

Baseline Habitat Condition Assessment (BHCA)

Survey site:

205 Nine Mile Ride, Finchampstead, Wokingham RG40 3QB

Client:

Harefield Development

Survey date:

25th February 2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Wokingham Borough Council. The proposal is described as:

The demolition of one existing dwelling and the construction of three houses.

The BHCA survey is written to inform the baseline for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report, and is based on UKHabs habitat methodology in accordance with [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

The site survey was undertaken by Thomas Doarks BSc (Hons), accredited agent for Level 1 activities on Natural England Bat Licence (2025-83880-CL18-BAT).					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
25/02/2026	16	68	0	6	None
Survey limitations					
This report is intended to inform the baseline for the BNG assessment; however, due to the extent of on-site degradation, satellite imagery will also be required to retrospectively establish the baseline condition.					

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. 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.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, proposed plans in appendix 3, photos in appendix 4 and habitat condition assessments in Appendix 5).	
Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
Summary of Survey Findings	The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference SU 79862 64917 and has an area of approximately 0.14ha. The site comprises one dwelling (B1), associated garages (B2 & B3), a gravel driveway, a small parcel of vegetated garden, two small parcels of introduced shrub, areas of bare ground resulting from the commencement of development works (including rubble and soil piles), two ornamental hedgerows and one scattered tree. It is situated within the village of Finchampstead, Berkshire. There are scattered trees within and adjacent to the site and extending into the local garden landscape. Aerial imagery shows the local landscape to have a woodland character, with several small copses and woodland swathes in close proximity to the site. Waterbodies in the wider landscape include Longmoor Lake (~1.2km west), King’s Mere (~1.2km east) and Queen’s Mere (~1.5km northeast). Such features likely enhance the area for a variety of species, including bats, amphibians and reptiles.

Habitat classification and condition assessment:**510 – Bare ground [81 ruderal or ephemeral]**

The dominant habitat on site is bare ground with ruderals. The bare ground habitat is a result of the commencement of development works on site. It includes rubble piles, soil piles, stacks of wooden pallets, and log piles. The following species were identified within the bramble scrub:

Table 3a: Bare ground with ruderals species abundance.

Abundance	Species
Occasional	Perennial ryegrass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>), Common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), Daisy (<i>Bellis perennis</i>)
Rare	Cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>), Ground elder (<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>)

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the bare ground with ruderals habitat has been assessed as being in **poor** condition, as there is a limited number of plant species present, the vegetation cover is sparse, and the structure of the habitat is simple and lacks variation.

u1 – Built-up areas and gardens [vegetated garden 828, introduced shrubs 847]

At the south of the site is a small parcel of vegetated garden. Physical damage is evident and present on more than 20% of the parcel as a result of the development works. Due to intensive management and physical damage the sward height is relatively short <3cm.

U1b – Developed land: sealed surface

To the north and east of B1 are small areas of hardstanding patio and footpaths. To the southeast of the site is a small area of asphalt pavement.

u1b5 – Buildings

The site contains three buildings: a main residential bungalow (B1) and two associated garages (B2 and B3). All buildings are single storey and of brick construction. B1 has a pitched roof, while B2 and B3 have flat roofs.

	<u>u1b6</u> – Other developed land To the south of the site, a small metal shipping container is present and is currently used for storage associated with the ongoing development works. <u>u1c</u> - Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface Two parcels of artificial unsealed surface are present within the site. To the south, a gravel driveway provides vehicular access to the main dwelling (B1). This area is regularly disturbed through vehicle use and is of negligible ecological value. To the northeast of B1 and B2, an access ramp constructed of compacted crushed concrete provides entry to the rear of the site for ongoing construction activities. This area is similarly subject to frequent disturbance and does not support vegetation. <u>h2b</u> – Non-native and ornamental hedgerow There are two ornamental hedgerows on site: • H1 is located along the northeast site boundary and consists of cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>). The hedgerow measures approximately 1.5m in height, 1m in width, and extends for approximately 30m in length. • H2 is located along the southern site boundary and consists of common beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>). The hedgerow measures approximately 1.5m in height, 1m in width, and extends for approximately 15m in length. <u>Scattered trees 32</u> There is one scattered tree on site. T1 is a common beech located in the northeast of the site. It has a diameter at breast height of 10cm and is therefore classified as a 'small' tree. T1 appears to be a newly planted tree, part of the ongoing development works on site, it is young and provides no natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates such as deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark. In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, T1 has been assessed as moderate condition.
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<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the loss of bare ground, vegetated garden, developed land; sealed surfaces, buildings, other developed land, artificial unsealed surfaces and non-native and ornamental hedgerow.
<i>Recommendations</i>	As more than 25m ² of habitat is being removed or has already experienced habitat degradation a result of the commencement of development works on site, the proposals are not a householder application or a self-build scheme, a biodiversity net gain will be required as the proposals do not fall under any of the exemption cases. The BNG metric will draw upon this report, in addition to satellite imagery, to establish the baseline, given the extent of on-site degradation.

Appendix 1: Habitat map

Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan

Tree protection - 25127-TPP-01

Location of trees, categorisation & protection/management proposals

205 Nine Mile Road, Finchampstead, Wokingham RG40 3QB

Scale (B) A1 1:200

Provided drawings

Topic: (23 Sep 2025) 581243 - TPP-01

Layout: (19-Feb-2026) Proposed Block Plan In DWG.dwg

Tree types

T = Tree, H = Hedge

Application boundary

BS category B: Trees of moderate quality

BS category C: Trees of low quality

Trees to be removed

Proposed layout

Protective barrier/fencing

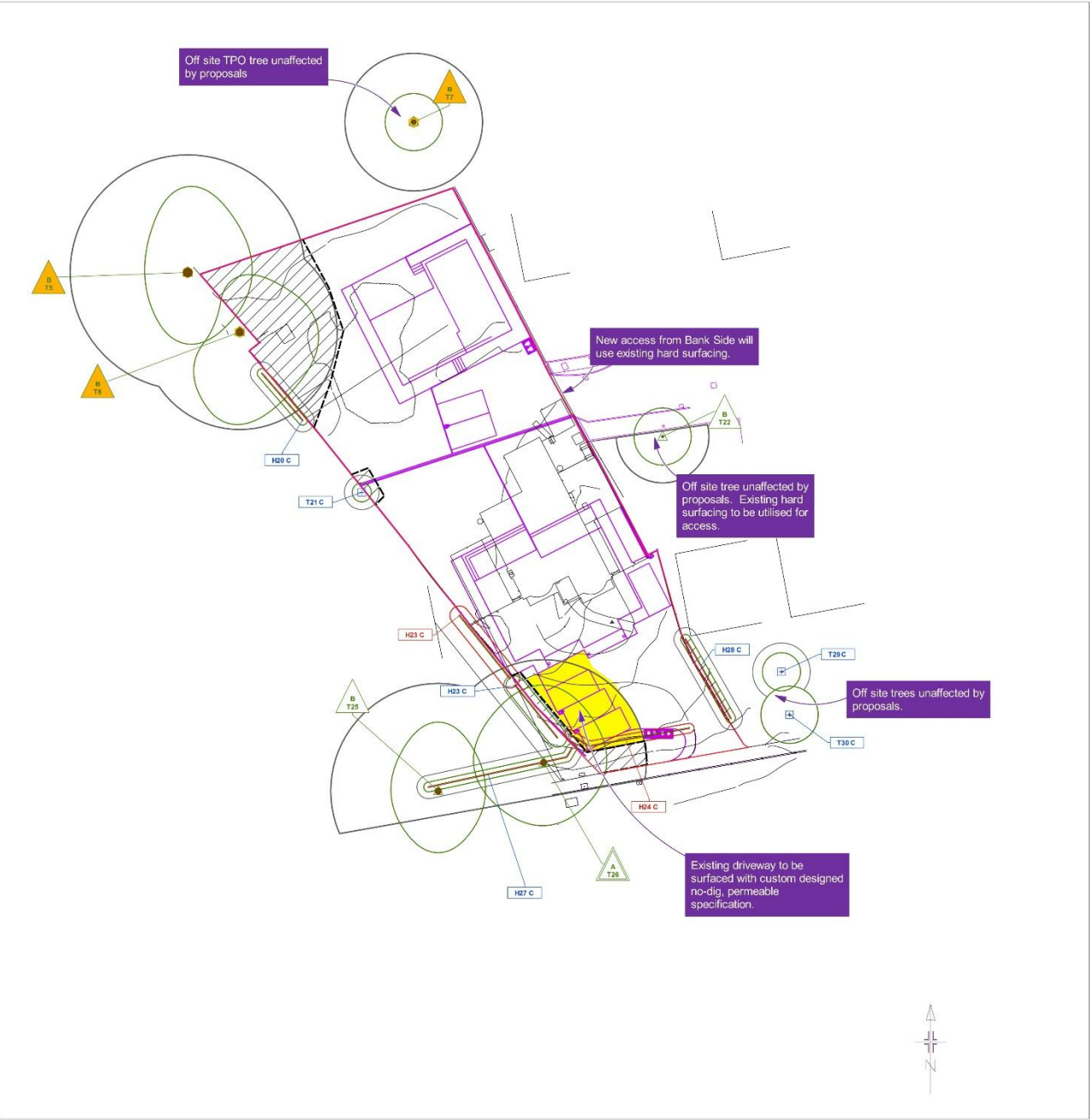
Construction exclusion zone

Precautionary area

Root protection area (RPA) boundaries for category A and B trees

Root protection area (RPA) boundaries for category C trees

Protected trees



Tree	Species	Category	Nominal RPA radius (m)	Tree works
T5	Oak	B	12.3	
T6	Oak	B	10.2	
T7	Scotts pine	B	7.2	
H20	Laurel	C	1.2	
T21	Rowan	C	1.8	
T22	Birch	B	3.6	
H23	Holly, laurel, hazel, rhododendron	C	1.2	Partial fall
H24	Beech, hazel	C	1.2	Fall for development
T25	Oak	B	9	
T26	Oak	A	9	
H27	Laurel	C	1.2	
H28	Laurel	C	1.2	
T29	Purple Norway maple	C	3	
T30	Walnut	C	3	

All retained trees & hedges

Carry out safety check and lift over site to 3-4 m as necessary

Offsite trees

T5, T6, T7, H20, T21, T22, H23, T25, T26, H27, H28, T29, T30

Trees not shown on original topographical survey

T7, H20, T21, H23, H27

SGN 1: Monitoring tree protection

Always:

- Have a pre-construction meeting with the tree expert just before development starts
- Use the tree consultant to regularly check that construction methods, equipment, and the tree consultant's assessment of the tree are in line with the agreed level of protection

SGN 2: Fencing protected trees

Always:

- Install protection cables to prevent damage
- Use a protection cable for all trees, i.e. 2 protection cables to prevent damage to the tree trunk
- Use a protection cable to prevent damage to the tree trunk
- Use a protection cable to prevent damage to the tree trunk

SGN 4: Pollution control

Always:

- Keep materials away from trees

SGN 9: Installing/upgrading surfacing in RPAs

Always:

- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work

SGN 11: Installing services in RPAs

Always:

- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work

SGN 12: Landscaping in RPAs

Always:

- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work
- Use the tree consultant to approve work

How to use this plan

These detailed guidelines on how to use the guidance notes (SGNs) can be found in a separate hard copy completion of all the SGNs. Manual for Managing Trees On Development Sites version 3.0, issued to the tree consultant at the pre-construction meeting (PCC). This should be available on the tree consultant's desktop at work. Additionally, an electronic pdf compilation of all the SGNs, with a summary of the drawings to the site plan, will be provided to the tree consultant. Alternatively, a pdf of each SGN can be downloaded by:

- visiting the tree consultant's website at the tree consultant's website
- visiting the tree consultant's website at the tree consultant's website
- visiting the tree consultant's website at the tree consultant's website

Permission is granted to scale from this drawing for Local Authority Planning Approval purposes relating to tree protection measures only. Where applicable this drawing is to be read in conjunction with the arboricultural report.

www.barrelltrees.com © Barrell Tree Consultancy

Appendix 4: Photos

Photo	Description
	Photo 1: The bare ground with rubble and soil piles to the north of B1, facing northwest.
	Photo 2: The small, damaged parcel of vegetated garden to the south of the site, facing west.



Photo 3: B1 in the centre of the site, facing south.



Photo 4: B2 to the east of B1, facing northeast.



Photo 5: B3 to the west of B1, facing northeast.



Photo 6: The small shipping container located on the bare ground at the south of the site, facing southwest.



Photo 7: The gravel driveway at the south of the site, facing northwest.



Photo 8: The crushed concrete access ramp at the east of the site, facing northwest.



Photo 9: H1 located along the southern site boundary of the site, facing southwest.



Photo 10: H2 located along the northeastern site boundary of the site, facing east.



Photo 11: T1 located in the northeastern corner of the site, facing east.

Appendix 5: Habitat Condition Assessments

Condition Assessment Criteria – Bare ground with ruderals		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
Core Criteria - must be assessed for all urban habitat types :			
A	Vegetation structure is varied, providing opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live, eat and breed. A single structural habitat component or vegetation type does not account for more than 80% of the total habitat area.	No	Vegetation is sparse and structure is unvaried.
B	The habitat parcel contains different plant species that are beneficial for wildlife, for example flowering species providing nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of year.	No	A limited number of plant species present.
C	Invasive non-native plant species (listed on Schedule 9 of WCA) and others which are to the detriment of native wildlife (using professional judgement) cover less than 5% of the total vegetated area. Note – to achieve good condition, this criterion must be satisfied by a complete absence of invasive non-native species (rather than <5% cover).	Yes	None observed.
Essential criteria relevant for habitat type achieved (Yes or No)			Yes
Number of criteria passed			1
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓
Results for habitats requiring assessment of 3 core criteria only:			
Passes all 3 core criteria AND Meets the requirements for good condition within criterion C		Good (3)	
Passes 2 of 3 core criteria OR Passes 3 of 3 core criteria but does not meet the requirements for good condition within criterion C		Moderate (2)	
Passes 0 or 1 of 3 core criteria		Poor (1)	✓

Condition Assessment Criteria – Scattered trees - T1			Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes/Justification
A	The tree is a native species (or more than 70% within the block are native species).		Yes	T1 is native.
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).		Yes	Individual trees automatically pass.
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).		No	T1 is not mature.
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by anthropogenic activities such as vandalism or herbicide use. There is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.		No	Evidence of anthropogenic activities identified: a bamboo trellis has been placed within the canopy of T1.
E	Natural Ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.		No	None observed.
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.		Yes	More than 20% of the tree canopy area has vegetation underneath.
Number of criteria passed				3
Condition Assessment Result		Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ✓	
Passes 5 or 6 of 6 criteria		Good (3)		
Passes 3 or 4 of 6 criteria		Moderate (2)	✓	
Passes 0, 1 or 2 of 6 criteria		Poor (1)		

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Version control			
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Draft	0.1	Thomas Doarks BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist	26/02/2026
Proof	0.2	Zenobia – Jay Pattison BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	05/03/2026
Final	1.0	Thomas Doarks BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist	07/03/2026