A1 Roberts Properties Limited

22a and 22b Barkham Ride
Finchampstead

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Job No: 243351
November 2024

AAe
Environmental Consultants

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8 Cholswell Court
Shippon
Abingdon
OX13 6HX
T 01235 536042
F 01235 523849
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Report for:
A1 Roberts Properties Limited
31 Barkham Ride
Finchampstead
Berkshire
RG40 4EX

22a and 22b Barkham Ride Finchampstead

Issued by

[redacted]
A R Beaumont BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM

Approved by

[redacted]
J D Thornber BSc (Hons) MCIEEM

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AA Environmental Limited (Registered Office)
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon
Abingdon
Oxon
OX13 6HX
T 01235 536042
F 01235 523849
E info@aae-ltd.co.uk
W www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Company No. 8474322

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Overview

1.1 AA Environmental Limited (AAe) has been commissioned by A1 Roberts Properties Limited to carry out an ecological survey of the redevelopment proposals at 22a and 22b Barkham Ride, Finchampstead. The aims of the survey were to:

- provide a description of the existing habitat types;
- determine the existence and location of any ecologically valuable areas; and
- identify the presence of any protected species.

1.2 This information will serve to assess the ecological impact of the proposals and identify any ecological constraints and/or mitigation measures required and also identify any enhancement measures that may be available.

1.3 The redevelopment proposals are for the construction of two residential dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping, requiring the demolition of the existing buildings and clearance of some vegetation.

Site Description

1.4 The site is located off Barkham Ride in Finchampstead, centred at National Grid Reference: SU 789657 and covers less than 0.1 of a hectare. The site comprised the existing buildings with associated hardstanding and vegetation. The site is bordered by Barkham Ride to the north, the Grange Centre (small business park) to the east and Rooks Nest Farm to the south and west (Figure 1).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

General

2.1 The study comprised two key phases: a desk-top study; and a walk-over field survey. The study was undertaken with reference to the Institute of Environmental Assessment's '*Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment*' (1995), Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) '*Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*' (2017) and BS 42020: 2013 '*Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development*'.

Desk-top Study

2.2 A review of the Preliminary Roost Assessment Report (dated November 2023) produced by Plan Ecology Limited was carried out. Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) was consulted in order to obtain baseline data held for the site and the surrounding 1 km area.

2.3 In addition, as certain baseline data is now readily available on the internet, the Multi-agency website (http://magic.defra.gov.uk/) was consulted to determine whether any part of the site or nearby habitats have been statutorily or otherwise designated and a review of Google Earth's satellite imagery (http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/index.html) was completed to determine past land uses of the site and surrounding land.

Field Survey

2.4 It was necessary to supplement the information obtained from the desk-top study with a walk-over field survey, in order to:

- ascertain whether, while the site itself or nearby habitats might not be covered by any ecological designations, they could be of ecological interest and/or contain protected species; and

- establish the ecological value of the site in order for the overall disturbance to ecosystems within the area to be fully evaluated.

2.5 An ecological walk-over survey of the site was carried out on Thursday 7 November 2024. The dominant plant species were recorded, and habitats classified according to their vegetation types and presented in the standard UK Habitat Classification System (*UK Hab Ltd, 2023*). The weather conditions at the time of survey were: 80% cloud cover; wind speed 3 (Beaufort scale); temperature 10°C; and no precipitation.

Habitat Evaluation

2.6 By applying recognised criteria produced by Ratcliffe (1977), the following seven-point scale was used to rank the importance of the habitat types and species they support. The value of each habitat was ranked according to its importance in a local context (a summary of the Ratcliffe criteria is attached at Appendix A):

- low value;
- low to intermediate value;
- intermediate value;
- intermediate to high value;
- high value (Local/District importance);
- very high value (County importance e.g. Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), County Wildlife Site); and
- exceptional value (National importance e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).

Fauna

[redacted]

Bats

2.10 Currently there are 17 species of bat known to breed in the UK. All species and their roosts are protected under Regulation 41 of *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. As a signatory to the *Bonn Convention* (Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe) the UK is also required to protect their habitats. This legislation makes it illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats or to obstruct access to, damage or destroy bat roosts. Under the law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

2.11 A visual survey of the site was completed to record any evidence of bats or features that could provide potential roosting opportunities[1]. The survey was carried out following the guidelines provided by the Bat Conservation Trust[2] and by an experienced and licensed ecologist[3]. A Preliminary Ground Level Roost Assessment was completed covering the various trees scheduled to be felled. A careful inspection of each tree was carried out to identify those features that are important for roosting bats. Surveying trees presents particular problems at any time of the year as bats will use a wide variety of roost sites in cavities, splits, cracks, knotholes and under loose bark, many of which are not easily detected from the ground. Each tree was assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- **NONE** – Either no PRF's in the tree or highly unlikely to be any.
- **FAR** – Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree.
- **PRF** – A tree with at least one PRF present.

2.12 Where possible, any tree categorised as **FAR** or **PRF** was then subject to a more detailed assessment to either confirm PRFs are present and/or fully inspect any PRFs to accurately subcategorise each tree into:

- **PRF-I** – is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitat.
- **PRF-M** – PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

2.13 The surrounding habitat was also surveyed to identify any important features such as mature trees with suitable features for roosting bats and any established lines of vegetation that might provide important flightlines.

2.14 Evidence of bats is usually detected by any one or more of the following signs:

- the presence of bat droppings, which tend to accumulate under established roost sites or at roost entrances;
- the accumulation of large numbers of moth wings, which have been discarded by feeding bats;
- areas of staining by urine or from fur rubbing; and
- the presence of bats themselves or their corpses.

2.15 The visual survey was facilitated by the use of binoculars, ladders, powerful torches (1M candlepower) and a Ridgid Micro CA-350 Inspection Camera endoscope.

Herpetofauna

Amphibians

2.16 All amphibian species have some level of protection under *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).* Great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) are protected under *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)*. The intentional or reckless killing, injury or taking, and intentional or reckless disturbance of great crested newts whilst occupying a 'place used for shelter or protection', is prohibited, as is the destruction of these places.

Reptiles

2.17 All reptile species are protected at some level under Schedule 5 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as*

[1] A Preliminary Roost Assessment covering the buildings was completed by Plan Ecology Limited and the findings were still considered valid
[2] Collins, J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.
[3] Lead surveyor was Alan Beaumont, MSc BSc (Hons) MCIEEM – 2018-37192-CLS-CLS

amended). The more common species of reptiles, which include slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*), common or viviparous lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), adder (*Vipera berus*) and grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) are protected by the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* by part of *Section 9(1)* and all of *Section 9(5).* This means that they are protected against intentional or reckless killing and injuring (but not 'taking') and against sale and transporting for sale.

2.18 An assessment of the site was carried out to determine its suitability for herpetofauna by recording the habitats present. In addition, any natural/artificial refugia present on the site was lifted to check for any sheltering animals or evidence of animals, such as sloughs (shed skins).

Other Species

2.19 In accordance with good practice, the site was checked for any evidence of other protected species or species of particular note.

3.0 RESULTS

Desk-top Study

3.1 A review of the previous Preliminary Roost Assessment Report produced by Plan Ecology Ltd was carried out. No evidence of bats was recorded during the internal and external inspection of the buildings, with the buildings assessed as providing **negligible** bat roosting potential.

3.2 A summary of the baseline data obtained from TVERC has been provided and detailed in Table 1; please note, due to sensitivity/copyright, a copy of the report cannot be reproduced but can be requested by the Local Planning Authority[4].

3.3 There are no statutory designated ecological sites located on or adjacent to the site. The nearest statutory designated site is Longmoor Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which forms part of a Local Nature Reserve (LNR), located 0.65 km to the south-west of the site. The nearest non-statutory designated site is Brook Farm Meadows Local Wildlife Site (LWS), located approximately 0.43 km to the north-east of the site. Full details of the designated sites located within the 1 km search area are provided in Table 1.

3.4 There were no records of protected species located on or adjacent to the site. There are a number of records of protected species within the 1 km study area, the majority of which were supplied with specific 6-figure grid references allowing a high-resolution indication of their locations. Further details of protected species recorded within 1 km of the site are provided in Table 1.

3.5 According to the Multi-agency Website, there are no Habitats of Principal Importance (HPIs) located on or adjacent to the site, with the nearest HPI being a Traditional Orchard, located approximately 0.04 km to the north of the site.

3.6 Google Earth Imagery shows that the site has remained largely unchanged since 1999, being dominated by the existing buildings, with associated hardstanding and garden areas.

Table 1: Summary of Data Search Results (TVERC)

Statutory Designated Sites		
Description	**Protection/designation**	**Distance/direction**
Longmoor Bog	SSSI	0.65 km to the SW
Longmoor Bog	LNR	0.65 km to the SW
Non-Statutory Designated Sites		
Description	**Protection/designation**	**Distance/direction**
Brook Farm Meadows	LWS	0.43 km to the NE
Longmoor Lake	LWS	0.66 km to the SW

[4] TVERC data cannot be passed on to any third parties (excluding local authorities), without express written permission.

The Moors (including Sand Martins Golf Couse Edge)	LWS	0.77 km to the NE
Longmoor Woodland and Bog, California Country Park	LWS	0.86 km to the SW
Protected/notable Species (Specific Grid References)		
Description	**Protection/designation**	**Distance/direction**
Bat (*Chiropter sp.*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	0.13 km to the S
Stag Beetle (*Lucanus cervus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species (against sale) & Priority Species	0.14 km to the E
[redacted]		
Grass Snake (*Natrix helvetica*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	0.25 km to the N
Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*)	Protected Species (against sale)	0.25 km to the N
Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*)	Protected Species (against sale)	0.25 km to the N
Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	0.35 km to the NE
Natterer's Bat (*Myotis nattereri*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	0.35 km to the NE
Brown Long-eared Bat (*Plecotus auritus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	0.35 km to the NE
Common Toad (*Bufo bufo*)	Protected Species (against sale) & Priority Species	0.38 km to the N
Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*)	Protected Species	0.39 km to the SW
West European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)	Priority Species	0.41 km to the SE
Pipistrelle Bat species (*Pipistrellus sp.*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	0.46 km to the SE
Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*)	Protected Species	0.47 km to the NNW
Cinnabar (*Tyria jacobaeae*)	Priority Species	0.48 km to the N
Myotis Bat species (*Myotis sp.*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	0.58 km to the E
Noctule Bat (*Nyctalus noctula*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	0.58 km to the E
Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	0.58 km to the E
Long-eared Bat species (*Plecotus sp.*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	0.58 km to the ESE
Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*)	Priority Species	0.59 km to the WNW
Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*)	Priority Species	0.59 km to the WNW
Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*)	Priority Species	0.59 km to the WNW
House Sparrow (*Passer domesticus*)	Priority Species	0.59 km to the WNW
Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)	Priority Species	0.59 km to the WNW
Linnet (*Linaria cannabina*)	Priority Species	0.59 km to the WNW
Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*)	Priority Species	0.59 km to the WNW
Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*)	Priority Species	0.59 km to the WNW
White Admiral (*Limenitis camilla*)	Priority Species	0.65 km to the SW
Nathusius's Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	0.67 km to the NNW
Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	0.67 km to the NNW
Western Barbastelle (*Barbastella barbastellus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	0.67 km to the NNW
Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*)	Protected Species	0.67 km to the NNW
Slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	0.69 km to the SW
Adder (*Vipera berus*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	0.71 km to the SW
Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	0.71 km to the SW
Leisler's Bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	0.72 km to the WNW
Reed Bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*)	Priority Species	0.74 km to the SSW
Brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*)	Protected Species	0.74 km to the SSW
European Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	0.75 km to the SW
Palmate Newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*)	Protected Species (against sale)	0.76 km to the SW
Knot Grass (*Acronicta rumicis*)	Priority Species	0.78 km to the SW

Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	0.8 km to the NE
Purple Emperor (*Apatura iris*)	Protected Species	0.82 km to the SSW
Shaded Broad-bar (*Scotopteryx chenopodiata*)	Priority Species	0.88 km to the SSW
Silver-studded Blue (*Plebejus argus*)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.06 km to the SW
Protected/notable Species (Coarse Resolution Records)		
Description	**Protection/designation**	**Record Accuracy**
Black Redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*)	Protected Species	1 km
Crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*)	Protected Species	1 km
Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	1 km
Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapilla*)	Protected Species	1 km
Hobby (*Falco subbuteo*)	Protected Species	1 km
Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*)	Protected Species	1 km

NB: All distances are calculated from the centre of the site, National Grid Reference: SU 789657.
SSSI = Site of Special Scientific Interest, LNR = Local Nature Reserve, LWS = Local Wildlife Site.
European Protected Species = species listed under *The Habitats Directive* Annexes II and IV.
Protected Species = species listed under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* Schedules 1, 5 and 8.
Priority Species = species listed under the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006* Section 41.

Field Survey

Introduction

3.7 The results of the survey are presented as a series of habitat descriptions for each of the areas on the site. The Existing Habitats Plan is shown on Figure 2, and the habitat descriptions should be read in conjunction with this Plan. An indicative plant species list is attached at Appendix B (nomenclature follows Stace, 2019) and a series of site photographs attached at Appendix C.

Habitat Types and Evaluation

Developed Land/Sealed Surface

3.8 The buildings comprised a semi-detached property with associated hardstanding (patio areas) and various storage containers also present. The buildings and associated hardstanding areas provided limited value for any wildlife.

Habitat value: Low

Artificial Unvegetated/Unsealed Surface

3.9 The existing access, driveway and material storage areas were made up of bare ground and crushed concrete. There were areas of scrap metal and a number of vehicles (some discarded/scrap) and a marquee also recorded.

3.10 These areas provide very limited value for wildlife.

Habitat value: Low

Bramble scrub

3.11 There were areas of overgrown scrub, which had become established around the site boundaries through lack of management. These areas were dominated by bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*), with common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), hedge bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*) and common ivy (*Hedera helix*) also present.

3.12 The scrub provides some foraging and sheltering opportunities for wildlife, including bird nesting habitat.

Habitat value: Intermediate

Tall Ruderal Vegetation

3.13 Alongside the scrub, there was areas of tall ruderal vegetation. Species recorded included common nettle, hedge bindweed, bramble, great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense)*, cleavers (*Galium aparine*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus)*, Canadian fleabane (*Conyza canadensis*) and white dead-nettle (*Lamium album*).

3.14 The ruderal vegetation provided some foraging and sheltering opportunities for wildlife but its ecological value is limited due to its restricted size.

Habitat value: Low to Intermediate

Vegetated Garden

3.15 There were limited areas of garden associated with the properties. These were dominated by lawns, with species recorded included perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire-fog, ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and dandelion (*Taraxacum spp.*).

3.16 The vegetated garden, due to its limited size and fragmented nature, provided only limited ecological value.

Habitat value: Low

Hedgerow

3.17 There was a single cherry laurel hedge recorded along part of the northern boundary. The hedgerow due to its limited length and monoculture of cherry laurel provided very limited value for wildlife.

Habitat value: Low

Urban Trees

3.18 A number of individual trees were recorded on site and at the site boundaries. Semi-mature/mature species recorded included silver birch (*Betula pendula*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Lawson cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) and holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), with a dead apple (*Malus sp.*) tree located off-site.

3.19 The trees provide sheltering and foraging opportunities for a range of wildlife and provide some bird nesting habitat.

Habitat value: Intermediate

Fauna

[redacted]

Bats

3.21 The buildings recorded on the site have been assessed to provide negligible roosting value for bats (survey completed by Plan Ecology Limited). The site, being dominated by buildings and bare ground, provides only limited foraging opportunities for bats. The results of the tree inspection are detailed in Table 2, which follows the numbering provided in the Arboricultural Report produced by Mark Welby (dated September 2024). A number of trees require felling, but all have been assessed under the category **NONE**, due to their age, size and/or lack of any obvious PRF's. The off-site apple tree was assessed under the category **FAR** due to the presence of a rot hole on one branch. On further investigation, the rot hole was fully investigated with no evidence of bats recorded and consequently the tree was assessed under the category **PRF-I**. **N.B. The apple tree is located off-stie and consequently scheduled to be retained.**

Table 2: Tree Assessment

Tree no	Species	Observations	Roosting Value/ Potential
01	Lawson Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*)	Tree lacking any PRFs	**NONE**
02	Lawson Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*)	Tree lacking any PRFs	**NONE**
08	Common Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)	Tree lacking any PRFs	**NONE**
28	Common Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)	Tree lacking any PRFs	**NONE**
29	Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)	Tree lacking any PRFs	**NONE**

Herpetofauna

3.22 There were no ponds on the site and therefore no breeding opportunities for any species of amphibian. The site, being dominated by buildings and associated hardstanding areas/bare ground, does not provide optimal terrestrial habitat for any species of herpetofauna. In addition, despite a careful search of the site, no species of herpetofauna were seen or found sheltering under any refugia lifted during the survey. In addition, the closest record returned by TVERC for great crested newt was 800 m away, with the nearest reptile record returned for a grass snake located over 200 m away, with intervening barriers to movement including residential development and the main road (Barkham Ride).

Other Wildlife

3.23 Apart from a few common species of birds, either recorded on the site or flying overhead, no other species of any note were recorded.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 The redevelopment proposals are for the construction of two residential dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping, requiring the demolition of the existing buildings and clearance of some vegetation. There are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals. The site is of overall low ecological value, with the species recorded described as common or abundant and are found in similar places across much of Britain, with no evidence of protected species recorded.

4.2 Although there are considered to be no over-riding ecological constraints to the redevelopment proposals, a series of generic mitigation measures, as detailed below, could be implemented to reduce any impact the development proposals may have on local wildlife. There is also an opportunity to implement some enhancement measures to increase the nature conservation value of the site in the long term in accordance with Government guidance as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023[5].

4.3 Although the trees scheduled to be felled have been assessed under the category **NONE** for roosting bats, if the off-site apple tree (assessed under the category **PRF-I**) requires felling then this should be felled by competent Tree Surgeons and in accordance with the following precautionary approach:

- all operatives will be given a toolbox talk so that they are fully aware of current legislation protecting bats and their roosts;
- a re-check of any PRFs should be completed by a licensed bat surveyor immediately prior to felling;
- where possible, cross-cutting will be avoided in proximity to cavities or hollows;
- split limbs under tension will be wedged open to prevent their closure when pressure is released, potentially trapping bats;
- the tree will be felled in manageable sections, with each section carefully lowered to the ground with any openings left clear to allow any bats inside an opportunity to escape; and

[5] Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London.

- any loose bark removed carefully before each section is felled, to avoid trapping bats when the limb falls.

4.4 In the unlikely event of any bats being encountered on the site, then works should stop immediately and Natural England contacted so that appropriate advice can be provided.

4.5 It should be noted that all species of wild bird and their nests are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Therefore, site clearance should be timed to avoid the main bird nesting season, which, in general, runs from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible, a check should be carried out prior to any clearance works to ensure there are no active nests present.

4.6 In order to protect any vegetation to be retained, suitable fencing may be required at certain locations to reduce the possibility of any damage that could be caused during the works. To minimise accidental damage, any overhanging branches should be pruned back to suitable live growth points. All works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced specialist contractor and should conform to current industry best practice, i.e. BS 3998: 2010 '*Tree Work - Recommendations*'. The retention of these features will maintain existing commuting/foraging routes currently utilised by local wildlife.

4.7 Where possible, any new boundary treatment should be designed to promote permeability of the site to minimise fragmentation and allow free movement of wildlife throughout the site, for example by strengthening/enhancing any existing boundary vegetation, planting up a series of new hedgerows and/or installing post and rail fences. If close boarded fences are required for security reasons, these should be minimised and raised slightly off the ground (c. 150-200 mm) to allow animals to pass underneath.

4.8 As part of the proposals, soft landscaping will be carried out. Where any new planting is proposed it should aim to use native species, but where this is not practicable then species of known value for wildlife can be used. In particular, flowering plants will be of benefit to invertebrate species and shrubs and trees may provide nesting opportunities for birds once they become established.

4.9 The site could be further enhanced by providing roosting, nesting and sheltering opportunities for a range of species and the creation of new wildlife habitats, such as some of those recommended by the Chartered Institute of Ecology Environment and Management's published Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Guidance, and listed below:

- Nest boxes
- Bat boxes
- Insect boxes/bee bricks
- Pollinator nest sites
- Planting wildflowers

4.10 The effects of lighting on plants and animals are difficult to assess, but it is thought that lighting can adversely affect invertebrates, birds and bats. Although the site currently experiences some light spillage from on-site sources and neighbouring properties and roads, in accordance with good practice, any new lighting to be introduced should be designed to minimise light spillage and pollution.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 The redevelopment proposals are for the construction of two residential dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping, requiring the demolition of the existing buildings and clearance of some vegetation.

5.2 An ecological survey has been carried out, supplemented by obtaining available baseline data from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre. The findings from the survey and review of baseline data have provided information to assess the impact of the proposals on species and/or features of ecological/biodiversity value.

5.3 There are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals. The site is of overall low ecological value, with the species recorded described as common or abundant and are found in similar places across much of Britain, with no evidence of protected species recorded.

5.4 Overall the findings of this ecological appraisal would indicate that there are no ecological constraints to the redevelopment proposals to preclude planning permission being granted. A range of generic mitigation/enhancement measures have been suggested and, if implemented effectively, would reduce the impact of the works on local wildlife, avoid contravention of current legislation.

243351/ARB AA Environmental Limited

November 2024

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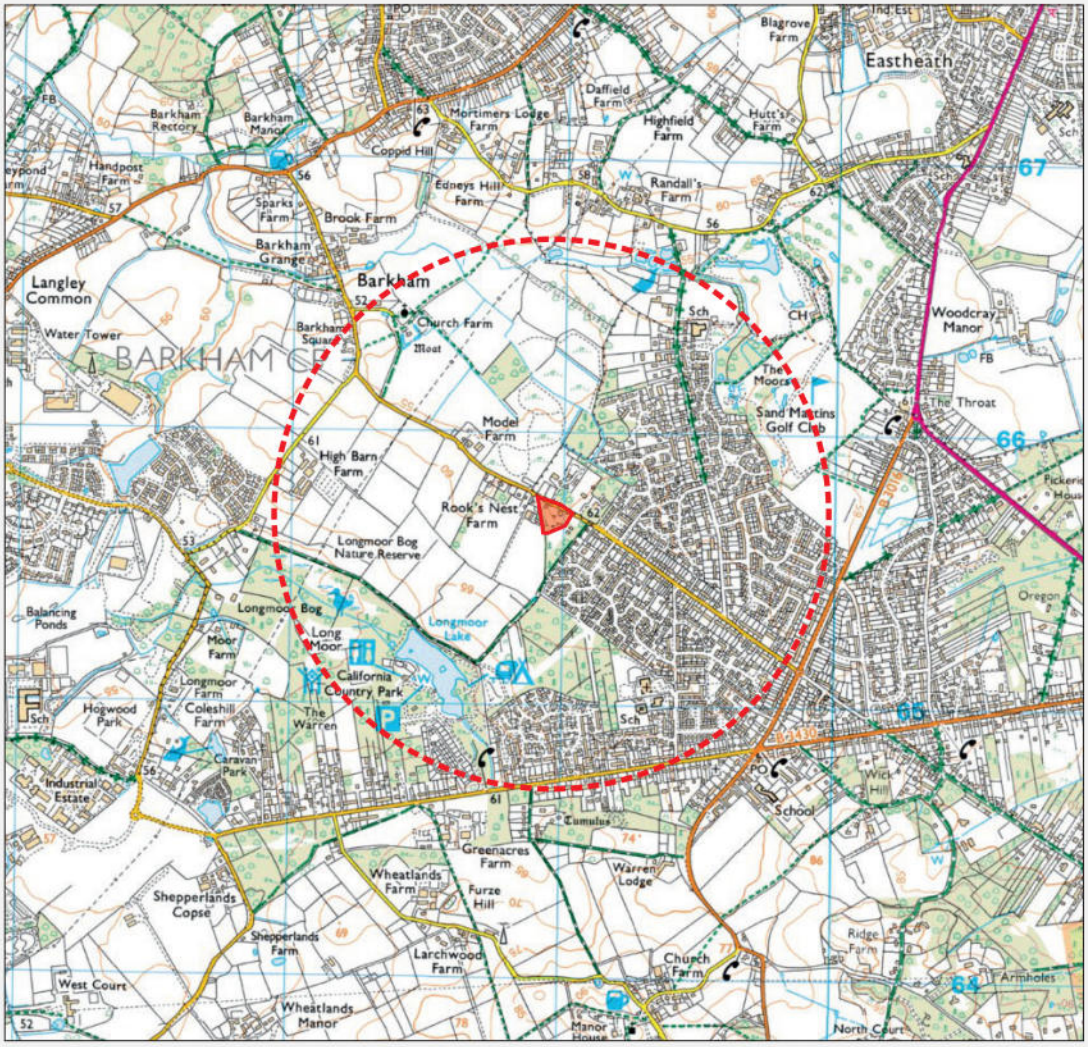
Figures



Scale (km)

0 0.5 1

KEY

Site Boundary:

1 km Study Area:

Ordnance Survey Explorer™ 159

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UK Location:

Rev.	Details	Drawn / Chkd.	Date

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon, Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

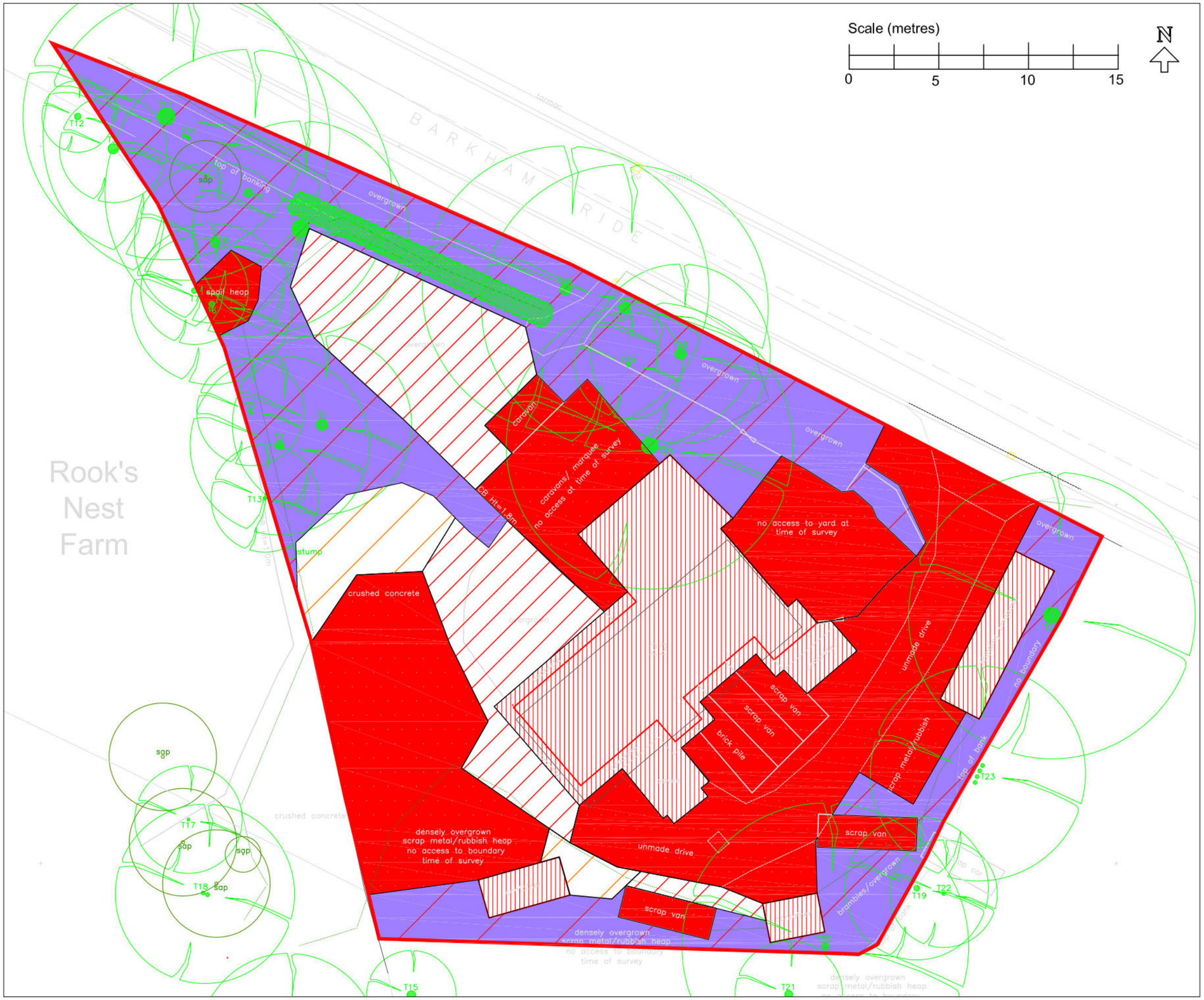
T: 01235 536042
F: 01235 523849
info@aae-ltd.co.uk
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Environmental Consultants

Project
243351
22a and 22b Barkham Ride
Finchampstead

Title
Site Location Plan

Scale	Date	Drawn	Chkd.	Drg. No.	Rev.
As shown	21.11.24	EC	ARB	Figure 1	



KEY

- Site Boundary (Indicative)
- Bramble Scrub
- Artificial Unvegetated/Unsealed Surface
- Developed Land/Sealed Surface
- Vegetated Garden
- Tall Ruderal Vegetation
- Individual Tree
- Hedgerow

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Title

Existing Habitats Plan

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
Cholswell Court
Shippon Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

T:(01235) 536042
F:(01235) 523849
info@aae-ltd.co.uk
www.aae-ltd.co.uk

Environmental Consultants

Scale	Date	Drawn	Chkd.	Drg. No.	Rev.
As shown	21.11.24	EC	ARB	Figure 2	

Appendix A

Summary of Ratcliffe Criteria

Fragility – some habitats, communities and species are particularly sensitive to environmental change and as such tend to be rare.

Rarity – the threat of loss of a particular habitat or species lends value to the organism and the site it occupies. Whether a species has rarity value is largely dependent upon the context, as a species or habitat can be internationally rare, but relatively common locally or nationally. Likewise, a nationally rare species can in some circumstances be more common at internationally level.

Size (area or extent) – size does play an important part in determining the ecological interest of an area, but is also a relative concept. For example, a 30 acre woodland or a one acre meadow could have a similar degree of nature conservation importance.

Diversity – the diversity of a site can be expressed in a number of ways and both low and high diversity can have a high nature conservation value under different circumstances.

Potential value – some sites have the potential to provide greater nature conservation interest than presently exists.

Position within the Ecological/Geographical Unit – a site which is near or adjacent to other similar habitats may have a higher nature conservation value than an isolated one because the range of fauna can be greater.

Typicalness – certain habitats have become important as they are good examples of what is, or has historically been, typical of the area. Efforts have been made to safeguard representative areas to prevent what was once common becoming fragmented or rare.

Recorded history – a well-documented site with detailed biological and/or natural history records presents a valuable insight into the ecology of a site. Such information is important for current and future management.

Naturalness – this is a measure of the degree to which an area has been modified by human activity. In England unmodified habitats are extremely rare being restricted to remote, inaccessible areas such as cliffs, and some saltmarshes. The bulk is either semi-improved, improved or artificial.

Intrinsic Appeal – this refers to value in a popular rather than ecological sense, and highlights the fact that value is also derived from society's preferences for landscape and other aesthetic features and is not just based on ecological considerations.

Appendix B

PLANT SPECIES LIST

Anthriscus sylvestris	Cow parsley
Bellis perennis	Daisy
Betula pendula	Silver birch
Calystegia sepium	Hedge bindweed
Chamaecyparis lawsoniana	Lawson's cypress
Cirsium arvense	Creeping thistle
Conyza canadensis	Canadian fleabane
Corylus avellana	Hazel
Dactylis glomerata	Cock's-foot
Epilobium hirsutum	Great willowherb
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash
Galium aparine	Cleavers
Glechoma hederacea	Ground-ivy
Hedera helix	Common ivy
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire-fog
Ilex aquifolium	Holly
Lamium album	White dead-nettle
Lolium perenne	Perennial rye-grass
Malus sp.	Apple
Plantago lanceolata	Ribwort plantain
Prunus laurocerasus	Cherry Laurel
Rubus fruticosus agg.	Bramble
Rumex obtusifolius	Broad-leaved dock
Sambucus nigra	Elder
Taraxacum spp.	Dandelion
Urtica dioica	Common nettle

Appendix C

Photograph 1: Showing the entrance to the property.

Photograph 2: Showing the site and areas of bare ground.

Photograph 3: Showing the site and side of the property.

Photograph 4: Showing the crushed concrete area with stored materials and vehicles.

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PROJECT

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TITLE

Photograph Record Sheet

AAe
Environmental Consultants

AA Environmental Ltd
Units 4-8
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Shippon Abingdon
Oxon OX13 6HX

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NTS	Drawn EC	Chkd. ARB	Appendix C	

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