right places; and

- c. *Make provision for the long-term maintenance of both existing and newly-planted trees which form part of the development.”*

Additional Planning Practice Guidance (PPGs) supports the NPPF and includes guidance on:

- 👉 Agricultural land, soil and brownfield land of environmental value;
- 👉 Green infrastructure;
- 👉 Biodiversity, geodiversity and ecosystems; and
- 👉 Landscape.

Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS) (see above) are a material consideration of planning applications and map areas important for existing biodiversity and priority areas for enhancement and restoration.

Wiltshire Planning Policy

The Wiltshire Core Strategy Development Plan Document ('the plan') was formally adopted in January 2015. The plan provides a positive and flexible overarching planning policy framework for Wiltshire for the period up to 2026. It contains the relevant planning policies:

- 👉 Core Policy 50 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity
- 👉 Core Policy 52 – Green Infrastructure

Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) was succeeded in 2012 by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework' which demonstrates a whole-environment strategy on how the UK contributes to achieving the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In England, 'Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' (Defra, 2011) sets out the strategic direction for biodiversity policy in the future. The former UK BAP was used to draw up lists of species and habitats of 'principal importance' which continue to be regarded as priorities under the Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework and are identified under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006; these species have been considered throughout this report.

Appendix 3 – Extended UK Habitat Classification Survey

Method

A site walkover was undertaken on 31 January 2024 by Vicki Hawkins BSc MSc ACIEEM when weather conditions were dry with good visibility.

All habitats within the Site were identified, described and mapped during the field survey in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) (UKHab Ltd. 2023 (V2.0)) and Statutory Biodiversity Metric (Defra 2024) classifications for hedgerows), with other linear and point features mapped using Phase 1 Habitat Survey symbology (JNCC 2010). Primary habitats have been mapped to a minimum mapping unit (MMU) of 25m², although where features of note of a smaller scale are present, these have also been recorded and mapped. Any habitats (e.g. traditional orchard) with no appropriate primary habitat label were assigned a secondary habitat code. Other secondary UKHab codes were recorded where relevant, although they are described qualitatively within this report for ease of reading. A non-exhaustive botanical species list was compiled, with plant names following Stace (2019).

The survey was extended to highlight the potential presence of protected and notable species in accordance with CIEEM's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017). This involved a search to identify the presence or potential presence of species such as breeding birds, bats, badger, dormouse, reptiles and amphibians. Target Notes (TNs) were used to record any features or habitats of ecological interest. Where access allowed, adjacent habitats were also considered in order to assess possible impacts of the proposal in a wider context.

A digital map was produced using QGIS (QGIS.org, 2024. *QGIS Geographic Information System*. QGIS Association. Available from: www.qgis.org). The habitat map is shown in **Figure 1**. Common names for flora and fauna are given in the body of the report with scientific names provided in **Appendix 4**.

Results

Desk study

The record centre returned a number of records of notable plants such as snakes head fritillary. None of the species listed were recorded at the Site, and the habitats present are generally unsuitable for such species.

Habitat Descriptions

The Site comprises an arable field bound by native species-poor hedgerows, native species-poor hedgerows with trees and native species-rich hedgerows with trees. The margins are predominantly modified grassland. Although the arable land is of negligible ecological value. Photographs and brief descriptions are provided below, including a list of dominant vegetative species within each habitat.

Table 4.1: Habitat Summaries

Habitat Summary	Photograph
Arable The site comprises an arable field.	
Modified grassland Small area of modified grassland present along the northeastern and eastern boundary along the perimeter of the cropland. This area is grass dominant and comprises common grass species such as perennial rye grass and cock's foot.	
Hedgerows The Site is bound by managed species poor and species rich hedgerows with individual mature trees. Species present include hawthorn, hazel, blackthorn and holly, and mature oak and ash.	
Brook/Watercourse A small brook runs south to northeast along the eastern boundary of the Site.	

Individual tree

A mature oak tree is present on Site (T18) within a hedgerow H1.

Tree was felled in November 2025 by the landowner due to health and safety concerns due to overhead cables in close proximity.



Appendix 4 – List of Flora and Fauna Mentioned in Text

Flora

Common name	Scientific name	Recorded on Site?
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	✓
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	✓
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	✓
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	✓
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	✓
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	✓
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	✓
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	✓
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	✓
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	✓
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	✓
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	✓
Oak sp.	<i>Quercus</i> sp.	✓
Perennial rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	✓

Fauna

Common name	Scientific name	Recorded on Site?
Adder	<i>Vipera berus</i>	
Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	
Brown long-eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	✓
Common toad	<i>Bufo Bufo</i>	
Daubenton's bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	
Dormouse	<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>	
Grass snake	<i>Natrix helvetica</i>	
Great crested newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	
Greater horseshoe bat	<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>	✓
Green sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>	
Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>	
Lesser horseshoe bat	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	✓
Long-eared bat species	<i>Plecotus</i> sp.	✓
Myotis bat species	<i>Myotis</i> sp.	✓
Natterer's bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	
Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	
Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	
Slow worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	
Water vole	<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>	

Appendix 5 - Bat Activity Surveys

Methods

Survey Effort

During the walkover the Site was assessed as having moderate suitability for bats based on the presence of some continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape providing shelter and/or invertebrate prey sources such as hedgerows, offsite woodland and narrow grassland margins.

Considering the predicted impacts of the proposed development on bats it was therefore proportionate to undertake automated detector surveys once a month. These surveys were conducted between September 2023 – October 2023 and April 2025 – October 2025 in accordance with the Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy (TMBS) (2019). These surveys were supplemented by monthly night-time bat walkover surveys as required by the TMBS (2019).

Night-time Bat Walkover Surveys

Night-time bat walkover (NBW) surveys involved two experienced surveyors observing and recording bat behaviour on Site. Surveys commenced 15 minutes before sunset, with surveyors positioned on potential flyways close to potential roost features, previously identified as part of the walkover survey. Surveyors initially remained in place to record early emerging behaviour and commuting bats, tracking the bat movement towards a roost, if appropriate. Following 30 minutes to an hour after sunset, surveyors then walked a pre-defined transect route (approximately 3km) covering all habitats of the Site paying attention to features with potential for use by foraging and commuting bats. However, surveyors responded dynamically to bat activity on Site, which required occasional stops or detours to observe bat behaviour. The survey concluded two hours after sunset/ when it became too dark to see bat activity.

Surveyors walked the transects simultaneously and were equipped with a manual hand-held detector and recorder Elekon BatScanner alongside Titley Scientific Anabat Swift/ Wildlife Acoustics Song Meter Mini (transect mode)), or Elekon Batlogger M2. When a bat was encountered the time, species and flight behaviour, direction and height was noted.

Surveys were completed during optimal weather conditions, as detailed in Table 5.1. Exceptions are detailed in the Limitations section.

Table 5.1: Bat activity transect survey dates and personnel

Date	Sunset/ start time	End time	Transect length (time)	Weather	Personnel
28/09/2023	19:00	21:00	2hrs	Dry, 16-15°C, Wind-3, Cloud 30%	VH, HK
25/10/2023	17:59	23:10	2hrs	Dry, 14°C, Wind-1, Cloud 80%	AG, HK
24/04/2025	20:06	22:06	2hrs	Dry, 10°C, Wind-2, Cloud 10%	EEB, CH
13/05/2025	20:48	22:48	2hrs	Dry, 12-17°C, Wind-0, Cloud 20%	CH, AJ
22/05/2025	21:03	23:03	2hrs	Dry, 14°C, Wind-2, Cloud 80%	CH, MF
12/06/2025	21:25	23:25	2hrs	Dry, 15-17°C, Wind-1, Cloud 10%	CH, CD
01/07/2025	21:28	23:28	2hrs	Dry, 18-19°C, Wind-1, Cloud 70%	BS, MH
10/07/2025	21:23	23:23	2hrs	Dry, 20-25°C, Wind-1, Cloud 25%	BS, CG
02/09/2025	19:54	21:54	2hrs	Dry, 17-16°C, Wind-3, Cloud 25%	CH, NC
01/10/2025	18:46	20:46	2hrs	Dry, 16°C, Wind-2, Cloud 40%	ET, CH

VH = Vicki Hawkins BSc MSc ACIEEM NE Level 1 Bat licence 2017-27581-CLS-CLS; **HK** = Hamish Kidd BSc; **AG** = Anna Galvin BSc MSc; **EEB** = Eliane Bornoff BSc; **CB** = Chelsea Bryer, **AJ** = Adam Jefferies BSc; **CH** = Cameron Hard BSc; **MF** = Max Flagg; **CD** = Callum Daglish, **BS** – Ben Steen, **MH**- Matthew Harrington, **CG** – Corrie Grafton; **NC** = Nick Cooke BSc; **ET** = Emma Thorton MBiol.

Automated Detector Surveys

Night-time bat walkover surveys were supplemented with the use of static automated detectors to increase survey effort.

This involved the deployment of two static detectors (Titley Scientific Anabat Express/Swift/Chorus or Wildlife Acoustics Song Meter SM2/Song Meter Mini), in boundary hedgerows. Locations were chosen through a “judgmental” strategy, considering features of greatest interest and those most likely to be impacted by proposals. Detectors were positioned on the leeward side of hedges and habitats, facing into the field, to avoid noise from wind and vegetation. Statics were deployed for a minimum of fifty nights over the season with at least one working week in each month between April and October, with two working weeks in May and July. These surveys were conducted on the following dates:

-  16th April 2025
-  12th May 2025
-  22nd May 2025
-  12th June 2025
-  1st July 2025
-  10th July 2025
-  2nd September 2025
-  1st October 2025

Previously, two months in 2023 (September and October) were surveyed.

Bat Data Analysis

Recordings from NBW surveys were analysed through Wildlife Acoustics Kaleidoscope Pro software and processed through Microsoft Excel and QGIS to produce a point map showing locations at which bat passes were recorded. The map was annotated to provide qualitative information about bat use of the Site, including key foraging areas and commuting routes.

The latest version of Wildlife Acoustics Kaleidoscope Pro software was used for processing and analysing static bat data. The confidence settings used were “liberal (this will produce more identifications but have more false positives)” with an audit of all recordings, including “noise” files. Batches of noise files and pipistrelle calls were checked depending upon their characteristics which are grouped by a range of variables including background noise and strength of calls. Myotis, long-eared and Nyctalus species were identified to genus level. NB: Where Myotis species could not be identified beyond genus level, it is possible that the Annex II species Bechstein’s bat* may be foraging and commuting across the Site, and this is taken into account in the mitigation recommendations. All bat calls other than common, soprano pipistrelle and Nyctalus species were verified manually in full, with at least 10% of calls checked again to confirm verification. A three-stage quality assurance process was undertaken, focusing on cryptic species.

Data from the automated surveys was then analysed and presented, using R Statistical Software (R Core Team 2021). A bat pass is defined as a sequence of echolocation calls separated from another call by a minimum of 2 seconds. Bat passes per hour for each species was calculated (bat pass/night length), allowing comparison between different seasons and locations on Site. The time of calls relative to sunset/sunrise was also calculated, using the ‘bioRad’ R package, and considered in relation to accepted emergence times for each species (Andrews and Peason 2022).

**It is extremely difficult to separate Annex II Bechstein’s bat calls from those of other Myotis species, and auto-ID software is not currently reliable for this purpose. It is, therefore, assumed that Bechstein’s bats are using sites where there is suitable habitat both on-site and in the surrounding area, and particularly within the range of known Bechstein’s bat roosts.*

Results

27 records of bat roosts were provided by WSBRC from the last ten years within 2km of the Site, a summary of the species and their legal/ conservation status is provided in **Table 5.2** below.

Table 5.2: Summary of bat roost records within 2km of Site (provided by WSBRC)

Species	Status/ Distribution in South-west England & South Wales ¹	Record Summary
Serotine	EPS. Rare but widespread.	Droppings identified
Bechstein's bat	EPS, Annex II, SPI. Very rare.	Three records, with the closest roost being c. 1km north for an individual bat.
Natterer's bat	Widespread in many geographies, but not as abundant in all	One record of an individual roosting bat c. 1km northeast of the Site.
Common pipistrelle	EPS. Widely distributed.	Three records, with the closest being c. 0.7km west of the Site where two bats were recorded roosting.
Soprano pipistrelle	EPS, SPI. Widely distributed.	One record c. 1.7km west of the Site where two bats were recorded roosting.
Brown long eared	EPS, SPI. Widely distributed.	Two records, with the closest roost being c. 0.7km east of the Site.
Greater horseshoe bat	EPS, Annex II, SPI. Very rare.	Two records with the closest being 1.8km west of the Site where 2 bats were recorded.
Lesser horseshoe bat	EPS, Annex II, SPI. Rare, with a restricted distribution.	Seven records with the closest being c. 0.7km northwest of the Site.

EPS = European Protected Species; **Annex II** = species listed in the Habitat Directives Annex II; **SPI** = Species of Principal Importance under S41 of NERC Act 2006.

Magic Map provided a single record of an EPS bat license within 2km of the Site for common and soprano pipistrelle, serotine and brown long eared.

Night-time Bat Walkover Survey Results

During the NBW surveys, common pipistrelle was the most frequently recorded species, followed by noctule. Serotine was recorded on Site in low numbers and no Annex II species were recorded across any of seasonal NBW surveys. (**Table 5.3**).

Table 5.3: Summary of total bat passes recorded during NBW surveys

Survey Month	PIPIPI	NYCSPP	EPTSER	PYGPPI	MYOSPP	RHIHIP	RHIFER	Grand Total
April	40	3	0	0	0	0	0	43
May	71	0	0	1	3	14	1	90
May	89	2	5	2	3	0	0	101

¹ Status/distribution according to the UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray, 2023).

June	59	12	147	1	6	0	0	225
July	180	17	18	15	0	1	0	231
September	129	7	0	1	0	0	1	138
October	37	0	0	1	0	0	0	38
Grand Total	662	41	180	28	14	15	2	931

PIPPIP = common pipistrelle; **PYGPIP** = soprano Pipistrelle; **MYOSPP** = Myotis species; **RHIHIP** = Lesser Horseshoe; **RHIFER** = Greater Horseshoe; **NYCSPP** = *Nyctalus* species; **EPTSER** = Serotine.

Bat activity was observed along each Site boundaries (see **Figure 4**). Pipistrelle activity was mostly recorded on the eastern boundaries. The southeastern hedgerow boundary separates the Site from a neighbouring field. Whereas the northern-eastern most hedgerow with trees boundary borders a residential garden. Both boundaries are poorly lit and may be acting as dark corridors for commuting and foraging bats.

During the Autumn 2023 survey, surveyors observed occasional passes from common pipistrelle and a single commuting noctule. Similarly, during the following three surveys, activity was mostly from common pipistrelle and with occasional pass from *Nyctalus* species. The fifth activity survey was conducted in May 2025 during which, surveyors observed consistent and regular passings from serotine bats. Serotine activity focussed on the northern boundary, adjacent Blind Lane.

Automated Detector Survey

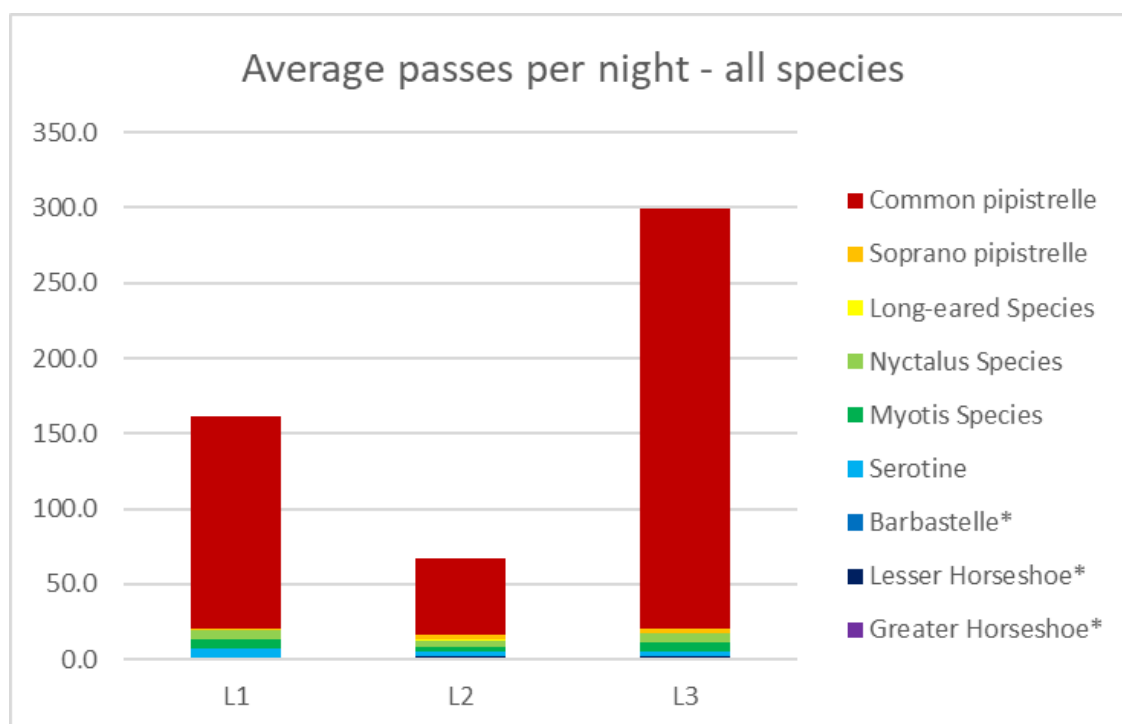
During the automated detector surveys, statics were placed at the following locations (illustrated in **Figure 3**):

-  Location 1 – Halfway along the northern boundary adjacent Blind Lane.
-  Location 2 – Along the southwest hedgerow facing northeast into the Site.
-  Location 3 – On the southeastern hedgerow, facing north.

Graph 1 below illustrates the relative abundance of bats during the survey period. Location 3 supported the highest number of bats passes per night overall and recorded the most passes from Annex II species and those considered to be more light-averse.

Common pipistrelle was the most frequently recorded bat species (89.04% of recorded bat passes per night; 21,148 passes across all surveys). Soprano pipistrelles were recorded in low numbers at all Locations (1.31%; 312 passes). Common pipistrelle showed greatest affinity to Location 3, with significantly lower passes at the other static locations. Whereas soprano pipistrelle showed a similar affinity for both Location 2 and 3.

Graph 1: Average bat passes per night during the automated detector survey period

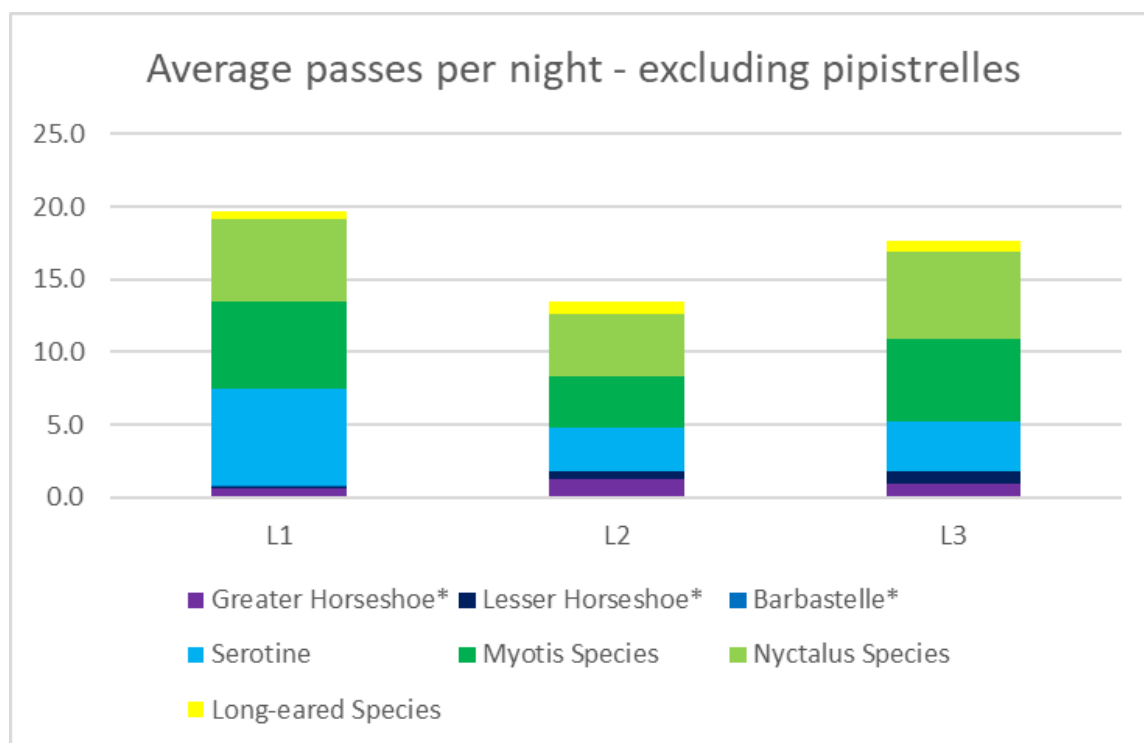


Graph 2 below excludes pipistrelles for a clearer picture of activity for other species.

Nyctalus species were also frequently recorded on Site (3.03%; 720 passes). However, it should be noted that due to the strength of noctule calls, this species can be detected from >100m and they also commute and forage over open habitat; therefore, it indicates that these bats are using this general area of the Site, not necessarily the hedgerows themselves.

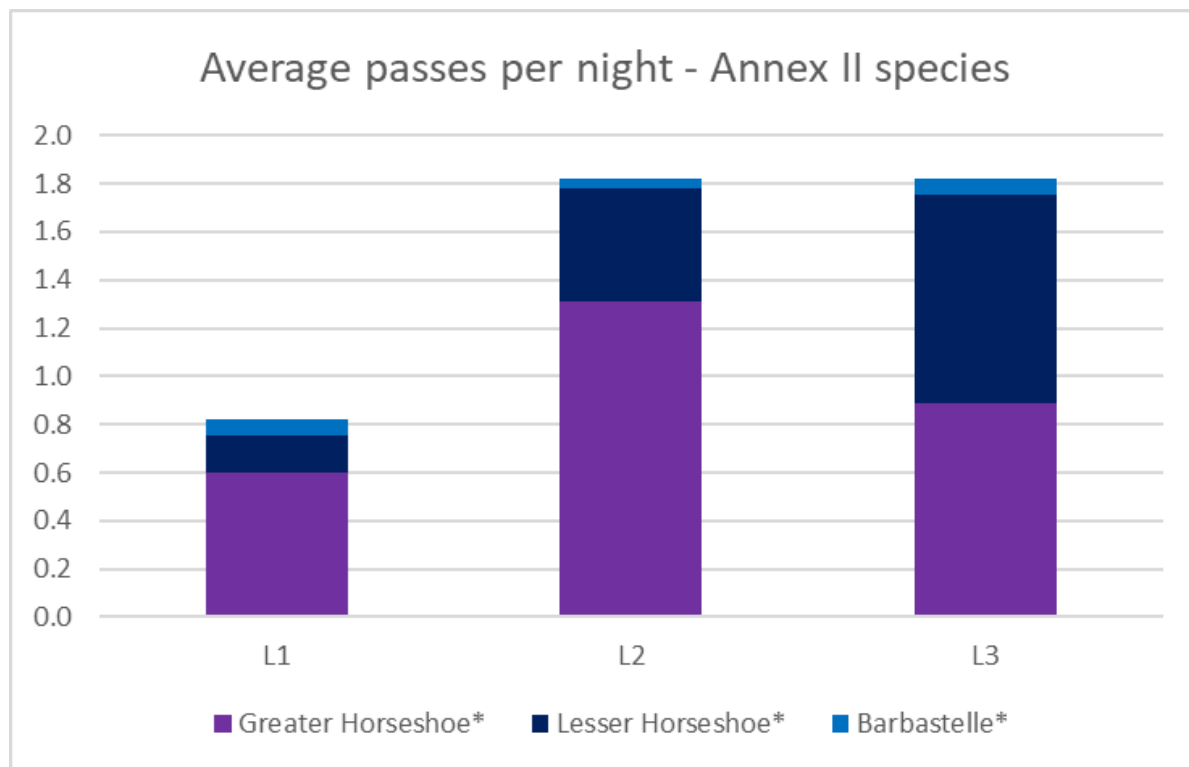
Serotine were recorded across the Site (2.48%; 590 passes). *Myotis* species (2.86%; 679 passes), which are considered to be more light averse, were recorded at all locations. Long-eared bats (0.40%, 95 passes) were also recorded at all locations. Each of these species had greatest affinity to a different Location. *Myotis* passes were most frequent at Location 1, long-eared at Location 2 and serotine at Location 1.

Graph 2: Average bat passes per night during the automated detector survey period, excluding pipistrelles and *Nyctalus* species



Graph 3 illustrates the abundance of Annex II species only. Barbastelle, lesser and greater horseshoes were recorded on Site, but in relatively low numbers. Barbastelle (0.03%; 8 passes) were recorded at all detector locations but in very low numbers. Similarly, greater horseshoe (0.53%; 126 passes) were also recorded at all Locations and more frequently. Lesser Horseshoe (0.28%; 67 passes) were also recorded throughout the Site. Location 2 and 3 showed the highest levels of activity from Annex II species. Barbastelle bats showed no particular affinity with a specific location due to the low number of passes recorded over the surveys. Greater horseshoe bats showed the highest affinity to Location 2 and lesser horseshoe passes were recorded the most frequently at Location 3. This showed that the peak activity was recorded along the southern and eastern boundary.

Graph 3: Average bat passes per night during the automated detector survey period, for Annex II species



Summary

Overall highest bat activity was recorded on the southeastern boundary furthest from Blind Lane (Location 3), with most passes from widespread species such as common pipistrelle and noctule. Location 1 had the highest levels of activity from light-averse *Myotis* species and lesser horseshoe. In total, Location 3 accounted for 56.71% of bat activity across all surveys.

Location 1 has the greatest number of passes from serotine species. During activity surveys, surveyors observed multiple serotines foraging along the northern hedgerow adjacent Blind Lane. Key foraging areas were identified along the eastern and southeastern boundaries based on surveyor observations during the activity surveys.

Appendix 6 – Breeding Bird Survey

Methods

A breeding bird survey was undertaken in Spring 2025 following methods adapted from the Bird Survey & Assessment Steering Group's guidance (2023). This consists of five dawn visits and a single dusk visit between late March and early July, consisting of a walked transect route encompassing the entire Site, starting within 30 minutes of sunrise in suitable weather conditions (avoiding cold, windy and wet days, although showery days make acceptable survey weather). Survey dates and weather conditions are summarised in **Table 6.1**.

Table 6.1: Dates, times and weather conditions for breeding bird survey

Visit	Date	Surveyor	Time	Weather
1	25/03/25	CB	06:30-07:30	No rain, 4°C, 3-4 Oktas CC, Beaufort 1, 2km+ visibility
2	15/04/25	CB	06:30-08:00	No rain, 7 °C, 8 Oktas CC, Beaufort 1, 2km+ visibility
3	27/04/25	CB	06:00-07:30	No rain, 3-4 °C, 2-4 Oktas CC, Beaufort 0, 2km+ visibility
4	19/05/25	CB	05:30-07:00	No rain, 7-8 °C, 8 Oktas CC, Beaufort 1-2, 2km+ visibility
5	20/06/25	CB	21:00-22:30	No rain, 23 °C, 3-4 Oktas CC, Beaufort 1-2, 2km+ visibility
6	01/07/25	CB	04:57-05:20	No rain, 17-19 °C, 6-7 Oktas CC, Beaufort 0, 1km+ visibility

CB = Craig Brakes BSc MSc PhD.

Notable bird species were recorded during the breeding bird survey, including WCA 1981 Schedule 1 species, birds listed on the UK Red-list of Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BoCC; Stanbury *et al.*, 2021), species listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and Local BAP species. During the survey, information on species, their locations and behaviour was mapped and recorded.

Results

A total of 23 species were recorded during the breeding bird survey of the Site. Of these, 9 were notable species (at least Amber-listed BoCC 5, SPI, Local BAP or Sch1 WCA). Results of notable species are detailed in **Table 6.2** and a full species list is provided in **Table 6.3**.

All of the notable species recorded as possible, probable and confirmed breeders within the Site were recorded in association with the vegetation around the perimeter of the field. Most records of SPI birds were from along the field boundary adjacent to Blind Lane.

There were no ground nesting species recorded on the Site.

Dunnock and wren are all considered to be **Probable** breeders on Site. Males were recorded singing on corresponding location across at least two surveys, indicating permanent territories. House sparrow, greenfinch, starling, and woodpigeon are all considered to be **Possible** breeders on Site.

In addition, two jackdaw nests were observed on trees along the western hedgerows adjacent to Wesley Lane.

The diversity and abundance of recorded breeding birds is typical of the habitats described. **Figure 5** illustrates the areas of the Site used by each notable species during the breeding season.

Table 6.2: Breeding bird survey results – notable species

Species and Status				Number of birds							
Species	Scientific Name	Conservation Status	Breeding Status	25/03 /25	15/04 /25	27/04 /25	19/05 /25	20/06 /25	01/07 /25	Peak Count	Recorded within Site Boundary
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Amber, S41	Probable	4	1	0	3	2	1	4	✓
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	Red	Possible	0	0	1	2	0	0	2	✓
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Red, S41, WBAP	Possible	10	20	7	14	8	8	20	✓
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Amber	Non-breeding	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	✓
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	Amber	Non-breeding	26	0	22	0	0	0	26	✓
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Red, S41, WBAP	Possible	4	20	3	3	8	15	20	✓
Wood-pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	Amber	Possible	2	5	7	0	1	24	24	✓
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Amber	Probable	1	0	5	4	1	2	5	✓
Lesser black-backed gull	Larus fuscus	Amber	Non-breeding	0	2	0	0	0	0	2	

Red = Red listed Bird of Conservation Concern 5 (BoCC5) (Stanbury et al., 2021); **S41** = Species of Principal Importance under S41 of NERC Act 2006; **Amber** = Amber listed BoCC5; **WBAP** = Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan species

Table 6.3: Breeding bird survey results – complete species list

Common Name	Scientific Name
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>
Lesser black-backed gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Pied wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>

Appendix 7 – Dormouse Survey

Methods

A dormouse tube survey was undertaken in accordance with The Dormouse Conservation Handbook (Bright *et al.*, 2006). 50 tubes were deployed on 16 April 2025 by Eliane Bornoff BSc at approximately 20m intervals. Tubes were checked on 10th July, 2nd September and 1st October 2025 by Ben Steen BSc, Nick Cooke BSc and Emma Thornton MBiol.

A survey must score a minimum probability score of 20 to provide sufficient survey effort to determine presence/likely absence of the species on a given site (based on 50 tubes). **Table 7.1** details the months in which tubes were in-situ and the probability score.

Table 7.1: Index of probability of finding dormice present (based on best practice guidelines) and months nest tubes were present

Month	Index of Probability (Bright <i>et al.</i> , 2006) for 50 tubes	Probability Score for Site
April	1	0
May	4	4
June	2	2
July	2	2
August	5	5
September	7	7
October	2	0
November	2	0
TOTAL SCORE		20

Results

No evidence of dormouse was recorded during nest tube surveys (locations shown on **Figure 6**) and as such this species is considered absent from the Site.

Appendix 8 – Riparian Mammal Survey

Methods

Riparian mammal surveys were undertaken on 08 May 2025 and 01 October 2025 by Anna Galvin BSc MSc, Ella Bond BSc and Cameron Hard BSc. The survey involved a walkover of the watercourse and a survey of both river banks where accessible for a length of approximately 280m up- and downstream of the Site.

Physical characteristics of the watercourse were recorded such as aspect, slope and substrate, along with any evidence of recent and ongoing management. A detailed search was made along the river following current best practice methodologies (NatureScot, 2024 (beaver), National Rivers Authority, 2001, Highways Agency, 1999 (otter) and Dean *et al.*, 2016 (water vole)) for evidence of:

- 🦫 Beaver, including dams, burrows, lodges, feeding signs, food caches and slides;
- 🦫 Otter, including footprints, spraints, holts, runs, slides and feeding remains;
- 🦫 Water vole, including burrows, droppings, footprints and feeding remains;
- 🦫 American mink, including footprints and droppings.

The survey included each river bank, emergent fringe vegetation and overhanging trees/ exposed tree roots close to the water surface. Due to the arable nature of the survey area, no search was made for evidence beyond the vegetated areas of river bank (generally no more than 2m from the waters edge). During the survey, the main habitat type of each section of bank was recorded, and the locations of any evidence marked on a map.

Results

Habitat Description

The watercourse comprised a shallow, slow flowing stream which was dry in places with steep (vertical), well vegetated banks. The substrate was recorded to comprise silt. The banks were dominated by grassland along with frequent ruderal vegetation and a hedgerow on the eastern bank.

Summary of Results

During the survey no evidence of beaver, otter or water vole was recorded. The watercourse provided suitable commuting opportunities for otter but was considered to be of negligible foraging potential, lacking suitable flow and substrate to support fish. The watercourse provided suitable habitat for water vole but no evidence was found.

Appendix 9 – Tree Assessment for Bats

Methods

Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA)

The trees on Site were subject to a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) by Vicki Hawkins BSc during the initial walkover survey for their bat roost potential in accordance with best practice methodology published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023).

Trees were inspected from ground-level with the aid of binoculars and a high-powered torch for Potential Roost Features (PRFs) such as rot holes, hazard beams, cracks or splits, woodpecker holes, knot holes, man-made holes, cankers, gaps between overlapping stems/ branches, loose bark, dense ivy, epicormic growth and bat, bird or dormouse boxes. Signs indicating possible use by bats were also recorded such as bat droppings, odour, scratches, staining and audible sounds. Information collected about PRF's included a description, the height of the feature above ground level and the orientation of the feature in relation to the trunk.

Trees were then prescribed a category based on their potential to support roosting bats as detailed in **Table 8**. Locations are shown in **Figure 7**.

Table 8: Assessment of Tree Bat Roost Potential from Ground Level (adapted Collins, 2023)

Suitability	Description of bat roosting potential
None	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required (FAR) to establish if PRFs are present in the tree.
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats. Estimate only during GLTA.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony. Estimate only during GLTA.

Results

Several trees were identified as having bat roost potential as detailed in **Table 9**. Tree locations and their categories are shown on **Figure 7**.



Table 9: Summary of tree assessment results

Tree ref.	Species	Potential Roost Features (PRF)	Tree category (Collins, 2023)	Photograph
T3	Oak sp. <i>Quercus</i> <i>sp.</i>	Lots of deadwood	PRF-M	



Tree ref.	Species	Potential Roost Features (PRF)	Tree category (Collins, 2023)	Photograph
T7	Oak sp. <i>Quercus</i> <i>sp.</i>	Some deadwood present.	PRF-M	



Tree ref.	Species	Potential Roost Features (PRF)	Tree category (Collins, 2023)	Photograph
T11	Oak sp. <i>Quercus</i> <i>sp.</i>	Minor deadwood.	PRF-M	



Tree ref.	Species	Potential Roost Features (PRF)	Tree category (Collins, 2023)	Photograph
T18*	Oak sp. <i>Quercus sp.</i>	Deadwood, split bark and knot holes. *T18 was felled in November 2025 by the landowner due to health and safety concerns due to overhead cables in close proximity. 3no. tree mounted bat boxes have been proposed for mitigation of this loss. See Figure 2.	PRF-M	 A photograph of tree T18, an oak species. The image shows a close-up of the tree's trunk and branches, which are heavily covered in deadwood, split bark, and knot holes. The tree is set against a clear blue sky.
T20	Oak sp. <i>Quercus sp.</i>	Major deadwood present.	PRF-M	 A photograph of tree T20, an oak species. The image shows a large, mature tree with a thick trunk and a dense canopy of green leaves. The tree is set against a clear blue sky.



Tree ref.	Species	Potential Roost Features (PRF)	Tree category (Collins, 2023)	Photograph
T21	Oak sp. <i>Quercus</i> <i>sp.</i>	Some cracks in deadwood.	PRF-M	

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