



Potterne Wick, Devizes, SN10 5QW. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)

DOCUMENT PRODUCTION RECORD	
SURVEYOR AND AUTHOR COMPETENCY SUMMARY:	The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken by Evie Rice MSci (Hons), a Qualifying member of CIEEM. Evie has four years' experience undertaking a range of ecological surveys, including UK Habitat Classification surveys and nesting bird surveys, and 4 seasons of bat activity survey experience.
REVIEWER COMPETENCY SUMMARY:	The results have been reviewed and assessed by James Mansfield BA (Hons), a Full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). James has over eight years' experience undertaking ecological surveys and is a holder of a Class 2 (CL18) survey licence for bats (ref: 2025-85618-CL18-BAT); (CL29) for barn owls (ref: 2026-88254-CL29-OWL); and a Bat (Possession) Licence holder (ref: 2020-47163-SCI-SCI). James is also the former Principal (County) Ecologist for Somerset Council.
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Non-technical Executive Summary

Background and Proposals

In August 2026, BN Ecology was commissioned by PKA Architects Ltd. (hereon referred to as 'the client') to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to support a planning application for the development of an office space on land at Potterne Wick, Devizes, SN10 5QW. The key objective of this Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was to record and highlight key habitats onsite and assess the potential the Site has to support or bolster the ecological network for protected species & species of conservation concern. Where necessary, any material ecological considerations for the Site have been noted, and in turn support the results and recommendations.

Ecology Survey Methods & Surveyor Competencies

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken in accordance with Codes of Practice as set out in the UK Habitats classification system¹; the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management²; the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines for Bat Surveys³; and the BS 42020:2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development* (BSI 2013).

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was performed by Evie Rice. All findings are supported by a desk study. Results of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal are illustrated in a habitat map (Appendix 2), which represents habitat types (outlined as target notes ('TN')) and identifies locations of evidence or potential for protected species and species of conservation concern on Site. Photos of the site are also provided (Appendix 1). These support the results and recommendations outlined in this report.

Results

The Site comprises of

- g4 – Modified Grassland
- u1f 81 – Sparsely Vegetated Land, Ruderal/Ephemeral
- u1b5 – Developed Land; Sealed Surface
- 32 – Individual Trees
- h2a – Native Hedgerow
- h2a 191, Native Hedgerow Associated With A Ditch

The proposed development site does not sit within or adjacent to any priority habitat listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

The development is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements, as the development redline boundary falls below the 0.2 ha threshold and no priority habitats will be impacted.

¹ UK Habitat Classification, Habitat Definitions, Version 2.0, 2023.

² Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*, Second Edition: Ampfield, Romsey. Issued December 2017.

³ BCT (2023): Collins, J. (ed.) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Consideration has been given to the following protected species or notable features:

- Above ground nesting birds
- Foraging and commuting habitats for bats
- Terrestrial badger activity
- The habitat suitability for amphibians during terrestrial phases
- Hedgerow suitability for hazel dormouse
- The habitat suitability for reptiles during terrestrial phases
- Terrestrial habitat potential for hedgehog
- Terrestrial habitat potential for brown hare
- Terrestrial and riparian habitat suitability for otter and water vole
- Root Protection Zones for retained trees and hedgerows

Recommendations

The recommendations outlined in this report briefly comprise of:

- Mitigation measures for:
 - Amphibians
 - Bats
 - Badgers
 - Nesting birds
 - Reptiles
 - Hedgehogs
 - Brown hare
 - Protection of retained habitats
 - On-site enhancements

The report also recommends that a sensitive lighting scheme for bats is designed (if any artificial lighting is required to facilitate the proposals) to ensure the boundary features are not subject to excessive artificial light spill.

No further survey effort is recommended, subject to the recommendations delineated in this report being secured. It is considered that the recommendations can be secured by way of planning obligations, such as conditions.

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1. Introduction, Background and Project Details

- 1.1. This report has been compiled to support a proposal comprising the development of an office space on land at Potterne Wick, Devizes, SN10 5QPW, delineated as the 'redline boundary', totalling 0.1508 ha. The grid reference for the redline boundary site is SU00195787.
- 1.2. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out by BN Ecology to assess the ecological baseline of the site, and where necessary, determine if further Phase II species specific surveys are required.
- 1.3. This report demonstrates and confirms that there are no significant ecological constraints beyond the implementation of avoidance, mitigation and minor compensatory measures, as outlined in section six of this report, in relation to nesting birds; foraging and commuting bats; amphibians and reptiles during terrestrial cycles; hedgehogs and badgers during terrestrial cycles; and protection protocols for hedgerow.

Table 1. – Site Specific Information	
Category	Site Specific Information
Site Name	Potterne Wick
Site Location	Pottern Wick, Devizes, SN10 5QW
Local Authority	
Overall Site Area (Redline)	0.1508 ha
Existing Land Use (Redline)	Agricultural
Proposed Land Use (Redline)	Commercial

2. Report Objectives

2.1 – The Objectives Set Out in this Report
- To establish the baseline ecological conditions within the redline boundary and future changes resultant from the proposed development. - To consider significant impacts resultant from the proposed development and identify any ecological considerations and constraints that will inform the proposals design and working methods during the construction phase. - To assess if development is likely to be in accordance with wildlife legislation. - HRA Screening (only if within a Consultation/Impact Risk Zone). - To identify the need for further species specific (commonly referred to as Phase Two) surveys if needed. - To establish enhancements in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (excluding mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain as instilled by the Environment Act 2021, which is addressed in a separate report).

3. Methodology

3.1 Desk Study Assessment

A desk study was performed in September 2026 to inform of local records, some or all information which may be relevant to the proposal. Online resources (in this instance, the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)⁴ website) were used as part of this exercise, and included the following:

- Information pertaining to Statutory Site Designations within 2km of the Site, and within 5km for designations relating to bats.
- Information pertaining to European Protected species licences that have been issued within 2km of the Site.
- Any notable Priority Habitats listed under the Priority Habitats inventory onsite or close to the Site.
- Information relating to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), including any associated features that may be within the Site boundary, or within an Impact Risk Zone.
- Any other relevant faunal, floral or geological information.

Google Maps⁵ was also used to view satellite images of the Site from an aerial and street view context.

Not all of the below abbreviations are necessarily used within this report. However, for thoroughness, common abbreviation used in such reports include:

- SAC = Special Areas of Conservation
- SPA = Special Protection Area
- SSSI = Site of Special Scientific Interest
- NNR = National Nature Reserve
- LNR = Local Nature Reserve
- AONB = Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- SNCI = Site of Nature Conservation Importance
- ASNW = Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland
- RAWs = Restored Ancient Woodland Site
- PAWS = Plantation of Ancient Woodland Site
- NE = Natural England
- WSBRC = Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre.

PLEASE NOTE: As part of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, the client did not commission local records to be obtained by Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre.

Aerial images and Ordnance Survey maps were utilised to characterise the wider landscape. Off-site features and habitats were examined and assessed in relation to the ecological value they contribute to existing ecological networks that are tangibly associated with the site.

⁴ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

⁵ <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@52.8382004,-2.3278149,6z>

Ancient woodland has been defined as non-statutory designated sites for the purposes of this report. Such habitats are defined as 'irreplaceable' and receive strong protection through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). More recently, their protection is further strengthened in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 as a result of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) policy, specifically associated with Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024.

3.2 Field Survey

Habitats:

A walkover of the Site was undertaken on the 7th of September 2026. The survey nature was an extended UK Habitat Classification Survey, specifically to inform the baseline of the habitats present on-site and their potential to support protected species and species of conservation concern. Any evidence suggestive of protected species being present onsite was noted throughout the course of the survey. The survey was carried out in reference to CIEEM 2017, UK Habitat Classification 2023 and BS 42020:2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development* (BSI 2013).

Habitats on site were assessed to determine whether habitats present are listed under Section 41 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, (2006), Priority Habitats UK's listed within the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2024), habitats of local priority for conservation such as those that pertain to Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), or if there are any qualifying features that may justify further designation such as non-statutory designated site inclusions (SINC/ LWS/ SNCI).

Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provides a list of non-native invasive species, which essentially prohibits the introduction or accidental introduction/spread of these species into the wild in Great Britain. Examples include Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* and giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*. Where observed, such species were noted during the survey.

Protected Species and Species of Conservation Concern:

Species taken into consideration included those listed under;

- Section 41 The NERC Act 2006;
- Species lists such as those of local priority and conservation interest e.g. ones listed within Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP);
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
- Species of Conservation concern (listed as Red, Amber, Near Threatened or Data Deficient or otherwise listed in a Red Data Book if taxonomic group updated assessments have not been undertaken);
- Species listed within the Species Status Project Reviews such as those that have been listed as Nationally Rare or Nationally scarce.

Bats:

The assessment of the suitability of structures (if present) for roosting bats was based on current guidance set out by the Bat Conservation Trust⁶.

The assessment comprised of a Daytime Bat Walkover survey of the Site for its potential to provide roosting features for bats (if appropriate). The focus of attention was to determine if the habitat features onsite form part of foraging and flight-path networks for local bat populations. Photographs were taken of the Site, including the hedgerows and immediate habitat surroundings. Structures (if present) were assessed on a five-point scale (1-5) for their potential as roost sites (where 1 = High potential, 2 = Moderate potential, 3 = Low potential, 4 = Negligible potential, 5 = No potential (Collins et al, 2023)). The assessment was made according to the criteria set out in Table 2. Habitat was also assessed and made according to criteria set out in Table 3.

The survey concentrated on looking for signs and evidence of bat usage as follows:

- Live and/or dead bats,
- Chattering and squeaking sounds (social calls) heard,
- Droppings,
- Feeding remains (e.g. butterfly or moth wings, beetle wing cases),
- Bat-fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases,
- Perch abrasions,
- Characteristic staining from urine,
- Marks from oil secretions.

Table 2 – Roosting potential suitability in reference to presence of roosting and habitat features. (Collins et al, 2023).		
Suitability	Description of roosting habitats	Number of activity survey visits required
None	POINT SCALE: 5 There are no habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year.	None
Negligible	POINT SCALE: 4 There are no noticeable habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	None
Low	POINT SCALE: 3 The structure in question provides one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats, on an opportunistic basis, at any time of the year.	One, in the period May to August
Moderate	POINT SCALE: 2 The structure in question provides one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and	Two, in the period May to September with at least one of the surveys

⁶ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation trust, London; Mitchell-Jones A. and McLeish A. (2004). Bat Workers Manual (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough; ell-Jones A. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

	surrounding habitat, but are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	between May and August
High	POINT SCALE: 1 The structure in question provides one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by possibly significant numbers of bats on a recurring basis and if the conditions are appropriate, potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support roosts of high conservation status.	Three, in the period May to September with at least two of the surveys between May and August
Confirmed	POINT SCALE: 0 Evidence of bats or use by bats found during the Daytime Bat Walkover, usually found during the external or internal inspection.	Minimum of two surveys to characterise the roost in the period May to September with at least one of the surveys between May and August

Table 3 – Summary of guidelines for assessing the suitability of surrounding bat habitat (Collins et al, 2023).

<u>Suitability</u>	<u>Description of commuting and foraging habitats</u>
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year.
Negligible	No key and/or apparent habitat features on site likely to be used as foraging resources or associated flightpaths.
Low	Habitat is generally isolated but may possess a few features that could be used by small numbers of bats such as flightpaths e.g. gappy hedgerow.
Moderate	The concerned habitat is continuous and usually connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flightpaths such as treelines, well developed scrub or linked back gardens.
High	The concerned habitat is usually high-quality habitat that is well-connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flightpaths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.

If appropriate, a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) for tree's was also undertaken if trees with potential suitability were identified onsite. The purpose of this is to ascertain and locate

Potential Roosting Features (PRF) on the exterior of the trees (for example, woodpecker holes). The criteria applied to this assessment is outlined as follows:

- PRF – I: PRF(s) only suitable for individual bats or a very small number of bats either due to their size or a lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
- PRF – M: PRF(s) suitable for multiple bats and could be used by a maternity colony.

An assessment was also undertaken to classify the surrounding habitats suitability for commuting, foraging and roosting bats. This survey was in direct reference to methods recommended in the Bat Conservation Trust Survey Guidelines, 2023⁷.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Birds:

All bird observations and calls were noted during the survey. Features that could be utilised by nesting birds were also noted and potential suitability for Schedule 1 listed birds, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), were assessed.

Dormice:

Dormice are small, nocturnal mammals which make use of habitats such as hedgerows, scrub and rich mosaics such as woodland complexes. The dormouse requires a good linear network which is well connected with a good range of food sources such as fruit, nuts, flowers (notably petals) or insects. Notable favourite for the species includes hazel, bramble, oak and honeysuckle but they will utilise other species such as hawthorn, hornbeam, blackthorn, sweet chestnut and sycamore in the network's composition.

Great Crested Newts:

Features on-site, and where appropriate off-site, were assessed for their potential to support great crested newt. The Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook (Frog life 2001) and Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 2003) were referred to. Aerial maps and Ordnance survey maps were utilised to determine whether any waterbodies within 500m of the site could be used by the species and thus have relevance to the site boundary in terms of terrestrial supporting habitat.

Reptiles:

Features on-site were assessed for their suitability for reptiles. Features relevant to reptile's ecological lifecycle depending on the time of year were assessed and noted, with

⁷ BCT (2023): Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

⁸ Anon. (2023), *Badger Protection: Best Practice Guidance for Developers, Ecologists and Planners*, Badger Trust, Brighton.

particular consideration given to the Reptile Management Handbook (Edgar, Foster & Baker, 2011) and the Reptile Mitigation Guidelines Technical Note TIN 102 (Natural England, 2013).

Other species:

Other species considerations were noted where appropriate habitat suitability was present or otherwise ruled out where no potential features were found that could be utilised by a species(s).

4. Limitations

4.1 Survey Limitations

The field survey that informs this report is a snapshot of the ecological features and evidence onsite at a specific time of year and is informed by the information obtained during the site visit for a particular period. It cannot be ruled out that important ecological features may be missed due to survey timings, unusual climate events that can disrupt ecological cycles, or the year of the survey. Every effort has been taken to ensure the advice provided within this report is balanced and in depth, but a lack of evidence for protected species does not always mean a likely absence.

Bats are very small animals, capable of accessing small spaces, and it is possible that bats, or their signs, might have been missed during the survey if they are normally present opportunistically or in small numbers for a short period of time each year. Not all features in trees or buildings suitable for use by bats are visible from the ground, and there can be no external evidence of use; consequently, it is only possible to make a best effort when carrying out such a survey.

These limitations have been taken into consideration in the conclusions and recommendations following the assessment.

5. Results

5.1 Desk Study and, Local Policy and The Law

Local Plan Policies & strategies

Wiltshire Core Strategy, adopted in January 2015, is the principle planning framework guiding development across Wiltshire. Within that strategy, **Core Policy 50: Biodiversity & Geodiversity**, sets out how biodiversity and geological interests must be incorporated into planning decisions throughout the country.

Policy CP50: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

All proposals for development, including those affecting national, international or locally protected sites or geological features, will be assessed against the following principles:

	• Retain, buffer and favourably manage ecological and geological features to maintain their functional value, connectivity and integrity over time. • Where retention is not feasible, development must incorporate mitigation and appropriate compensatory measures to ensure no net loss of local biodiversity, maintaining ecological networks and ecosystem services. • Avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive species or habitats through design, phasing, buffers, lighting control, noise mitigation, and other measures. • Proposals affecting European/Natura 2000 sites must either follow the county's strategic guidance (e.g. for bats, rivers, Stone Curlew) or present bespoke avoidance/mitigation measures to demonstrate no adverse effect on the designated site's integrity. • Major developments should include habitat creation, restoration or enhancement to deliver biodiversity gains, aligned with local Biodiversity Action Plans and catchment/river basin objectives. • Local sites (e.g. County Wildlife Sites) should be avoided where possible. Impacts may only proceed in exceptional cases if unavoidable, minimised, justified in the public interest, and properly compensated or managed. • All effects — direct and indirect, cumulative, on- and off-site, over the life of the development — must be considered, including disturbance factors (e.g. recreation, pets, lighting) • Wiltshire Council also supports implementation of Biodiversity Net Gain principles (ensuring measurable gains in biodiversity), consistent with national policy, so that development must aim for at least no net loss and ideally a positive net gain in biodiversity value. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Wiltshire and Swindon provides a strategic framework for nature recovery across Wiltshire and Swindon, identifying priorities and measures intended to reverse biodiversity decline, restore ecological connectivity and improve the resilience of the area's landscapes. The LNRS identifies 24 priorities for nature recovery, comprising nine strategically mapped habitat priorities, nine species priorities and six wider countryside priorities. The strategically mapped habitat priorities are: • Calcareous Grassland • Neutral Grassland • Woodland • Heathland, Acid Bogs and Acid Grassland
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- Mixed Habitats
- Open Mosaic Habitats
- Rivers, Streams and Wetlands
- Chalk Rivers
- Nature on Our Doorstep

The LNRS also identifies nine species priorities, which are:

- Bats
- Farmland Birds
- Great Bustard
- Lapwing and Stone-curlew
- Eurasian Curlew
- Wart-biter Bush-cricket
- Duke of Burgundy Butterfly
- Juniper
- Arable Plants

The mapped habitat priorities identify areas where habitat creation or enhancement can contribute strategically to the local Nature Recovery Network. Where the relevant habitat and proposed intervention correspond with the LNRS mapping and specified measures, this can also inform the assessment of strategic significance within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The species priorities provide complementary objectives for species recovery but do not themselves constitute habitat strategic significance within the Metric.

Wiltshire's Local Biodiversity Action Plan Prioritises the following listed habitat types and networks:

- **Woodland:** This includes ancient woodland and wood-pasture/parkland
- **Arable Farmland:** This focuses on specific needs of arable fields for biodiversity
- **Wet Habitats:** Broadly, this comprises of reedbeds, fen and marsh, and wet grassland
- **Hedgerows:** Hedgerows of varying types are included, with action plans specifically addressing the conservation and management of these
- **Scrub:** Action plans to protect and manage scrub habitats
- **Acid and Calcareous Grassland:** This addresses these particular grassland types

	• Open Water: Broadly, includes lakes, reservoirs, and other water bodies • Field Margins, Churchyards, Gardens: Often overlooked, the plan focuses on these • Lowland Heathland: Action plans are delineated for this specific type of habitat • Other Semi-Natural Habitats: The Plan Recognises the importance of various semi-natural habitats for biodiversity In Wiltshire, Local Priority species are those that have been determined as vulnerable or declining and therefore in need of focused conservation interventions. These include the water vole <i>Arvicola amphibius</i>, hedgehog <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>, common toad <i>Bufo bufo</i>, curlew <i>Numenius Arquata</i>, Duke of Burgundy butterfly <i>Hamearis lucina</i>, and reintroduced Great Bustard <i>Otis tarda</i>. The Wiltshire Wildlife Trust has identified these species as critically important and has developed resources to support their conservation.
Ecological Context	The site is located at Potterne Wick, within the parish of Potterne, approximately 3 km south of Devizes in central Wiltshire. The surrounding landscape is predominantly rural and agricultural, characterised by a mosaic of improved pasture, arable fields, hedgerows, small woodland blocks, and scattered farmsteads. Land use surrounding the site is primarily agricultural, with residential development concentrated within Potterne village and the hamlet of Potterne Wick to the north of the site. The wider countryside retains a largely rural character with relatively low-density settlement and a strong presence of semi-natural boundary habitats where hedgerows, mature trees, woodland edges, and field margins provide important habitat and commuting corridors for birds, bats, small mammals, and invertebrates. The combination of agricultural land and semi-natural habitats contributes to moderate ecological connectivity within the wider landscape. The Site lies along Stroud Lanes with access gained to the north and is delineated to the east, south, and west by arable fields. Several residential dwellings are located along the road, comprising of generous landholdings, giving the immediate area a definite rural feel.
Statutory & Non-statutory Designated Sites	The desk study revealed that the Site does not sit within any Statutory Designated Sites and one lies within 2km, namely Stert Brook Exposure SSSI.

Stert Brook Exposure SSSI – 1.37 km west of the site.

The Site is designated for the following Geological Interests:

Description and Reasons for Notification:

This locality shows the most complete section in the Vale of Pewsey of the Portland Beds, of late Jurassic age. The section extends from basal glauconitic micrites (identical to those of the Swindon area), through the lime mudstones and ooid grainstones (similar to those on the Vale of Wardour), all overlain by Lower Greensand. This section shows a unique combination of north Wiltshire/Oxfordshire and south Wiltshire rock-types, parts of the succession having a prolific molluscan fauna. This is an important site in the analysis of facies and ancient environments represented in the late Jurassic marine rocks of the Wessex Basin.

The desk study revealed that the Site does not sit within any Non-Statutory Designated Sites and one lies within 2km, namely **Drews Pond Wood LNR** which 1.75km north of the site. Habitats include woodland, meadows and a burial ground. The site was managed as coppice with standard before being left derelict for forty to fifty years. It has been returned to coppice management since 1990. There are 29 Ancient Woodland indicator species on site, including field rose, wood sorrel, Solomon's seal etc. As well as a host of bird and mammal species, such as bats (four species), [REDACTED] buzzards and long-eared owls.

The Site is covered by a SSSI Impact Zone pertaining to the above Site. Consultation is required with Natural England if development types fit one or more of the following criterion:

- **Infrastructure:** Pipelines and underground cables, pylons and overhead cables (excluding upgrades and refurbishment of existing network). Any transport proposal including new or extended footways, cycleways, roads/car parks, railways and waterways (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- **Minerals, Oil and Gas:** Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction.
- **Air Pollution:** Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (including: industrial processes, livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 750m² & manure stores > 3500 tonnes).
- **Combustion:** General combustion processes >50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant,

	pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion. • Waste: Landfill. Including: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill. • Water Supply: Large infrastructure such as warehousing/industry where the total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is 1,000m² or more. As the proposals do not meet any of these criterion consultation with Natural England is not expected to be required. Salisbury Plain SPA Mitigation Zone The Site lies in an Impact Zone pertaining to the above site. Site's in the following categories are affected: • Developments in the following categories are affected: • All residential units (namely, C3 Use Class) • Annexes of residential/holiday/guest accommodation • Houses in Multiple Occupation (sui generis) • Residential institutions within the C2 Use Class where the residents are not severely restricted by illness or mobility • Student accommodation • Sites for Gypsy, Roma, Travellers and Travelling Show people • Tourist accommodation, including hotels, self-catering, caravan, and touring holiday accommodation. As the proposals comprise a commercial office, impacts pertaining to the designated site do not need to be considered further. River Avon Species Area of Conservation The principles of nutrient neutrality in Wiltshire are that where a proposal is deemed to be a 'phosphate affected development', it must be demonstrated that the adverse effect on the integrity of the protected site can be ruled out by achieving 'nutrient neutrality' i.e. resulting in there being no net increase in phosphorus from the change of land use and/or discharged foul wastewater effluent from associated overnight accommodation. The nature of the proposals will not provide overnight accommodation, therefore, the development does not have the potential to result in an adverse effect alone or in combination with other developments through the discharge of phosphorus into the surface water and general fluvial catchment.
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	Therefore, further consultation with Natural England is not required. <u>Special Areas of Conservation or Component Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Bats):</u> There are no Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) associated with bats within 5km of the site. The site is not situated within an Impact Risk Zone. Therefore, consultation with Natural England is not considered necessary.
Habitats	<u>The Law</u> There is a list of habitats and species, noted as such by their principal importance in England. This includes 56 habitats and 943 species. These were originally highlighted as priority habitats and species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)⁹. The publication of this list is a legal duty under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) shows that there are no Priority Habitats located on the site. The nearest known Priority Habitat lies approximately 180 metres to the north of the Site which is identified as Deciduous Woodland by National Forest Inventory 2020. Other areas of Priority Habitat found within 2km of the site include; - Wood-pasture and Parkland - Traditional Orchard - Chalk Rivers - Priority Ponds - Good-quality semi-improved grassland Blanket bog, Lowland fens, Limestone pavements, Coastal sand dunes, Ancient woodland, Ancient trees and veteran trees, Spartina saltmarsh swards and Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub are defined as 'irreplaceable' habitats and receive strong protection through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). More recently, their protection is further strengthened by the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) policy, specifically associated with <u>Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024</u>. Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland, Ancient Replanted Woodland and Ancient Wood Pasture lie within 2km of the site.

⁹ <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-bap/>

	The proposals are located far enough away from the Priority and Irreplaceable Habitat to conclude that no impact is foreseen. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Wiltshire and Swindon identifies nine strategically mapped habitat priorities for nature recovery: • Calcareous Grassland • Neutral Grassland • Woodland • Heathland, Acid Bogs and Acid Grassland • Mixed Habitats • Open Mosaic Habitats • Rivers, Streams and Wetlands • Chalk Rivers • Nature on Our Doorstep These priorities identify areas where the creation or enhancement of relevant habitats can make a strategic contribution to the local Nature Recovery Network and, where the relevant LNRS criteria are met, may inform the application of strategic significance within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The Site does not fall within any of the strategically mapped habitat priority areas identified by the LNRS.
Amphibians	<u>The Law</u> Great crested newts, and natterjack toads, are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to: - Deliberately capture, injure or kill a great crested newt or natterjack toad - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a great crested newt or natterjack toad - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a great crested newt or natterjack toad uses for shelter or protection - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place. Species of principle importance in England include great crested newt, pool frog, natterjack toad and common toad. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there is one records confirming the presence of great crested newt within 2km of the

	site. In addition, no European Protected Species Class Survey Licence Returns for the species were identified within 2km. The Site in its entirety lies within an Amber Risk Zone for great crested newt. Amber Zones represent areas where suitable habitat is present and where great crested newt may occur, such that potential effects upon the species should be considered in relation to the proposed development. The Site lies within a Core Great Crested Newt Strategic Opportunity Area. 'Core' Great Crested Newt Strategic Opportunity Area; these are areas that have been strategically identified as locations where the addition of new ponds would significantly benefit the GCN population. A review of OS maps identified four ponds within 500m of the Site, all four lie within 250m of the site. The Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (2001) states that the species can be capable of commuting up to 500m from their ponds during their terrestrial phase; however, these distances for such migration are energetically expensive, very dangerous and only considered necessary where there is a scarcity of habitats within the locality. English Nature (2004) published that most individuals will only travel within 100m of their pond, and few migrated beyond 200m. In addition, there are several intervening barriers comprising predominantly of footpaths, roads and arable land between the ponds and the Site which will likely deter migration to the Site. There are also other ephemeral or flowing ditches within 500m, however, these are not suited to amphibians.
Badgers	<u>The Law</u> Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under this legislation it is an offence to; - Take, injure, or kill a badger - Treat a badger cruelly - Interfere with a badger sett - Possess or control a live badger - Mark or ring a badger - Damage or destroy a badger sett - Obstruct access to a badger sett - Disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett
Bats	<u>The Law</u> All bat species are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and

	Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: - Deliberately capture, injure or kill bats - Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; or under the habitat regulations deliberately disturb in a way that would affect their local distribution or abundance, or affect their ability to survive, breed or rear young - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which bats use for shelter or protection - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place. - Possess, control, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale/exchange any live or dead bat or any part of a bat Bat species of principal importance include: - Greater horseshoe bat - Lesser horseshoe bat - Greater mouse-eared bat - Bechstein's bat - Barbastelle - Common pipistrelle - Soprano pipistrelle <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there has been one European Protected Species licence issued within 2km of the Site, specifically pertaining to bats. The licence for the species was issued approximately 2 km to the east from the Site, for Brown Long-eared, Common Pipistrelle, Serotine, and Soprano Pipistrelle. The licence legally permitted the destruction of a resting place, and expired on 24/09/2024.
Birds	<u>The Law</u> All wild birds are granted legal protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: - Kill, injure or take any wild bird - Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built - Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird Schedule 1 listed bird species under this Act are afforded further protections, making it illegal to disturb these species while

	building a nest, or if a nest contains eggs or young, or disturb dependent young. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that the Site sits within the following Countryside Stewardship targeting areas: - Lapwing are listed on the UK Red list. They are listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which provides special protection for wild birds, their nests, eggs, and young. It's an offence to disturb them during nesting season. Lapwings require arable land, grazed pasture and wet features such as scrapes and flushes which enhance a 'muddier' environment for invertebrates. No such habitats are present on the Site. The Site also sits within a sighting zone for Lapwing. - Lapwing - Stone-curlew are listed on the UK Red list. They are listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which provides special protection for wild birds, their nests, eggs, and young. It's an offence to disturb them during nesting season. This species requires a mixture of arable farmland, grazed grassland as well as dry grassland compositions. These are in close proximity to the Site, but none of these habitats sit within the Site boundary. - Tree sparrow are listed on the UK Red list and receive protection from the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), safeguarding them, including their nests and eggs, from intentional harm or disturbance. The species requires woodland edges and small woods predominantly but will also utilise farmland and extensive hedgerow networks. These are in close proximity to the Site, but none of these habitats sit within the Site boundary. - Bunting are listed on the UK Red List and receive protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), safeguarding wild birds, their nests and eggs from intentional harm or disturbance. The species is strongly associated with open farmland, particularly arable land and mixed farming landscapes, where it requires suitable nesting habitat and seed- and invertebrate-rich foraging areas. Suitable arable habitat occurs in close proximity to the Site; however, no such habitat is present within the Site boundary.
Flora & Invertebrates	<u>The Law – Flora</u>

	Many species of plant are afforded protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to deliberately collect, pick, uproot, cut or destroy these plants. It is also an offence to possess, sell or exchange such a plant. Additionally, many of these species are also listed as species of principal importance. <u>The Law - Invertebrates</u> The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 affords protection to 45 invertebrate species. It is an offence to: - Intentional kill, injure or take such species - Deliberately damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by such species - Disturb such species when occupying a structure or place For eight species of invertebrate, the species and associated habitat(s) are afforded further protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). An additional 21 species benefit from partial protection. Nearly 400 species of invertebrate are included as species of principal importance. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there have been no European Protected Species licences issued within 2km of the Site. The Site does not sit within any priority, targeted or conservation areas pertaining to invertebrates.
Hazel Dormice	<u>The Law</u> Hazel Dormice are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: - Deliberately capture, injure or kill a dormouse - Intentionally or recklessly disturb dormice - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a dormouse uses for shelter or protection - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place

	- Possess, control, transport (alive or dead) Dormice are also listed as a species of principal importance. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there have been no European Protected Species licences issued within 2km of the Site.
Otter	<u>The Law</u> Otters are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: • Kill, injure, or capture an otter • Harass an otter • Disturb an otter while it is caring for its young or in its resting place • Damage or destroy an otter's resting place or breeding site • Obstruct access to an otter's resting place or breeding site • Possess, control, or transport an otter, alive or dead
Reptiles	<u>The Law</u> Smooth snakes and sand lizards are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to: - Deliberately capture, injure or kill a smooth snake or sand lizard - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a smooth snake or sand lizard - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a smooth snake or sand lizard uses for shelter or protection - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place - Advertise sale, barter, exchange, transport for sale and/or advertise to sell or buy a reptile Slow worm, grass snake, adder and common lizard are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) against killing, injury and sale. <u>Findings</u>

	A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there have been no European Protected Species licences issued within 2km of the Site.
Water Vole	<u>The Law</u> Water voles are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to intentionally: - Kill, injure or take them - Possess or control them (alive or dead) - Damage or destroy a structure or place used for shelter or protection - Disturb them in a place used for shelter or protection - Obstruct access to a place used for shelter or protection
Other Notable Species	<u>The Law</u> Other species are identified as species of principal importance in England. Many species are required to be considered under National and often Local Planning Policies. Species of principal importance also include hedgehog and brown hare. Hedgehogs are listed with the following protections and considerations: • Red (IUCN) List mammal species • Have partial protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) • Listed as priority species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 • Hedgehogs are highlighted as a priority species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan • The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 was established in light of dramatic population declines. The legislation afforded to hedgehogs in Act 2016 and National Planning Policy Framework (2024) enforces that public authorities must have due regard when exercising their functions to conserve biodiversity. 'Conserving biodiversity' is defined in relation to a living organism or type of habitat and restoring or enhancing a population or habitat. Brown hare are listed with the following protections and considerations:

	- Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). Their protection under this act is limited during a closed season from February 1st to September 30th. During this period It is illegal to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, or take a brown hare without a license - Brown hare are also a Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. Findings A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that the Site does not sit within any other related protected species zones such as Countryside Stewardship Targeting Areas.
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5.2 Field Survey	
Statutory Designated Sites	No Statutory Designated Sites of such interest are located within or adjacent to the site boundary.
Assessment of Impacts, Statutory & Non-Statutory Designated Sites	All sites as listed within section 5.1 are not foreseen to be subject to any impact owing to the small-scale nature of the proposals as well as their distance from the site and intervening barriers obstructing the ecological connectivity to the site.
Site Description	g4 16 – Grassland – Modified Grassland, 0.0928 ha, TN1 The central and majority portion of the site comprises uniformly managed grassland, with a sward height of approximately 5–10 cm. Species richness is relatively low, averaging approximately four species per m². Grass species include frequent cock's-foot and perennial rye-grass, with Yorkshire-fog occurring rarely. Forbs include frequent ivy-leaved speedwell, with creeping thistle, cow parsley and common nettle occurring rarely. g4 16 – Grassland – Modified Grassland – Tall Forbs, 0.0216 ha, TN2 Along the western site boundary, beneath the canopy of individual trees, is an area of unmanaged grassland characterised by a high proportion of tall forb species. The sward ranges from approximately 10 cm to 1 m in height, providing some structural variation. Species richness averages approximately six species per m². The grass component comprises occasional Yorkshire-fog and cock's-foot, with false oat-grass occurring rarely. The forb assemblage is characterised by abundant creeping thistle, with bramble, ivy-leaved speedwell and round-leaved crane's-bill

occurring rarely. Common nettle, ground-ivy, hogweed and cow parsley are also present.

g4 16 – Grassland – Modified Grassland – Tall Forbs, 0.0144 ha, TN3 | Along the eastern site boundary, beneath the canopy of individual trees, is a narrow strip of unmanaged grassland characterised by a high proportion of tall forb species. The sward ranges from approximately 10 cm to 1 m in height, providing structural variation. Species richness averages approximately five species per m². Species composition includes abundant common nettle, frequent hedge bindweed and ground-ivy, occasional hogweed, and cock's-foot and rare dock, common comfrey, and cleavers.

g4 – Grassland – Modified Grassland, 0.0076 ha, TN4 | Situated between the managed grassland (TN1) and the strip of tall-forb-dominated grassland (TN3) is an area of unmanaged grassland characterised by a relatively tall, uniform sward of approximately 90 cm. The grassland is dominated by cock's-foot, with perennial rye-grass, Yorkshire-fog and creeping bent occurring rarely. The forb component is limited, comprising rare occurrences of a ivy-leaved speedwell, dock and hogweed. Species richness averages approximately four species per m².

g4 – Grassland – Modified Grassland, 0.002 ha, TN5 | To the north of B1 is a small area of unmanaged grassland supporting a relatively tall sward of approximately 80–90 cm. Species richness averages approximately seven species per m². The grass component is characterised by frequent false oat-grass and occasional cock's-foot. Bramble is abundant within the sward, while ivy-leaved speedwell, elder, cleavers, Yorkshire fog, cherry plum, hogweed, dock, and common nettle occur rarely.

g4 – Grassland – Modified Grassland, 0.007 ha, TN6 | In the north-western corner of the site, beneath the canopies of a large crack willow (T26) and a medium-sized cherry plum (T25), is an area of unmanaged grassland with a variable sward height of approximately 50 cm to 1 m. Species richness is low, averaging approximately three species per m². The sward is dominated by abundant cock's-foot, with false oat-grass occurring frequently and dock and hogweed occurring rarely.

u1f 81 – Sparsely Vegetated Land, Ruderal/Ephemeral, 0.0022 ha, TN7 | Immediately east of B3, adjacent to the shed entrance, is an area of sparsely vegetated ground comprising a mixture of bare ground and early successional vegetation. Vegetation cover is approximately 40%. Species richness averages approximately four species per m². The vegetation comprises occasional common nettle, with rare occurrences of dock, ground-ivy, false oat-grass, creeping thistle and hedge bindweed.

u1b5 – Developed Land – Sealed Surface; Building, 0.002 ha, B1 | B1 comprises a simple, single-storey timber storage shed of conventional timber construction, with a monopitched roof clad with corrugated metal sheeting. The building has an open frontage on the southern elevation, with no windows or other external openings. Internally, the building is used for storage and contains a range of gardening and construction materials.

u1b5 – Developed Land – Sealed Surface; Building, 0.0006 ha, B2 | B2 comprises a conventional greenhouse structure formed from glass-panelled walls and roof. Access is provided via a sliding door on the southern elevation. The greenhouse was empty and not in active use at the time of the survey.

u1b5 – Developed Land – Sealed Surface; Building, 0.0006 ha, B3 | B3 comprises a small, single-storey timber shed with timber-panelled walls and a pitched roof clad with roofing felt. Access is provided via a single door on the eastern elevation. Internally, the shed is used for storage and contained a range of construction and gardening materials at the time of the survey.

32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 1 | A multi-stemmed almond willow shrub is present, with each individual stem measuring less than 7.5 cm in diameter at breast height (DBH). As such, the specimen does not meet the size threshold for classification as an individual tree for BNG purposes. However, for the purposes of this PEA only, it has been recorded and assessed as an individual tree.

32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 2 | A Norway spruce in the 'medium' size class.

32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 3 | A group of immature field elm shrubs, each individual stem measuring less than 7.5 cm diameter at breast height (DBH). As such, the specimens do not meet the size threshold for classification as an individual tree for BNG purposes. However, for the purposes of this PEA only, it has been recorded and assessed as an individual tree.

32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 4 | An apple tree in the 'small' size class.

32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 5 | A hawthorn in the 'small' size class.

32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 6 | A European plum in the 'small' size class.

32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 7 | A hawthorn in the 'medium' size class.

	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 8 A silver birch in the 'large' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 9 A hawthorn in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 10 An English oak in the 'large' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 11 A hawthorn in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 12 An apple in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 13 A pear in the 'medium' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, T14 A pear in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 15 A wild cherry in the 'medium' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 16 A fur tree in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 17 A fur tree in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 18 A Norway spruce in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 19 A Norway spruce in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 20 A fur in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 21 A fur in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 22 A dead tree in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 23 A blackthorn in the 'small' size class.
	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 24 A hawthorn in the 'small' size class.

	32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 25 A pear in the 'small' size class. 32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 26 A cherry plum in the 'medium' size class. 32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 27 A crack willow in the 'very large' size class. 32 – Individual Tree – Rural Tree, 28 A rowan tree in the 'small' size class. H2a, Native Hedgerow , 0.0211 km, H1 H1 extends along the northern Site boundary and comprises a relatively dense hedgerow, averaging approximately 2 m in height and 1.5 m in width. The woody component is dominated by elder, with hawthorn and goat willow occurring occasionally and box-leaved honeysuckle occurring rarely. The understory comprises abundant ivy and bramble. H2a 191, Native Hedgerow Associated With A Ditch, 0.0585 km, H2 H2 extends along the western Site boundary and is associated with an adjacent ditch. The hedgerow measures approximately 1.5 m in height and 0.5 m in width and is dominated by hawthorn, with field elm occurring rarely. The understory is characterised by abundant ivy and frequent bramble, with hogweed occurring rarely.
Assessment of Impacts, Habitats	The desk study revealed that there are no habitats listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 present on-site. Moreover, no habitats that are defined as 'irreplaceable' sit within or adjacent to the Site. The predominant habitat on-site is modified grassland, which is of 'low' distinctiveness when considered in terms of the Statutory Metrics habitat definitions. Distinctiveness is defined in the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, July 2026) as a measure based on the type of habitat and its distinguishing features, which considers species richness, extent of habitat and its protected designations, and the degree in which the habitat supports species rarely found in other habitats. Any losses associated with this habitat can be readily re-created/compensated. The principal habitat value of the Site is associated with its hedgerow network and individual trees. The two hedgerows and 28 individual trees provide greater structural and botanical diversity than the predominantly modified grassland habitats elsewhere within the Site. Collectively, these features provide

ecological connectivity between habitats within the Site and with the wider landscape.

The two hedgerows differ in their structure and condition. H1 supports a comparatively dense and continuous structure, providing a well-defined linear habitat feature. H2 is associated with a ditch, which increases its structural complexity and provides additional habitat variation; however, the hedgerow itself is comparatively sparse and gappy. Despite this, H2 remains an established linear feature and contributes to the overall habitat connectivity and structural diversity of the Site.

The individual trees provide further habitat structure and ecological value, particularly given their concentration along the Site boundaries. In combination with the hedgerows, these trees strengthen the network of boundary vegetation and provide additional continuity between habitat features. Their distribution therefore contributes to the function of the Site as part of the wider ecological network, while also providing locally valuable areas of shelter, foraging habitat and potential movement corridors for wildlife.

Notwithstanding their ecological value, none of the hedgerows were assessed as meeting the criteria for an 'Important Hedgerow' under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. The Regulations provide the statutory mechanism for identifying and protecting qualifying important hedgerows.

The proposed development will result in the loss of much of the existing modified grassland to facilitate the development of the office, access, parking and other infrastructure. Given the low distinctiveness, species-poor character and limited botanical value of this habitat, its loss is not considered likely to result in a significant adverse ecological effect.

No hedgerow removal is anticipated as part of the proposed development. However, some tree removal will be necessary to facilitate the proposals. This includes T1, a multi-stemmed willow shrub; T4, an apple tree; T6, a plum tree; and T28, a rowan tree. None of the trees proposed for removal are considered mature specimens, and their loss is therefore unlikely to result in a significant adverse effect on the overall intrinsic habitat resource of the site.

The loss of these trees can be adequately compensated for through appropriate replacement planting as part of the proposed landscaping scheme. Replacement planting should comprise native tree and shrub species of local value, where appropriate, and should seek to provide an overall enhancement in the diversity, structure and ecological value of woody habitats across the site. Retention and appropriate

	management of the remaining trees and hedgerows will further minimise potential impacts on existing habitats. All retained hedgerows and trees should be appropriately protected throughout the construction period. Where works are undertaken in proximity to retained trees, an appropriate Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Tree Protection Plan and/or Arboricultural Method Statement should be prepared where required, with Root Protection Areas (RPAs) and construction exclusion zones established in accordance with BS 5837:2012 – <i>Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations</i>. BS 5837 provides the current British Standard recommendations for the integration and protection of retained trees during the design, demolition and construction process. Protective fencing should be installed prior to the commencement of relevant construction activities and retained for the duration of works, as appropriate. Construction compounds, storage of materials, soil stockpiles, vehicle movements, excavation and other potentially damaging activities should be excluded from designated tree protection areas unless specifically addressed through an appropriate arboricultural methodology. Similar precautionary protection should be afforded to retained hedgerows to prevent accidental encroachment, root damage or unnecessary loss during construction. Where underground services, drainage or other infrastructure are required close to retained trees or hedgerows, their routes should, wherever practicable, be designed to avoid RPAs and established woody vegetation. Where avoidance is demonstrably not practicable, the works should be informed by appropriate arboricultural advice and undertaken using methods designed to minimise damage to retained root systems. Subject to the implementation of these measures, the proposals will retain the majority of the Site's higher-value habitat features. Where practicable, opportunities should also be incorporated to strengthen the Site's existing habitat network through the creation of new species-rich native hedgerows and additional native tree planting, particularly around the Site boundaries. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for habitats. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.1.
Amphibians	Amphibians (and notably great crested newts) utilise an array of habitats including open woodland and associated fringes, grassland (varying in sward height, with a preference to rough grassland), hedgerows, scrub, field margins, allotments, gardens (particularly those with ponds), coastal sand dunes, lowland dry heath, log and stone piles, and even misplaced stockpiles,

	especially those that have been subject to vegetative overgrowth. The mosaic of the above, in part or entirely, is important for the yearly lifecycles of amphibians, for foraging, commuting, shelter and hibernation activities. Field survey The Site provides variable, but predominantly limited, terrestrial habitat suitability for amphibians. The majority comprises managed modified grassland (TN1), which supports a short, relatively uniform sward with limited structural diversity and therefore offers limited opportunities for shelter, although it may facilitate occasional foraging and dispersal. The taller, unmanaged modified grassland (TN2–TN6) provides comparatively greater suitability, with taller grasses, forbs and areas of bramble offering more sheltered and potentially humid conditions for foraging, refuge and movement. These areas are predominantly associated with the Site margins and established trees, increasing their value as part of the boundary habitat network. The hedgerows provide suitable terrestrial habitat and potential dispersal routes, particularly around their vegetated bases. H2 is associated with a ditch, which provides additional structural diversity and may offer locally damper, sheltered conditions. The log pile (WF1) provides a potentially suitable refuge feature through the presence of sheltered crevices, while the spoil heap (WF2) may provide additional localised refuge opportunities. The buildings and sparsely vegetated land (TN7) are of negligible or limited relevance to amphibians. No ponds or other aquatic habitats suitable for amphibian breeding were identified within the Site. Overall, the Site provides some suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians, principally associated with the hedgerows and taller unmanaged grassland, which may provide opportunities for shelter, foraging and dispersal.
Assessment of Impacts, Amphibians	The desk study identified one record of great crested newt within 2 km of the Site, and no European Protected Species Class Survey Licence Returns relating to the species were identified within this area. A review of OS mapping identified four ponds within 250 m of the Site. The Site lies entirely within an Amber Risk Zone for great crested newt and within a 'Core' Great Crested Newt Strategic Opportunity Area. The majority of habitat loss will comprise short, managed modified grassland (TN1), which provides limited terrestrial

habitat suitability for amphibians. However, the development may also result in the loss of small areas of taller, unmanaged grassland and tall-forb vegetation around the Site margins, which provide comparatively greater opportunities for shelter, foraging and dispersal. Vegetation clearance and groundworks within these areas could result in the injury or killing of common individual amphibians, if present.

The majority of habitat removal is anticipated to be restricted to habitats of relatively limited suitability, principally short, modified grassland, with the majority of the Site's more suitable boundary habitats retained where practicable. As such, the proposals are not expected to materially affect the overall availability or connectivity of terrestrial habitat for common amphibians at the Site level.

Great Crested Newt – Rapid Risk Assessment

For the purposes of a precautionary assessment, it has been assumed that the entirety of the Site would be lost or otherwise affected by the proposed development. Natural England's Great Crested Newt Rapid Risk Assessment was therefore completed on this basis.

The assessment assumes no effects upon great crested newt breeding ponds, land within 100 m of a breeding pond, land beyond 250 m, or individual great crested newts. Allowing for the potential loss or damage of 0.1–0.5 ha of terrestrial habitat between 100 m and 250 m of a breeding pond, the assessment returned a maximum notional offence probability score of 0.1, corresponding to a Green: "Offence Highly Unlikely" result.

Accordingly, even when adopting the precautionary assumption that the entire Site would be affected, the Rapid Risk Assessment indicates that the proposed development is highly unlikely to result in an offence in relation to great crested newt. The tool is intended as a general guide rather than a substitute for a site-specific assessment, which has been thoroughly considered as delineated above.

Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.1 - 0.5 ha lost or damaged	0.1
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
		Maximum: 0.1
Rapid risk assessment result:		GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY

Figure 1: Results, Rapid Risk Assessment Result

Precautionary working measures are nevertheless recommended during vegetation clearance and construction,

[illegible]

- Determine the intensity of roost use (e.g. number of bats, time and duration of use)
- Identify features and characteristics of the roost and the important surroundings
- If a confident assessment can be made, the times of year the bats are likely to be present.

B1 Overview

B1 is considered to provide **negligible suitability for roosting bats**. The building is of simple timber construction with a corrugated metal monopitch roof and an open southern frontage. No potential roosting features, such as suitable gaps, crevices or enclosed roof voids, were identified, and the open nature of the structure results in relatively exposed and variable internal conditions.

A single bat dropping was recorded on a surface within B1. Given the open frontage of the building, bats are able to readily enter the internal space, and the isolated dropping is considered most likely to be associated with occasional or transient aerial foraging use of the building, rather than indicating the presence of an established roost. No accumulation of droppings, staining, feeding remains or other evidence indicative of regular or prolonged use by roosting bats was identified.

B2 Overview

B2 is considered to provide **negligible suitability for roosting bats**. The greenhouse is constructed predominantly from glass panels, with no enclosed roof void or suitable crevices capable of providing sheltered roosting opportunities. The predominantly glazed construction is also likely to result in highly variable internal temperatures and provides little shelter from light and disturbance.

B3 Overview

B3 is considered to provide **negligible suitability for roosting bats**. The building is a small timber shed with timber-panelled walls and a roofing-felt-clad pitched roof. No suitable gaps, crevices or other potential roosting features were identified within the external elevations or roof structure, and the building lacks an enclosed roof void or other suitably sheltered roosting opportunities.

A Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) was undertaken of the trees within the Site in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust's Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition) (Collins, 2023). The trees were inspected systematically from ground level for potential roost features (PRFs)

and any evidence indicative of bat use. The BCT guidance identifies a GLTA as a detailed external inspection of trees to establish the available roosting resource and determine whether further survey or mitigation may be required.

During the assessment, the surveyor searched for PRFs including:

- woodpecker, squirrel and knot holes;
- cavities associated with pruning cuts, tear-outs, wounds and cankers;
- compression forks and butt rot cavities;
- cracks, fissures, shearing cracks and frost cracks;
- hazard beams, transverse snaps and other features associated with branch or stem failure;
- lightning strikes and other damage-related cavities or splits;
- lifting or loose bark;
- fluting and other naturally formed cavities or sheltered features; and
- dense or mature ivy growth capable of concealing or providing potential roosting opportunities.

These features are consistent with the PRF types identified in Table 6.6 of the BCT guidance.

No PRFs or evidence of bat roosting was identified within any of the trees assessed. Accordingly, all trees were considered to provide negligible suitability for roosting bats at the time of survey.

The Site provides suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats, principally associated with the hedgerows and individual trees. These features provide sheltered flight routes, are likely to support concentrations of invertebrate prey and provide connectivity between habitats within the Site and the surrounding landscape.

H1 provides a relatively dense linear feature along the northern Site boundary, while H2 and its associated ditch provide additional structural diversity along the western boundary. The 28 individual trees, many of which are concentrated around the Site margins, provide further structural complexity and, in combination with the hedgerows and taller unmanaged grassland, contribute to a network of suitable foraging and commuting habitat around the Site. The predominantly short, uniformly managed grassland (TN1) is considered of comparatively limited value, with the taller unmanaged grassland and tall-forb margins (TN2–TN6) likely to provide greater foraging opportunities.

	Overall, the Site provides suitable habitat for foraging and commuting bats, with the hedgerows, individual trees, and taller boundary vegetation representing the principal habitat resources and providing connectivity with the surrounding landscape. The wider site, in the context of the surrounding landscape, is considered to provide <u>moderate</u> foraging and commuting opportunities for bats. Wider landscape The Site lies within a well-connected rural landscape comprising mature hedgerows, hedgerows with trees, hedgerows associated with banks and ditches, treelines and linear water features. These features provide connectivity between areas of broadleaved, mixed and coniferous woodland, traditional orchards and agricultural habitats within the wider landscape. The Site is situated on the edge of Potterne Wick, with agricultural land predominating to the south and east, and low-density residential development occurring principally to the north and west. Some localised artificial light spill is likely to arise from surrounding residential properties, particularly to the west; however, extensive illumination of the Site is considered unlikely. As a result, the Site and its hedgerow network are expected to retain comparatively dark conditions, particularly along the more established vegetated boundaries. H1 provides some east–west connectivity along the northern Site boundary, although its wider connectivity is constrained by surrounding roads. However, H1 is directly connected to H2, which forms a more continuous linear habitat feature with stronger connectivity to suitable habitats to the south and east. The combination of established linear vegetation, relatively low levels of artificial lighting and connectivity with surrounding woodland, orchards and agricultural land provides suitable foraging and commuting habitat for a range of bat species, including those more sensitive to artificial lighting. In the context of the surrounding landscape, the Site forms part of a broader network of suitable bat habitat rather than an isolated resource. Its principal contribution is through the hedgerows, which provide connectivity between habitats within and beyond the Site. Overall, the wider landscape is considered to provide moderate opportunities for bat foraging and commuting.
Assessment of Impacts, Bats	The Site provides suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats, principally associated with the hedgerows and individual trees. These features provide sheltered linear habitat and

connectivity with suitable habitats within the surrounding landscape.

The proposals will retain H1 and H2 in their entirety, thereby maintaining the principal linear habitat features and existing connectivity through and around the Site. Development will predominantly result in the loss of short, managed modified grassland, which is considered to provide comparatively limited value for foraging bats. Some areas of taller unmanaged grassland and tall-forb vegetation may also be lost, resulting in a localised reduction in foraging habitat.

Some individual trees require removal to facilitate the development. The removal of T1, T4, T6 and T28 is considered unlikely to result in significant impacts on bats as the trees have negligible potential to support roosting bats. Their removal will result in a minor localised loss of potential foraging and commuting habitat; however, the retention of surrounding trees and hedgerows will maintain habitat connectivity across the site. Replacement planting using native tree and shrub species will further compensate for this loss and provide future foraging opportunities for bats.

On the basis of the building's negligible roosting suitability, absence of identifiable potential roosting features and lack of evidence indicative of an established roost, further activity surveys of B1 are not considered proportionate despite the evidence of a singular bat dropping.

The desk study identified one European Protected Species licence relating to bats within 2 km of the Site. Although this demonstrates the presence of roosting bats within the wider landscape, no potential roost features were identified within the trees assessed on-site, and the proposals are not anticipated to directly impact known or potential bat roosts.

Additionally, the development is not likely to have a significant increase in artificial lighting as it is being used only as a daytime office space.

Overall, the retention of both hedgerows will maintain the principal foraging and commuting corridors associated with the Site. Subject to retaining trees where practicable, appropriate replacement planting for any unavoidable tree losses, and implementing a sensitive lighting strategy, significant adverse effects on the Site's function for foraging and commuting bats are not anticipated.

Overall, the Site is considered to be of **Site** value for bats.

No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.1

Birds	Field survey The Site provides suitable nesting and foraging habitat for a range of common bird species. The hedgerows (H1 and H2) and individual trees represent the principal habitat resources, providing opportunities for nesting, shelter, perching and foraging. The taller areas of unmanaged grassland and tall-forb vegetation provide additional foraging opportunities through their associated seed and invertebrate resources, while the short, managed modified grassland (TN1) is considered of comparatively lower value. Two bird boxes (WF3 and WF4) are present within the Site, providing additional potential nesting opportunities, although neither showed evidence of current use at the time of the survey. A buzzard was observed during the field survey, and a blue tit was identified by call, demonstrating use of the Site and/or surrounding habitats by common bird species. Overall, the Site provides suitable habitat for nesting and foraging birds, with the hedgerows and individual trees representing the principal features of value.
Assessment of Impacts, Birds	The desk study identified that the site lies in several Countryside Stewardship areas and sighting zones for the following species: • Lapwing • Stone Curlew • Corn Bunting • Tree Sparrow The site does not consist of suitable habitats for these species. The Site provides suitable nesting, sheltering and foraging habitat for a range of common bird species, principally associated with the hedgerows (H1 and H2) and individual trees. The taller areas of unmanaged grassland and tall-forb vegetation provide additional foraging opportunities, while B1 provides some potential nesting habitat due to its open frontage and sheltered internal structure. The two bird boxes (WF3 and WF4) also provide potential nesting opportunities. Both hedgerows will be retained as part of the proposals, maintaining the principal areas of nesting and sheltering habitat within the Site. However, some individual trees require removal, together with areas of modified grassland, including potentially some of the taller unmanaged margins. This would result in a localised reduction in nesting and foraging opportunities, although suitable habitat will remain within the retained hedgerows, trees and surrounding landscape.

	All three buildings (B1–B3) will be removed. B1 provides some potential nesting opportunities and also contains bird box WF4, which will consequently be lost. WF4 should therefore be relocated to a suitable retained feature or replaced with an appropriate new bird box elsewhere within the Site. Removal of trees, taller vegetation and buildings has the potential to directly affect nesting birds if undertaken during the breeding season through the damage or destruction of active nests or disturbance of nesting birds. All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) while nests are in use or being built. Appropriate precautionary measures will therefore be required during vegetation clearance and demolition to avoid impacts on active nests. Where practicable, replacement tree planting should be incorporated into the proposals to compensate for any trees removed, while additional bird boxes should be provided on retained trees or within the proposed development to increase nesting opportunities. Taking account of the retention of both hedgerows and the availability of suitable habitat within the surrounding landscape, the proposals are not anticipated to materially affect the availability of nesting and foraging habitat for common birds. Subject to appropriate precautionary measures and replacement habitat provision, significant adverse effects on the local bird assemblage are not anticipated. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for birds. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.1
Flora & Invertebrate	Field survey The majority of the Site comprises species-poor modified grassland (TN1), which is relatively uniform in structure and supports a limited diversity of flowering plants. The sward is dominated by common and widespread species and is therefore considered unlikely to support notable or specialist plant or invertebrate assemblages, although flowering plants provide some seasonal foraging opportunities for common pollinating invertebrates. The taller, less intensively managed grassland and tall-forb habitats (TN2–TN6) provide comparatively greater value for invertebrates due to their increased structural diversity and greater abundance of flowering vegetation. Species including creeping thistle, hogweed, cow parsley, bramble and ground-ivy provide potential nectar and pollen resources, while taller

	vegetation provides additional sheltering and breeding opportunities. The hedgerows and individual trees provide the principal areas of structural diversity within the Site. The combination of woody vegetation, ivy, bramble, flowering and fruiting species is likely to support a range of widespread invertebrate taxa. The dead tree (T22) and log pile (WF1) provide additional localised habitat associated with dead and decaying wood. Overall, the Site is considered to support predominantly widespread flora and invertebrates, with the greatest value associated with the hedgerows, individual trees, taller unmanaged vegetation and deadwood features. No invasive and non-native species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were observed.
Assessment of Impacts, Flora and Invertebrates	The proposals will result in the loss of modified grassland which is of limited value for flora and invertebrates. Some taller unmanaged grassland and tall-forb vegetation may also be lost, resulting in a localised reduction in flowering, sheltering and breeding resources. Both hedgerows will be retained, maintaining the principal areas of structurally diverse vegetation and habitat connectivity within the Site. Some individual trees may require removal, resulting in a localised loss of habitat; where practicable, these should be retained or compensated through appropriate native tree planting. Overall, habitat losses will predominantly affect common and species-poor vegetation. Subject to retention of the hedgerows and appropriate habitat creation and enhancement measures, significant adverse effects on flora and invertebrates are not anticipated. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for flora and invertebrates. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.1
Hazel Dormice	Field survey The Site provides limited potentially suitable habitat for hazel dormouse, principally associated with hedgerows. The hedgerows are relatively limited in extent and woody species diversity, although hawthorn, bramble and goat willow provide some seasonal foraging resources.

	H1 is relatively dense and provides potential opportunities for shelter, nesting and movement. In contrast, H2 is sparse and gappy and lacks the dense, continuous woody structure associated with higher-quality dormouse habitat, although it provides some linear connectivity. Individual trees additional structural cover, while the modified grassland is of negligible value for the species. Connectivity with the wider landscape is also limited. H1 is constrained by surrounding roads, although it connects directly with H2, which provides some onward connectivity with woody habitats beyond the Site. The nearest deciduous woodland is approximately 184 m north but is separated from the Site by a road and residential development. Overall, the limited extent and diversity of woody habitat, together with restricted connectivity to larger areas of suitable woodland, reduces the suitability of the Site for hazel dormouse.
Assessment of Impacts, Hazel Dormouse	The desk study did not identify any records of hazel dormouse within 2 km of the Site. The Site provides only limited potentially suitable habitat, principally associated with H1 and H2, which are relatively limited in extent and woody species diversity. Furthermore, connectivity with larger areas of suitable habitat is restricted. The likelihood of hazel dormouse being present is therefore considered low. Both hedgerows will be retained as part of the proposals, maintaining the principal areas of potentially suitable habitat and existing woody connectivity through and around the Site. The majority of habitat loss will comprise modified grassland, which is of negligible value for hazel dormouse. Some individual trees require removal. However, these trees are immature and are not physically connected to either hedgerow. Given the limited suitability of habitats present, restricted connectivity with larger areas of suitable habitat, absence of desk study records and retention of both hedgerows, significant effects on hazel dormouse are considered unlikely. No specific further survey or mitigation for hazel dormouse is considered necessary, provided H1 and H2 are retained and protected during construction. No further surveys are recommended.
Reptiles	Habitat for reptiles (particularly with the United Kingdom's unpredictable weather patterns) requires optimal thermal and structural properties (Edgar et al. 2011). Field survey The short, managed modified grassland (TN1), which comprises the majority of the Site, provides limited suitability for reptiles due

	to its relatively uniform structure and lack of cover, although it may provide some opportunities for basking and foraging. Greater suitability is associated with the taller, less intensively managed grassland and tall-forb vegetation (TN2–TN6), particularly where these habitats occur alongside hedgerows and boundary vegetation. These areas provide greater structural diversity and opportunities for shelter, foraging and movement. The vegetated bases of H1 and H2 provide additional cover. The log pile (WF1) and spoil heap (WF2) provide localised potential refuge and basking features, with the log pile offering sheltered crevices that could be used by reptiles. Overall, suitable reptile habitat is relatively limited and principally associated with the taller marginal vegetation, hedgerow bases, ditch and refuge features, rather than the short modified grassland that dominates the Site.
Assessment of Impacts, Reptiles	The desk study did not identify any records confirming the presence of reptiles within 2km of the Site. The proposals will predominantly result in the loss of short, managed modified grassland, which provides limited suitability for reptiles. However, some taller unmanaged grassland and tall-forb vegetation may also be lost, resulting in a localised loss of potentially suitable foraging, sheltering and dispersal habitat. The log pile (WF1) and spoil heap (WF2) may also be affected, potentially resulting in the loss of localised refuge features. Both hedgerows (H1 and H2) will be retained, maintaining the principal areas of cover and connectivity around the Site. Given the relatively limited extent and suitability of habitats affected, significant effects on reptiles are considered unlikely. However, the presence of individual reptiles cannot be entirely excluded, and vegetation clearance, removal of refuge features and groundworks could result in injury or killing if reptiles are present. Appropriate precautionary working measures are therefore recommended during site clearance and construction. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for reptiles. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.1
Otter	The Site does not present habitats required for this species, such as watercourses, vegetated riverbanks, reedbeds and woodland. Otters are likely to be active in the wider landscape, but their presence is considered to be unlikely on-site.
Assessment of Impacts, Otter	No direct or indirect impacts are foreseen on this species.

	No further surveys are recommended.
Water Vole	The Site does not present habitats required for this species, such as slow-moving or still watercourses, and soft banks. Therefore, their presence is considered to be unlikely on-site.
Assessment of Impacts, Water Vole	No direct or indirect impacts are foreseen on this species. No further surveys are recommended.
Other Notable Species	The Site may offer some refuge for small mammals, notably hedgehog. Hedgehogs rely on sheltered habitat assemblages such as woodland edges, rough grassland, log and leaf piles and thick undergrowth, including shrubby layers. The hedgerow bases offer some suitable habitat for hedgehogs. Brown hare may occur within the wider landscape, particularly within the extensive areas of arable farmland surrounding the Site to the south. This provides a mosaic of open fields, field margins, grassland and hedgerows suitable for foraging, shelter and movement. The Site itself is considered to provide comparatively limited opportunities for brown hare due to its proximity to existing residential development and the associated levels of human activity and disturbance. Consequently, regular use of the Site is considered unlikely, although occasional transient individuals cannot be entirely excluded.
Assessment of Impacts, Other Notable Species	No evidence of hedgehog or brown hare was recorded during the field survey. The Site nevertheless provides suitable opportunities for hedgehog, particularly for foraging, shelter and movement associated with the hedgerow network and vegetated margins. Consequently, individual hedgehogs could be present during vegetation clearance or groundworks, presenting a risk of injury or killing if appropriate precautions are not implemented. The Site is considered to provide comparatively limited opportunities for brown hare due to its proximity to existing residential development and associated levels of disturbance. More suitable habitat is extensive within the surrounding agricultural landscape, particularly the areas of arable farmland. Regular use of the Site by brown hare is therefore considered unlikely, although occasional transient individuals cannot be entirely excluded. The proposed development is not anticipated to result in a significant adverse effect on local populations of either species. Precautionary working measures are nevertheless recommended during vegetation clearance and construction to

	minimise the risk of harm to individual animals that may be present. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for hedgehogs and brown hare. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.1
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6. Recommendations and Enhancement Opportunities

6.1 Further Surveys (if required) and Recommendations

Methodology to Identifying Ecological Constraints

All potential ecological constraints in relation to the developments proposals have been thoroughly considered in Section 5. Opportunities to deliver ecological enhancement in accordance with local and national planning policy have also been considered and are outlined below.

Planning policy makes it clear that any proposed development duly considers and applies the below mitigation hierarchy when considering impacts to ecological species and habitats:

1. **Avoidance:** every attempt should be made to avoid creating impacts on features from the outset;
2. **Minimisation:** where avoidance cannot be wholly achieved, measures by design, suitably designed methods of working or other actions to minimise impacts (otherwise known as mitigation) should be employed;
3. **Compensation/restoration:** if avoidance and minimisation cannot be wholly achieved, significant impacts on features should be compensated in such a way to restore an area to its original ecosystem or any other ecological functions/services that existed prior to impacts relating to the development.

The hierarchy requires that avoidance is applied where possible. When it is not feasible to avoid such impacts, rationale for minimisation/compensation/restoration should be sufficiently detailed, showing the measures are feasible to implement.

The ecological constraints associated with the development have been assessed in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy, with due consideration to apply, as much as possible, actions to avoid impacts on ecological features.

In addition to the above, Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 states that 'Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity' as well as 'Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat'.

Protection of Habitats

Retained hedgerows and trees should be protected during the works, including any groundworks, by the establishment of Root Protection Areas in accordance with BS 5837:2012. All off-site boundary features should be marked by Heras fencing, if appropriate, erected prior to works commencing. No materials or construction plant(s) should be allowed within the allocated buffer zone.

General

Prior to the commencement of any works, construction operatives should be inducted by a suitably qualified ecologist to make them aware of the possible presence of protected species, briefed on their legal protection, how to identify them, the habitats they are most likely to be found in and the working practices to avoid harming them.

Species

Amphibians

The proposed development is anticipated to result in the loss of some vegetation with potential suitability for amphibians, including areas of taller, tall-forb-dominated vegetation around the Site margins. However, the habitats present are generally of limited suitability, with a lack of more favourable terrestrial features such as extensive tussocky grassland and diverse, structurally complex herbaceous vegetation. Notwithstanding this, the Site lies within an Amber Risk Zone for great crested newt and four ponds are present within 500 m of the Site. The potential for great crested newt to occur within the Site therefore cannot be excluded on the basis of terrestrial habitat suitability alone.

It is recommended that a precautionary set of working measures are implemented in relation to amphibians. Working measures should comprise of the following:

- Vegetation must be maintained below 5cm to maintain the sub-optimal habitat value for amphibians.
- Similarly to measures outlined for badgers below, any excavations should be covered overnight, or a means of escape, such as a plank, installed to allow amphibians to escape if they fall in.
- Pollution prevention measures should be implemented in accordance with the Environment Agency's *Pollution Prevention Guidelines* 2015.
- Where the use or generation of chemicals and pollutants occurs, COSHH regulations should be implemented in relation to storage and disposal in order to preserve and protect nearby waterbodies.
- In the unlikely event that amphibians are found within the working area, they should be given sufficient time to disperse, or in extreme circumstances moved by hand to suitable sheltered vegetation.
- In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease immediately, and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.
- Hedgerow clearance (however, none is anticipated to be required) should be undertaken using a two-stage cut, with the base vegetation removed by hand and arisings carefully lifted and shaken out to allow any amphibians to disperse naturally into adjacent retained vegetation or pre-identified refugia.

Bats

The introduction of artificial lighting levels would increase light spill as a result of the proposals.

It is therefore recommended that a sensitive lighting design for bats which follows Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK (ILP and BCT 2023), should be prepared by a suitably qualified consultant. The design should show how and where external lighting will be installed and supported, where appropriate, with technical specifications. The sensitive lighting design for bats should also ensure that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent bats using their territory. The design should accord with Step 5 of Guidance Note 08/23. The Local Planning Authority will likely require that all external lighting needs to be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the agreed design and thereafter maintained in accordance with the design.

Badger

[REDACTED]

It is recommended that, during construction, if excavations or large pipes are created (>200mm diameter) these must be covered at night. If excavations are left open, then it is essential that a means of escape is created. As an example, this may include a plank to allow badgers and other small mammals to escape if they fall in. If further signs of badgers are encountered during the works, then works should stop until advice is sought from a suitably qualified ecologist at the earliest possible opportunity.

Nesting Birds

The proposed development requires the removal of vegetation which may support nesting birds. It is recommended that no removal of vegetation or works to or removal of the buildings on-site should take place between 1st March and 30th of September inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check for active birds' nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared or works to or demolition of the building commences. In no circumstances should netting be used to exclude nesting birds. If nesting birds are recorded during this inspection(s), then the vegetation must remain with a sufficient sectioned exclusion zone marked around the nest site until any dependent young have fledged.

Reptiles

The Site provides limited suitable habitat for reptiles, with the principal opportunities for shelter and movement associated with the hedgerow bases and other areas of denser vegetation. The modified grassland is considered comparatively sub-optimal owing to its relatively uniform structure and limited availability of suitable refugia.

Although regular use of the Site by reptiles is considered unlikely, the presence of individual common reptiles cannot be entirely excluded. A precautionary approach should therefore be adopted during vegetation clearance and construction, comprising the following:

- Grassland within the working area should be maintained at a short sward, approximately 5 cm or less, to discourage reptiles from occupying areas subsequently affected by construction. Where taller vegetation requires initial clearance, this should be reduced progressively rather than through a single close cut.
- Clearance of suitable vegetation associated with hedgerow bases should be undertaken sensitively. Where dense vegetation is present, a staged cut should be undertaken, initially reducing vegetation to approximately 15 cm before a subsequent cut to ground level, allowing reptiles an opportunity to disperse into adjacent retained habitat.
- Open excavations, trenches and pits should either be securely covered overnight or provided with a suitable means of escape, such as a roughened plank positioned at an appropriate angle. Excavations should be checked each morning before works recommence.
- Construction materials should be stored above ground where practicable, for example on pallets, to minimise the creation of temporary refugia. Materials that have remained undisturbed should be moved carefully.
- Appropriate pollution prevention measures should be implemented throughout construction, with fuels, oils, chemicals and other potentially harmful substances appropriately stored and handled.
- If a common reptile is encountered during works, activities within the immediate area should temporarily cease and the animal should be allowed to disperse naturally into adjacent retained habitat. Where an animal is at immediate risk of harm, advice should be sought from the project ecologist regarding appropriate action.
- In the highly unlikely event that a smooth snake or sand lizard is identified or suspected, works within the immediate area must cease and advice should be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist before works recommence.

Other Notable Species

The site offers limited refuge for hedgehog, mainly provided by the hedgerows. Therefore it is recommended that prior to vegetative clearance, any features potentially used by hedgehogs, such as the long rough grassland, shall be checked by a competent ecologist via a fingertip search. Any individuals found will be translocated to an appropriate location outside of the construction site and away from roads prior to works commencing. Additionally, prior to vegetative works commencing, a site check by a suitably competent ecologist should be performed to check for the presence of brown hare – the precautionary works already recommended for hedgehogs shall be sufficient to maintain the favourable conservation status for brown hare.

Enhancement Opportunities

The National Planning Policy Framework (2026), Policy N2: Improving the natural environment, requires development proposals to contribute positively to the natural environment and support nature's recovery, including through the conservation and enhancement of existing ecological features, strengthening of ecological networks and incorporation of features that support priority or threatened species.

Appropriate biodiversity enhancements should therefore be incorporated into the proposed development.

- It is recommended (if proposals can incorporate such on-site enhancements) that consideration is given to the proposed on-site hedgerow creation. Species composition of new hedgerow(s) should be planted with native species comprised of the following: hazel, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hawthorn, field maple *Acer campestre*, and elder.
- A National Trust Bee & Insect Tower, or similar, is recommended to be installed on a suitable hedgerow or tree, about 1 metre above ground level on a south or southeast facing orientation.
- It is recommended that any new shrubs incorporated within the Site boundary should be high nectar producing to encourage invertebrates to the Site, as well as provide continued foraging for bats. The Royal Horticultural Society guide, "RHS Perfect for Pollinators, www.rhs.org.uk/perfectforpollinators" provides a well-suited plants list of both native and non-native species. In addition, all new trees planted on site should ideally be from local native stock, such as field maple, ash, hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, beech *Fagus sylvatica* and spindle *Euonymus europaeus*.
- It is recommended that a Vivra Pro Woodstone House Martin nest or similar is mounted directly under the eaves of the north elevations on each of the office.
- It is recommended that new fencing incorporates accessible hedgehog holes, measuring 13cm x 13cm to allow the movement of hedgehogs into and out of the Site.

7. Conclusion

It is considered that the proposals will not breach wildlife legislation, national or local planning policies subject to the recommendations as outlined in section 6.1 being followed.

Appendix 1: Figures

For convenience – press “Alt + Left Arrow” to return to the section of the report



Site Photos

Figure A: Photo showing site entrance facing south.



Figure B: Photo showing TN1 facing west.



Figure C: Photo showing unmanaged site margins on the east.



Figure D: Photo showing TN3 facing south.



Figure E: Photo showing B1.



Figure F: Photo showing TN1, TN5, and B1 facing south.



Figure G: Photo showing B2 and B3 facing north.



Figure H: Photo showing TN1 facing north.



Figure I: Photo showing B1 internal.



Figure J: Photo showing WF2 and H2.



Figure K: Photo showing TN6.



Figure L: Photo showing TN7.



Figure M: Photo showing WF4.



Figure N: Photo showing WF3.



Figure O: Photo showing WF1 at the base of T2.



Figure P: Photo showing H1.



Figure Q: Photo showing TN1 facing south.



Figure R: Photo showing B3.



Figure S: Photo showing B3 internal.



Appendix 1: Habitat Map



Appendix 2: Latin names

Floral species	
Species	Latin name
Annual meadow grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Barren brome	<i>Bromus sterilis</i>
Bird's-foot trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
Bittersweet	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>
Bluebells	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Bulbous buttercup	<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>
Box-leaved honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera nitida</i>
Carnation sedge	<i>Carex panicea</i>
Chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>
Common bent	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>
Common bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Common dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Common fleabane	<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Common ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>
Common reed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
Common thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Cocks-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Cows parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Cranesbill	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>
Creeping bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Creeping cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>
Crested dogs-tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>
Cut-leaved cranesbill	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Devil's-bit scabious	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>
Dog's mercury	<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>
Dyer's greenweed	<i>Genista tinctoria</i>
False oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>
Fine bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>
Flowering sweet-grass	<i>Glyceria fluitans</i>
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Great mullein	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>
Hairy sedge	<i>Carex hirta</i>
Hawksbeard	<i>Crepis</i>
Heath spotted-orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i>
Hedge bedstraw	<i>Galium mollugo</i>
Hedge woodruff	<i>Galium odoratum</i>

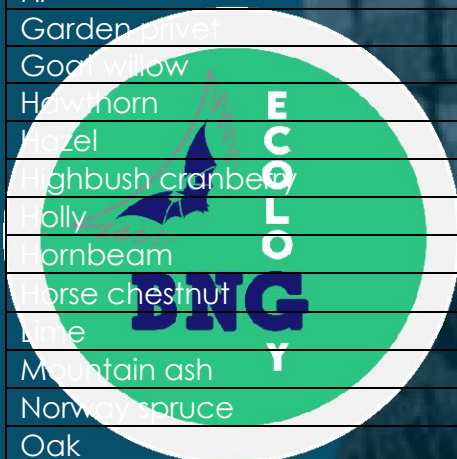


Hedge woundwort	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>
Hemlock	<i>Conium maculatum</i>
Herb-Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Hop	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>
Horse parsley	<i>Smyrnium olusatrum</i>
Horsetail	<i>Equisetum arvense</i>
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Ivy-leaved speedwell	<i>Veronica hederifolia</i>
Lilac	<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>
Lady's bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>
Lords and ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>
Meadow barley	<i>Hordeum secalinum</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>
Meadow thistle	<i>Cirsium dissectum</i>
Meadow vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
Morning glory	<i>Ipomoea purpurea</i>
Oval sedge	<i>Carex ovalis</i>
Oxeye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Round-leaved crane's-bill	<i>Geranium rotundifolium</i>
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>
Rosemary beetle	<i>Chrysolina americana</i>
Roses	<i>Rosa</i> spp.
Rough hawksbeard	<i>Crepis biennis</i>
Rough meadow grass	<i>Poa trivialis</i>
Pendulous sedge	<i>Carex pendula</i>
Pepper-saxifrage	<i>Silene silaus</i>
Perennial rye grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Purple beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica purpurea</i>
Purple orchid	<i>Orchis mascula</i>
Saw-wort	<i>Serratula</i>
Self-heal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
Sharp-flowered rush	<i>Juncus acutiflorus</i>
Shepherd's purse	<i>Capsella bursa pastoris</i>
St. Peter's wort	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>
Smooth meadow grass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>
Smooth hawksbeard	<i>Crepis capillaris</i>
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
Soft brome	<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>
Star rush	<i>Juncus effusus</i>
Spiny thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Spiked sedge	<i>Carex spicata</i>



Stitchwort	<i>Stellaria holostea</i>
Sweet vernal grass	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>
Timothy grass	<i>Phleum pratense</i>
Virginia creeper	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>
Wall barley	<i>Hordeum murinum</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
White dead nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>
Wild onion	<i>Allium vineale</i>
Wild privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
Wood speedwell	<i>Veronica montana</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>

Tree species	
Species	Latin name
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Almond willow	<i>Salix triandra</i>
Apple	<i>Malus sp.</i>
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg</i>
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>
Bird cherry	<i>Prunus padus</i>
Canadian poplar	<i>Populus × canadensis</i>
Common buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>
Cherry plum	<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>
Crack willow	<i>Salix fragilis</i>
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Elm	<i>Ulmus procera</i>
English oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
European plum	<i>Prunus domestica</i>
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Field elm	<i>Ulmus minor</i>
Fir	<i>Abies sp.</i>
Garden privet	<i>Ligustrum ovalifolium</i>
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Highbush cranberry	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Lime	<i>Tilia cordata</i>
Mountain ash	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Norway spruce	<i>Picea abies</i>
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>



Pear	<i>Pyrus sp.</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Scot pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>
Sweet chestnut	<i>Cryphonectria parasitica</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Wayfaring tree	<i>Viburnum lantana</i>
Wild cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>

<i>Mammal species</i>	
Species	Latin name
Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>
Brown hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>
Hazel dormice	<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>
Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>
Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>
Water vole	<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>

<i>Bat species</i>	
Species	Latin name
Alcathoe	<i>Myotis alcathoe</i>
Barbastelle	<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>
Bechstein's	<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>
Brandt's	<i>Myotis brandtii</i>
Brown long-eared	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>
Daubentons	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>
Greater horseshoe	<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>
Greater mouse-eared	<i>Myotis myotis</i>
Grey long-eared	<i>Plecotus austriacus</i>
Leislers	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>
Lesser horseshoe	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>
Nathusius's pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>
Natterer's	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>
Sothomano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>
Whiskered	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>

<i>Bird species</i>	
Species	Latin name
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>
Blithern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Black redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>



Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Carion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Curlew	<i>Numenius Arquat</i>
Coal tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>
Common buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
Common quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>
Common redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>
Corn bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>
Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclus</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
Eurasian hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
Fire crest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
Great Bustard	<i>Otis tarda</i>
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Green sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>
Grey wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>
Hen harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
House martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Jack snipe	<i>Lymnocyrtus minimus</i>
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus Vanellus</i>
Lesser spotted woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>
Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Mandarin duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>
Mistle thrush	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Pigeon	<i>Columba livia domestica</i>



Redshank	<i>Tring tetanus</i>
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Stone curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
Tawny owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Tree sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Turtle dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
Tundra swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Yellow-browed warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>
Yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>

Butterfly species	
Species	Latin name
Brown hairstreak butterfly	<i>Thecla betulae</i>
Crayling	<i>Hipparchia semele</i>
Duke of Burgundy butterfly	<i>Hamearis lucina</i>
Grizzled skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>
Marsh fritillary	<i>Eurodryas aurinia</i>
Meadow brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>
Red admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>
Silver washed fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phaeas</i>
Speckled wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>
Wall brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>

Invertebrate species	
Species	Latin name
Beautiful demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx virgo</i>
Blue ground beetle	<i>Carabus intricatus</i>
Bramble moth	<i>Epiblema uddmanniaria</i>
Buff ermine	<i>Spilarctia luteum</i>
Caddis fly	<i>Enicocla pusilla</i>
Cinnabar moth	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>



Common hawk	<i>Aeshna juncea</i>
Gnat	<i>Trichocentrus larvae</i>
Honeybee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>
Ladybird	<i>Coccinellidae</i>
Mediterranean oil beetle	<i>Meloe mediterraneus</i>
Midges	<i>Culicoides impunctatus</i>
Mullein moth	<i>Cucullia verbaschi</i>
Pale-palped spring beegrabber	<i>Myopa pellucida</i>
Rugged oil beetle	<i>Meloe rugosus</i>
Scarlet tiger moth	<i>Callimorpha dominula</i>

Reptile and amphibian species	
Species	Latin name
Adder	<i>Vipera berus</i>
Common lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>
Common toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>
Grass snake	<i>Ix helvetica</i>
Great crested newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>
Natterjack toad	<i>Epidalea calamita</i>
Palmate newt	<i>Lissotriton helveticus</i>
Pool frog	<i>Pelophylax lessonae</i>
Sand lizard	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>
Slow worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>
Smooth newt	<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>
Smooth snake	<i>Coronella austriaca</i>



Appendix 3: Relevant Wildlife Legislation & Relevant National and Local Policies

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (SI No. 2017/1012) are the principal means by which the European Habitats Directive is transposed in England and Wales.

The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of a network of 'European Sites' termed Natura 2000, the protection of 'European protected species', and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European Sites.

These Regulations transpose Council Directive 92/43/EEC¹⁰ on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ No. L 206, 22.7.1992, p.7) ("the Habitats Directive"). This establishes protected wildlife sites across the European Union, known as 'Natura 2000'. This network consists of designated sites, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC)¹¹. These sites form part of a series of measures aimed at conserving important and threatened habitats and species.

These Regulations consolidate the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007/1842) with subsequent amending instruments, and make minor modifications reflecting changes to related legislation. The instruments being consolidated by these Regulations made, amongst things, provision for implementing Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (OJ No. L20, 26.01.2010, p.7.) and Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ No. L206, 22.7.92, p.7) in relation to marine areas where the United Kingdom has jurisdiction beyond its territorial sea. The Regulations make provision in relation to the offshore marine area, offshore marine installations and certain ships and aircraft. The "offshore marine area" is defined in regulation 2(1).

Regulation 43 relates to the protection of European protected species listed under Schedule 2 of the Regulations. Taken together it is an offence to undertake the following acts with regard to European Protected Species:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European Protected Species;



¹⁰ European Commission (1992). Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. European Commission, Brussels.

¹¹ European Commission (1979). Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds. European Commission, Brussels.

- deliberately disturb animals of any such species in such a way as to be likely to: impair their ability to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young, hibernate or migrate, or
- affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;
- deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal; or
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

The disturbance offence is generally taken to refer to a discernable effect at population level and biogeographic level, rather than simply to an individual animal. However, in certain circumstances the disturbance of one individual animal may have population level effects.

The Regulations also make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot, destroy, or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 5.

However, the actions listed above can be made lawful through the granting of licences (European Protected Species Licence) by the appropriate authorities (Natural England in England). Licences may be granted for a number of purposes (such as science and education, conservation, preserving public health and safety), but only after the appropriate authority has determined that the following regulations are satisfied:

- the works under the licence are being carried out for the purposes of 'preserving public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment';
- there is 'no satisfactory alternative'; and
- the action 'will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at favourable conservation status in their natural range'.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981¹²

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the principal piece of UK legislation relating to the protection of wildlife. It consolidates and amends existing national legislation to implement the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive) in Great Britain.



The Act makes it an offence (with exception to species listed in Schedule 2) to intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird or their eggs or nests. Special penalties are available for offences related to birds listed on Schedule 1, for which there are additional offences of disturbing these birds at their nests, or their dependent young. The Secretary of State may also designate Special Protection Areas

¹² Secretary of State, 1981. Wildlife and Countryside Act. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

(subject to exceptions) to provide further protection to birds. The Act also prohibits certain methods of killing, injuring, or taking birds, restricts the sale and possession of captive bred birds, and sets standards for keeping birds in captivity.

The Act makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to intentionally kill, injure, or take, possess, or trade in any wild animal listed in Schedule 5, and prohibits interference with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places. The Act also prohibits certain methods of killing, injuring, or taking wild animals listed in Schedule 6.

The Act makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to pick, uproot, trade in, or possess (for the purposes of trade) any wild plant listed in Schedule 8, and prohibits the unauthorised intentional uprooting of such plants.

The Act contains measures for preventing the establishment of non-native species which may be detrimental to native wildlife, prohibiting the release of animals and planting of plants listed in Schedule 9. It also provides a mechanism making any of the above offences legal through the granting of licences by the appropriate authorities.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000¹³

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) was passed to provide additional levels of protection for wildlife whilst also strengthening the protection afforded to Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Schedule 12 of the Act amends the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, strengthening the legal protection for threatened species. The provisions make certain offences 'arrestable', create a new offence of 'reckless' disturbance, confer greater powers to police and wildlife inspectors for entering premises and obtaining wildlife tissue samples for DNA analysis, and enable heavier penalties on conviction of wildlife

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006



The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) is designed to help achieve a rich and diverse natural environment and thriving rural communities through modernised and simplified arrangements for delivering Government policy.

It was created to make provision in connection with wildlife, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Parks and the Broads; to amend the law relating to rights of way; to make provision as to the Inland

¹³ Secretary of State, 2000. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Waterways Amenity Advisory Council; to provide for flexible administrative arrangements in connection with functions relating to the environment and rural affairs and certain other functions; and for connected purposes.

Section 40 of NERC carries an extension of the earlier CRow Act biodiversity duty to public bodies and statutory undertakers to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. Section 41 requires the Secretary of State, as respects England, to publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat which in the Secretary of State's opinion are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The updated S41 list, published in August 2010, identified 56 habitats and 943 species of principal importance.

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 makes it an offence for any person to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006

Prior to the Animal Welfare Act 2006, people only had a duty to ensure that an animal didn't suffer unnecessarily. The new Act keeps this duty but also imposes a broader duty of care on anyone responsible for an animal to take reasonable steps to ensure that the animal's needs are met. This means that a person has to look after the animal's welfare as well as ensure that it does not suffer. The Act says that an animal's welfare needs include:

- a suitable environment (how it is housed);
- a suitable diet (what it eats and drinks);
- the ability to exhibit normal behaviour patterns;
- any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals; and
- protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease.



With regards to development, this may have implications when translocations of animals are proposed. As such, care must be taken to ensure that any receptor sites are suitable for the species in terms of habitat and carrying capacity.

National and Local Planning Policy in Relation to Biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in August 2026 and replaces the previous version published in December 2024. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Policy S3 establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development when determining development proposals.

Policy N2: Improving the natural environment requires development proposals to contribute positively to the natural environment and support nature's recovery. This includes identifying opportunities to conserve or enhance environmental qualities, strengthening ecological networks, conserving and enhancing existing natural features such as trees and hedgerows, minimising adverse impacts on biodiversity and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species.

Where significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for, Policy N2 states that development should be refused.

For the purposes of the NPPF, "priority or threatened species" includes species of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, species protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Biodiversity Action Plans

The UK BAP lists are delineated as statutory lists of priorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In England, there are 56 habitats of principal importance and 943 species of principal importance.

Local Planning Policy



Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Wiltshire and Swindon

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Wiltshire and Swindon provides a strategic framework for nature recovery, identifying priorities and measures for the creation, restoration and enhancement of habitats and the recovery of species across Wiltshire and Swindon. The LNRS identifies 24 priorities, comprising nine strategically

mapped habitat priorities, nine species priorities and six wider countryside priorities. Revised_Copy_of_Local_Nature_Re...

Mapped Habitat Priorities – BNG Strategic Significance

- Calcareous Grassland
- Neutral Grassland
- Woodland
- Heathland, Acid Bogs and Acid Grassland
- Mixed Habitats
- Open Mixed Habitats
- Rivers, Streams and Wetlands
- Chalk Rivers
- Nature on Our Doorstep

Site Relevance: The Site does not fall within any of the mapped Strategically Significant Habitat Areas identified by the LNRS. Accordingly, none of the mapped habitat priorities are directly applicable to the Site for the purposes of BNG strategic significance.

Mapped Species Priorities – Not of BNG Strategic Significance

- Bats
- Farmland Birds
- Great Bustard
- Lapwing and Stone-curlew
- Eurasian Curlew
- Wart-biter Bush-cricket
- Duke of Burgundy Butterfly
- Juniper
- Arable Plants

Site Relevance: Relevant species priorities have been considered within the corresponding species assessments within this EclA, having regard to the habitats present within the Site and surrounding landscape.

Wider Countryside Priorities

The LNRS also identifies wider countryside priorities relating to the Built Environment, Nature-Friendly Farming, Nature-Friendly Productive Forestry, Ponds, Hedgerows and Dry Stone Walls, and Green and Blue Access. These are not identified as being of BNG Strategic Significance but provide wider context for nature recovery and ecological enhancement.



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