



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL AND GROUND LEVEL TREE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Client: Ayro Property Investments Ltd

Site: Mitford Close, Reading

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Survey Data	Survey data are valid for 12 to 18 months from the date the survey was undertaken.		

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The information which we have prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.

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1. Summary

Site Details
- Site Address: Mitford Close, Land lying to the East Side of Whitley Wood Road, Shinfield, Reading, Berkshire, RG2 8JQ. - OS grid reference: SU 7292 6962. - Approximate Area of Site: 949.15 m² (0.09 ha).
Scope of Works
- aLyne Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Ayro Property Investments Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), comprising an online data search and field survey to assess the baseline ecological conditions of the site and its potential to support protected species and species of conservation concern. - aLyne Ecology Ltd was also commissioned to carry out a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA), comprising an inspection of the trees to be affected by the proposals to inform an assessment of the suitability for summer roosting and hibernating bats.
Development Proposals
The development proposals are for the construction of six new two-storey dwellings, with associated car parking, bicycle and refuse storage with adjoining landscaping including gardens and road verges.
Evaluation and Potential Impacts Assessment
- The habitats recorded on site are as follows: modified grassland, bramble scrub, other broadleaved woodland and other developed land (see Figure 1). - All existing habitats onsite will be lost as part of the proposal: modified grassland (0.0329 ha), bramble scrub (0.019 ha), other broadleaved woodland (0.0188 ha), and other developed land (0.038 ha). - Pearman's Copse Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located approximately 514 m to the south-east of the site. LNRs are afforded protection through local planning policy. - There is a parcel of semi-natural ancient woodland located 48m southwest of the site boundary, associated with Nore's Hill. There are a further six parcels of semi-natural ancient woodland located within 1 km of the site. Ancient woodland is strictly protected through national planning policy. - There are four types of Priority Habitats located within 1 km of the site, namely deciduous woodland, ponds, woodpasture & parkland and traditional orchards. Priority Habitats are absent from the site, although deciduous woodland and woodpasture & parkland are directly adjacent to the site boundary. Priority Habitats are listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006 (HM Government, 2006). Under the NERC Act, 2006, Local Planning Authorities are required to give due regard to biodiversity. - The woodland habitats have potential to support stag beetles. The stag beetle is a Priority Species under the NERC Act, 2006 (HM Government, 2006).

- Ponds are absent from the survey area. There is one granted EPSL for great crested newts within 2 km of the site, approximately 1.3km to the northeast. There are suitable habitats for terrestrial activity of great crested newts on site including bramble scrub, modified grassland and woodland. There is one pond within 500m of the site which is approximately 450 m to the east of the site, separated from the site by A327 Shinfield Road located in a semi-urban environment. The site is approximately located within a NatureSpace Wokingham Green Impact Risk Zone. The great crested newt and its habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (HM Government, 1981), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (HM Government, 2017). The common toad could be present on site. The common toad is a Priority Species under the NERC Act, 2006 (HM Government, 2006).
- The discarded materials (see target note 1 on Figure 1 and photograph 7, Appendix 1) have the potential to support reptiles. Reptiles are protected against killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended (HM Government, 1981). All reptile species are Priority Species as listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act, 2006 (HM Government, 2006).
- The bramble scrub and tree habitats could support nesting birds, including birds of conservation concern. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (HM Government, 1981), it is illegal to take, damage or destroy the nests of wild birds whilst being built or in use.
- Bats, their roosts, and their habitats are strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended (HM Government, 1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (HM Government, 2017).
- **Trees with bat roosting features (see T9, T11, T12, T13, T14, T16, T28 and T29 on Figure 2) could potentially support roosting bats.**
- The woodland and tree habitats on site could support foraging, and commuting bats. Bats, their roosts, and their habitats are strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended (HM Government, 1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (HM Government, 2017).
- The bramble scrub and woodland could support the hazel dormouse as a small amount of understory provides habitat connectivity to off-site Priority Habitats and ancient woodland. The hazel dormouse and its habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (HM Government, 1981) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (HM Government, 2017).
- [REDACTED]
- The site has potential to support hedgehogs. The hedgehog is a Priority Species, listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act, 2006 (HM Government, 2006).

Recommendations for Avoidance, Mitigation, and Enhancement

- The off-site adjacent deciduous woodland and woodpasture-parkland Priority Habitat and ancient woodland should be retained and protected both during construction and following completion of development. A Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) and Biodiversity Protection and Enhancement Scheme (BPES) should be prepared, detailing

how off-site Priority Habitats and ancient woodland will be protected during construction operations.

- A fingertip search of the any vegetation, as well as the removal of the discarded materials (see target note 1, Figure 1) within the site should be carried out by a great crested newt licenced ecologist prior to works taking place. If any great crested newts are found, all works must cease immediately, and a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) should be obtained from Natural England.
- An Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) should be present on site during any site clearance activities, which are likely to involve the removal of any vegetation. Any common toad, stag beetles, or hedgehogs found, should be moved away into adjacent habitats unharmed.
- Trees and scrub should be retained and protected, where possible.
- The removal of the discarded materials piles (see target note 1 on Figure 1) should be carried out carefully by hand, to ensure that any reptiles, which may be present, can escape unharmed.
- Any removal of vegetation should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive) to avoid destruction/disturbance of nesting birds.
- A sensitive lighting plan should be adopted, to ensure that outside lighting does not adversely affect adjacent habitats and wildlife, particularly bats when foraging and commuting.
- [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
- As the habitats suitable for dormice to be lost are small (bramble scrub - 0.019 ha and woodland - 0.0188 ha), it is considered disproportionate and impractical to survey for presence/absence of hazel dormice. Therefore, a Precautionary Method Statement for hazel dormice is recommended, which should include (but not limited to): a pre-works inspection of the bramble scrub and woodland by a licensed ECoW, details of toolbox talks and a method statement for vegetation clearance.

Further Survey Requirements

Roosting Bats

Further surveys for bats of trees should be conducted using either of the following methods:

- Aerial Inspection Surveys: three visits (either by ladder, climbing or mobile elevating work platform (MEWP)) to be conducted between May and September, with at least two visits between May to August inclusive.
- Dusk Emergence Surveys: three visits to be conducted between May and September, with at least two visits between May to August inclusive.

2. Introduction

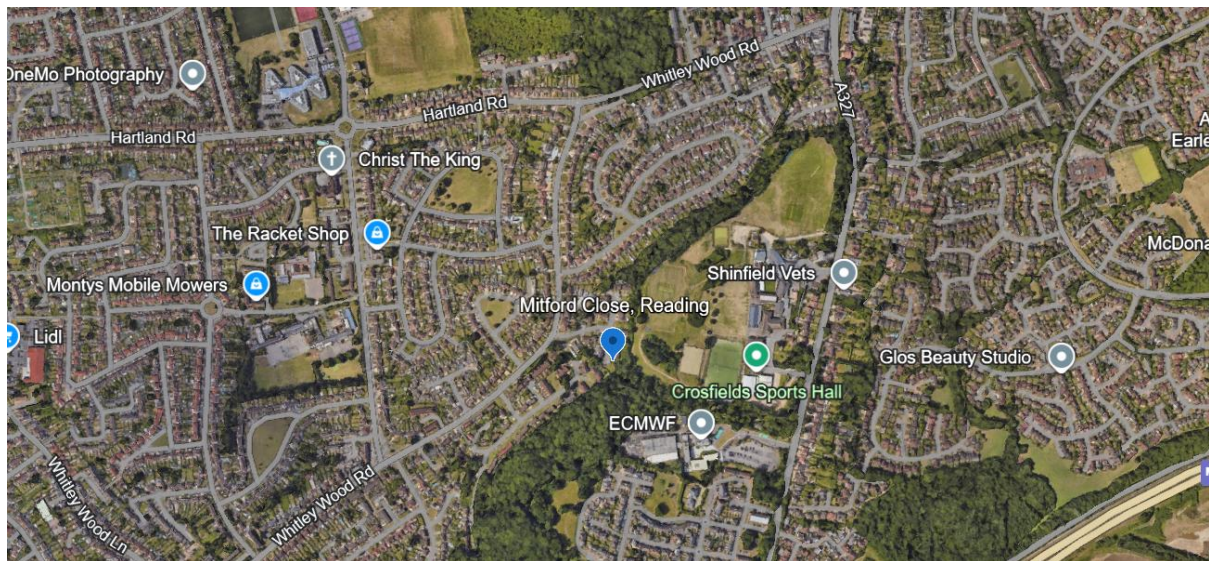
2.1 Site Details

Table 1 provides details of the site, intended as a summary of key features, derived from the online data search using Magic (Natural England, 2025). The habitats recorded on site during the field survey are shown on Figure 1. Photographs of the site are provided in Appendix 1. A full species list, with target notes, is provided in Appendix 2.

Table 1. Site Details

Site Name	Mitford Close, Reading
Site Address	Mitford Close, Land lying to the East Side of Whitley Wood Road, Shinfield, Reading, RG2 8JQ
OS Grid Reference	SU 7292 6962.
Approximate Total Area of Site	0.09 ha (949.15 m ²)
Landowner and Local Authority	Ayro Property Investments Ltd, Wokingham Borough Council
Geology and Soils	Loamy soils with naturally high groundwater
Hydrology	Naturally wet
Nature Conservation Designations	None on site
Other Designations	None on site
The Woodland Trust Ancient and Notable Tree Inventory	None on site
Biodiversity Opportunity Area	None on site
National Habitat Network	Network Enhancement Zone 2 includes land within close proximity to the existing habitat components that are more likely to be suitable for habitat re-creation for the particular habitat (Natural England, 2020).
Current Land Use	Modified grassland verges, areas of woodland and bramble scrub in the southern end of the Mitford Close residential area
Surrounding Habitats and Land Use	Suburban location comprising mostly dwellings with adjoining gardens and roads. Large playing fields associated with local schools are situated close by. The closest pond being approximately 450 m to the east. The wider landscape is characterised by residential areas with scattered trees and gardens
Urban Context / Locality	The site is located on Mitford Close, off Whitley Wood Road in the suburbs of Reading. Central Reading is located approximately 4km north and Wokingham is located 8km to the southeast of the site
Connectivity to Wider Landscape	The site has good habitat connectivity for foraging bats and dormice, as it borders deciduous woodland, wood pasture and parkland Priority Habitats to the south. This is directly linked to multiple areas of ancient woodland

An aerial plan showing the location of the site is provided below.



Site Location (© Google Earth Pro, accessed 14th March 2025).

2.2 Proposed Development

The development proposals are for the construction of six new two-storey dwellings, with associated car parking, bicycle and refuse storage with adjoining landscaping including gardens and road verges.

All existing habitats onsite will be lost as part of the proposal:

- Modified grassland – 0.0329 ha.
- Other broadleaved woodland – 0.0188 ha.
- Bramble scrub – 0.019 ha.
- Other developed land – 0.038 ha.

2.3 Brief and Objectives

2.3.1 PEA

The purpose of the PEA was to:

- Map and identify the existing habitats within the survey area, using the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) system (UK Habitat Working Group, 2023).
- Check for evidence of protected species and assess the potential for protected species to be present on site.
- Check for evidence of invasive species.
- Identify potential ecological impacts and constraints relating to the proposed works.
- Make recommendations for further survey work, as appropriate.
- Propose mitigation measures to avoid, mitigate or compensate for ecological impacts, as appropriate.

2.3.2 GLTA

The objective of the GLTA was to:

- Assess the suitability of the trees on site to support bat roosts, including those used by hibernating bats.

- Record evidence of roosting bats in trees.
- Identify the ecological impacts of the development on roosting bats in trees.
- Provide recommendations for avoidance, mitigation, enhancement, and compensation, where applicable.

3. Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

This section provides a summary of legislation and planning policy for designated sites, Priority Habitats, ancient woodland, trees, and protected species, which are assessed to be present or potentially present on site, as detailed in Table 13, Section 6.

The legislation and planning policy detailed in this section is intended to be a summary only. The relevant pieces of legislation and planning policy should be referred to for full information. Legislation and planning policy pertaining to protected habitats and species can be found at the following websites:

- The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC (European Commission, 2009):
https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/birds-directive_en
- The Habitats Directive 1992/43/EEC (European Commission, 1992):
https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/habitats-directive_en
- Water Framework Directive (European Commission, 2000):
https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/info/intro_en.htm
- Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (HM Government, 1981):
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (as amended) (HM Government, 2017): http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/pdfs/uksi_20100490_en.pdf
- Countryside Rights of Way Act, 2000 (HM Government, 2000):
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 (HM Government, 2006):
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>
- National Planning Policy Framework, 2024 (HM Government, 2024):
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf
- OPDM Circular 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System (HM Government, 2005):
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7692/147570.pdf
- Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services (DEFRA, 2020):
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69446/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf
- Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework: Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Wokingham Borough Council, 2010):
<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/Final%20adopted%20Core%20Strategy%20inc.%20cover.pdf>
- Wokingham Borough Council – Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (Adopted February 2014) (Wokingham Borough Council, 2014):
<https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/sites/wokingham/files/2023-06/Adopted%20MDD.pdf>

The valued ecological receptors, which could be impacted on by development are highlighted in blue in Table 2 and further details on relevant legislation and planning policy are provided in Appendix 3. A list of abbreviations is provided in Appendix 4.

3.1 Legislation and Planning Policy Relating to Valued Ecological Receptors

Table 2. Legislation and Planning Policy Relating to Valued Ecological Records

Key Ecological Receptor	Legislation and Planning Policy										
	Annex I (Habitats) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex II (Species) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex I of Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), Schedules 1, 5, 9	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000	The Protection of Badgers Act, 1996	NERC Act, 2006	NPPF	Relevant Regional Planning Policy: N/A	Relevant Planning Policy: Policy CP7: <u>Biodiversity</u> ; Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework, January 2010. Policy TB23: <u>Biodiversity and Development</u> ; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan February 2014.
Statutory Designated Sites – SACs and SPAs	✓	✓		✓					✓		✓
Statutory Designated Sites – SSSIs					✓	✓			✓		✓
Statutory Designated Sites – LNRs									✓		✓

Key Ecological Receptor	Legislation and Planning Policy										
	Annex I (Habitats) Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex II (Species) Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex I of Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), Schedules 1, 5, 9	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000	The Protection of Badgers Act, 1996	NERC Act, 2006	NPPF	Relevant Regional Planning Policy: N/A	Relevant Planning Policy: <u>Biodiversity</u> ; Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework, January 2010. <u>Policy TB23: Biodiversity and Development</u> ; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan February 2014.
Non-Statutory Designated Sites – SINCS								✓	✓		✓
Priority Habitats								✓	✓		✓
Ancient Woodland									✓		✓
Trees											✓
Priority Species – Plants								✓			✓
Invasive Plant Species					✓ (Schedule 9)						✓

Key Ecological Receptor	Legislation and Planning Policy										
	Annex I (Habitats) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex II (Species) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex I of Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), Schedules 1, 5, 9	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000	The Protection of Badgers Act, 1996	NERC Act, 2006	NPPF	Relevant Regional Planning Policy: N/A	Relevant Planning Policy: <u>Biodiversity</u> ; Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework, January 2010. <u>Policy TB23: Biodiversity and Development</u> ; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan February 2014.
Priority Species – Invertebrates								✓	✓		✓
Great Crested Newts (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>)		✓		✓	✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓
Common Toads (<i>Bufo bufo</i>)								✓	✓		✓
Reptiles					✓			✓	✓		✓
Breeding Birds					✓				✓		✓
Priority Species – Birds								✓	✓		✓

Key Ecological Receptor	Legislation and Planning Policy										
	Annex I (Habitats) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex II (Species) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex I of Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), Schedules 1, 5, 9	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000	The Protection of Badgers Act, 1996	NERC Act, 2006	NPPF	Relevant Regional Planning Policy: N/A	Relevant Planning Policy: CP7: <u>Biodiversity</u> ; Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework, January 2010. <u>Policy TB23: Biodiversity and Development</u> ; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan February 2014.
Protected Bird Species					✓ (Schedule 1)				✓		✓
Roosting, Foraging and Commuting Bats		✓		✓	✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓
Hazel Dormouse (<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>)		✓		✓	✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓
Badger (<i>Meles meles</i>)					✓		✓				✓
European Hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>)								✓	✓		✓

Key Ecological Receptor	Legislation and Planning Policy										
	Annex I (Habitats) Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex II (Species) Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex I of Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), Schedules 1, 5, 9	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000	The Protection of Badgers Act, 1996	NERC Act, 2006	NPPF	Relevant Regional Planning Policy: N/A	Relevant Planning Policy: CP7: <u>Biodiversity</u> ; Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework, January 2010. <u>Policy TB23: Biodiversity and Development</u> ; Managing Development Delivery Local Plan February 2014.
Brown hare (<i>Lepus europaeus</i>)								✓			✓
European Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)		✓		✓	✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓
Water Vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>)					✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓

4. Survey Methods

This report has been produced with reference to current guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (CIEEM, 2017) and BS42020:2013: Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

4.1 PEA

4.1.1 Online Data Search

The following published materials were consulted:

- The Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (Magic (Natural England, 2025)) (accessed 10th March 2025).
- Section 41: Priority Species in England (NERC Act, 2006) (HM Government, 2006) (accessed 10th March 2025).
- Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework (Wokingham Borough Council, 2010) (accessed 10th March 2025).
- Wokingham Borough Council – Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (Wokingham Borough Council, 2014) (accessed 12th March 2025).

4.1.2 Field Survey

A field survey, using the UKHab system was undertaken of the site by Charlie Gardiner BSc (Hons) ACIEEM and Lucie Bloomfield BA (Hons) on 17th March 2025 (aLyne Ecology Limited, Senior Ecologist, Ecologist and Assistant Ecologist). The weather conditions during the survey were 9°C, wind force 1, and 100% cloud and dry. The site boundary and survey area are shown in Figure 1.

The field survey technique used is detailed in the UK Habitat Classification User Manual, Version 2.0 (UK Habitat Working Group, 2023). The principal aim of the UKHab system is to provide a rapid system for recording and classifying habitats, which can be used for both earth-based and field-based surveys. The system comprises a principal hierarchy (the Primary Habitats), which include ecosystems, broad habitats, Priority Habitats and Annex 1 habitats, and non-hierarchical Secondary Codes.

The UKHab 'Professional Edition' has been used, with the use of Level 5 Primary Habitats and Secondary Codes, as detailed in the UK Habitat Classification-V2.0 (UK Habitat Working Group, 2023) Excel workbook. Primary Habitats and Secondary Codes follow the UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions – V2.0 (UK Habitat Working Group, 2023). The Secondary Codes selected are appropriate to the site and habitats recorded. The Minimum Mapping Unit used is 25 m² and 5 m in length.

Where possible, prior to carrying out the field survey, habitats on site were identified using www.magic.gov.uk, Google Earth Pro, 2020 and previous surveys reports, if available. Pre-survey maps were compiled using 3.28.13 'Firenze'. Evidence of habitat management was also noted.

During the field survey, habitat types were recorded using QField on a tablet (Samsung Galaxy Tab S6). GIS symbology used is as recommended in the UK Habitat Classification symbology files for QGIS, presented as Level 4 Primary Habitat, with Level 5 labelled as a code.

A full plant species-list is provided in Appendix 2. All plants have been assigned an assessment of abundance according to the DAFOR scale:

D – Dominant.

A – Abundant.

F – Frequency.
O – Occasional.
R – Rare.

4.1.3 Protected Species Assessment

As part of the PEA, the site was assessed for its potential to contain protected or notable species. The assessment was made based on the habitats present within the site and their suitability for protected species (information on the legislation of protected species can be found in Section 3 and Appendix 3). Protected species assessed for, but not limited to, were:

- Plants of conservation concern.
- Invertebrates of conservation concern.
- Great crested newts.
- Common toad.
- Reptiles.
- Breeding birds.
- Bats.
- Hazel dormice.
- Badgers.
- European hedgehog.
- Brown hare.
- Otters.
- Water voles.

In addition, a search was undertaken for evidence of non-native, invasive species.

4.2 GLTA

4.2.1 Tree Inspections

The assessment of trees was carried out on 17th March 2025 by Charlie Gardiner (Hons) ACIEEM (Accredited Agent under Bat Class Licence WML-CL18, Class Registration Number: 2022-11232-CL18-BAT), and Lucie Bloomfield BA (Hons).

The assessment was carried out following current best practice guidance, published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023).

The survey comprised a ground level assessment of all trees to be affected by the proposals for the presence of potential roosting features that could be used by bats. The survey was conducted using binoculars and a high-powered torch during daylight hours and all aspects of the trees were assessed. An endoscope and thermal imaging scope were also used where necessary. The locations of trees is provided in Figure 2 which includes trees assessed as either PRF or Further Assessment Required (FAR) only (see Table 3).

The following potential bat roosting features, as noted in the Bat Tree Habitat Key (BTHK, 2018), were sought and details on their number, location and quality noted:

- Woodpecker and squirrel holes.
- Knot-holes.
- Pruning-cuts.
- Tear-outs.
- Wounds, cankers, compression-forks, and butt-rots.
- Lighting-strikes, hazard-beams, subsidence-cracks, shearing-cracks, and frost cracks.

- Transverse-snaps, welds, and desiccation fissures.
- Lifted bark, fluting and ivy.

Where possible, features were inspected for signs of current or historic use by roosting bats, including:

- Bats in situ.
- Bat droppings.
- Staining.
- Scratch marks.

The tree location in terms of surrounding habitat type, quality, and connectivity was also taken into consideration when assessing a potential roosting feature. The type and quality of the roosting feature observed also determines the type of roost (maternity, summer/transitional, hibernation) that it could potentially support.

Following the assessment, the trees were categorised as either NONE, FAR, or PRF (Collins, 2023). The categories were based on the observations and information set out in Table 3.

Table 3. Guidelines for Assessing Suitability of Trees on Proposed Development Sites for Bats

Suitability	Description
NONE	Either no PRF's in tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRF's are present in the tree
PRF	A tree with at least one feature that could support roosting bats is present

Following the assessment, each individual PRF identified was also assigned a category based on the observations and information set out in Table 4, where possible from the ground (Collins, 2023).

Table 4. Guidelines for Categorising the Potential Suitability of PRFs for Bats on Trees

Potential Suitability	Rationale
PRF-I	Suitable for individual numbers of bats either due to the size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats/other suitable PRFs.
PRF-M	Suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony. Trees or woodland with surrounding suitable habitats for bats or within/near a CSZ for bats.

4.3 Evaluation of Ecological Features

A valuation of ecological features (designated sites, species, and habitats) was undertaken in accordance with CIEEM guidance (CIEEM, 2019). Valuation is determined using the geographic framework provided in Table 5.

The value of an ecological feature is based on a professional ecologist's judgement and takes into consideration various characteristics including any site designations, species records, priority species and habitats, species rarity, the quality of the resources (e.g., habitat diversity, species population size), and location within the landscape context.

Sometimes it is not possible to provide a valuation of ecological features in the absence of data, which would have to be provided by further ecological surveys. Important ecological features, which may pose a constraint to the proposed development, are those with an ecological value which could be impacted by the development. These are the features which may require further survey work and mitigation.

Table 5. Framework for Assessing the Value of Ecological Features

Geographic Scale	Example of Ecological Feature
International	An internationally designated site, i.e., SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites. Regularly occurring populations of internationally important species.
National	Site of national importance, i.e., SSSIs, NNRS. Regularly occurring populations of nationally important species.
Regional	Non-statutory site e.g., LWSSs, Key Wildlife Site (KWS), Country Wildlife Site (CWS) supporting a regionally significant area of Priority Habitat or regionally significant population of legally protected/priority species.
County	Non-statutory site e.g., LWSSs, KWSSs, CWSSs, ancient woodland, site supporting Priority Habitats, Priority Species, and/or legally protected species of significance for the county.
Local	Habitats which enhance the local habitat resource e.g., old species-rich hedgerow, deciduous woodland, ponds, small areas of Priority Habitat or areas supporting small populations of legally protected/Priority Species which are not rare within the region, county, or nationally.
Site	Habitats of limited ecological importance e.g., scattered trees, hedgerows, woodland plantations, small areas of non-priority habitats that are of value for wildlife. Species of limited ecological importance.
Negligible	Hardstanding, bare ground, built environment, and other areas with negligible biodiversity value, including for priority and legally protected species.

4.4 Survey Limitations

The online data search should not be taken as a definitive list of the protected species, species of conservation concern and non-statutory designated sites that occur within the search area.

The site was visited over the period of one day, as such seasonal variations cannot be observed and only a selection of all species that potentially occur within the site have been noted. Therefore, the survey provides a general assessment of potential nature conservation value.

There were no limitations to the survey in terms of the following:

- The site could be fully accessed.
- Weather conditions.
- Personal competence (qualifications, training, skills, and experience).
- Time spent surveying.

Tree numbers in the Block Plan 100_01 provided by Laura Nica Studio (Laura Nica Studio, 2024) do not match those recorded during the PEA and GLTA survey. The tree numbers referred to in this report are referred to as the numbers recorded during the PEA and GLTA survey. Appendix 5 provides a table to show the translation between the tree numbers to avoid confusion. The translation of tree numbers is also provided in Table 9 when referring to the results of the GLTA.

During the GLTA, it was identified that trees T9, T11, T12, T13, T14, T16, T28 and T29 are covered by ivy vegetation upon the main stem of the tree so a full inspection of the tree could not be carried out as other potential features suitable for bat roosting may have been obscured from the ground. Furthermore, trees T12, T13, T14 and T16 could not also be fully assessed as not all elevations could be viewed due to lack of access from within site boundary. This is not deemed to be a significant limitation to the report as further surveys have been recommended for the trees.

Under Section 6.7.2 of BS42020:2013 'Code of Practice for Planning & Development', limitations to a survey should be stated with an explanation of their significance and any attempt made to overcome them. The consequence of any such limitations on the soundness of the findings should be made clear. The evaluation and recommendation sections of this report provide solutions to overcome this limitation (BSI, 2013).

5. Results

5.1 PEA

5.1.1 Online Data Search

Designated Sites

There are no internationally designated sites within 5 km of the survey area. Table 6 provides details on statutory designated sites, which are present within 1 km of the site.

Table 6. Statutory Designated Sites within 1 km of the Site

Site Name and Designation	Central Grid Reference	Approximate Distance from Site (m)	Area (Ha)	Description
Pearman's Copse LNR	SU 735 693	514 SE	6.89	Pearman's Copse comprises a two-hectare area of ancient woodland, which contains mostly ash, hazel and oak trees, and some coppiced areas. There are also multiple banks and ditches. Pearman's Copse is surrounded by community woodland and connects with Dinton Pastures Country Park.

Ancient Woodlands

The site is not located within an area of ancient woodland or plantation on ancient woodland. However, there are six parcels of ancient and semi-natural woodland within 1 km of the site. The closest is located approximately 48 m to the southwest of the survey area, associated with Nores Hill.

Priority Habitats

Four types of Priority Habitats are located within 1 km of the site, as detailed in Table 7.

Table 7. Priority Habitats within 1 km of the Site

Habitat Type	Number of Land Parcels	Nearest Land Parcel to Site (m)
Deciduous woodland	28	0 (adjacent to the southern boundary of the site)
Wood pasture and parkland	1	0 (adjacent the southern boundary of the site)
Traditional orchards	2	417
Pond	8	450

Granted EPSLs within 2 km of the Site

The following EPSLs for bats, were recorded within 2 km of the site:

- Destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bats, located approximately 669 m to the southeast.
- Destruction of a breeding site and resting place for common pipistrelle bats, located approximately 1 km to the southeast.
- Destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) bats, located approximately 1.3 km to the south.
- Five licences for the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bats, located approximately 1.3 km to the southeast.

- Destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats, located approximately 1.4 km to the south.
- Two licences for the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats, located approximately 1.7 km to the southwest.

The following EPSLs for amphibians, were recorded within 2 km of the site:

- Destruction of a resting place for great crested newts, located approximately 1.3 km to the northeast.

Great Crested Newt Licence Returns and Pond Surveys within 2 km of the Site

There are five pond surveys which recorded great crested newts as likely absent, within 2 km of the site.

Great Crested Newt Risk Zones

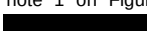
The site is situated within the NatureSpace Wokingham Green Impact Risk Zone (NatureSpace, 2018).

5.1.2 Field Survey – Habitats

The results of the field survey undertaken on 17th March 2025 are presented in map form on Figure 1 and described in Table 8. Priority Habitats are in bold, where applicable. Photographs of the site are provided in Appendix 1 and a full list of species, with scientific names, is provided in Appendix 2. The following habitats (Level 5 Primary Habitat labels and codes, where applicable) were recorded on site.

- Modified grassland – g4.
- Bramble scrub – h3h.
- Other developed land – u1b6.
- Other broadleaved woodland– w1g.

Table 8. Results of Field Survey - Habitats

Primary Habitat	Approximate Area (ha) / Length (km)	Location in Site	Main Common Plant Species	Essential Secondary Code	Additional Secondary Code	Evidence of and Potential for Protected Species
Modified grassland – g4	0.0329 ha	Mown grassland verge in the centre of the site	Common daisy, couch grass, Yorkshire-fog, curled dock, goose grass	N/A	106 - Mown 801 – Road verge or island	Foraging hedgehogs, reptiles, terrestrial great crested newts, (see target note 1 on Figure 1) 
Bramble scrub – h3h	0.019 ha	One parcel of bramble scrub is located to the northern boundary against adjacent houses on Mitford Close, while a smaller parcel is located to the western boundary bordering the turning circle of Mitford Close	Bramble, forsythia, dog-rose, ash	N/A	801 - Road verge or island	Nesting birds, dormice, foraging hedgehogs, great crested newts 
Other developed land – u1b6	0.038 ha	The hardstanding road and turning circle of Mitford Close which dominates the northern and western boundaries	Bristly oxtongue, scentless mayweed, yarrow	N/A	800 - Road	None
Other broadleaved woodland– w1g	0.0188 ha	Two parcels of woodland separated by modified grassland on the western and southwestern boundaries. The parcel to the southwestern	Field maple, poplar, sycamore, ash, hazel	31 – Secondary woodland 50 - Ditch	N/A	Nesting birds, foraging hedgehogs, dormice, stag beetles, great crested newts    bat roosting

Primary Habitat	Approximate Area (ha) / Length (km)	Location in Site	Main Common Plant Species	Essential Secondary Code	Additional Secondary Code	Evidence of and Potential for Protected Species
		boundary has a ditch across the parcel				suitability in trees (see Figure 2)

5.1.3 Field Survey – Species

The following fauna was recorded during the survey:

Birds:

- Chiffchaff.
- Crow.
- Great tit.
- Nuthatch.
- Red kite.
- Robin.
- Wood pigeon.
- Great spotted woodpecker.

5.2 GLTA

5.2.1 Tree Inspections

The location of the trees is provided in Figure 2. The results of the GLTA are provided in Table 9 and Figure 2.

All trees were surveyed for their suitability to support roosting bats including two off-site trees which are proposed to be pruned (T9 and T11, see Figure 2). This resulted in eight individual trees being assessed as FAR, as trees close to the southern boundary could not be fully assessed and are covered by dense ivy growth which could conceal other suitable bat roosting features. Only trees assessed as FAR have been included in Table 9.

Table 9. Results of GLTA

PEA Tree No.	Block Plan 100_01 Tree No.	Location (Grid Reference, 10 Figure)	Tree Species	DBH (cm)	Tree Age	FAR Assessment Description
T9	T17	SU7292469601	Sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)	21	Mature	Dense ivy growth covering tree potentially concealing PRFs
T11	T18	SU7292169601	Sycamore	19.5	Mature	Dense ivy growth covering tree potentially concealing PRFs
T12	T16	SU7291969602	White Poplar (<i>Populus alba</i>)	22.5	Mature	Dense ivy growth covering tree potentially concealing PRFs, not all elevations assessed due to lack of access from within site boundary
T13	T16	SU7292069602	Sycamore	27	Mature	Dense ivy growth covering tree potentially concealing PRFs, not all elevations assessed due to lack of access from within site boundary
T14	T16	SU7291969603	Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	45	Mature	Dense ivy growth covering tree potentially concealing PRFs, not all elevations assessed due to lack of access from within site boundary
T16	T16	SU7291969603	Ash	29	Mature	Dense ivy growth covering tree potentially concealing PRFs, not all elevations assessed due to lack of access from within site boundary
T28	T12	SU7292669607	Sycamore	22	Mature	Dense ivy growth covering tree potentially concealing PRFs
T29	T13	SU7292569606	Sycamore	32.5	Mature	Dense ivy growth covering tree potentially concealing PRFs

5.2.2 Foraging and Commuting Habitats

Table 10 details the habitats, which were recorded on site, which could potentially support foraging and commuting habitats.

Table 10. Foraging and Commuting Habitats

Habitat / Feature Description	Connectivity to Potential Roost	Connectivity to Wider Landscape
Other broadleaved woodland	Numerous trees within the woodland are assessed as FAR which could contain potential roosting features for bats.	Direct connections to adjacent Priority Habitat woodland to the south of the site boundary.
Bramble scrub and modified grassland	Adjacent to numerous trees that have been assessed as FAR which contain potential roosting features for bats.	The scrub and grassland connect to the on-site woodland providing a vegetated buffer edge.

5.2.3 Categorisation of Summer Roosting and Hibernation Suitability

Table 11 details the categorisation of summer roosting and hibernation suitability.

Table 11. Categorisation of Summer Roosting and Hibernation Suitability

PEA Tree No. (see Figure 2)	Block Plan 100_01 Tree No.	Roosting Suitability	Justification
T9	T17	FAR	Numerous areas of deciduous woodland and woodpasture and parkland located within 1 km of the site, including six areas of ancient woodland. There have been eleven granted EPSLs for roosting bats within 2 km of the site. The tree was covered in dense ivy which could conceal other potential suitable roosting features higher up the stem of the tree which could not be adequately seen.
T11	T18	FAR	Numerous areas of deciduous woodland and woodpasture and parkland located within 1 km of the site, including six areas of ancient woodland. There have been eleven granted EPSLs for roosting bats within 2 km The tree was covered in dense ivy which could conceal other potential suitable roosting features higher up the stem of the tree which could not be adequately seen. Not all elevations of the tree could be fully inspected due to lack of access from within the site boundary.
T12	T16	FAR	Numerous areas of deciduous woodland and woodpasture and parkland located within 1 km of the site, including six areas of ancient woodland. There

PEA Tree No. (see Figure 2)	Block Plan 100_01 Tree No.	Roosting Suitability	Justification
			have been eleven granted EPSLs for roosting bats within 2 km of the site. The tree was covered in dense ivy which could conceal other potential suitable roosting features higher up the stem of the tree which could not be adequately seen. Not all elevations of the tree could be fully inspected due to lack of access from within the site boundary.
T13	T16	FAR	Numerous areas of deciduous woodland and woodpasture and parkland located within 1 km of the site, including six areas of ancient woodland. There have been eleven granted EPSLs for roosting bats within 2 km of the site. The tree was covered in dense ivy which could conceal other potential suitable roosting features higher up the stem of the tree which could not be adequately seen. Not all elevations of the tree could be fully inspected due to lack of access from within the site boundary.
T14	T16	FAR	The tree was covered in dense ivy which could conceal other potential suitable roosting features higher up the stem of the tree which could not be adequately seen. Not all elevations of the tree could be fully inspected due to lack of access from within the site boundary
T16	T16	FAR	Numerous areas of deciduous woodland and woodpasture and parkland located within 1 km of the site, including six areas of ancient woodland. There have been eleven granted EPSLs for roosting bats within 2 km of the site. The tree was covered in dense ivy which could conceal other potential suitable roosting features higher up the stem of the tree which could not be adequately seen. Not all elevations of the tree could be fully inspected due to lack of access from within the site boundary.
T28	T12	FAR	Numerous areas of deciduous woodland and woodpasture and parkland located within 1 km of the site, including six areas of ancient woodland. There have been eleven granted EPSLs for roosting bats within 2 km of the site. The tree was covered in dense ivy which could conceal other potential suitable roosting features higher up the stem of the tree which could not be adequately seen.
T29	T13	FAR	Numerous areas of deciduous woodland and woodpasture and parkland located within 1 km of the site, including six areas of ancient woodland. There

PEA Tree No. (see Figure 2)	Block Plan 100_01 Tree No.	Roosting Suitability	Justification
			have been eleven granted EPSLs for roosting bats within 2 km of the site. The tree was covered in dense ivy which could conceal other potential suitable roosting features higher up the stem of the tree which could not be adequately seen.

5.2.4 Categorisation of Foraging and Commuting Suitability

Table 12 details the categorisation of habitats within/adjoining the site for their suitability to support foraging and commuting habitats for bats.

Table 12. Categorisation of Bat Foraging and Commuting Suitability

Habitat / Feature	Categorisation of Suitability	Justification
Other broadleaved woodland	Moderate	Direct habitat connectivity to adjacent off-site Priority Habitats and trees within the woodland that could have potential suitability for roosting bats.
Bramble scrub and modified grassland	Low	Provision of a buffer edge to the on-site woodland which can offer opportunities to foraging bats.

6. Evaluation and Potential Impacts Assessment

Table 13 sets out known and potential ecological constraints to development, and potential impacts assessment (in the absence of avoidance and mitigation measures), derived from the data search and field survey, including designated sites, ancient woodland, Priority Habitats, and protected species/species of conservation concern. Where a potential ecological constraint has been identified, further survey work and/or appropriate avoidance, mitigation, and compensation (as appropriate) is likely to be required to address the issue. **Further survey and/or mitigation measures are required for the valued ecological receptors highlighted in blue.**

Table 13. Evaluation and Potential Impacts Assessment

Ecological Receptor and Value	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
Designated Sites (Regional)	LNR located within 1km of site boundary	The site is not located within a designated site for nature conservation and is not located within 5 km of an SPA or SAC. There is one nationally protected site for nature conservation within 1 km of the site; Pearman's Copse LNR is 514m southwest from the site. The development will not result in significant adverse impacts on designated sites for nature conservation for the following reasons: • The proposed development site is separated from the nearest designated site by 514 m of existing dwellings, gardens, and roads. • The proposed development will be confined to the site, which is not located within a site designated for nature conservation. • The proposed development will comply with legislation relevant to reducing the impacts of construction, namely the Control of Pollution Act, 1974 (HM Government, 1974), the Environmental Protection Act, 1990 (HM Government, 1990), The Clean Air Act, 1993 (HM Government, 1993), The Environment Act, 1995 (HM Government, 1995), and the Pollution Prevention and Control Act, 1999 (HM Government, 1999). • The proposed development will conform to British Standards on noise and vibration (BS 5228-2009. Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites). For the above reasons, Pearman's Copse LNR should not be impacted upon by the development and further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and Pearman's Copse LNR.

Ecological Receptor and Value	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
Priority Habitats (Regional)	None on site. Immediately adjacent to the site boundaries.	Priority Habitats are not located within the site boundaries. The woodland parcels were assessed as other broadleaved woodland according to the UKHab methodology and do not share characteristics with the definition for Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat description (JNCC, 2016). However, as shown on magic maps, Priority Habitats are located within 1 km of the site, including deciduous woodland and woodpasture-parkland Priority Habitats immediately adjacent to the site boundary (Natural England, 2025) In the absence of avoidance and mitigation measures, construction and development operation activities could result in significant adverse effects on Priority Habitats. Recommendations for avoidance and mitigation measures relating to Priority Habitats have, therefore, been provided in Section 7.1.
Ancient woodland (Regional)	None on site. Close to the site boundary.	The site is not located within an area of ancient woodland or plantation on ancient woodland. There is one parcel of ancient woodland located within 1 km of the site known as Nores Hill which is 48 m to the southwest. In the absence of avoidance and mitigation measures, construction and development operation activities could result in significant adverse effects on ancient woodlands. Recommendations for avoidance and mitigation measures relating to ancient woodlands have, therefore, been provided in Section 7.1.
Trees (Site)	Present on site	Mature native trees are located on site. In the absence of avoidance and mitigation measures, construction and development operation activities could result in significant adverse effects on trees. Recommendations for avoidance and mitigation measures relating to trees have, therefore, been provided in Section 7.2.
Plants of conservation concern (N/A)	Negligible potential	No protected or notable rare plant species were noted during the survey. The areas of the site, which will be affected by the proposed works mostly have negligible potential to support plants of conservation concern (bramble scrub, modified grassland and other developed land). The broadleaved woodland habitat on site did not contain any protected or notable plant species. Therefore, plants of conservation concern are concluded to be absent from the site and further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and plants of conservation concern.
Invasive plant species such as rhododendron, Japanese knotweed (<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>) and giant hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>) (N/A)	None recorded	Plant species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) (HM Government, 1981) were not recorded on site. Therefore, further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and invasive plant species.

Ecological Receptor and Value	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
Invertebrates of conservation concern (N/A)	Potentially present	No invertebrates of conservation concern were recorded during the survey. The areas of the site, which will be affected by the proposed works mostly have negligible potential to support invertebrates of conservation concern (bramble scrub, modified grassland and other developed land). However, the woodland habitat on site could potentially support stag beetles. Recommendations to for avoidance and mitigation measures relating to Priority Habitats and ancient woodland have been provided in Section 7.1, which will also provide avoidance and mitigation measures for invertebrates of conservation concern.
Great crested newts (Site)	Unlikely to be on site	There are no ponds on site. There is one granted EPSL for great crested newts within 2 km of the site, approximately 1.3km to the northeast. There are suitable habitats for terrestrial activity of great crested newts on site including bramble scrub, modified grassland and woodland and the discarded materials (see target note 1, Figure 1). There is one pond within 500m of the site which is approximately 450 m to the east of the site, separated from the site by A327 Shinfield Road located in a semi-urban environment (as shown on Magic (Natural England, 2025)). There is one ditch in the southern corner of the site boundary within woodland but was dry at the time of the survey. The site is approximately located within the NatureSpace Wokingham Green Impact Risk Zone. As the proposals include the removal of all existing vegetation, which could impact great crested newts. Therefore, it is concluded appropriate to take a precautionary approach to ensure great crested newts are not harmed during the works, in the unlikely event that they are encountered (see in Section 7.3).
Common toads (Site)	Unlikely to be on site	For the same reasons given for great crested newts, it is concluded possible that common toads are present within the survey area. Recommendations for avoidance and mitigation measures relating to common toads have, therefore, been provided (see Section 7.4).
Reptiles (such as slow worms- <i>Anguis fragilis</i> , common lizards - <i>Zootoca vivipara</i> , and grass snakes- <i>Natrix helvetica</i>) (Site)	Low potential	The modified grassland is mown short and has been frequently used by local residents for dog walking. There are rubble piles on site (see target note 1 on Figure 1), which could support common species of reptiles. As reptiles are protected against killing and injury, and could be impacted on by the development proposals, avoidance measures for reptiles have been recommended (see Section 7.4).
Nesting birds (Site)	Potentially present	The site comprises trees, and scrub, which could support common species of nesting birds. As nesting birds are protected, recommendations to avoid disturbing nesting birds are provided in Section 7.5.

Ecological Receptor and Value	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
Birds of conservation concern (such as barn owl – <i>Tyto alba</i> , peregrine falcon – <i>Falco peregrinus</i> and black redstart – <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>) (Site)	Potentially present	Birds of conservation concern recorded on site during the field survey (wood pigeon) could potentially breed on site. Avoidance measures for breeding birds are provided in Section 7.5, which also relate to birds of conservation concern. Measures to retain and protect the trees, as detailed in Section 7.2, will also ensure that nesting bird habitats are avoided and protected.
Bats (To Be Determined)	Habitats on site are likely to support foraging/commuting bats Trees assessed as FAR were recorded in (see T9, T11, T12, T13, T14, T16, T28 and T29 on Figure 2)	Trees assessed as FAR were recorded in the woodland on site (see T12, T13, T14, T16, T28, T29 on Figure 2), which are proposed to be felled and trees off-site which are to be pruned (see T11 and T9 on Figure 2). Therefore, trees (see T9, T11, T12, T13, T14, T16, T28 and T29 on Figure 2) will require further assessment for roosting bats (see Section 8.1.1). The woodland habitat on site could potentially support foraging/commuting bats, which could be impacted on by the development proposals. Recommendations to for avoidance and mitigation measures relating to Priority Habitats and ancient woodland have been provided in Section 7.1, which will also provide avoidance and mitigation measures for foraging/commuting bats. A sensitive lighting plan has been recommended in Section 7.6.
Hazel dormouse (Site)	Potentially present	No signs of hazel dormouse were recorded during the survey. There are no granted EPSLs for hazel dormice located within 2 km of the site. However, the site contains two parcels of broad-leaved woodland with a small amount of interconnecting understory to off-site Priority Habitat woodland and ancient woodland. One parcel of bramble scrub is dense and is adjacent to the on-site woodland parcels providing direct habitat connectivity. As all habitats on-site are to be lost through the proposal, In the absence of avoidance and mitigation measures, construction and development operation activities could result in significant adverse effects on hazel dormice. Avoidance and mitigation measures relating to hazel dormice have, therefore, been provided in Section 7.8.
Brown hare (N/A)	Negligible potential	The site does not contain any habitats, which could support the brown hare, i.e., agricultural fields and open pasture. Therefore, the brown hare is concluded to be absent from the site, and further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and brown hares.

Ecological Receptor and Value	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
Water vole and otter (N/A)	Negligible potential	The site does not contain any habitats, which could support the water vole and otter, i.e., rivers and streams. Therefore, the water vole and otter are concluded to be absent from the site, and further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and water voles and otters.
Hedgehog (Site)	Potentially present	The modified grassland, bramble scrub and woodland on site on site and within adjacent properties could support hedgehogs, which is a Priority Species. As hedgehogs could be present in areas of the site, which would be impacted on by the proposals, avoidance measures for hedgehogs have been recommended in Section 7.4, in accordance with the duty placed on Local Planning Authorities to have due regard for biodiversity.

7. Recommendations for Avoidance and Mitigation

7.1 Priority Habitats and Ancient Woodland

The proposed development should comply with legislation relevant to reducing the impacts of construction, namely the Control of Pollution Act, 1974, the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, The Clean Air Act 1993, The Environment Act, 1995 and the Pollution Prevention and Control Act, 1999 and conform to British Standards on noise and vibration (BS 5228-2009. Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites).

The following avoidance and mitigation measures relating to off-site adjacent Priority Habitats and ancient woodlands are recommended:

- Materials should not be stored in or near off-site woodlands, ancient woodlands and trees.
- Construction activities should be confined to the site and not encroach into off-site woodland or Priority Habitats and ancient woodlands.
- Nesting bird habitat should be retained and protected and any removal of vegetation on site should be carried out outside the bird nesting period, as detailed in Section 7.5.
- An ECoW should be present on site during any site clearance activities, which are likely to involve the removal/disturbance of any vegetation. **In the unlikely event hazel dormice are found works will cease immediately and Natural England will be contacted to seek advice on how works can proceed lawfully (see Section 7.8).**
- A sensitive lighting plan should be adopted, to ensure that outside lighting does not adversely affect adjacent habitats and wildlife, particularly bats when foraging and commuting (see Section 7.6).

It is recommended a CEMP (Biodiversity), enforced via an appropriate planning condition, is prepared for the site. The CEMP (Biodiversity) should include the following:

- A map showing the locations of all ecological features.
- A risk assessment of the potentially damaging construction activities.
- Practical measures to avoid and reduce impacts during construction.
- Location and timing of works to avoid harm to biodiversity features, namely the parcels of woodland.
- Precautionary measures relating to protected species including, stag beetles, common toads, reptiles, great crested newts, nesting birds, roosting/foraging/commuting bats, hazel dormice, badgers, and hedgehogs.
- Responsible persons and lines of communications.
- Use of protective fences, exclusion barriers, and warning signs.

It is also recommended a BPES, enforced via an appropriate planning condition, is prepared, detailing how the Priority Habitats off-site, will be protected post-construction and how the enhancements will be implemented and managed in the long term.

Providing the recommendations given above are adhered to, Priority Habitats and ancient woodlands should not be adversely impacted upon by the development proposals.

7.2 Trees

Native trees should be retained, where possible and any trees lost as a result of the proposed development, should be replaced with equivalent numbers of native species.

To prevent damage to retained trees during development, a buffer zone should be put in place to protect the rooting area (Root Protection Area, which is calculated in accordance with British Standard 5837, 'Trees in Relation to Construction'), in which no construction activities should be permitted.

7.3 Great Crested Newts

As a precautionary approach to ensure great crested newts are not harmed during the proposed works, it is recommended that a fingertip search of the works area is carried out by a great crested newt licenced ecologist immediately prior to the commencement of the works, to search for great crested newts. This can be conducted at the same time as measures implemented for hazel dormice (see Section 7.8). An ECoW should be present on site during any site clearance activities, which are likely to involve the removal of any vegetation, as well as the removal of the discarded materials (see target note 1, Figure 1).

In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is found during the search, works would need to cease immediately and an EPSL for great crested newts should be obtained from Natural England before works continue.

7.4 Common Toads, Reptiles and Hedgehogs

An ECoW should be present on site during any site clearance activities, which are likely to involve the removal/disturbance of any vegetation, particularly the bramble scrub, woodland and discarded material piles (see target note 1, Figure 1). Any common toads, reptiles or hedgehogs found, should be allowed to move away into adjacent habitats unharmed, of their own accord.

7.5 Nesting Birds

Nesting bird habitat within the trees and scrub on site should be retained, where possible, as detailed in Section 0. However, if works which are likely to damage bird nests need to be carried out during the nesting period, there is potential that nesting birds could be harmed and disturbed. To ensure legal compliance, a check should be undertaken by an ecologist within 48 hours of works commencing, to confirm the presence/absence of nest sites. If nests sites are identified, works to that feature should be delayed until the nest site becomes inactive (species specific, but approximately 4-6 weeks maximum).

7.6 Bats

Recommendations to minimise the potential impacts of artificial external lighting on bat activity, are provided below (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023):

- Avoid prolonged use of outside lighting during the period dusk to dawn, particularly during the bat active season (April to October).
- Security lighting should be on a motion sensor and short duration timer (1 minute).
- Lighting that is required for security or safety reasons, should use a lamp of no greater than 2000 lumens (150 Watts) and should comprise sensor activated lamps.
- Red light bulbs should be used, where possible.

- LED luminaires with a warm white spectrum (<2700 Kelvin) are the preferred option and should be used where possible. Luminaires should feature peak wavelengths higher than 550 nm to minimise disturbance to bats. All luminaires should lack UV elements, metal halide and fluorescent sources should not be used.
- Lighting should be directed to where it is needed with minimal light spillage. This can be achieved by limiting the height of the lighting columns and by using as steep a downward angle as possible and/or a specialist bollard that directs the light below the horizontal plane (<90°).
- Internal luminaires should be recessed where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill.
- Waymarking inground markers with a low output and with cowls should be used to delineate path edges.
- Artificial lighting should not directly illuminate any potential bat roosting features or habitats of value to foraging bats, i.e., woodlands.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7.8 Hazel Dormouse

It has been concluded that the parcel of bramble scrub and on-site woodland could support hazel dormouse as there is interconnected understory connected to adjacent off-site woodland, Priority Habitats and ancient woodland. Given the small size of the bramble scrub to be affected (0.019 ha) and on-site woodland (0.0188 ha), it would disproportionate and impractical to survey for presence/absence of hazel dormice. Therefore, a Precautionary Method Statement for hazel dormice should be produced to enable clearance of the bramble scrub and woodland be undertaken lawfully.

The requirements of the Precautionary Method Statement are as follows:

- A pre-works inspection of the bramble scrub and woodland by a licensed ECoW by hand searching for field signs for dormice including feeding remains or nests at least 24 hours before vegetation clearance. Harm and/or injury to hazel dormice must be avoided.
- A toolbox talk will be given by the licensed ecologist to all contractors working on site, following the pre works inspection. A paper copy of the toolbox talk and this Precautionary Working Method Statement will be provided to contractors and kept on site for the duration of the works. All contractors will sign the toolbox register, to confirm they have read and understand the toolbox talk. Any contractors not present at the toolbox talk will need to sign the toolbox register, to confirm they have read and understand the toolbox talk and Precautionary Working Method Statement.
- Vegetation clearance works of the bramble scrub and woodland should be conducted using hand tools when hazel dormice are likely to have finished breeding but before they enter hibernation between 1st September and 31st October, in line with the current best practice for dormouse mitigation (Bright, P., Morris, P. & Mitchell-Jones, A., 2006).

- A licensed ECoW should supervise vegetation clearance works over the bramble scrub to ensure no dormice are harmed or injured. A phased approach to vegetation clearance will be undertaken of the bramble scrub where the ECoW will periodically check the vegetation at convenient points to confirm that dormice and dormice field signs are absent.

In the unlikely event that hazel dormice or field signs for hazel dormice are identified, all works should cease immediately, and Natural England should be contacted for advice on how best to proceed lawfully.

8. Further Survey Requirements

8.1 Bats

8.1.1 Further Surveys

Trees T9, T11, T12, T13, T14, T16, T28 and T29 were assessed as FAR, in accordance with best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Further surveys all trees assessed as FAR should be carried out according to one of the following methods:

- Aerial Inspection Surveys: three visits (either by ladder, climbing or mobile elevating work platform (MEWP)) to be conducted between May and September, with at least two from May to August inclusive. The visits should be carried out at least three weeks apart and during optimal weather conditions for surveying bats.
- Dusk Emergence Surveys: three visits to be conducted between May and September, with at least two visits between May to August inclusive. The visits should be carried out at least three weeks apart and during optimal weather conditions for surveying bats.

9. Biodiversity Enhancements

Below are a set of biodiversity enhancement measures, which should be implemented on site. These measures are in addition to avoidance measures for habitats, as detailed in Section 7.

- The use of appropriate SUDS. For example, in addition to permeable surfaces, a rain garden could be included (see Rainwater Gardens, a Guide for Residents, Woking Borough Council, 2018).
- The inclusion of at least one biodiverse roof (where possible), which can help to enhance habitat linkage across the site, particularly for invertebrates and birds.
- Open spaces should include a wildflower mix suitable for the geology of the site, is available from Emorsgate Seeds (Emorsgate Seeds, 2024).
- The installation of log piles along site boundaries, to provide habitat for invertebrates and reptiles.
- The installation of Improved Crevice Bat Box (or similar) on trees and buildings, would be beneficial to common and widespread bat species that are likely to be present on site, which can be purchased from NHBS (NHBS, 2024).
- The installation of Improved Cavity Bat Box (or similar) on trees and buildings, would be beneficial to common and widespread bat species that are likely to be present on site, which can be purchased from NHBS (NHBS, 2024).
- The installation of Vivara Pro Barcelona WoodStone Open Nest Box on buildings and trees would be beneficial to garden bird species. These nest boxes can be purchased from NHBS (NHBS, 2024).
- The installation of Vivara Pro Seville 28mm WoodStone Nest Box on buildings and trees would be beneficial to garden bird species. These nest boxes can be purchased from NHBS (NHBS, 2024).
- The installation of bee bricks, which can be purchased from NHBS (NHBS, 2024).
- The installation of a Hedgehog Nest Box, which can be purchased from NHBS (NHBS, 2024).
- The installation of a hibernacula for invertebrates, such as the National Trust Apex Insect House, which can be purchased from NHBS (NHBS, 2024).

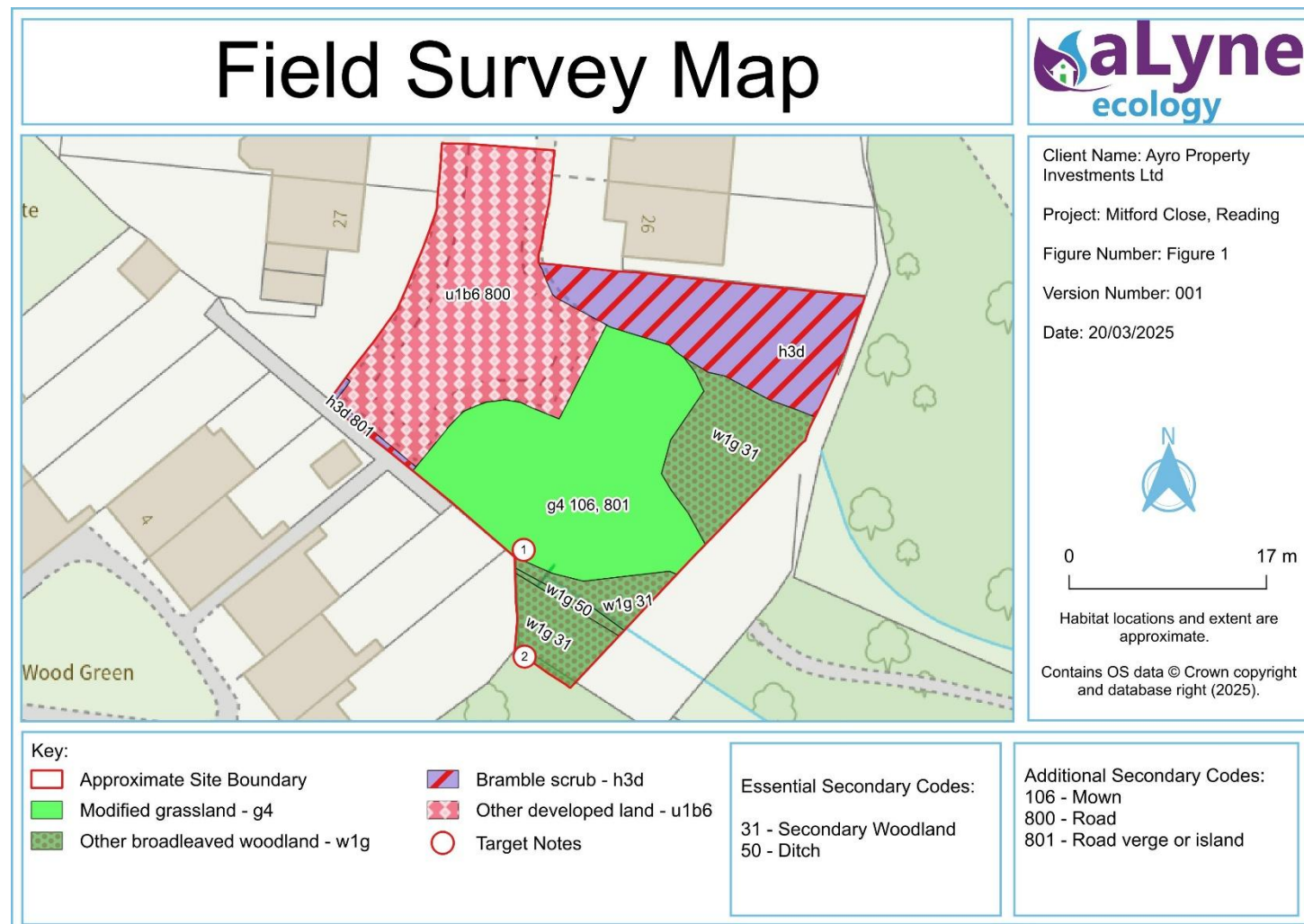
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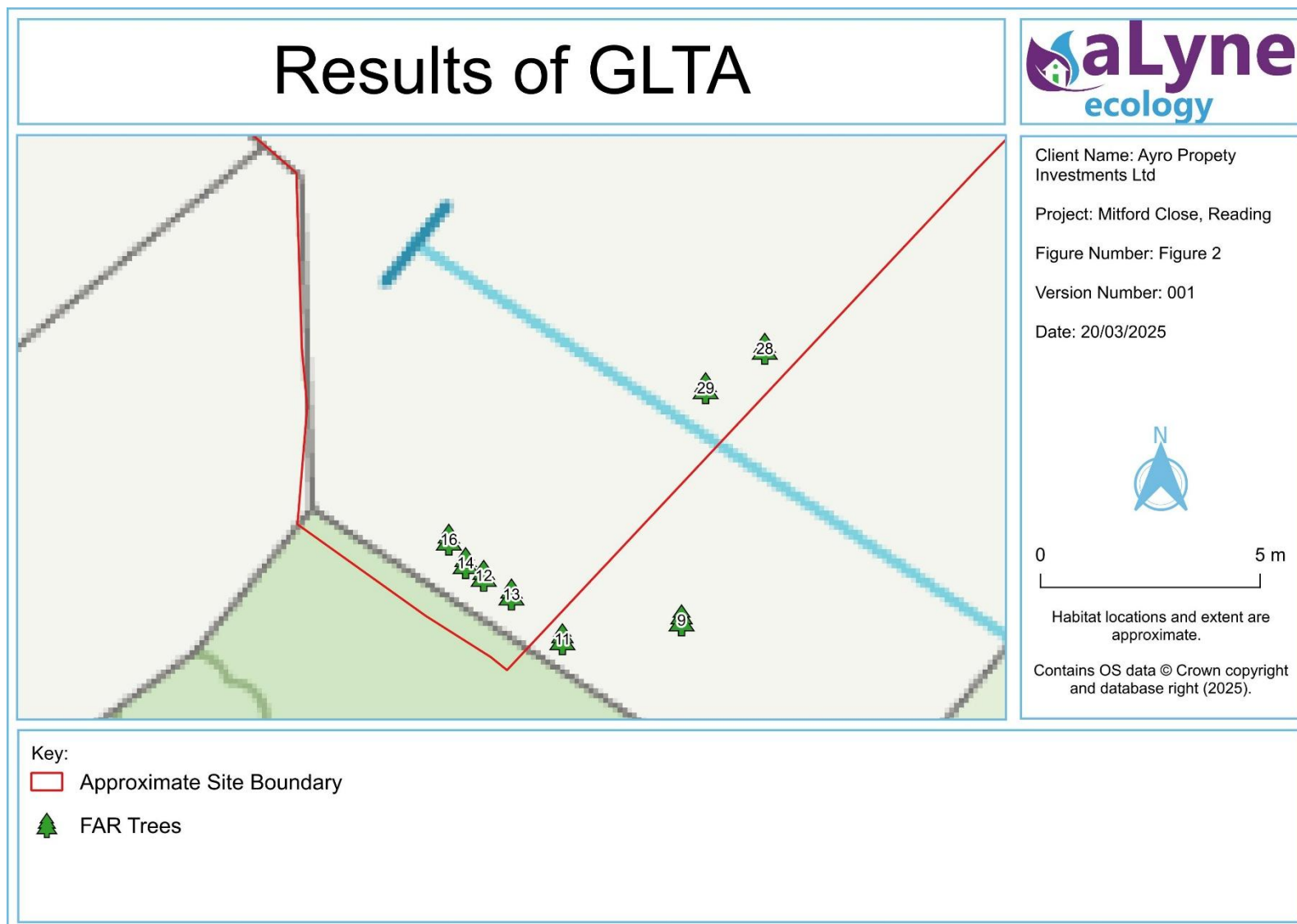
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11. Figures

11.1 Figure 1: Results of Field Survey



11.2 Figure 2: Results of GLTA



12. Appendix 1 – Site Photographs



Photograph 1—The north-western aspect of the site comprises developed land, sealed surface, in the form of a road and pavement. To the east of the developed land is mown modified grassland.



Photograph 2—Along the south-eastern boundary of the site lies other woodland, adjacent to the modified grassland. This woodland connects with off-site Priority Habitat deciduous woodland.



Photograph 3—In the south-western corner of the site, the developed land meets bramble scrub.



Photograph 4 —Woodland comprises mostly poplar and sycamore trees.



Photograph 5—From the southern corner of the site runs a ditch which was dry at the time of the survey.



Photograph 6—Along the south-western boundary of the site, on the edge of the modified grassland, is a pile of discarded material. See target note 1, Figure 1.



Photograph 7—Trees T1, T2 and T3 are Lawson cypress and are situated in the northern section of the site. T1 lies within the modified grassland, while T2 and T3 are located within bramble scrub.



Photograph 8—Bramble scrub runs along the majority of the northern boundary, into the north-eastern corner of the site.



Photograph 9 —Trees 12, T13, T14 and T16 in the southern corner were assessed as Further Assessment Required for roosting bats.



Photograph 10—A mammal track was identified on the south-western boundary of the site. This led off-site into the adjacent Priority Habitat deciduous woodland. See target note 2, Figure 2.

13. Appendix 2 – Full Species List and Target Notes

Habitats	Common Name		Species Name	DAFOR
Modified Grassland – g4	Common daisy		<i>Bellis perennis</i>	O
	Couch grass		<i>Elymus repens</i>	O
	Creeping buttercup		<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	F
	Curled dock		<i>Rumex crispus</i>	O
	Dove's-foot crane's-bill		<i>Geranium molle</i>	O
	Goose grass (cleavers)		<i>Galium aparine</i>	R
	Hogweed		<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	R
	Lords-and-ladies		<i>Arum maculatum</i>	O
	Pendulous sedge		<i>Carex pendula</i>	R
	Wood avens		<i>Geum urbanum</i>	R
	Yorkshire-fog		<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	D
Bramble Scrub – h3d	Ash		<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	O
	Bramble		<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	D
	Dog rose		<i>Rosa canina</i>	R
	Dove's-foot crane's-bill		<i>Geranium molle</i>	O
	Forsythia		<i>Forsythia</i> spp.	R
	Goose grass (cleavers)		<i>Galium aparine</i>	O
	Ivy		<i>Hedera helix</i>	F
	Lords-and-ladies		<i>Arum maculatum</i>	O
	Yorkshire-fog		<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	O
Other Broadleaved Woodland – w1g	Canopy	Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	O
		Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	F
		White poplar	<i>Populus alba</i>	A
		Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	A
	Understorey	Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>	F
		Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	O
	Ground Layer	Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	O
		Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	A
		Colt's foot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	O

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name	DAFOR
	Common daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	R
	Common dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	R
	Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	O
	Dog mercury	<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>	O
	Dog-rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>	R
	Goose grass	<i>Galium aparine</i>	O
	Green alkanet	<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>	O
	Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	R
	Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	R
	Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	F
	Marsh marigold	<i>Caltha palustris</i>	O
	Pendulous sedge	<i>Carex pendula</i>	O
	Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	R
	Tutsan	<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	R
	Wild parsnip	<i>Pastinaca sativa</i>	R
Developed Land, Sealed Surface – u1b	Bristly oxtongue	<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>	R
	Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	O
	Common mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	O
	Meadow grass	<i>Poa</i> spp.	R
	Scentless mayweed	<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i>	R
	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	F
	Yorkshire-fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	R
Birds	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	N/A
	Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	
	Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	
	Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>	
	Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	
	Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	
	Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>	
	Great Spotted Woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	

Target Note	Notes
1	Discarded material
2	

14. Appendix 3 - Legislation and Planning Policy

14.1 Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC

The following information has been taken from ec.europa.eu.

Natura 2000 is a network of sites selected to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. How a site is chosen depends on what it aims to protect.

Under the Habitats Directive (Art. 3 and 4), Member States designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to ensure the favourable conservation status of each habitat type and species throughout their range in the EU. Under the Birds Directive (Art. 4), the network must include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated for 194 particularly threatened species and all migratory bird species.

Member States designate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) according to scientific criteria such as '1% of the population of listed vulnerable species' or 'wetlands of international importance for migratory waterfowl'.

The choice of sites is based on scientific criteria specified in the directive, to ensure that the natural habitat types listed in the directive's Annex I and the habitats of the species listed in its Annex II are maintained or, where appropriate, restored to a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

14.2 The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC

The following information has been taken from ec.europa.eu.

The Birds Directive aims to protect all of the 500 wild bird species naturally occurring in the European Union. The 500 wild bird species naturally occurring in the European Union are protected in various ways:

- **Annex 1:** 194 species and sub-species are particularly threatened. Member States must designate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for their survival and all migratory bird species.
- **Annex 2:** 82 bird species can be hunted. However, the hunting periods are limited, and hunting is forbidden when birds are at their most vulnerable: during their return migration to nesting areas, reproduction, and the raising of their chicks.
- **Annex 3:** overall, activities that directly threaten birds, such as their deliberate killing, capture or trade, or the destruction of their nests, are banned. With certain restrictions, Member States can allow some of these activities for 26 species listed here.
- **Annex 4:** the directive provides for the sustainable management of hunting, but Member States must outlaw all forms of non-selective and large scale killing of birds, especially the methods listed in this annex.
- **Annex 5:** the directive promotes research to underpin the protection, management and use of all species of birds covered by the Directive, which are listed in this annex.

14.3 Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended)

Under these Regulations, the UK Government and Devolved Administrations are required to establish a network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the habitats and species identified in Annexes I and II, respectively, of European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, known as the Habitats Directive. The listed habitat types and species are those considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds). Of the Annex I habitat types, 78 are believed to occur in the UK. Of the Annex II species, 43 are native to, and normally resident in, the UK (www.JNCC.gov.uk). Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), together with Special Protection Areas

(SPAs), are the UK's contribution to the Bern Convention's Emerald Network of protected areas, known as Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCIs).

14.4 The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act

Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949 provides discretionary powers to enable local authorities to establish and manage Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019 Regulations, these powers have been extended from preserving flora and fauna to include enabling or facilitating its recovery or increase.

14.5 The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (As Amended)

The following information was taken from www.jncc.gov.uk and www.ukwildlife.com.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) is the primary national legislation, which protected animals, plants, and habitats in the UK. The act contains four parts and 17 schedules, which cover:

- Part 1: Wildlife (includes protection of birds, animals, and plants; and measures to prevent the establishment of non-native species which may be detrimental to native wildlife).
- Part 2: Nature conservation, the countryside, and National Parks (including the designation of protected areas).
- Part 3: Public rights of way.
- Part 4: Miscellaneous provisions of the act.

All naturally occurring wild birds in Great Britain are protected from persecution. It is illegal to kill, injure or 'take' any wild bird, take, or damage the nest of any wild bird whilst in use or being built. The eggs of all wild birds are also protected. If you have in your possession any live wild birds, egg(s) or any part of a wild bird you are committing an offence. The birds listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are further protected by Special Penalties all year round for those in Part 1 and during a specified closed season for those listed in Part 2.

Schedule 5 lists Animals Species that are protected under Section 9. Section 9 prohibits the intentional killing, injuring, or taking of the species listed in Schedule 5 and also prohibits their possession and the trade in the wild animals listed. The species listed are also further protected from disturbance by prohibiting actions that affect places they use for shelter.

Animals listed in Schedule 6 are protected from being killed or taken by certain methods under Section 11(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The methods listed are: self-locking snares, bows, crossbows, explosives (other than ammunition for a firearm), or live decoys. The species listed are also protected from the following activities: trap, snare or net, electrical device for killing or stunning, poisonous, poisoned or stupefying substances or any other gas or smoke, automatic or semi-automatic weapon, device for illuminating a target or sighting device for night shooting, artificial light, mirror or other dazzling device, sound recording, and mechanically propelled vehicle in immediate pursuit.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the country nature conservation bodies have a duty to notify any area of land which in their opinion is 'of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features' – these areas are known as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

14.6 Countryside & Rights of Way Act, 2000

The CRow Act gives a public right of access to land mapped as 'open country' (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land. The protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) is

strengthened in this legislation. The CROW Act also allows for the prosecution of third parties that damage or destroy a SSSI.

14.7 Hedgerow Regulations 1997

These regulations fall under the local authority and are intended to protect important hedgerows from removal. Owners and managers must request permission from their local authority before removing a hedgerow, and permission may not be granted if it supports a diverse range or protected species.

14.8 The Protection of Badgers Act, 1992

Badgers are fully protected in the UK by the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 and by Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence (amongst other things) to:

- Wilfully kill, injure, take, possess, or cruelly treat a badger.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett.
- Disturb a badger while it is occupying a sett.

14.9 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006

The site comprises deciduous woodland, which is a Priority Habitat. Priority Habitats are listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. Section 40 (1) of the NERC Act, 2006 imposes a duty to conserve biodiversity:

- *“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.”*

Section 40(3) of the Act explains that:

- *“Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat”.*

The duty applies to all local authorities and extends beyond just conserving what is already there to carrying out, supporting and requiring actions that may also restore or enhance biodiversity.

14.10 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Section 15 of the NPPF (paragraphs 187 to 195) considers the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment including habitats and biodiversity. Paragraph 187 states that planning and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- “Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
- Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; and
- Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and

incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;.

Paragraph 188 states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national, and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

Paragraph 192 states that in order to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- “Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and steppingstones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and
- Promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.”

When determining planning applications, Paragraph 193 states that local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying the following principles:

- If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons, and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”

As stated in paragraph 194 the following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- Potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- Listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- Sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.”

Paragraph 195 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the planned project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitat site (alone or in combination with other plans or projects) unless an appropriate assessment has concluded the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

14.11 Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC) became law in England and Wales in 2003 via the Water Environment (WFD) (England and Wales) Regulations. The Water Framework Directive has four main goals: (1) to prevent deterioration in water status, (2) all water bodies achieve good ecological status, good chemical status and good groundwater status (or potential), (3) reduce and eliminate sources of pollution and (4) contribute to achieving objectives of sites protected by other EU legislation.

14.12 Bern Convention

The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) was ratified by the UK Government in 1982. The principal aims of the Convention are to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats (listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention), to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species) listed in Appendix III. To this end, the Convention imposes legal obligations on contracting parties, protecting over 500 wild plant species and more than 1,000 wild animal species.

15. Appendix 4 – List of Abbreviations

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CSZ	Core Sustenance Zone
CWS	County Wildlife Site
EclA	Ecological Impact Assessment
EPSL	European Protected Species Licence
GCN	Great Crested Newt
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance
SPA	Special Protection Area
UKHab	UK Habitat Classification System

16. Appendix 5 – Tree Numbers Translation Table

PEA Tree No.	Block Plan 100_01 Tree No.
T9	T17
T11	T18
T12	T16*
T13	T16*
T14	T16*
T16	T16*
T28	T12
T29	T13

*Tree T16 in 'Block Plan 100_01' are grouped together but have been assigned individual tree numbers for the PEA report.