



L I Z A R D

Landscape Design and Ecology

ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Ascot House, Finchampstead Road

On Behalf of: Klara Ascot Ltd.

Client	Klara Ascot Ltd.			
Project	Ascot House, Finchampstead Road			
Reference	LLD3111-ECO-REP-002-00-EcIA			
Revision	Date	Author	Proof	Approved
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Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the site visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, and to inform a review of the conclusions and recommendations made.



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SUMMARY

Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology (LLDE) has been commissioned by Klara Ascot Ltd. to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment of the proposed development of Ascot House, Finchampstead Road (*Grid Reference: SU 8100 6821 – hereafter referred to as 'the site'*). Dusk emergence surveys were completed externally on the 10th September 2024 and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site was undertaken on 30th of September 2024, to update survey work previously completed in 2022. An assessment of the ecological impact of the proposals was then undertaken using this baseline data.

The main body of the site was dominated by a large building and hardstanding, with small areas of introduced shrubs, and ornamental planters, which were considered habitats of very low ecological value. Individual urban trees were the greatest ecological interest identified on-site and are proposed to be retained wherever possible.

Bat emergence surveys found that roosting bats continue to be likely absent from the building, but additional mitigation has been included as a precautionary measure. The site was also found to offer some suitability for nesting birds, widespread invertebrate species, and commuting hedgehogs. Mitigation strategies for these taxa are outlined herein to ensure that impacts shall be negligible. Once avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures have been taken into account, the impacts of the planned development upon biodiversity will be negligible and non-significant.

Opportunities for ecological enhancement have been provided to allow the ecological value to the site to be maximised. As a full planning application, the development proposals shall be subject to the standard Biodiversity Gain Condition. A full Biodiversity Net Gain Report which discusses the baseline value of the site, and proposed habitat creation measures accompanies this assessment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by Klara Ascot Ltd. to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment of the proposed development of Ascot House, Finchampstead Road (*Grid Reference: SU 8100 6821*– hereafter referred to as ‘the site’).
- 1.2 This report presents the findings of an updated preliminary ecological appraisal and updated bat emergence survey, which update previous survey work completed in 2022.
- 1.3 A summary of the results of these surveys, potential impacts of the proposals, and details of avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures have been detailed within this report. Residual impacts are then discussed once all mitigation and compensation measures have been taken into account.
- 1.4 The scope of this assessment has been determined with consideration of best-practice guidance provided by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2018) and the *Biodiversity: Code of practice for planning and development* published by the British Standards Institute (BS 42020:2013).

Site Information

- 1.5 The survey area covers c. 0.25ha and consists of a two-storey residential building and hard standing carpark bound by linear features such as walls and fences, with block paving in pedestrian areas. The site is an irregular-shaped plot bound to the north and east by Kendrick Close, to the south by residential dwellings, and to the west by Finchampstead Road (A321).

Surrounding Landscape

- 1.6 The site is situated within an urban context with residential and commercial dwellings dominating the immediate vicinity as well as strong green infrastructure provision. Residential gardens, street trees, landscaping, allotments, and green transport infrastructure are all present within 150m of the site. Emm Brook and its associated habitats is situated beyond this to the south. The land further south is more rural with both cultivated agricultural and silvicultural land present.

Development Proposals

- 1.7 It is understood that the proposals are for a vertical extension of the existing building to create an additional 10no. residential units. In addition, the scheme will include the rearrangement of the existing car park, with associated hard and soft landscaping.

Report Aims

- 1.8 The aim of the baseline surveys and Ecological Impact Assessment has been:
- Describe baseline conditions at the site;
 - Determine the importance of features which may be impacted by the scheme;
 - Identify impacts of the proposed development and set out appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures;
 - To identify any residual impacts;
 - To provide details of enhancements to be incorporated into the scheme;
 - Provide sufficient information to determine whether the project accords with relevant nature conservation policies and legislation, and where appropriate, to allow conditions or obligations to be proposed by the relevant authority.

Biodiversity Net Gain Statement

- 1.9 As of 2nd of April 2024, Biodiversity Net Gain is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the *Environment Act 2021*) for all major and non-major developments. The scheme would require a full planning application and as such shall be subject to the standard biodiversity gain planning condition.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Legislation

2.1 Legislation relating to wildlife and biodiversity of particular relevance to this EclA includes:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017;
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006; and
- The Environment Act 2021.

2.2 This above legislation has been addressed, as appropriate, in the production of this report.

National Planning Policy

2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (*NPPF*) 2023 sets out the government planning policies for England and how they should be applied. 'Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' states that development should be 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'

2.4 The Government Circular 06/2005, which is referred to by the NPPF, provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system.

Local Planning Policy

2.5 The *Adopted Core Strategy Development Plan* (Wokingham Borough Council, 2010) and *Managing Development Delivery Local Plan* (Wokingham Borough Council, 2014) set out local planning policy with regards to biodiversity. This includes Policy CP7, CP8, CC03, TB23 which are summarised below:

- Policy CP7 is part of the core strategy for the district and identifies that development which impacts international, national or local wildlife sites, nationally protected species, habitats or species of principle importance under the NERC Act (2006) or wildlife corridors, both directly and indirectly, or that compromises national, regional, county or local

biodiversity actions plans will be resisted unless there are reasons of overriding public interest why the development should proceed and there is no alternative acceptable solution. Mitigation and compensation measures must also be implemented, proportionate to the proposed impacts.

- Policy CP8 is also core strategy policy for designated sites but refers specifically to Thames Basin Heaths SPA. It states that any development which alone or in combination will result in impacts to this site will be required to demonstrate adequate avoidance and mitigation measures.
- Policy CC07 targets implementation of green infrastructure, trees and landscaping within development. Development is expected to demonstrate how trees, hedges and landscape features will be protected and avoid the loss, fragmentation or isolation of areas of green infrastructure. It also requires development to incorporate high quality planting and landscaping as an integral part of schemes, which should ideally be native.
- Policy TB23 targets avoidance of damage to international, national and local sites of importance. It states that planning permission will only be granted where it demonstrates how they are providing new opportunities or enhancing existing biodiversity features and providing appropriate buffer zones for designated sites and species of principal importance. In addition, development must ensure that all new developments are ecologically permeable, through the protection of existing, and provision of new wildlife corridors which should be linked to existing green infrastructure.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1 The Multi-Agency Geographical Information Centre (MAGIC) website¹ was consulted for information regarding the location of waterbodies, priority habitats, statutory designated sites, and existing wildlife mitigation licences, within a potential zone of influence of the site. Additionally, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) website was consulted for information regarding the location of non-statutory designated areas, and satellite imagery and historic mapping was used to inform an assessment of the recent land use changes and habitat types within the area. The following potential zones of Influence's have been used for the following potential ecological receptors during the desk study assessment:

Table No. 01 – Zones of Influences for Ecological Receptors

Potential Zone of Influence	Type of Record / Designation/s / Ecological Receptor
0.5km	• Ponds, ditches, and other water bodies.
2.0km	• Priority Habitats (UKBAP) (NERC, 2006); • European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSMLs); • Local Nature Reserves (LNRs); • National Nature Reserves; • Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); and • Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) / Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI).
10.0km	• Special Protection Areas (SPAs); • potential Special Protection Areas (pSPAs); • Ramsars (Wetlands of International Importance); • proposed Ramsars (pRamsar); • Special Areas of Conservation (SACs); and • possible Special Areas of Conservation (pSACs).
12.0km	• Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and possible Special Areas of Conservation (pSACs) designated for supporting Annex II bat species.

¹ www.magic.gov.uk

3.1.2 Biological records data has been provided from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) for previous planning applications on the same site in 2021 (Planning application number: 212322). These results alongside any additional baseline data identified from previous surveys and reports were used to inform this assessment, which are referenced below:

- *Phase 2 Bat Emergence Survey* (Dr. Jonty Denton, 2024)
- *Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment* (LLDE, 2024).
- *Ecological Impact Assessment (including bat emergence survey)* (LLDE, 2022 – set out in *Appendix B – Previous Ecological Impact Assessment*).
- *Bat Emergence Survey Report* (Greengage, 2021a).
- *Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* (Greengage, 2021b).

3.2 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- 3.2.1 An updated field survey was undertaken on 30th of September 2024 by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (Max Day MSci (Hons), 1 year's professional experience). Weather conditions were mild (c.15°C), with a light south-westerly wind (Beaufort Scale 1-2), 100% cloud cover and overcast.
- 3.2.2 The field survey comprised a walkover inspection of the site and immediately adjacent land and boundaries features, in which ecological features were noted and mapped in accordance with principles of the UKHabs-Professional Classification System (Butcher *et al*, 2020). A minimum mapping unit of 25m² was used and habitats were identified to at least level 4 wherever practicable. Habitat categories were slightly amended to be consistent with those used as part of Biodiversity Net Gain calculations.
- 3.2.3 A list of plant species was compiled, together with an estimate of abundance (*Table No. 05*). In addition, Target notes (*Table No. 06*) were used to provide supplementary information on features which were particularly interesting or significant to specific construction proposals, or too small to map.

- 3.2.4 The survey methodology was extended to provide more detail in relation to the sites potential to support rare or protected fauna, as described by the *Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* (CIEEM, 2017). The assessment of habitat suitability for protected, rare or priority species is based on current good practice guidance such as that presented in the *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual* (Gent and Gibson, 2003) and *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins (ed.), 2023).

3.3 Bat Emergence Surveys

- 3.3.1 A single bat dusk emergence survey was conducted on the 10th September 2024 by Dr. Jonty Denton. Full details of the methodology and results are set out within the report in *Appendix A – Bat Emergence Survey Report*.

3.4 Ecological Impact Assessment

- 3.4.1 The methodology for Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) follows best practice guidelines set by the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM): 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment' (CIEEM, 2018). This includes identifying the baseline conditions on the site and subsequently rating the potential effects of the development based on the sensitivity and value of the resource affected, combined with the magnitude, duration and scale of the impact (or change). This is initially assessed without mitigation measures, and then assessed again after allowing for the proposed mitigation measures; this provides the residual effects. The assessment is divided into construction effects and longer-term operational effects.

3.4.2 The CIEEM guidelines (2018) state that ecological features should be considered within a 'defined geographical context'. The geographical frame of reference used to determine ecological importance in this assessment is detailed below:

- International and European;
- National;
- Regional;
- County;
- District;
- Local;
- Site Level;
- Negligible.

3.4.3 Based upon CIEEM guidance, value was determined with reference to the following factors:

- Its inclusion as a Designated Site or other protected area;
- The presence of habitat types of conservation significance, e.g. Habitats of Principal Importance (NERC 2006);
- The presence (or potential presence) of species of conservation significance e.g. Species of Principal Importance (NERC 2006);
- The presence of other protected species e.g. those protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981;
- The sites social and economic value.

3.4.4 The ecological impacts resulting from the proposals were then described according to a defined set of characteristics as defined within '*Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland*' (CIEEM, 2018). When describing impacts the assessment refers to characteristics such as the extent; magnitude; duration; frequency; and, reversibility of the impact in order to provide justification for any conclusions about the nature and likelihood of the impact described.

- 3.4.5 Where initial impacts have been identified as significant, avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures have been proposed to avoid, prevent or offset such effects. This assessment then considers residual impacts (*once all mitigation has been taken into account*), with any significant effects highlighted. A significant effect is defined as “*an effect which either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for ‘important ecological features’ or for biodiversity in general*”. Enhancement has been proposed to ensure that the development represents a net gain in biodiversity in accordance with National Policy.

3.5 Constraints and Limitations

- 3.5.1 Due to the field survey consisting of only one site visit, certain species, particularly some of the flowering plants, may not have been visible and hence overlooked. These are accepted constraints associated with the standard Survey Methodology.
- 3.5.2 A single bat emergence survey was completed in September, which is outside of best practice guidance (Collins, 2023). Weather conditions were mild in the days preceding the visit, with suitable temperatures but a brief heavy shower and light drizzle reported during the survey (for further details see *Appendix A – Bat Emergence Survey Report*). The usage of thermal imaging cameras reduces the chances for a false negative but there is still some potential for the survey to have missed roosting bats owing to seasonal constraints. However, given that no bat roosts were identified within the building during previous surveys undertaken in 2021 and 2022, it is considered highly likely that bats continue to be absent. Overall, given the seasonal constraints, a precautionary approach has been used when formulating mitigation measures for this species group but are not thought to have impacted the conclusions of this assessment.

4.0 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

4.1 Designated Sites

Statutory Protected Sites

- 4.1.1 The following statutory protected sites are noted within the likely zone of influence of the proposed site:

Table No. 05 – Statutory Protected Sites

Site	Description	Location
<i>International Statutory Designated Sites within a Potential Zone of Influence</i>		
Thames Basin Heaths SPA	The site qualifies under article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1% or more of the Great Britain populations of the following species listed in Annex I in any season: • Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>; • Woodlark <i>Lullula arborea</i>; and • Dartford warbler <i>Sylvia undata</i>.	Various locations, closest – c. 5.1km southeast
<i>National Statutory Designated Sites within 2.0km</i>		
Holt Copse & Joel Park LNR	Known ancient woodland site featuring mixed broadleaved trees. Also noted as having a large noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i> bat roost.	c. 1.0km northwest

- 4.1.2 The site is in the Risk impact Zone (IRZ) for Longmoor Bog SSSI and Broadmoor to Bagshot Woods and Heaths SSSI, but proposals are unlikely to meet the criteria whereby the LPA would be required to consult with NE on the application. The site is also situated within the 7km zone of influence for Thames Basin Heaths SPA.

Non-Statutory Protected Areas

- 4.1.3 Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) are designations applied to the most important non-statutory nature conservation sites. They are recognised by the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) and as such are material considerations when assessing planning applications.

- 4.1.4 The following SNCI's were identified within 2.0km of the site from previous survey reports (LLDE, 2022; Greengage, 2021).

Table No. 06 – Non-Statutory Protected Sites

Site	Location
Woodland near Ludgrove School LWS	c. 0.85km SE
Cantley Park LWS	c. 1.0km N

- 4.1.5 The site is comprised of distinctly different habitat to that of the above *Non-Statutory Protected Sites*, the site area provides no supporting habitat, and proposals would have no impact upon these areas due to the intervening distance.

Pond Study

- 4.1.6 3no. ponds were identified within 500m, of which only 1no. was situated within 250m of the site. This pond is situated within an area of deciduous woodland and was connected to Emm brook via a stream to the south. Both this pond and the remaining ponds within 500m were separated from the site by various roads, railways, gardens and dwellings.

Priority Habitat

- 4.1.7 Within 2.0km of the site there are Priority Habitats (NERC, 2006) of Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, Traditional Orchards, and Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland.

European Protected Species Mitigation Licence (EPSML) Search

- 4.1.8 In accordance with the MAGIC dataset, within a 2.0km search radii of the site, the following records for existing European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSMLs) were returned:

Table No. 07 – EPSMLs within Potential Zone of Influence

Date(s)	Species	Licence Permission	Distance from Site
05/09/15	Common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Destruction of a resting site	c. 0.4km WNW
31/05/18	Common pipistrelle Brown long-eared <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Destruction of a resting site	c. 0.9km ESE

Date(s)	Species	Licence Permission	Distance from Site
23/03/10	Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Destruction of a breeding site	c. 1.1km NNW
01/04/16	Brown long-eared	Destruction of a resting site	c. 1.2km NW
22/07/14	Common pipistrelle Brown long-eared	Destruction of a resting site	c. 1.6km WSW
15/04/14	Brown long-eared	Destruction of a resting site	c. 1.6km WSW
01/08/20 01/08/20 22/09/20	Great crested newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	3no. licenses for destruction of a resting site	c. 1.7km NNE
01/09/20	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> Brown long-eared	Destruction of a resting site	c. 1.7km NNE
10/05/13 20/08/14 22/05/15 05/09/14	Great crested newt	4no. licenses for destruction of a resting site and destruction of a breeding site	c. 2.0km NE

4.2 Existing Habitat Assessment

4.2.1 Habitats within and adjacent to the site include:

- *Ground-level Planters*
- *Introduced Shrub*
- *Developed Land; Sealed Surface*
- *Buildings*
- *Individual Urban Trees*

Ground-level Planters with Urban Trees

- 4.2.2 Several planters were identified on all aspects of the site. Some were located at ground level whilst others were at waist height within retaining walls. These were filled with wood chippings and mostly planted with ornamental species such as Japanese holly *Ilex crenata*, iris *Iris* sp. and rosemary *Rosmarinus officinalis*. This habitat was considered to be of **low** ecological value at the site level.

- 4.2.3 Two of the raised ornamental beds to the north of the site had been planted with 3no. non-native and ornamental yew *Taxus* sp. trees (T03-T05). These trees are considered to be of **low** ecological value at the **site** level.



Ornamental ground-level planters on the north of the site (left) with 3no. non-native yew trees (T03-05) and planter within south of the site with several ornamental non-native species present.

Introduced Shrub with Urban Trees

- 4.2.4 Three raised ornamental flower beds had overgrown into dense shrub habitats. These were dominated by mostly non-native species such as firethorn *Pyracantha* sp., cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, ornamental roses *Rosa* sp. and wall cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis*. However, other species such as ash *Fraxinus excelsior* saplings, hawthorn *Crataegus mononyga*, and wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare* were also present in some planters. Several species were present at the base of these planters including purple toadflax *Linaria purpurea*, ivy *Hedera helix*, and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* saplings. This habitat was determined to be of **low** ecological value at the site level.



Introduced shrub on northwest of site (left) with semi-mature oak (T06) and young horse chestnut (T02) visible and within southwest (right) with shrubs including dense cherry laurel and a black locust (T01) tree visible.

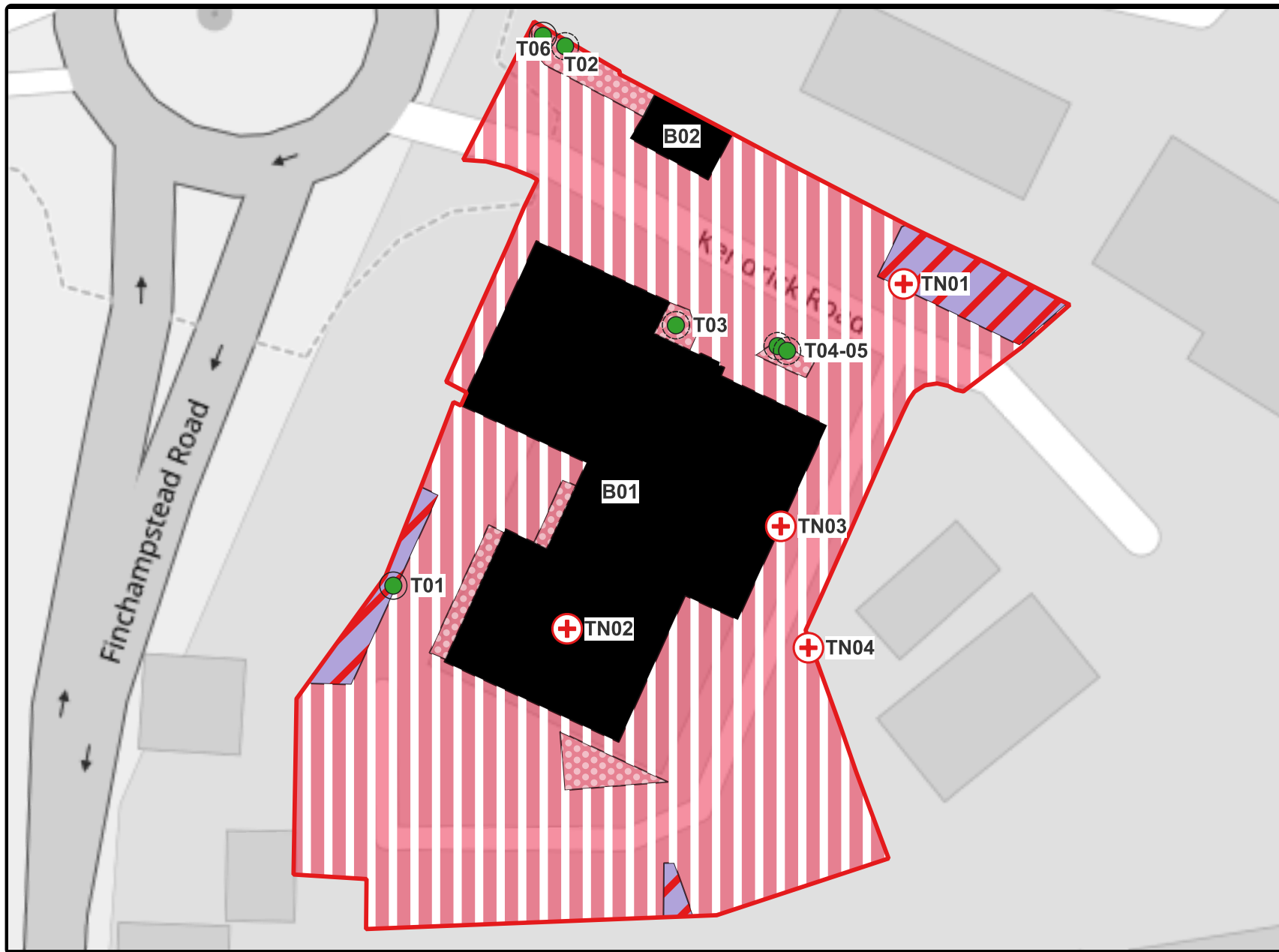


Introduced shrub in northeast of site within densely overgrown planter.

- 4.2.5 The planter to the west of the site included a mature black locust *Robinia pseudoacacia* (T01). The dense introduced shrub to the northwest of the site also comprised several trees including a young horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum* (T02) and a semi-mature oak *Quercus robur* (T06). These trees are determined to be of **moderate** ecological value at the **site** level.

Developed Land; Sealed Surface with Buildings

- 4.2.6 The majority of the site comprised hard standing including parking spaces, access routes and several pathways. This includes a combination of tarmac for road access and blocking paving areas surrounding the building in the centre of the site. Areas of ruderal and garden escapees were identified around the verges of the site but were *de minimis* in size.
- 4.2.7 The centre of the site was encompassed by a block of flats formerly converted from an office building (B01). This comprised a flat-topped redbrick building with a basement level, a double storey extension to the west, and single storey extension to the south. Several ecological enhancements required for a previous planning application were identified including 3no. integrated bat boxes to the south face of the building, and 4no. multi-chamber sparrow terrace boxes to the east of the site.
- 4.2.8 In addition, a small bin shed was identified to the north of the site (B02). This comprised a timber structure with bitumen felt flat-topped roof. Overall, these habitat are all considered to be of **negligible value**.



Legend

Redline Boundary

Baseline Habitats

Introduced Shrub

Developed Land; Sealed Surface

Ground Level Planters

Buildings

Existing Large Urban Tree

Existing Medium Urban Tree

Existing Small Urban Tree

Target Notes



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Client

Klara Ascot Ltd.

Project Title & Location

Ascot House,
Finchampstead Rd,
Wokingham

Drawn by	Approved by	Rev	Date
MD	CO	00	16/10/24

Figure No. 01 - Site Habitat Plan

4.3 Invasive Species

- 4.3.1 Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis* was identified within the planter to the northeast of B01 (see target note *TN01*). Cotoneaster is a Schedule 9 Invasive Species listed on the *Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)* and it is therefore an offence to let this species spread in the wild.
- 4.3.2 It should be noted that whilst buddleia *Buddleja davidii* and black locust tree are not recognised as an invasive non-native species by national legislation they were identified on-site, and some local districts have recognised them as a locally invasive species. This is not the case for Berkshire or Wokingham District Council, but the presence of these species should still be highlighted. Buddleia is a fast-growing plant that rapidly colonises waste ground, forming dense stands that can eliminate existing habitats and outcompete native species. Black locust has fast growing suckers than can quickly colonise and overshadow grassland habitats. Whilst these species can often provide some local value for wildlife, they regularly outcompete native species and habitats which can result in net losses for biodiversity overall.

4.4 Protected Species Assessment

Amphibians

Desk Study

- 4.4.1 TVERC has previously returned 22no. records for GCN within a 2.0km radius of the site (LLDE, 2022) and one granted EPSML for GCN was identified c. 1.9km to the northeast. Additionally, two GCN license returns were located with a 2.0km radius, the closest was located c.1.0km east by southeast, whilst the other was c.1.9km to the southwest.
- 4.4.2 TVERC has also previously returned records for common and widespread amphibian species including 5no. records for smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*, 14no. for common toad *Bufo bufo*, and 58no. for common frog *Rana temporaria* within 2.0 km of the site.
- 4.4.3 There are 3no. ponds within 500m of the site, of which 1no. was identified within 250m of the southeast site boundary.

Site Assessment

- 4.4.4 No suitable breeding habitat was identified for amphibians within the site itself, however ponds and waterbodies were identified within 250m. A single non-priority pond was identified within 250m of the site, to the southeast adjacent to an area of woodland. However, the intervening habitats are identified to be highly urbanised with numerous roads, buildings, walls, fences, gardens, and a railway line. Together, these form a major barrier to dispersal. The on-site habitats are predominantly hard standing, with dense introduced shrub habitats identified within planters at waist height or bounded by brick walls and fences. These habitats could only provide very limited opportunities for amphibian species. Therefore, the site is considered to be of **negligible value** to GCN and other amphibian species.

Reptiles

Desk Study

- 4.4.5 TVERC has previously returned records for reptiles within a 2.0km radius. This includes 32no. records of slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, 16no. records of grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, and 3no. records for common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*.

Site Assessment

- 4.4.6 Reptiles require a mosaic of habitats to persist in a landscape, including vegetative cover for refuge opportunities, open areas for basking and diverse flora to support viable invertebrate prey throughout the year. The site lacked suitable habitats that could support most of these opportunities such as grassland or scrub. The planters with dense introduced shrubs lacked botanical diversity and were mostly ornamental, so would be unable to support the viable invertebrate prey required for reptile species. In addition, these were either placed at waist height or bounded by brick walls and fences which provide significant barriers to dispersal. Therefore, the site was assessed to be of **negligible** value for reptiles.

Bats

Desk Study

- 4.4.7 TVERC has previously returned records for serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, noctule, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats within 2.0km of the site area.
- 4.4.8 Bat emergence surveys have previously been conducted on building B01 in 2021 (Greengage, 2021) and in 2022 (LLDE, 2022). These surveys identified the presence of weep holes, and integrated bat boxes in the latter survey. No bats were identified to emerge from the building on either of these emergence surveys and activity was very low. Very brief passes were heard from common pipistrelle and noctule at the start of these surveys, which were assessed to likely be commuting nearby.

Preliminary Roost Assessment - Trees

- 4.4.9 Various trees were identified as offering some level of bat roost suitability during the initial ground level assessment. A summary of these features is provided in Table No. 08 below and reference to the tree numbers are illustrated in *Figure No. 01 – Site Habitat Plan*.

Table No. 08 – Bat Roost Assessment Results - Trees

Ref.	Suitability	Justification
T01	FAR	Mature black locust tree with dense ivy cover and cherry laurel. Some deadwood identified in crown. No PRF's identified but could be concealed by dense vegetation surrounding the main stem and branches.
T02	None	Small yew tree within planter. No PRF's identified.
T03	None	Small yew tree within planter. No PRF's identified.
T04	None	Small yew tree within planter. No PRF's identified.
T05	None	Young horse chestnut to north. No PRF's identified.
T06	None	Semi-mature oak within northwest. No PRF's found.

Preliminary Roost Assessment - Buildings

- 4.4.10 Building B01 was assessed externally for bats; no internal roof void was present so it could not be assessed internally. Building reference numbers are as illustrated on *Figure No. 01 – Site Habitat Plan*.

Table No. 09 – Bat Roost Assessment Results - Buildings

Ref.	External Assessment Results	Internal Assessment Results	Suitability
B01	Redbrick building with flat-topped roof. 3no. integrated bat boxes identified on the south of building near the top of the building which have been recently installed. These could provide roosts for small numbers of bats. No direct evidence of roosting bats identified.	No internal roof void	Low
B02	Timber framed bin store. No suitable PRFs for bats identified.	No internal roof void	Negligible

Bat Dusk Emergence Surveys

- 4.4.11 A single dusk emergence survey was conducted on the 10th of September 2024. No bats were seen to emerge from the integrated bat boxes throughout the survey and no thermal signature was identified indicating a lack of occupation. For the complete results see *Appendix A – Bat Emergence Survey Report*.

Winter Roosting Potential

- 4.4.12 Building B01 included underground elements, however, these included occupied dwellings with no PRF's suitable for winter hibernating bats. Opportunities were limited to individual crevices, and therefore B01 was assessed as offering **low** winter roosting potential with B02 offering **negligible** winter roosting potential.

Foraging and Commuting Suitability

- 4.4.13 The site mostly comprised hardstanding and small ornamental planters with small non-native trees. These habitats are of negligible value for foraging bats as they are unable to support the necessary invertebrate prey populations throughout the year. The adjacent cherry laurel scrub, black locust tree (T01) and semi-mature oak (T06) along the west of the site provide some value to commuting and foraging bats. However, only one common pipistrelle pass, which is a widespread light and gap tolerant species, was identified during the further dusk emergence surveys. Previous surveys have shown similarly very low activity with only brief common pipistrelle and noctule passes (Greengage, 2021; LLDE, 2022). Given these results and the degree of light spill and urban habitats in the immediate surrounds these features are considered to be of **low** value to gap and light tolerant bats at the **site** level.

Dormouse

Desk Study

- 4.4.14 No hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* records have been identified or were returned by TVERC within the 2.0km search area.

Site Assessment

- 4.4.15 The dense introduced shrub on-site did not contain species suitable to support dormouse foraging. Furthermore, these areas were defunct and not functionally connected to areas of suitable habitat in the wider environment. Overall, no suitable habitat was identified on-site and therefore the site was considered of **negligible** value to this species.

Badger

Desk Study

- 4.4.16 European badger *Meles meles* records are classified as confidential by TVERC and were therefore not included within the data search.

Site Assessment

- 4.4.17 No suitable habitat or evidence of badgers was identified on-site during the initial site visit. Furthermore, the site is bounded by several brick walls and fences which would preclude most commuting badgers from accessing the development area. [REDACTED], the immediate surrounding area, and area to the north, east and west were all highly urbanised with no habitats of foraging value identified. Therefore, the site was considered to be of **negligible** value to badgers.

Water Vole

Desk Study

- 4.4.18 TVERC previously returned 1no. record of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* within 2.0km of the site.

Site Assessment

- 4.4.19 The site was determined to be of **negligible value** to water vole as no waterbodies were identified on or adjacent to the site.

Birds

Desk Study

- 4.4.20 Numerous bird species have been recorded within 2.0km of the site. This includes species listed under Schedule 1 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) as well as records for species of birds listed on the Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red List (Stanbury *et al*, 2021). Records include species associated with urban areas and hedgerows such as yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*, house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, and greenfinch *Chloris chloris*.
- 4.4.21 Previous surveys have identified a disused bird nest within a hawthorn tree in the planter to the north, and identified presence of birds such as house sparrows, blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* and blackbird *Turdus merula* within the dense cherry laurel scrub to the west (Greengage 2021; LLDE, 2022).

Site Assessment

- 4.4.22 The dense introduced scrub identified on-site could provide some limited opportunities for passerine bird species such as the planters to the north and west. Several floral species within the planters to the north boundary were berry producing which could provide a foraging resource.
- 4.4.23 4no. mounted multi-chamber sparrow boxes were identified on the eastern side of building B01. No birds were identified using these boxes at the time of survey, or signs of any other birds using the site. Overall, the site was considered to be of **low** value with **low** potential to support a notable species assemblage.

Invertebrates

Desk Study

- 4.4.24 TVERC has previously returned records for several notable invertebrate species including stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*, holly blue *Celastrina argiolus* and pearl-bordered fritillary *Boloria euphrosyne* butterfly as well as numerous priority moth species.

Site Assessment

- 4.4.25 An insect tower box was found to the east of the site, within a small planting area, but no invertebrate species were identified within it. *De minimis* areas of ruderal vegetation were also identified across the site including within planters, alongside dense ivy cover, flowering hawthorn, and ornamental flowering species. These could provide limited value to widespread invertebrate species at certain times of the year. No suitable habitat was identified on-site that would be suitable for stag beetle larvae, with no fallen or significant standing deadwood identified. Therefore, the site was considered to be of **low** value to common and widespread invertebrate species.

Hedgehog

Desk Study

- 4.4.26 A total of 226no. records for hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* have previously been returned by TVERC within the 2.0km search radius.

Site Assessment

- 4.4.27 The site was dominated by hardstanding, and planters were out of reach for foraging and so was considered to offers very limited opportunities for foraging hedgehogs. However, urban gardens were identified in adjacent areas. Hedgehogs are widespread and often exist within neglected areas and gardens in suburban settings so could occasionally commute across the site. The site was therefore considered to be of **low value** to commuting hedgehogs.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS

- 5.0.1 Using the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (IEEM, 2006 & updated by CIEEM, 2018), the assessment set out below considers the potential impacts of the scheme prior to mitigation. Detailed avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures are then discussed, with residual impact identified once these measures have been taken into account. Wherever possible mitigation measures have been designed into the scheme as this gives greater certainty over deliverability and ensures the correct application of the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' (as advocated by BS42020:2013, Defra 2019 and CIEEM, CIRIA & IEMA 2016).
- 5.0.2 Protected species for which the site offers negligible suitability have been scoped out of further assessment.

5.1 Internationally Designated Sites

Potential Impacts

- 5.1.1 Thames Basin Heaths SPA was identified within a potential zone of influence of the proposed development site. Given the intervening distances, existing habitats identified on-site, and small scale of the development, no direct impacts are likely to occur.
- 5.1.2 Given that the proposals are for a net increase in dwellings there is potential for an increase in recreational pressure to these sites. However, the site was identified to be just outside the 5km buffer zone and proposals are for less than 50 dwellings, so are not considered likely to contribute to a significant effect on Thames Basin Heaths, in line with local planning policy (Wokingham Borough Council, 2014). Therefore, no significant indirect impacts are likely to occur.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.1.3 As no impacts to internationally designated sites are anticipated, no mitigation is required.

Residual Impacts

- 5.1.4 As no impacts to internationally designated sites are anticipated; no residual effects will occur.

5.2 Nationally and Locally Designated Sites*Potential Impacts*

- 5.2.1 Several nationally and locally designated areas were identified within a potential zone of influence of the site. However, given the habitats identified on-site, and that none exist within or directly adjacent to the site, they are not likely to be directly impacted by proposals.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.2.2 As no impacts to nationally or locally designated sites are anticipated, no mitigation is required.

Residual Effects

- 5.2.3 As no impacts to designated sites are anticipated, no residual effects will occur.

5.3 Habitats*Potential Impacts*

- 5.3.1 Overall, the habitats on site were assessed as being of very low ecological value with the greatest ecological interest at the site associated with the individual trees within the planters. The mature and semi-mature trees are all proposed to be retained; however, several small ornamental trees are to be permanently lost for the reconfiguration of the parking and soft landscaping. Therefore, in the absence of appropriate mitigation, proposals could result in biodiversity net loss overall.
- 5.3.2 In addition, in the absence of appropriate management invasive non-native species of plants could be spread into the wild such as the wall cotoneaster identified within the planter to the north of the site. This would constitute an offence under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended)*.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.3.3 In order to offset the trees scheduled for removal, all new areas of soft landscaping will be designed to maximise the biodiversity value of the site. This will be done by planting new native trees of known value to wildlife. A full Biodiversity Net Gain report (LLDE, 2024) has been provided to detail how these enhancements can contribute to the +10% net gain mandate detailed under the *Environment Act (2021)* and will be prepared in line with best practice guidance (CIEEM, 2021).
- 5.3.4 The planter bed with wall cotoneaster present will be removed by a suitable contractor as invasive species are considered controlled waste. All soil and arisings are to be securely bagged and removed from site to an authorised composting location to avoid the spread of this species into the wild.

Residual Impacts

- 5.3.5 Provided the measures outlined are delivered post-development the impact of the scheme will be **negligible**, with the proposed scheme likely to provide a long-term **net gain** for biodiversity.

5.4 Bats*Potential Impacts*

- 5.4.1 Integrated bat boxes are proposed to be removed during the construction of the vertical extension. Whilst further emergence surveys identified likely absence of roosting bats within these boxes, the most recent survey was conducted outside best practice timings. Previous surveys have identified very low activity on-site with no confirmed roosts. However, some bat roosts can be very transient, and individuals can occupy new roosts within a year of survey completion. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation there is still low potential for works to result in the destruction of a roost or killing / injury of bats, which would constitute an offence under the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)* (as amended) and the *Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)* (as amended) with adverse impacts significant at the **site** level.

- 5.4.2 In the absence of mitigation impacts could also include the disruption of commuting corridors and foraging habitat through inappropriate lighting. Due to the low suitability of the habitats, impacts would be of minor significance and unlikely to occur.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.4.3 All mitigation set out in the emergence survey report conclusions will be followed (see *Appendix A – Bat Emergence Survey Report*). This includes the inspection of integrated bat boxes by a level 2 licensed bat ecologist prior to their removal, and appropriate usage of external lighting. All bat boxes will be relocated within the new scheme design facing south as close to their original position as possible.
- 5.4.4 During the construction, in the unlikely event that a bat be found then all works should cease whilst a suitable licence is obtained from Natural England to allow works to progress.

Residual Impacts

- 5.4.5 Providing the measures outlined above are incorporated **negligible** impacts to roosting bats are anticipated overall.

5.5 Nesting Birds

Potential Impacts

- 5.5.1 The protected species assessment identified that the site offered habitats of **low** value to wild birds within the ornamental shrub, individual trees and within the mounted bird boxes. The bird boxes are to be retained throughout construction and are not proposed to be impacted by development. However, in the absence of mitigation, the removal of introduced shrub and trees suitable to support nesting birds have the potential to result in damage / destruction of an active nest, which would constitute an offence under the *Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)* with adverse impacts significant at the **site** level.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.5.2 Any habitat suitable to support nesting birds scheduled for removal, i.e., the introduced shrub, will be cleared outside of the main bird nesting season in the first instance (i.e., outside March – September inclusive). If this is not possible, they will first be subject to a bird nesting check within 24 hours prior to removal, to be conducted by suitably qualified ecologist or arborist.
- 5.5.3 Additionally as detailed in *BS 42021:2022 Integral nest boxes* (BSI, 2022), integral nest boxes should be installed in all new developments, at a rate equal to the number of dwellings. Therefore, additional bird boxes targeted for a range of species, such as sparrows and starlings are to be implemented on the eastern side of the building.

Residual Impacts

- 5.5.4 The overall impact of the scheme will be **negligible**, with the proposed scheme likely to provide a long-term minor positive impact.

5.6 Invertebrates*Potential Impacts*

- 5.6.1 The protected species assessment identified that the site offered **low** value to common and widespread species. In the absence of mitigation, small areas of suitable habitat for these species would be lost. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation it would not be possible to scope out the potential that the development would result in net losses for invertebrates, significant at the **site** level.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.6.2 The most valuable invertebrate habitats comprising the mature and semi-mature individual trees are to be retained within the final scheme designs. New planter beds are also to be incorporated within the proposed soft landscaping which are to include plant species listed on RHS Plants for Pollinators. In addition, an additional invertebrate box is proposed to be added within the south of the site.

Residual Impacts

- 5.6.3 The overall impact of the scheme will be **negligible**, with a positive impact in the long-term once vegetation has established.

5.7 Hedgehogs*Potential Impacts*

- 5.7.1 The protected species assessment identified that the site supported **low** potential for commuting hedgehogs. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation it would not be possible to scope out the potential that works could result in the obstruction of commuting corridors for hedgehogs or the killing / injury of hedgehogs, which would constitute an offence under the *Wild Mammals Protection Act (1996)* with adverse impacts to hedgehogs significant at the **site** level.

Avoidance, Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.7.2 During operation, any temporary fencing will include a 13x13cm access gap to the base to allow the free movement of hedgehogs around the site. In addition, standard safety measures are to be implemented during the construction phase such as clearance of litter, tools and potentially dangerous materials on site at the end of the working day, and the storage of any chemicals will be contained in such a way that they cannot be accessed or knocked over.

Residual Effects

- 5.7.3 Providing the measures outlined above are incorporated **negligible** impacts to hedgehogs are anticipated overall.

5.8 Future Baseline

- 5.8.1 The site is subject to active management. Therefore, general habitat and building maintenance works are likely to continue to keep the site in a managed state, similar to that found during the initial habitat assessment.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The survey area covers c. 0.25ha and consists of a two-storey residential building and hard standing carpark bound by linear features such as walls and fences, with block paving in pedestrian areas. Small areas of introduced shrubs, and ornamental planters, were present but were considered habitats of very low ecological value. Individual urban trees were the greatest ecological interest identified on-site and are proposed to be retained wherever possible.
- 6.2 Bat emergence surveys found that roosting bats continue to be likely absent from the building. The site was also found to offer some suitability for nesting birds, widespread invertebrate species, and commuting hedgehogs. Mitigation strategies for these taxa are outlined herein to ensure that impacts shall be negligible. Once avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures have been taken into account, the impacts of the planned development upon biodiversity will be negligible and non-significant.
- 6.3 Opportunities for ecological enhancement have been provided to allow the ecological value to the site to be maximised. As a full planning application, the development proposals shall be subject to the standard Biodiversity Gain Condition. A full Biodiversity Net Gain Report which discusses the baseline value of the site, and proposed habitat creation measures accompanies this application.
- 6.4 The scheme accords with best practice in regard to ecological impacts and mitigation. Providing the recommendations outlined herein are secured and delivered, the scheme would comply with all local and national planning policy guidance and legislation, with net gains for wildlife delivered overall.

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Table No. 10 – Species List for Habitat Parcels**D – Dominant; A – Abundant; F – Frequent; O – Occasional; R – Rare; L – Locally****Ground level planters**

Common Name	Scientific Name	DAFOR
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	O
Iris sp.	<i>Iris</i> sp.	R
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	LA
Japanese holly	<i>Ilex crenata</i>	D
Japanese honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	R
Lavender	<i>Lavandula</i> sp.	R
Periwinkle	<i>Vinca</i> sp.	R
Rosemary	<i>Salvia rosmarinus</i>	O
Yew sp.	<i>Taxus</i> sp.	O

Introduced shrub

Common Name	Scientific Name	DAFOR
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	D
Black locust tree	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	R
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	O
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	R
Cherry laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	A
Firethorn	<i>Pyracantha</i> sp.	A
Green-stemmed forsythia	<i>Forsythia viridissima</i>	R
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	R
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	O
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	D
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	R
Purple toadflax	<i>Linaria purpurea</i>	R
Rose sp.	<i>Rosa</i> sp.	R
Snow-in-summer	<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	R
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	R
Wall cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>	R

Table No. 11 – Target Notes

<i>Ref</i>	<i>Feature</i>	<i>Description</i>
TN01	INNS	Wall cotoneaster present within ornamental planter.
TN02	Bat boxes	3no. bat boxes integrated within south of building.
TN03	Bird boxes	4no. multi-chamber sparrow boxes mounted on side of building.
TN04	Invertebrate box	Insect tower box mounted on wall.

Appendix A – Bat Emergence Survey Report

**Ascot House,
Finchampstead Road,
Wokingham, RG40 2NW**

Phase 2 Bat emergence Survey

September 2024

Dr. Jonty Denton *FRES FLS MCIEEM CEcol*

Level 1 bat license holder no. 2020-46400-CLS-CLS



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METHODS

The survey was conducted at dusk on the 10th September 2024

Surveyor was stationed to the southwest (viewing the southwest gable) where a Canon XA40 HD digital camcorder with IR illumination were also placed (see figure 1). Survey commenced 30 minutes before sunset and continued until 90 minutes after sundown. *EchotouchPro*, *Echotouch*, and *Batbox Duet* detectors were employed to monitor and record bat activity. Walkie-talkie communications were maintained to assist with triangulation and avoid multiple counting.

A Zeiss DTI 3/35 thermal imaging scope was used to look for signs of occupancy in the bat bricks.

RESULTS

The night of the 10th was wet with heavy shower at 19.25-37 easing to light drizzle from then until the end of the survey. No bats emerged from or were recorded over the car park. A common pipistrelle was active over the gardens to the east at 20.57-8. (see appendix 1).

SPECIES ENCOUNTERED

Common Pipistrelle

One was active off site to the east after the main survey concluded (see figure 1)



Fig 1. Location of viewer and camera

CONCLUSIONS

No bats emerged from the bat bricks and there was no sign of thermal emissions consistent with occupancy.

When the bricks are to be removed, they should be checked by a licensed bat ecologist. If they remain unoccupied, they can be stored safely prior to relocation.

New exterior lighting should be avoided, but if necessary for security purposes, then the latest updated lighting guidance note (GN08/23) should be followed. This is available at Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting | Institution of Lighting Professionals (theilp.org.uk) and supersedes all previous guidance.

APPENDIX 1. FIELD DATA

10th September 2024

Project		Start time	18.50	Finish	20.55	Temperature	14 C at start 13C at finish
Surveyors	JD	10.9.2024		sunset	19.25	Weather	100% cloud beaufort 1
Bat passes heard							
Station no.	Start time		No.	passes	comments		
	20.57	Common pipistrelle	1	1	Brief pass around trees to east of car park (see figure 1)		

Appendix B – Previous Ecological Impact Assessment



ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Ascot House, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham

On behalf of: Klara Ascot Limited

Client:	Klara Ascot Limited			
Project:	Ascot House, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham			
Reference:	LLD2739-ECO-REP-001-00-EcIA			
Revision:	Date:	Author	Proof	Approved
00	29/09/22	Georgia Baker (MEnv, BSc)	George Sayer MCIEEM	George Sayer MCIEEM

Disclaimer:

The information provided within this report has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

This report is intended for the sole use of the Client and their agents in accordance with the agreement under which our services were performed. Unauthorised communication, reproduction or usage of this report by any party other than the aforementioned is prohibited. No liability is accepted by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology for any use of this report, other than for the purposes for which it was originally prepared and provided. This report does not constitute legal advice. No warranty, express or implied, is made as to the advice in this report or any other service provided by us.

Validity:

This report is valid for 18 months from the date of the site visit. If works have not commenced by this date, an updated site visit should be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist to assess any changes in the habitats present on site, and to inform a review of the conclusions and recommendations made.



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APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Full Bat Survey Results



SUMMARY

Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by Klara Ascot Limited to undertake an updated Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of development proposals at Ascot House, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham (*Grid Reference: SU929104– hereafter referred to as ‘the site’*). This survey work provides an update to work completed by Greengage in 2021. A preliminary ecological appraisal (PEA) was undertaken on Tuesday 9th August, with subsequent bat survey completed in August 2022. A full EclA was then undertaken using this baseline information.

The main body of the site is a two-storey commercial office building bound by linear features such as walls and fences, with block paving in pedestrian areas and hard standing in the carpark. The habitats on site are of very low ecological value.

The building on site was assessed as offering ‘low’ bat roost suitability and was therefore subject to 1no. dusk emergence survey on the 31st August 2022. No bats were seen to emerge from the building at any point during the survey. The findings of the survey correlate with previous survey work completed by Greengage in May 2021.

The small area of dense scrub the site provides suitable habitat and foraging opportunities for breeding birds. Subject to sensitive design which ensures the retention of all trees in accordance with BS5837 and the removal of any scrub/trees outside the bird breeding season, impacts upon these species shall be avoided.

Ecological enhancements shall be included within the scheme to ensure compliance with local and national planning policy. Careful attention to the mitigation and enhancement recommendations listed in this report would likely allow the scheme to achieve the required levels of Biodiversity Net Gain.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology has been commissioned by Klara Ascot Limited to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment of the proposed development at Ascot House, Finchampstead Road, Wokingham (*Grid Reference: SU929104 – hereafter referred to as 'the site'*).
- 1.2 The scope of this assessment has been determined with consideration of best-practice guidance provided by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2018) and the Biodiversity: Code of practice for planning and development published by the British Standards Institute (BS 42020:2013).
- 1.3 An initial Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site was undertaken on 9th August 2022, with subsequent bat emergence surveys completed in August 2022. This survey work provides an update to previous surveys completed by Greengage in February and May 2021.
- 1.4 A summary of the results of these surveys, potential impacts of the proposals, and details of avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures have been detailed within this report. Residual impacts are then discussed once all mitigation and compensation measures have been taken into account.

Site Information

- 1.5 The site is located in central Wokingham, Berkshire. The site is an irregular-shaped plot bound to the north and east by Kendrick close, to the south by residential dwellings, and to the west by Finchampstead Road (A321). It comprises of an existing two-storey office building with associated parking and soft-landscaping.



Surrounding Landscape

- 1.6 The site is situated within an urban context with residential and commercial dwellings dominating the immediate vicinity as well as strong green infrastructure provision. Residential gardens, street trees, landscaping, allotments, and green transport infrastructure are all present within 150m of the site. Emm Brook and its associated habitats is situated beyond this to the south. The land further south is more rural with both cultivated agricultural and silvicultural land present.

Development Proposals

- 1.7 It is understood that the proposals include the development of a two-storey extension to the south of the existing building to provide 19 new residential units. They also include the extension of the car-park in the north.

Survey Aims

- 1.8 The aim of the baseline surveys and Ecological Impact Assessment has been:
- Describe baseline conditions at the site;
 - Determine the importance of features which may be impacted by the scheme;
 - Identify impacts of the proposed development and set out appropriate avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures;
 - To identify any residual impacts;
 - To provide details of enhancements to be incorporated into the scheme;
 - Provide sufficient information to determine whether the project accords with relevant nature conservation policies and legislation, and where appropriate, to allow conditions or obligations to be proposed by the relevant authority.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION***Legislation***

- 2.1 Legislation relating to wildlife and biodiversity of particular relevance to this EclA includes:
- *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017;*
 - *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);*
 - *The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;*

- 2.2 This above legislation has been addressed, as appropriate, in the production of this report.

National Planning Policy

- 2.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 sets out the government planning policies for England and how they should be applied. 'Chapter 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment' states that development should be '*minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.*'

- 2.4 The Government Circular 06/2005, which is referred to by the NPPF, provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.5 *Policy CP7 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (2010)* states that sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site in terms of its international or national importance.

Development:

A) Which may harm county designated sites (Local Wildlife Sites in Berkshire), whether directly or indirectly, or

B) Which may harm habitats or, species of principle importance in England for nature conservation, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna (including wildlife and river corridors), whether directly or indirectly, or

C) That compromises the implementation of the national, regional, county and local biodiversity action plans

will be only permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the nature conservation importance, that no alternative site that would result in less or no harm is available which will meet the need, and:

i) Mitigation measures can be put in place to prevent damaging impacts;
or

ii) Appropriate compensation measures to offset the scale and kind of losses are provided.

- 2.6 Provided the following recommendations within this report are adhered to and implemented, it is considered that the works undertaken comply with all national and local planning policy with regards biodiversity.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1 A desk study was conducted to establish the presence of priority habitats, protected species, and statutory designated sites within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the proposed development site. Protected species records within 2.0km of the site were provided by the local biodiversity records centre.

3.2 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Field Survey

- 3.2.1 The field survey was undertaken on Tuesday 9th August by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (Georgia Baker, MEnv, BSc). Weather conditions were clear and sunny (c.25°C), with almost no breeze (Beaufort Scale 0).
- 3.2.2 The field survey comprised a walkover inspection of the land and covered all accessible parts of the site, including boundary features. Habitats were recorded according to the UKHabs Classification System as described within the UK Habitats Manual (Butcher *et al*, 2020).
- 3.2.3 A list of plant species was compiled, together with an estimate of abundance made according to the DAFOR scale (*Table 05*). In addition, Target notes were used where necessary to provide supplementary information on features which were particularly interesting or significant, or too small to map.
- 3.2.4 The survey methodology was extended to provide more detail in relation to the sites potential to support rare or protected fauna, as described by the *Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017b)*. The assessment of

habitat suitability for protected, rare or priority species is based on current good practice guidance such as that presented in the *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual* (Gent and Gibson, 2003) and *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (Collin (ed.), 2016).

Evaluation Criteria

- 3.2.5 The importance of ecological features have been evaluated in relation to a geographical frame of reference, i.e. international/European value, national, regional, county, local, site or negligible value (based on CIEEM, 2018).

3.3 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment

- 3.3.1 A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment was undertaken on Tuesday 9th August by an experienced, licenced bat surveyor who undertook a ground-level assessment of trees and buildings within and adjacent to the proposed construction zone.
- 3.3.2 The bat surveyor assessed the trees visually and searched for direct evidence such as:
- Grease Marks;
 - Urine Stains;
 - Bat Droppings;
 - Feeding Remains;
 - Dead or Live Bats.
- 3.3.3 Potential Roost Features (PRF's) were also recorded, such as:
- Woodpecker Holes;
 - Knot Holes;
 - Tear-outs;
 - Flush Cuts;
 - Double Leaders.
- 3.3.4 Once features had been assessed the trees were then categorised in accordance with *Table 4.1 of the Bat Conservation Trust's Good Survey Guidelines* (2016):

Table No. 01 – Summary of Categorisation Criteria

Category	Buildings	Trees
`Negligible`	No suitable features identified.	No suitable features identified.
`Low`	A structure which could be used opportunistically, however, are not likely to be used on a regular basis / by a large number of bats.	Tree of sufficient size / age to support bat roost features; but with none identified from the ground.
`Moderate`	A building with features which, could be used regularly by a small number of bats.	Tree with features which, may support a bat roost of low conservation status.
`High`	A building with features suitable for use by a large number of bats on a regular basis.	A tree with several potential bat roost sites that are suitable for use by a large number of bats.

3.4 Badger Walkover Survey

3.4.1 The site was systematically searched during the site visit for any evidence of badger such as:

- Setts
- Latrines
- Snuffle Holes
- 'Push-unders' through boundary fencing
- Hair
- Prints
- Mammal tracks

3.4.2 All areas within the site, and where possible in the immediate surroundings were searched. Any evidence was then mapped to allow the status and distribution of badger activity to be assessed.

3.5 Bat Emergence Survey

3.5.1 In accordance with current best practise guidelines (BCT, 2016), 1no. bat emergence survey of B01 was completed on the 31st August 2022 to determine if and how bats were using the building.

- 3.5.2 A total of 4no. bat surveyors were assigned a point each to adequately cover all aspects of the building B01 (*Refer to Figure No. 02 – Location of Survey Points*).
- 3.5.3 The emergence survey started 15 minutes before sunset and terminated approximately 1.5 hours after sunset. Data including species, behaviour and general patterns of activity were recorded throughout the survey. Details of the survey visits can be found in *Table No. 04* below:

Table No. 02 – Bat Emergence Survey Details

Date	31/08/2022
Survey Type	Dusk
Surveyors	GS, JH, AR, GB
Sunrise / Sunset	19:53
Start Time	19:38
End Time	19:23
Temperature	18 °C
Wind	1-2
Weather	Light Cloud

- 3.5.4 Bats were identified using Echo Meter Touch Pro 2 and Peersonic RPA3 bat detectors. 2no. infra-red cameras with additional illuminators were also used to aid the surveys.

Data Analysis

- 3.5.5 Sonogram analysis was undertaken using the Kaleidoscope programme.

Surveyor Details

- 3.5.6 The survey was led by a licenced surveyors, assisted by experienced field ecologists. The following surveyors were used during these surveys:
- George Sayer – Senior ecologist, MCIEEM, 6 years survey experience
 - Josh Harwood – Assistant ecologist with 3 years survey experience.
 - Alex Rosenfield – Assistant ecologist with 3 years survey experience.
 - Georgia Baker – Assistant ecologist with 2 years survey experience.

3.6 Constraints and Limitations

- 3.6.1 Due to the field survey consisting of only one site visit, certain species, particularly some of the flowering plants, may not have been visible or may have been otherwise inconspicuous at the time of the survey and hence overlooked. These are accepted constraints associated with the standard Survey Methodology.
- 3.6.2 No other limitations were encountered, or assumptions made during either the desk study or the field survey and it is considered that with the access gained and recording undertaken an accurate assessment of the site's ecological value has been made.

4.0 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

4.1 Desk Study

- 4.1.1 The following designated sites are not necessarily representative of the existing site's ecology but are indicative of the ecological context of the surrounding area; a factor that may be important when assessing the presence / absence potential of certain species groups.

Statutory Protected Sites

- 4.1.2 The desk study identified Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Special Scientific Interest within 2.0km of the site and European Designated sites including SAC's and SPA's within 10km of the site. Statutory protected areas in the Zol of the site include:

Table No. 03 – Statutory Protected Sites

Site	Description	Location
Holt Copse Joel Park LNR	Known ancient woodland site featuring mixed broadleaved trees. Also noted as having a large noctule (<i>Nyctalus noctule</i>) bat roost.	1.0 km NNW
Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)	The Thames Basin Heaths SPA is a composite site that is located across the countries of Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire in southern England. It encompasses all or parts of Ash to	5.0 km SE

	<i>Brookwood Heaths Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Bourley and Long Valley (SSSI), Bramshill (SSSI), Broadmoor to Bagshot Woods and Heaths (SSSI), Castle Bottom to Yateley and Hawley Commons (SSSI), Chobham (SSSI), Colony Bog and Bagshot Heaths (SSSI), Eelmoor Marsh (SSSI), Hazeley Heath (SSSI), Horsell Common (SSSI), Ockham and Wisley Commons (SSSI), Sandhurst to Owlsmoor Bogs and Heaths (SSSI), and Whitmoor Common (SSSI).</i> <i>The section closest to the site is Crowthorne Woods and Caesar's Camp which form part of Broadmoor to Bagshot Woods and Heaths (SSSI).</i>	
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- 4.1.3 The site is located just outside the *Impact Risk Zone* of the *Broadmoor to Bagshot Woods and Heaths (SSSI)* however development proposals do not meet the criteria which would require consultation with Natural England.

Non-Statutory Protected Areas

- 4.1.4 *Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs)* are designations applied to the most important non-statutory nature conservation sites. They are recognised by the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2021) and as such are material considerations when assessing planning applications. Non-Statutory sites within 2.0km of the site include:

Table No. 04 – Non-Statutory Protected Sites

Site	Description	Location
Woodland near Ludgrove School LWS	Dense woodland with hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>) coppice, alder (<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>), birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>), rowan (<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>), and hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>). Also features areas of willow carr.	850 m SE
Cantley Park LWS	Historic parkland dating back to the 18 th C which is now a large, well-used public space. Main habitats are semi-improved grassland with 20-30 veteran trees scattered across the property. Main species are Oak and lime sp.	1.0 km N

Priority Habitats

- 4.1.6 Within 2.0 km of the site there are *Priority Habitats* of *Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland, and Deciduous Woodland*.

4.2 Habitats**Site Assessment**

- 4.2.1 Habitats within and adjacent to the site include:

- w1f7 - buildings
- u1b6 – Developed land; sealed surface
- u1 – Built-up areas and gardens
- h3 – Dense scrub

Buildings

- 4.2.2 The existing building on site is a two-storey commercial office. The carpark is bounded by linear features such as walls and fences with small, raised landscaping beds. A full preliminary roost assessment of the building is detailed in section 4.3.

Developed land; sealed surface

- 4.2.3 The existing building on site is surrounded by block paving in pedestrian areas and hardstanding in the carparks.

- 4.2.4 The western section of the building has been demolished, opening up large wall cavity. Both the building and the sealed/developed surfaces that surround it is of **negligible value** to local wildlife.

Built up areas and gardens

- 4.2.5 Small raised beds are present at the building entrance and building rear. They are predominantly planted with ornamental species interspersed with native ruderal and self-colonised ash saplings. Species include ivy, buddleia, greenstem forsythia, blackberry, rosemary, lavender, Japanese honeysuckle, cherry laurel, Japanese holly, periwinkle, and Japanese yew, amongst others. *Cotoneaster (Cotoneaster horizontalis)* is present and this species is listed as an invasive species on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). This habitat is of negligible / low site value.

Dense scrub

- 4.2.6 Immediately adjacent to the site on the western boundary consists of mixed scrub with scattered trees. The mixed group includes charry laurel, ash, maple, ornamental hawthorn, Buddleia, and goat willow. The north-eastern boundary also contains a raised bed that has overgrown into a scrub habitat dominated by ash tree saplings, ivy, and bramble. This habitat is of low site value.

4.3 Protected Species Assessment

*Amphibians**Desk Study*

- 4.3.1 The data provided by the desk study showed that 17 records of Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*), 5 of Smooth Newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), 14 Common Toad (*Bufo Bufo*), and 58 Common Frog (*Rana temporaria*) have been identified within 2.0 km of the site. There are no standing water bodies within 500 m of the site. The nearest standing water bodies lies 1.1 km to the southeast in the Garden cottage on Luckley Road.

Site Assessment

- 4.3.2 The scrub provides some sub-optimal terrestrial habitat for amphibians such as GCN and common toad. However, there are no suitable breeding ponds for GCN within 500 m of the site. Therefore, the site is considered to be of **negligible** value to protected species of amphibian.

*Reptiles**Desk Study*

- 4.3.3 A total of 32 records of slow worm, 16 records of grass snake, and 3 of Common Lizard were returned within 2.0km of the site. The presence of overgrown gardens within 2.0km of the site and compost heaps in the case of slow worms could be conducive to the habitat of reptiles.

Site Assessment

- 4.3.4 As the site lacks any grassland areas and predominantly consists of hardstanding ground, it is of **negligible value** to reptiles.

Bats

Desk Study

- 4.3.5 The data search returned records Serotine Noctule, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle, and Brown Long-eared Bats within 2.0km of the site area. Previous surveys of the site completed in 2021 recorded the likely absence of a bat roost within the building, with only 2no. common pipistrelle passes record during the survey period.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

- 4.3.6 There are no trees on site which provide any potential bat roosting features. The western section of the building has already been demolished which has opened the wall cavity potentially providing bat roosting features. Moreover, sparrow terraces and integrated bat boxes have been installed in the building. Weep holes were recorded on several elevations. Weep holes could offer roosting opportunities for crevice dwelling bats to use during summer as feeding day-roosts, although these are not optimal features and the immediate surroundings are unsuitable for bats and well-lit. As such, the site as **low potential** to support roosting bats.

Foraging Suitability

- 4.3.7 The dense treeline on the western boundary of the site could provide a small commuting corridor for bats although it lacks connectivity to mature hedgerows or treelines either side; this feature is likely of **site value** to bats whilst the remainder of the site is of **negligible value**.

Bat Emergence Survey Results

- 4.3.8 The Bat Emergence Survey carried out on the 31st of August recorded no bats emerging or re-entering the building. A single Noctule and Common Pipistrelle were detected in the area, yet neither were seen using the building.

Dormouse

Desk Study

- 4.3.9 No records of Hazel Dormouse were returned within 2.0km of the site. The site is located in an urban residential setting and thus there are no mature hedgerows linked to blocks of surrounding woodland; therefore, the site is unlikely to provide suitable habitat for dormice.

Site Assessment

- 4.3.10 The site is of **negligible value** to this species.

Badger

Desk Study

- 4.3.11 Badger records are confidential and were therefore not included within the data search.

Site Assessment

- 4.3.12 The area within 30m of the site was extensively searched for badger setts with no setts found. Given the absence of badger signs on site and the urban surroundings, the proposed development area is considered to be of **negligible value** to this species.

Water Vole

Desk Study

- 4.3.13 Only 1 record of water vole was returned within 2.0km of the site.

Site Assessment

- 4.3.14 The site is of **negligible value** to water vole with no water bodies on or near the site.

Other Mammals

Desk Study

- 4.3.15 The desk search returned 226 records of hedgehog within a 2.0km radius of the site. Hedgehogs are listed on the UK BAP Priority Terrestrial Mammal Species list. Numerous records of other common mammals including rabbit and wood mouse exist within 2.0km of the site area.

Site Assessment

- 4.3.16 Although no evidence of hedgehogs was identified, the data search results and urban setting suggest that hedgehogs have a 'low' potential to occur.

Birds

Desk Study

- 4.3.17 A total of 100no. notable bird species have been returned within 2.0km of the site, including species such as the Tawny owl, Barn owl, Skylark, Turtle dove, Cuckoo, and Yellowhammer.

Site Assessment

- 4.3.18 The records show numerous notable bird species within 2.0km of the site, however these are highly mobile, therefore the likelihood that they are associated with the site directly is limited.
- 4.3.19 The habitats on site provide some site value for foraging passerine species, with plants such as berry producing shrubs/climbers, however these are limited in extent. The scrub habitat adjacent to the site on the western boundary also provides suitable habitat for foraging activities.
- 4.3.20 Three house sparrows were recorded in the shrubs lining the western boundary of the site during the survey, as well as one blue tit and a blackbird.

Invertebrates

Desk Study

- 4.3.21 The data search returned records of numerous species of invertebrates within 2.0km of the site including the Stag beetle, Holly Blue and Pearl-bordered Fritillary butterflies, as well as many priority moth species.

Site Assessment

- 4.3.22 Whilst there are records of stag beetle within 2.0km of the site, there is insufficient deadwood or woody species present to provide suitable foraging resources for stag beetle larvae. The habitats on site also have very limited value for all other invertebrate groups. The site is therefore considered to be of low site value to invertebrates.

Others

- 4.3.23 No suitable habitat for any other protected species was recorded on site.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

5.1 Designated Sites

Potential Impacts

- 5.1.1 The site is located just outside the *Impact Risk Zone* of the *Broadmoor to Bagshot Woods and Heaths (SSSI)* therefore development proposals do not meet the criteria which would require consultation with Natural England. The site is located within the 5 - 7km buffer zone of Thames Basin Heaths SPA, however due to the existing land use, and scale of proposed development, no impacts upon the SPA are predicted and bespoke mitigation or SAMM / SANG payments are unlikely to be required.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.1.2 None required.

Residual Impacts

- 5.1.3 No residual impacts anticipated.

5.2 Habitats

Potential Impacts

- 5.2.1 The development shall result in the loss of hard ground and small planting beds – habitats of very low ecological value. These habitats are common and widespread in the vicinity of the site, and their loss would be of minor impact magnitude.
- 5.2.2 In the absence of mitigation, retained hedgerows and trees would be damaged through roost compaction, vehicle strike and dust smothering. Works shall impact no areas of Priory or Irreplaceable habitat.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.2.2 Retained trees and hedgerows shall be protected throughout construction and operation in accordance with BS5837. New planting beds shall be provided within the scheme. These beds are to be planted with native species of a known wildlife value.

Residual Impacts

- 5.2.3 Residual impacts after mitigation shall be negligible.

5.3 Bats

Potential Impacts

- 5.3.1 In the absence of mitigation, impacts could include the disruption of commuting corridors and foraging habitat through inappropriate lighting. Given very small number of bats detected during the bat emergence survey, impacts are considered to have been of very minor impact magnitude.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.3.2 Employ a sensitive lighting scheme which avoids light spill upon boundary vegetation to allow their continued use by the local bat community.

Residual Impacts

- 5.3.3 Residual impacts after mitigation will be negligible and **non-significant**.

5.4 Breeding Birds

Potential Impacts

- 5.4.1 In the absence of avoidance / mitigation, the change in use could result in the damage / destruction of a bird nest.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.4.2 The removal of any areas of trees / scrub shall be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (*March-August inclusive*). Where this is not possible, all vegetation shall be checked before removal by a suitability qualified ecologist to ensure that no active bird nests are present.

Residual Impacts

- 5.4.3 The overall impact of the scheme will be **negligible, non-significant** with the potential for a **minor-positive impact**.

5.5 Hedgehogs

Potential Impacts

- 5.5.1 In the absence of avoidance / mitigation, the development could result in the obstruction of commuting corridors for hedgehogs or the killing/injuring of this species.

Mitigation and Compensation

- 5.5.2 No hedgehog signs were noted during the survey. During the construction phase, all trenches and footings over 1m deep should be covered or fitted with a ramp when the site is unattended to ensure any mammals which becomes trapped can escape. During operation, any fencing panels should incorporate 'Hedgehog holes'; essentially a small hole at the base of the panels to allow the free passage of hedgehogs through the landscape, thus mitigating potential habitat fragmentation impacts. Hedgehog homes should also be incorporated into proposals to compensate for the lost scrub habitat.

Residual Impacts

- 5.5.3 The overall impact of the scheme will be **non-significant**.

6.0 ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS / OPPORTUNITIES

- 6.1 The design of the proposed development must include ecological enhancements to ensure compliance with *Local Planning Policy* and the emerging *Environment Act 2021* which mandates a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity across all development sites. Ecological enhancements that shall be included as part of development proposals include:
- The provision of nesting boxes for a variety of bird species within trees / scrub to the margins of the site.
 - Incorporation of integrated bird boxes to the northern or eastern aspect of the building.
 - Bat boxes are to be installed to the southern aspect of mature trees or into the building;
 - Installation of 2no. invertebrate boxes in both sunny and sheltered locations to cater for a range of species.
 - The use of flowering plants as listed within the RHS 'Plants for Pollinators' plant list to provide year-round interest for invertebrates.
 - Trees or shrubs provided within the scheme shall be berry or seed producing species to provide a foraging resource for birds.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The proposals are unlikely to adversely impact any surrounding statutory or non-statutory designated site.
- 7.2 The main body of the site is formed of an office building surrounded by developed/sealed surfaces, with ornamental planting scattered at the front and rear of the site and mixed introduced scrub running along the western boundary and in the carpark. The scrub/trees on the western boundary directly adjacent to the site provide foraging and nesting opportunities for breeding birds. The removal of any trees must take place in accordance with the BS5837 guidelines, and the removal of any trees/scrub should take place outside the bird breeding season (*March-August*). With a suitable design, the proposals could ensure the retention and enhancement of these features, resulting in an overall benefit to local wildlife.
- 7.3 No direct evidence of bats was recorded yet a single emergence survey was undertaken due to the evidence of low suitability bat roost features (weep holes in the brick work, open crevices due to demolition of building, bat boxes) in accordance with the *Bat Conservation Trust (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice guidelines and the Bat Workers Manual (2004)*. No bats were seen emerging from or re-entering the building.
- 7.4 Ecological enhancements should be included within any future scheme to ensure compliance with local and national planning policy. Following the ecological enhancements listed in this report would likely allow the scheme to achieve the required levels of Biodiversity Net Gain.

8.0 REFERENCES

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Table No. 05 – Species List for Habitat Parcels**Built up areas and gardens**

Common Name	Scientific Name	DAFOR
Common Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsio</i>	D
Common Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	D
Rosemary	<i>Salvia rosmarinus</i>	R
Lavender	<i>Lavandula sp.</i>	R
Japanese honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	R
Cherry laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	O
Japanese holly	<i>Ilex crenata</i>	O
Periwinkle	<i>Vinca sp.</i>	R
Japanese yew	<i>Taxus cuspidata</i>	O
Rockspray Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>	R

Dense scrub

Common Name	Scientific Name	DAFOR
English Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	R
Horse Chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	O
Common ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsio</i>	D
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	R
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	R
Common Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	D
Blackberry bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	F
Cherry laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	D
Black locust tree	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	R
Apple rose	<i>Rosa villosa</i>	R
Greenstem forsythia	<i>Forsythia viridissima</i>	R

D – Dominant; A – Abundant; F – Frequent; O – Occasional; R – Rare; L – Locally

Appendix A – Bat Survey Results

Date	31.08.22
Survey Type	Dusk
Sunrise / Sunset	19:53
Start Time	19:38
End Time	21:23
Temperature	18 °C
Wind	1-2
Weather	Light Cloud

Surveyor	Gs	
Point	NW	
Time	Species	Notes
20:27	Noctule	Hns

Surveyor	AR	
Point	NE	
Time	Species	Notes
20:52	C.Pip	Flying south

Surveyor	JH	
Point	SW	
Time	Species	Notes
20:27	Noctule	HNS

Surveyor	GB	
Point	SE	
Time	Species	Notes
20:26	Noctule	HNS
20:52	Cpip	HNS
20:53	Cpip	HNS