



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Chapel Cottage, Chittoe, Chippenham SN15 2EL

Client:

Joe Worrell

Survey date:

11/02/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Wiltshire Council. This proposal can be described as a re-configuration of existing internal space, two storey extension, landscaping and garage.

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion

Executive Summary

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Tables 1, 3 & 4 of this report.

- **B1 = High bat roost value: Three bat emergence and re-entry surveys (BERS), with three surveyors.** No works to the property that may block or remove potential roosting features should be carried out until the required surveys have been completed. Undertaking such work beforehand could unlawfully affect bats if present and may compromise the validity of the surveys and hinder the planning application process.
- **A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment will be required,** whereby a minimum 10% gain will need to be demonstrated through the use of the Defra Statutory Metric for area-based habitat and hedgerow units.

Precautionary Working Methods (PWM):

Precautionary Working Methods should be followed during site preparation and construction to safeguard wildlife and habitats, for reptiles, great crested newts, birds, bats, badgers, hedgehogs, trees and adjacent woodland.

Introduction and Context

Introduction

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development. The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author's knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

Limitations

Whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report is a preliminary assessment and does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. Nor does it represent a full botanical assessment. It assesses the likelihood of protected, notable and important habitats and species being present, based on a site and landscape level habitat value-based risk assessment. This is based upon the ecology, biology and known distribution of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

The survey was completed outside of the optimal survey period (April to October) for ground flora, and as such the accuracy of botanical assessment and condition assessment data may be limited in terms of species visible and ground conditions at the time of survey.

Further survey within the optimal season for surveying vegetation will be required to obtain accurate habitat classification and condition assessment data. This may lead to changes to the current identified species assemblages and the condition of habitats on site.

Results, Impacts and Recommendations

Site Location and Landscape Context

Table 1: Site location and landscape context

Site Location					
The site is located at National Grid Reference ST 95676 66560 and has an area of approximately 0.13ha comprising four buildings, five scattered trees, lowland mixed deciduous woodland and vegetated garden.					
Priority Habitats and Designated Sites					
Summary of Survey Findings <u>Priority Habitats</u> There are 6 priority habitats located within 2 km of the site, including deciduous woodland, which is on-site. These comprise deciduous woodland, lowland heathland, traditional orchard, lowland fens, ancient replanted woodland and ancient & semi-natural woodland. The site is located within a rural setting near Chittoe, to the north of Bromham, within a predominantly agricultural landscape interspersed with woodland blocks and small watercourses. The surrounding land is largely characterised by arable fields bounded by hedgerows, with pockets of woodland and associated drainage features present in the wider landscape. These habitats provide connectivity at a local scale, forming a network of linear and semi-natural features that may support the movement of wildlife between suitable habitats. Overall, the site lies within a moderately well-connected rural landscape matrix. <u>Designated Sites</u> There is 1 statutory site within 2 km of the site. This is listed below: <i>Table 1a: Statutory sites within 2km of the site.</i> <table><tr><th>Designation</th><th>Distance from site</th></tr><tr><td>Spye Park SSSI</td><td>560m NW</td></tr></table>		Designation	Distance from site	Spye Park SSSI	560m NW
Designation	Distance from site				
Spye Park SSSI	560m NW				

The site falls within the Impact Risk Zone for Spye Park SSSI; however, the proposed development type is not identified as a high-risk activity in relation to this designation.

Areas of deciduous woodland are located immediately adjacent to the site and form an important component of the wider ecological network, providing habitat connectivity and supporting higher biodiversity value than the habitats within the development footprint. The proposed works are confined to modified grassland and existing developed areas, and no direct impacts to the adjacent woodland are proposed.

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2 km of the site cannot be confirmed without consultation with the local records centre. However, based on the habitats present within the site boundary, the development area itself does not support habitats of comparable ecological value to the adjacent woodland.

Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, due to the proximity of the site to deciduous woodland, and the possible presence of non-statutory designations in the vicinity, indirect effects such as pollution during construction, or increased recreational pressure, could occur.

Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution, damage to adjacent habitats must be implemented during construction. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be requested by the LPA via condition. This should include the following measures:

- Retained trees adjacent to the site will be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations' (BS 5837) (2012).
- Appropriate buffering between the development zone and retained habitats (e.g. 15m for ancient woodland)
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto adjacent habitats.

Habitats and Flora

The site survey was undertaken by Hannah Upshall BSc (Hons), MSc, Consultant Ecologist.

Table 2: Survey weather conditions

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
11/02/2026	9.8	89	99	9.6	Light rain

Table 3: Habitats and flora

Habitats and Flora: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations <i>This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.</i>
Onsite habitats – Appendix 6 Summary of Survey Findings <u>Lowland mixed deciduous woodland (w1f)</u> The site supports a small area of broadleaved woodland located along the southern and eastern boundaries of the garden. The canopy is dominated by silver birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>), with occasional ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) and scattered coniferous trees including pine species. Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>) is present within the understorey. Trees are predominantly young to semi-mature, with no veteran features recorded. Canopy cover is moderate, creating partial shading across the woodland floor. The understorey is generally sparse, with limited shrub development beyond hazel. Ground flora is patchy and typical of secondary woodland associated with managed residential land. Frequent species include lords-and-ladies (<i>Arum maculatum</i>) and wood sorrel (<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>), with occasional primrose (<i>Primula vulgaris</i>), emerging bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>), and ground ivy (<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>). Moss species are abundant across shaded areas. Localised ruderal species including dock (<i>Rumex</i> sp.) and thistle (<i>Cirsium</i> sp.) occur within small, disturbed patches.

The woodland floor comprises predominantly leaf litter with some areas of bare ground and minor localised disturbance associated with garden management. No evidence of significant nutrient enrichment, heavy poaching, or extensive ground damage was observed. Botanical diversity is limited and characteristic of secondary woodland in a residential setting.

This woodland area is directly connected to a larger block of deciduous woodland located outside the red line boundary, contributing to habitat connectivity and ecological continuity within the wider landscape.

Overall, the woodland is of low ecological value at the local scale, although it provides structural diversity and connectivity within the surrounding woodland network.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the lowland mixed deciduous woodland was assessed to have a poor condition value.

Table 3a: Lowland mixed deciduous woodland species abundance.

Abundance	Species
Dominant	-
Abundant	Hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), leyland cypress (<i>Cupressus x leylandii</i>)
Frequent	Silver birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>), lords-and-ladies (<i>Arum maculatum</i>), wood sorrel (<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>), ground-ivy (<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>), ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>), snowdrop (<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>)
Occasional	Dock (<i>Rumex</i>), bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>)
Rare	Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>), thistle (<i>Cirsium sp.</i>)

Vegetated garden (u1 828)

The grassland comprises a sloping domestic garden arranged over a series of terraces. The majority of the site supports modified grassland (g4), with variation in sward composition and structure across the slope.

The upper terrace adjacent to the dwelling comprises modified grassland with a grass-dominated sward including Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*)

and perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*). The grassland supports species including ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), wood avens (*Geum urbanum*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum* agg.), field speedwell (*Veronica persica*), herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and cleavers (*Galium aparine*). The sward is moss-rich in shaded areas.

The mid-terrace comprises a moss-dominated modified grassland with sparse grasses including Yorkshire fog and perennial rye-grass emerging through a largely continuous bryophyte layer. Vegetation is thin and shaded, reflecting reduced management and canopy influence.

The lower terrace comprises modified grassland with scattered mature trees and increased structural diversity. Woodland-edge species are frequent, and the area exhibits transitional characteristics between garden and adjacent woodland. Areas of exposed concrete foundations are present and classified as developed land (u1a).

Introduced shrub planting occurs adjacent to the dwelling and along parts of the boundaries, including bamboo, cotoneaster, yew and leylandii. Ground flora beneath shrubs is typically ivy-dominated.

Site boundaries comprise native hedgerow vegetation (h2) with scattered standard trees. Species include hazel (*Corylus avellana*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and ivy (*Hedera helix*), with mature oak (*Quercus* sp.) and silver birch (*Betula pendula*) emerging above the shrub layer. The hedgerow connects directly to offsite deciduous woodland along the southern and eastern boundaries, providing ecological connectivity.

Overall, the site represents a modified domestic garden habitat with woodland-edge influence and structural variation across the slope.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment and is automatically assigned a poor condition.

Scattered Trees (32)

4 trees are scattered throughout the vegetated garden area of the site. All trees are semi-mature, comprising 2 small and 2 medium size. A general assessment of the trees on site indicates a mix of conditions. The Crack Willows and Silver Birch are in good condition, meeting all criteria for health and ecological value. The Scots Pine is assessed as being in moderate condition, with some criteria not being met. No specific ecological niches were identified for any of the trees. The species present are a mix of native and non-native, including crack willow (*Salix fragilis*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*). In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the individual trees were assessed to have the following condition values:

Table 3b: The individual condition scores of each tree on site.

Tree	Condition Score
crack willow (<i>salix fragilis</i>)	Good
crack willow (<i>salix fragilis</i>)	Good
silver birch (<i>betula pendula</i>)	Good
scots pine (<i>pinus sylvestris</i>)	Moderate

Building (u1b5)

There are four buildings on site; one is a dwelling and three of them are out-buildings. Full details for buildings on site are included within Table 4.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of modified grassland within the vegetated garden. This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of these habitats. However, this could lead to a net loss in biodiversity at the site.

Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution must be implemented during construction. This should include the following measures:

- Remove only the minimum of habitat required to facilitate the development
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto retained habitats.
- Protect retained turf and soil resource from destruction and compaction using plastic matting and wooden boarding. Do not store skips and other heavy materials on retained turf.
- Grasscrete, cell web or any other porous surface treatment facilitating recovery of vegetation is preferred to hard standing.

A Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) will be required, outlining best practice measures delineate the construction zone and to minimise the possibility of pollution and habitat damage during construction.

The proposed development will require a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment to calculate the baseline habitat value of the site and demonstrate the delivery of a minimum 10% measurable biodiversity net gain, unless the development qualifies for an exemption, such as householder development.

Invasive / Non-native species

Summary of Survey Findings

No non-native invasive or otherwise problematic plants were recorded on site.

Impacts

None.

Recommendations

None.

Fauna

Table 4: Fauna

Fauna: Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations

This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

Invertebrates

Summary of Survey Findings

The site provides limited habitat value for a variety of commonplace species but is unlikely to support important species and assemblages. In particular, the deadwood/log piles will provide value to saproxylic invertebrates.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of grassland. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to the presence of more extensive habitat locally.

Recommendations

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for invertebrates:

- Retention of scrub pockets
- Planting of pollinator friendly grassland species
- Installation of insect hotels
- Incorporation of log piles/dead wood
- Incorporation of bee bricks into the fabric of the new building. These should be installed 0.5m above ground level on a south-facing elevation with no obscuring vegetation
- Creation of rock and brash piles

Roosting Bats

Trees

The site comprises woodland, hedgerows, grassland and areas of introduced ornamental planting, which together provide suitable habitat for common garden and woodland fauna.

All individual trees within the site were inspected from ground level for features with potential to support roosting bats, including cavities, rot holes, splits, woodpecker holes, loose bark and other defects. No such features were identified. As such, the trees are considered to offer negligible suitability for roosting bats.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of modified grassland, patio and introduced ornamental shrubs. Numerous trees are present within and adjacent to the site, particularly along the northern boundary and within the surrounding woodland. The trees vary in age and structure; however, none of the trees within the development footprint were observed to exhibit features typically associated with bat roost potential, such as cavities, splits, rot holes or lifted bark. No trees are proposed for removal as part of the development.

In the absence of potential roost features and given that no trees are to be removed, no impacts to roosting bats associated with trees are anticipated.

Recommendations

Although no bat roosts were identified within trees on site, precautionary measures are recommended to ensure retained trees continue to provide suitable habitat for bats and to avoid indirect impacts.

A sensitive lighting strategy should be implemented to maintain dark conditions around retained trees and woodland edges. External lighting should be kept to the minimum necessary for safety and directed away from tree trunks, canopies and woodland margins to avoid illumination of features with bat roost potential and to preserve dark commuting and foraging corridors. Warm-colour LED fittings ($\leq 2700\text{K}$), fitted with directional cowls and operated via timers or motion sensors, should be used where possible to reduce light spill onto retained trees.

Buildings

Building B1 Description

B1 is a two-storey, detached dwelling constructed of brick. The property features a gabled slate roof with a lean-to extension. Internal voids, specifically attic spaces, are present. Potential roosting features have been identified within the roof structure, walls, and internal voids.

In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B1 is assessed to have high habitat value for roosting bats due to the building being of traditional brick and stone construction with tiled and slate roofing and associated lean-to structures. Numerous significant roosting features were identified, including extensive gaps beneath roof tiles, displaced and uneven ridge tiles, open eaves and verge detailing, and voids around the chimney stack. These features provide direct access into the roof void and create a range of crevice opportunities suitable for bat roosting.

Additional potential access points are present at roof junctions, beneath bargeboards and soffits, and at the interface between differing construction materials. The rendered elevations also display cracking and separation, forming further linear crevices.

The property is situated within a rural landscape with mature trees and woodland immediately adjacent, offering high-quality commuting and foraging habitat. The level of structural complexity, extent of access points into the loft space, and apparent long-term low disturbance collectively indicate that the building has high suitability for roosting bats.



Eastern elevation of B1



Northwestern elevation of B1

			 <i>Southern elevation of B1</i>
Feature	Materials	Condition/Suitability	Photographs
Roof	Slate	The slate roof is gabled and presents frequent defects with multiple gaps visible. Numerous potential roosting features are present, including gaps beneath the lower edges of roof tiles along the eaves and voids beneath ridge tiles. The overlapping nature of the tiles and displaced or lifted slates create narrow crevices suitable for crevice-dwelling bat species. Moss accumulation further conceals potential access points. The lean-to extension also contributes to potential roosting opportunities. Overall, the roof structure is considered to provide	

suitable crevice features for roosting
bats.

Eastern elevation of B1



Eastern elevation of B1



southern elevation of B1

				 <i>Eastern roof elevation on B1</i>	
	Walls	Brick-built + Single-skin timber weatherboarding (sections) + Render	The brick-built walls have frequent cracks and gaps. The rendered elevations display cracks and areas of deterioration, with vertical and horizontal fissures noted. Localised separation between the render and underlying masonry, and small gaps at the interface with adjacent features, create narrow crevices that may provide opportunistic roosting opportunities for crevice-dwelling bat species. Overall, the rendered walls offer limited but suitable minor crevice features.	 <i>Southern elevation of B1</i>	

	Voids	No lining + No lining	Loft space 1 is an unlined attic space measuring 4m in length, 4m in width, and 1.4m in height, with an area of 16m². The temperature was recorded at 10°C with 70% humidity. Gaps in the tiles are present and daylight is visible throughout the loft space, indicating potential access points. Loft Space 2 is an unlined attic space measuring 6m in length, 4m in width, and 1.6m in height, with an area of 24m². The temperature was recorded at 10°C with 71% humidity. Gaps in the tiles are present and daylight is visible throughout the loft space, indicating potential access points. The traditional pitched roof voids are unboarded and comprise exposed rafters, purlins, and brick/stone gable walls. No modern roofing membrane is present, with clay tiles laid directly onto timber battens. Numerous gaps were visible between tiles and along the eaves, with daylight penetrating the roof structure in multiple locations. These gaps provide potential access points for crevice-dwelling bat species. Additional minor crevice features are present at timber junctions and along wall interfaces. No direct evidence of bats was recorded within the accessible areas at the time	 <i>Loft 1</i>  <i>Loft space 2</i>	
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of survey; however, given the presence of multiple access gaps and suitable crevice features, the loft void offers suitability for roosting bats.



Loft space 2



Loft Space 2

				 <i>Loft Space 2</i>	
Building B2 Description					

B2 is a single-storey, detached out-building. The structure is timber-framed with a flat roof clad in corrugated bitumen felt. There is no basement. No internal voids were noted. No roosting features or bat evidence were identified within the walls, eaves and soffits, windows and doors, roof or internal voids.

In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B2 is assessed to have negligible habitat value for roosting bats due to a small timber outbuilding is present within a woodland edge setting. The structure is clad in overlapping waney-edge timber boards; however, the boards are tightly fitted with minimal void space behind them and no significant enclosed cavities were identified. The building is lightweight and highly ventilated, offering little thermal stability.

As such, the structure is considered to provide negligible suitability for roosting bats.



B2



B2

Building B3 Description

B3 is a single-storey, detached out-building of timber-framed construction. The structure has a flat roof clad in corrugated metal sheeting and does not possess a basement or internal voids. Limited roosting features were noted within the walls, with dense ivy growth present. In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B3 is assessed to have low habitat value for roosting bats due to the site includes a small timber-framed outbuilding clad in corrugated metal sheeting. Gaps are present at sheet overlaps and timber junctions; however, the open window aperture and lightweight metal construction result in high levels of ventilation and temperature fluctuation. Dense ivy growth is present on parts of the structure, which may provide limited additional crevice opportunities and some localised buffering of external conditions. Overall, due to the limited internal void space, poor thermal stability and drafty nature of the structure, it is considered to provide low suitability for roosting bats.	 B3  B3		
Feature	Materials	Condition/Suitability	Photographs

	Roof	Corrugated metal sheeting	The flat roof is constructed of corrugated metal sheeting with open gaps present at sheet overlaps. Dense ivy growth is present on parts of the structure, which may provide limited additional crevice opportunities and some localised buffering of external conditions. Overall, due to the limited internal void space, poor thermal stability and drafty nature of the structure, it is considered to provide low suitability for roosting bats.	 B3	
	Walls	Timber-framed + Corrugated sheet pannels	The timber-framed structure is clad in corrugated metal sheeting. Dense ivy growth is present on parts of the structure, which may provide limited additional crevice opportunities and some localised buffering of external conditions.	 B3	

Building B4 Description

B4 is a single-storey, detached out-building. The structure is timber-framed with a hipped roof clad in bitumen felt. There is no basement. No roosting features or bat evidence were noted within the walls, eaves and soffits, windows and doors, roof or any internal voids.

In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B4 is assessed to have negligible habitat value for roosting bats due to the timber garden shed is of modern single-skin construction with tightly fitted boarding and glazing. The structure lacks any roof void, lifted tiles, soffit gaps, or crevice features that could provide suitable access or roosting opportunities for bats. No gaps exceeding approximately 10–15 mm were identified.

The interior is fully exposed, well-lit and devoid of structural complexity. No evidence of bat activity was recorded during the survey (e.g. droppings, staining, feeding remains).

Given the absence of suitable access points, crevice features, or internal voids, the shed is assessed as having Negligible potential for roosting bats.



B4

Summary of Survey Findings

B1 – The level of structural complexity, extent of access points into the loft space, and evidence of long-term low disturbance collectively indicate that the building has **high suitability** for roosting bats.

B2 – The structure is considered to provide **negligible suitability** for roosting bats.

B3 – The structure is considered to provide **low suitability** for roosting bats.

B4 – The shed is assessed as having **negligible suitability** for roosting bats.

Impacts

The proposed development comprises a two-storey extension and internal alterations, which have the potential to affect existing roof structures, loft voids and associated access points within B1. B1 has been assessed as having high suitability for roosting bats due to its structural complexity, multiple access points and evidence of long-term low disturbance. Works affecting this structure could result in the disturbance, injury or killing of bats, as well as the damage or destruction of a roost, and are therefore considered to present a potentially significant impact in the absence of further survey.

Buildings B2, B3 and B4 are assessed as having low to negligible suitability for roosting bats; however, these structures are not proposed to be altered or affected as part of the development. As such, no impacts to roosting bats are anticipated in relation to these buildings.

Recommendations

Three Bat Emergence and Re-entry Surveys (BERS) of B1 should be undertaken during the active bat season (optimal May to August) to determine the species present, the number of individuals, and patterns of use. **Three surveyors** will be required to provide full coverage of all elevations of Building B1 and the barn. Infra-red cameras should be utilised to assist with observations.

No works to the property that may block or remove potential roosting features should be carried out until the required surveys have been completed. Undertaking such work beforehand could unlawfully affect bats if present and may compromise the validity of the surveys and hinder the planning application process.

A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2>

Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements

These will be confirmed upon completion of the surveys

Foraging and Commuting Bats

Summary of Survey Findings

The site comprises a mosaic of woodland, hedgerows, grassland and introduced ornamental shrubs, which together provide suitable habitat for foraging and commuting bats.

The woodland and mature hedgerows offer linear features and edge habitat likely to be used as navigation corridors, as well as supporting a good invertebrate resource. The grassland provides additional foraging opportunities, particularly where it is structurally diverse.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of grassland, patio and introduced ornamental shrubs. These habitats provide limited foraging value for bats and are common within the surrounding landscape. Given the availability of similar habitat locally and the retention of woodland and hedgerow features, the impact on bats is anticipated to be minor.

Recommendations

A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting¹.

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for foraging bats:

- Planting of locally characteristic tree, shrub and hedgerows to increase foraging opportunities.

Birds

Summary of Survey Findings

The habitats on site, including woodland, hedgerows, grassland and introduced shrubs, provide suitable nesting and foraging opportunities for common bird species. One active nest was recorded within a tree; however, this tree will not be affected by the proposed development.

Impacts

Grassland, introduced shrubs, sealed surfaces and areas of building roof will be removed during construction. These habitats are of low ecological value and are common within the surrounding landscape. While they may provide limited nesting, foraging or shelter opportunities for common bird species, their loss is unlikely to result in a significant reduction in habitat at a local or regional scale.

There is potential for disturbance to nesting birds during vegetation clearance works, and the destruction of active nests is possible if works are undertaken during the breeding season. However, the scale of habitat removal is small and woodland and hedgerow features will be retained, meaning fragmentation of bird habitat within the wider landscape is not anticipated.

Recommendations

Any building/vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building/vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.

Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests, depending on species present, until the young have fledged.

Reptiles

Summary of Survey Findings

The woodland, hedgerows, grassland and areas of introduced ornamental planting on site provide suitable shelter and foraging opportunities for reptiles. Boundary features and vegetated margins may offer refuge, basking opportunities and dispersal routes.

The wider landscape comprises woodland, agricultural fields and linear habitat corridors, which provide suitable connectivity and habitat mosaic for reptiles at a local scale. As such, the presence of reptiles on site cannot be discounted.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of grassland, debris piles, introduced shrubs and sealed surface. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations owing to their low value and the presence of more suitable habitat locally and onsite. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of reptiles, if present.

Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to reptiles, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures:

- Site clearance will be undertaken outside of the reptile hibernation season (November to February) insofar as is possible.
- A toolbox talk will be given to contractors regarding the possible presence of reptiles at the site.
- A pre-commencement inspection of the site will be undertaken for reptiles.
- A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any reptiles to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter reptiles from the working area.
- Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent reptiles from utilising these areas.
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

Amphibians

Summary of Survey Findings

A review of MAGIC database found no granted EPSL for great crested newts within 2km of the site.

No ponds are located on, or adjacent to, the site. There is one pond located within 500m of the site, approximately 400m to the north. The pond is separated from the site by arable fields, residential gardens and a road, which are likely to act as partial barriers to movement and may reduce its suitability for use by great crested newts in relation to the application site.

This pond was not surveyed in person and was identified through review of aerial and satellite imagery (Magic Maps, 2026).

The site itself does not contain any ponds or standing water suitable for breeding great crested newts. Habitats present comprise woodland, hedgerows, grassland and areas of introduced ornamental planting, which may provide limited terrestrial sheltering and foraging habitat.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of grassland and introduced planting. These habitats are of limited value for amphibians and are common within the surrounding landscape. Given the absence of on-site breeding habitat and the distance to the nearest pond, impacts to great crested newts and other amphibians are considered unlikely and, if present, would be minor and localised. When completing the rapid risk assessment published by Natural England (Natural England 2015), the proposed development produces a 'green' risk score, which states: 'offence highly unlikely'.

Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. It is anticipated that any potential risks to transient great crested newts, if present, can be mitigated to an acceptably low level via the implementation of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) during the construction phase.

Badgers

Summary of Survey Findings

The woodland edges, hedgerows and areas of grassland on site provide suitable opportunities for badger foraging and commuting. Vegetated boundary features offer connectivity into the wider landscape, which comprises woodland, agricultural fields and established corridor habitats that may support badger territories.

The site itself is relatively managed and does not provide optimal conditions for sett excavation. No badger setts were recorded on site or within the immediate surrounding area where accessible, and no direct evidence of badger activity (such as latrines, dung pits, hair or clear snuffle holes) was identified at the time of survey.

While no evidence of badgers was observed, the presence of commuting or foraging individuals cannot be entirely discounted given the connectivity of the surrounding landscape.

Impacts

No works will be undertaken within 30m of a badger sett. The proposed development will result in the loss of grassland, introduced shrubs and sealed surface. The loss of such habitats could result in a reduction in badger habitat and could result in the fragmentation of the local landscape. Furthermore, construction activities could result in the death or injury of badgers, if present.

Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to badgers, further badger surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- A toolbox talk will be given to contractors regarding the possible presence of badgers at the site.
- A pre-commencement inspection of the site will be undertaken for any new badger activity if works do not commence within three months.
- Heras fencing will be erected around the working area to prevent encroachment into retained habitats where badger setts could be present.
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Any pipework exceeding 150mm will be capped overnight.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which badgers could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

Riparian animals

Summary of Survey Findings

There are no riparian habitats on or adjacent to the site.

Impacts

Otters

No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

Water Vole

No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

Recommendations

Otters

None.

Water Vole None.
Hazel dormouse
Summary of Survey Findings The site comprises woodland and mature hedgerows, which provide connected linear features that could be used by dormice for commuting and foraging. However, the site lacks well-developed scrub and the dense, multi-layered vegetation structure typically favoured by dormice for nesting and feeding. Ground flora and grassland are relatively simple in structure and do not provide optimal habitat complexity. Although the wider landscape includes woodland and hedgerow networks offering connectivity, the limited structural diversity within the site reduces its suitability. Overall, the site is considered to offer low suitability for dormice, and their presence is considered unlikely. Impacts The proposed development will not result in the removal of woodland or mature hedgerows, and therefore key linear features that could function as dormouse commuting habitat will be retained. The works relate primarily to the loss of a small area of grassland and introduced ornamental planting, which are of limited suitability for dormice due to their lack of dense, multi-layered structure. Given the low suitability of the habitats to be removed and the retention of boundary features, no impacts to dormice are not anticipated. Recommendations None
Other e.g. small mammals
Summary of Survey Findings The site comprises woodland, hedgerows, grassland and areas of introduced ornamental planting, which provide suitable sheltering, commuting and foraging opportunities for hedgehogs and other small mammals. Boundary features in particular offer connectivity into the wider landscape of woodland and agricultural fields, increasing the likelihood of use by common mammal species. No evidence of hedgehogs or other notable mammals was recorded during the survey; however, a small mammal hole was observed on site,

which was not characteristic of badger. This indicates some level of use by small mammals. Overall, the habitats present are suitable for widespread and common species, and the presence of hedgehogs and other small mammals on site cannot be discounted.

Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of grassland and introduced ornamental planting, which may provide limited foraging and sheltering opportunities for hedgehogs and other small mammals. There is also potential for temporary disturbance during construction activities.

However, woodland and hedgerow boundary features will be retained, maintaining connectivity and the majority of suitable habitat on site. Given the limited scale of habitat removal and the availability of similar habitat within the surrounding landscape, impacts to hedgehogs and other small mammals are anticipated to be minor and localised.

Recommendations

A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Any pipework exceeding 100mm will be capped overnight.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any small mammals are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs:

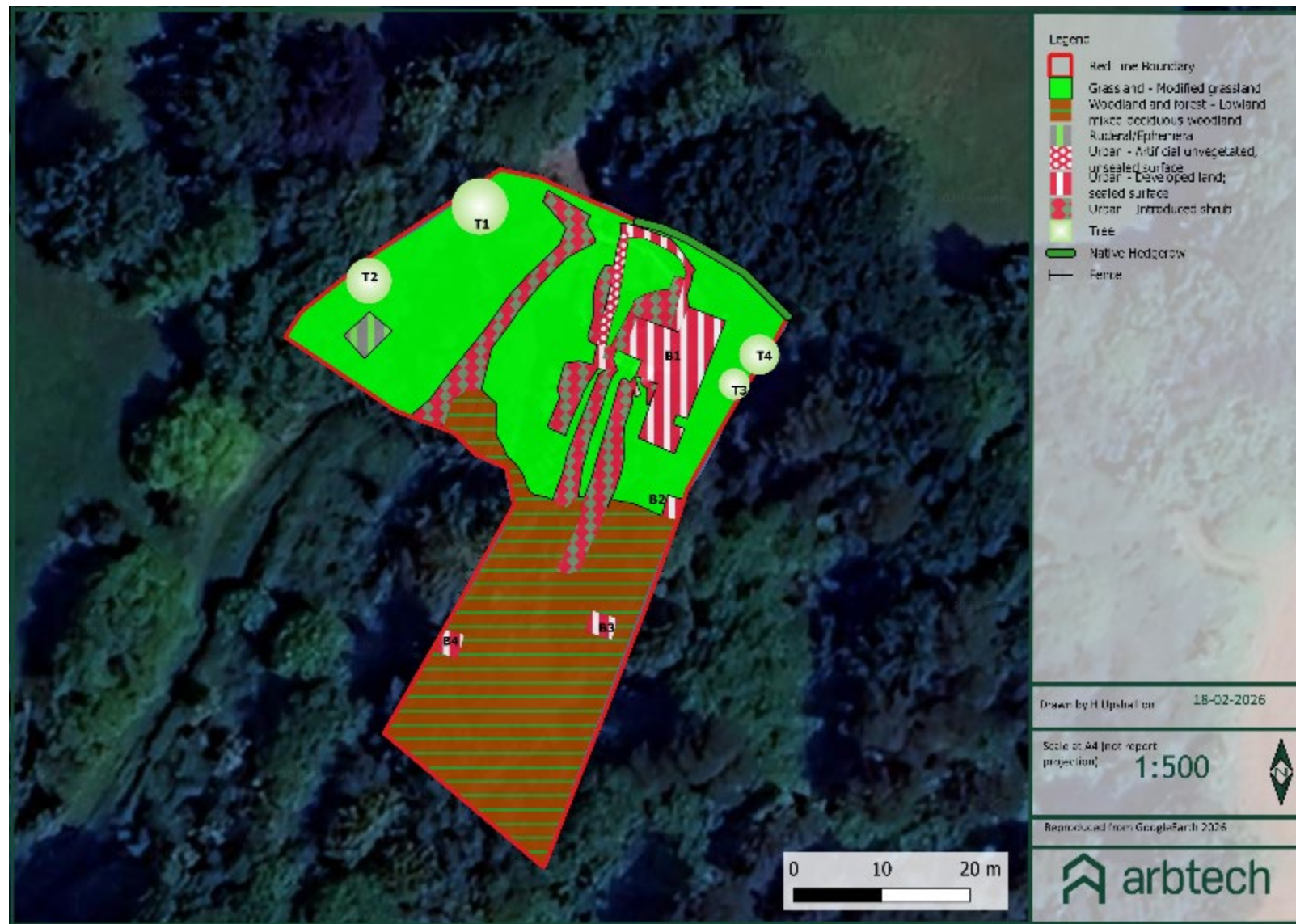
- Creation of fence gaps (14cm x 14cm) to enable small mammals to travel freely through the site
- Creation of brash piles
- Installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.

Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan





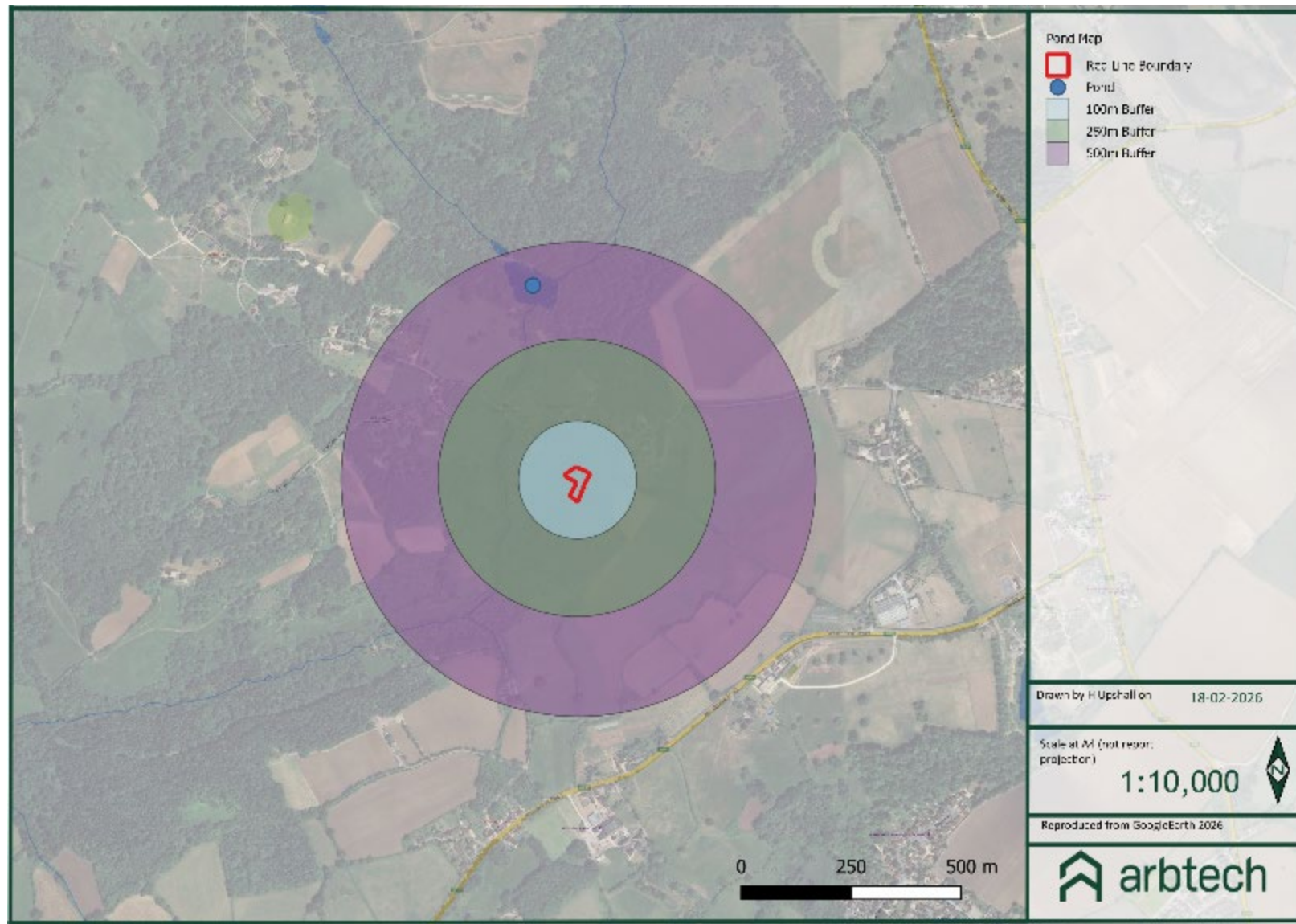
Appendix 3: Habitat Survey Plan



Appendix 4: PRA Plan



Appendix 5: Pond Plan



Appendix 6: Site Photographs



Photo 1: Lowland mixed deciduous woodland



Photo 2: Lowland mixed deciduous woodland



Photo 3: Lowland mixed deciduous woodland



Photo 4: Vegetated garden



Photo 5: Vegetated garden



Photo 6: Vegetated garden



Photo 7: T1



Photo 8: Eastern elevation of B1



Photo 9: Northwestern elevation of B1



Photo 10: Southern elevation of B1



Photo 11: B2



Photo 12: B2



Photo 13: B3



Photo 14: B3



Photo 15: B4

Appendix 7: Baseline Condition Assessments

Table 7a: Woodland condition assessment.

Category	Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score
Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes present.	Two age-classes present.	One age-class present.	2
Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland.	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland.	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland.	3
Invasive plant species	No invasive species present in woodland.	Rhododendron ponticum or cherry laurel Prunus laurocerasus not present, and other invasive species <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ≥10% cover.	3
Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.	Three to four native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.	Two or less native tree or shrub species across woodland parcel.	1
Cover of native tree and shrub species	>80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native.	50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understory shrubs are native.	<50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native.	1
Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space.	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. But if woodland <10ha has <10%	1

	permitted (given the increased ratio of edge habitat to woodland where the woodland is <10ha).		temporary open space, please see Good category7.	
Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland.	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland.	3
Tree health	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback.	11% to 25% tree mortality and or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present.	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present.	3
Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community at ground layer present.	3
Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots, or a complex woodland.	Two storeys across all survey plots.	One or less storey across all survey plots.	1
Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees per hectare.	One veteran tree per hectare.	No veteran trees present in woodland.	1
Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	1

Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident.	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area, and or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground.	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground.	2
				Total 25/39
	Condition Poor due to scoring 25 out of 39.			

Table 7b: Individual Tree condition assessment.

Category	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criteria Passed (Yes or No)			
Tree Number:		1	2	3	4
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y	Y	Y	N
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Y	Y	Y	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	N	N	N	N
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Y	Y	Y	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Y	Y	Y	Y
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Y	Y	Y
RESULTS		Good	Good	Good	Moderate

Table 7c: Low distinctiveness grassland habitat assessment.

Category	Condition Assessment Criteria	Criteria Passed (Yes or No)
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m² present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include those listed in Footnote 1). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition. Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m² (excluding those listed in Footnote 1), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland. Where a grassland is classed as medium, high, or very high distinctiveness, please use the relevant condition sheet.	No
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	Yes
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Yes
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Yes
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens) ² .	Yes
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Yes
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ³ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁴).	Yes
Results		Poor due to not passing criteria A. However, this assessment was completed outside of optimal survey times. Therefore, for BNG purposed this grassland would need to be assessed as good or resurveyed.

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