

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Harris Garden Wall, University of Reading

January 2026

Client details University of Reading

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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of report

- 1.1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide a baseline of existing ecological conditions, conduct a preliminary assessment of likely impacts of the proposed development and propose appropriate mitigation and compensation.

1.2 Scheme description

- 1.2.1 There is a proposal to re-landscape the garden and erect a timber teaching shelter with accessible WC. The landscaping will include a pond and native wildflower meadow.

1.3 Summary of methodology

- desk study
- extended UKHab survey
- bat Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) survey
- Biodiversity Net Gain assessment using the Statutory Metric

1.4 Summary of site conditions

Habitats

- 1.4.1 The site is dominated by an ornamental walled garden originally managed with flower beds, fruit/vegetable plots and polytunnels. The garden has more recently been neglected and tall ruderal and scrub species have developed within garden beds, although the garden remains a garden with mown paths and garden beds predominantly supporting non-native species. Recent clearance of the site has been undertaken and therefore this assessment has relied on information recorded during the survey carried out on 15th October 2024.

Protected/notable species

- 1.4.2 The following protected species have potential to be present on site:
- Bats – particularly crevice dwelling species within gaps in the wall
 - Nesting birds – prior to site clearance

1.5 Summary of conclusions

Nature conservation sites

- 1.5.1 There are no likely impacts to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation sites.

The type and size of development proposed does not require the LPA to consult Natural England on likely risks to SSSI's.

Habitats and Plants

- 1.5.2 The site is dominated by an ornamental walled garden originally managed with flower beds, fruit/vegetable plots and polytunnels. The garden has more recently been neglected and tall ruderal and scrub species have developed within garden beds. Recent clearance of the site has been undertaken.
- 1.5.3 The non-native invasive tree-of-heaven *Ailanthus altissima* was recorded in the walled garden. The species is listed as a 'Species of special concern' by the UK government because of its ability to spread in the wild. The species has been removed from site.
- 1.5.4 Habitat enhancements for the site include the following:
- 157m² of g3c Other neutral grassland
 - 103m² of Pond (non-priority)
 - Six small native urban trees
 - Sixteen small non-native urban trees
 - >25% of the proposed planting will either be native and/or pollinator plants

Protected/notable species

Bats

- 1.5.5 Potential bat roosting features associated with the wall will be retained. To mitigate for the loss of three potential bat roosting features, eight suitable bat boxes will be erected on site.

Hedgehogs

- 1.5.6 Access for hedgehogs will be created beneath the main door on the west wall on completion of landscape works.

Great crested newts

- 1.5.7 The brick wall surrounding the site acts as a significant dispersal barrier to newts accessing the site and therefore it is highly unlikely that site clearance works affected newts. The construction of a new pond and inclusion of the proposed hedgehog access will enhance the site for great crested newts and other amphibians if present in nearby ponds.

Reptiles

- 1.5.8 The brick wall surrounding the site acts as a significant dispersal barrier to reptiles accessing the site and therefore it is highly unlikely that site clearance works affected reptiles. The construction of a new pond and inclusion of the proposed hedgehog access will enhance the site for reptiles.

Nesting birds

- 1.5.9 Vegetation clearance works was carried outside of the nesting bird season. To enhance the site for nesting birds six WoodStone Swift Nest Boxes will be attached to the northern elevations of the garden wall.

Invertebrates

- 1.5.10 The garden provides a sheltered habitat suitable for invertebrates and is complimented by the adjacent Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site (LWS) which is likely to be of importance to a range of invertebrate species. To enhance the site for invertebrates, the proposed planting scheme includes a high proportion of native plant species and pollinator species. In addition to planting enhancements, fifteen bee bricks have been incorporated into the south facing wall.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment

- 1.5.11 The site proposals will lead to a net biodiversity gain of 14.77% in Area habitat units. No hedgerow units are required. Trading rules have been satisfied.

2 Introduction

2.1 Site

2.1.1 Ecoconsult Ltd has been commissioned to carry out an extended UKHab survey and bat Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) survey of the Harris Garden Wall and associated garden at University of Reading.

2.1.2 The site is dominated by an ornamental walled garden originally managed with flower beds, fruit/vegetable plots and polytunnels. The garden has more recently been neglected and tall ruderal and scrub species have developed within garden beds, although the garden remains a garden with mown paths and garden beds predominantly supporting non-native species. Recent clearance of the site has been undertaken and therefore this assessment has relied on information recorded during the survey carried out on 15th October 2024.

2.2 Purpose of report

2.2.1 The extended UKHab survey and PRA survey provide a baseline of existing ecological conditions to enable a preliminary assessment to be made of likely impacts of the proposed development.

2.3 Objectives of survey

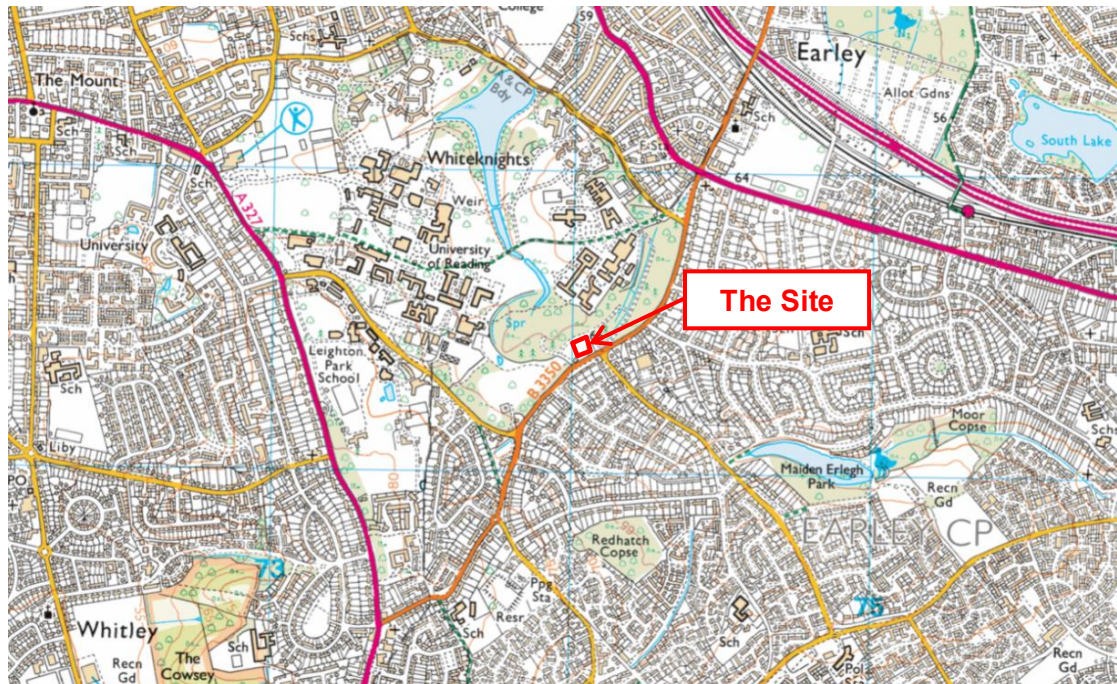
2.3.1 The objectives of the survey were:

- to determine if there are any habitats of ecological value on site
- to locate any evidence of protected species being present on site or potential for protected species to be on site
- to assess whether further survey work is necessary to meet the above objectives

2.4 Surrounding landscape

2.4.1 The site is located in an urban location within University of Reading Whiteknights Campus. Immediately to the north is Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site (LWS) supporting mature mixed woodland which extends to the northeast and northwest. To the south is the busy Wilderness Road beyond which are residential properties. To the southwest is the Harris Garden which supports horticultural planting, meadows and amenity grassland and planted trees. Immediately to the east is an

area used for composting and storage of garden waste with Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site beyond. The site is located at grid reference: SU 74027 71426.



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Figure 1: Site location (scale 1:25,000)

3 Methodology

3.1 Desk study

- 3.1.1 A data search was requested from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) for the site and 2km radius from the site boundary to provide records for designated sites and protected and notable species.
- 3.1.2 The MAGIC website was searched to provide information regarding international statutory nature conservation sites within 5km from the site boundary.
- 3.1.3 The MAGIC website was searched to provide information regarding protected species licences issued by Natural England within close proximity to the site.
- 3.1.4 The MAGIC website was searched to provide information regarding great crested newt class licence returns and positive and negative great crested newt survey results between 2017 – 2019.
- 3.1.5 The *Habitat Management Plan for Whitenights Campus University of Reading* (University of Reading, January 2024) was reviewed.
- 3.1.6 The *Woodland Management Plan for The Wilderness, Whiteknights Campus, University of Reading* (University of Reading, January 2021) was reviewed.
- 3.1.7 The *Whiteknights Biodiversity blog* was reviewed to provide information on recorded species - <https://blogs.reading.ac.uk/whiteknightsbiodiversity/>
- 3.1.8 The site was assessed in relation to Natural England's Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZs).
- 3.1.9 Aerial photographs and 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey maps were used to search for ponds within 500m of the site.

3.2 Field surveys

Extended UKHab survey

- 3.2.1 The extended UKHab survey was carried out on 15th October 2024 with a follow up survey on 13th January 2026. The surveys followed methodology in *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (UKHab Ltd 2023) and *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 2nd Edition* (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management 2017).

Bat Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) survey

- 3.2.2 A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the wall, buildings and trees was carried out on 15th October 2024 with an additional walkover survey carried out on 13th January 2026.
- 3.2.3 The PRA followed *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (2023).
- 3.2.4 A thorough search was made of the wall, building(s) and trees including all accessible areas and crevices for bats, their droppings, food remains or characteristic grease marks at potential exit/entrance points. The exterior of the buildings was searched, paying particular attention to window ledges or pipes where droppings can gather undisturbed, and under potential access points such as loose tiles and gaps between boarding.
- 3.2.5 Equipment for daytime inspection included:
- 8x32 close-focussing binoculars
 - Cluson SM126 Smartlite heavy duty rechargeable torches
 - fibre-optic endoscope (video inspection system: KC-150a)
 - long ladder, 3 section extension (9.17m)
 - telescopic ladder (3.8m)
 - digital camera
- 3.2.6 Signs of bat activity searched for included:
- Droppings - these typically contain fragments of insect exoskeleton and crumble to dust (unlike those of small rodents, which typically become hard). Bat droppings will stick to surfaces including walls, windows and window ledges. Droppings may also become caught in spider webs below a roost site or feeding perch.
 - Feeding remains - these include the discarded wings of flying invertebrates, which may accumulate under a well-used feeding perch. Some species, such as the brown long-eared bat have seasonal preference for moths of the noctuid family. Hence the accumulated wings of these moths commonly identify this bat as being present.
 - Oil staining - the fur of bats may leave an oily residue on surfaces close to occupied roost sites and access/egress points.

- Smell – most bat species have an identifiable aroma while certain species, such as the noctule, are noted for their “smelly roosts” due to urine scent marking activity.
- Daytime vocalisations - these are most pronounced at larger roost sites during periods of hot weather.
- Absence of cobwebs - a well-used bat roost and its access points are typically clear of cobwebs.
- Scratching - scratch marks produced by the claws of many bats may be apparent close to the access point for a well-used roost.
- Dead bats.
- Tracks in dust.

Table 1: Timings and conditions of surveys

Date	Timings	Survey work	Weather
13/01/26	Start: 08:15 Finish: 11:00	Extended UKHab survey and PRA	8°C Moderate rain Light air (Beaufort 1) 100% cloud
15/10/24	Start: 08:15 Finish: 14:30	Extended UKHab survey and PRA	14 - 16°C No rain Light air (Beaufort 1) 100% cloud

3.3 Personnel

3.3.1 The extended UKHab survey and PRA was carried out by the following surveyor.

3.3.2 Robert Gray BSc (Hons) MCIEEM is a Senior Ecologist at Ecoconsult Ltd. He has carried out bat surveys since 2006 and has extensive experience in ecological survey and monitoring techniques, protected species survey, mitigation and licensing and ecological clerk of works work. He holds the following Natural England licences:

- Natural England Licence to disturb and take bats for the purposes of science and education or conservation bat survey licence (no. 2025-85258-CL18-BAT).
- Registered Bat Earned Recognition Consultant at Accreditation Level AL2 (Unique ER Consultant Reference Number: BER0189) under the following

Natural England Class Licence – *Bat Earned Recognition Class Licence* (Ref. No.: WML-CL47).

- Natural England Level 1 Licence to survey great crested newts for scientific (including research) or educational purposes (no. 2015-18636-CLS-CLS).

3.4 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment

3.4.1 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used to calculate the biodiversity net gain calculation for the site following guidance in The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide (DEFRA 2025).

3.5 Constraints

3.5.1 The entire site had been cleared prior to the updated survey carried out in January 2026. This included clearance of all vegetation and removal of all buildings.

4 Survey results

4.1 Designated Sites

Statutory Nature Conservation Sites

4.1.1 There are no international statutory nature conservation sites located within 5km from the site boundary.

4.1.2 The following national statutory nature conservation sites are located within 2km from the site boundary:

- Maiden Eriegh Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located 605m to the southeast of the site. The LNR will not be affected by the proposals.
- Highwood Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located 1.3km northeast of the site. The LNR will not be affected by the proposals.
- Pearman's Copse Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located 2km south of the site. The LNR will not be affected by the proposals.

Non-statutory Nature Conservation Sites

4.1.3 The following non-statutory nature conservation sites are located within 1km from the site:

- The Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is located immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. The LWS will not be affected by the proposals.
- Redhatch Copse Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is located 560m to the south of the site. The LWS will not be affected by the proposals.
- Maiden Eriegh Woods Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is located 715m to the southeast of the site. The LWS will not be affected by the proposals.

Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zones

4.1.4 The site lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone. The type and size of development proposed does not require the LPA to consult Natural England on likely risks to SSSI's.

Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOA's)

4.1.5 The site is not located in or immediately adjacent to a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA).

4.2 Habitats present on site

4.2.1 The site is dominated by an ornamental walled garden originally managed with flower beds, fruit/vegetable plots and polytunnels. The garden has more recently been neglected and tall ruderal and scrub species have developed within garden beds, although the garden remains a garden with mown paths and garden beds predominantly supporting non-native species. Recent clearance of the site has been undertaken and therefore this assessment has relied on information recorded during the survey carried out on 15th October 2024 (see Figure 2 below). The following habitats were present on site prior to site clearance works:

- u1 Built-up areas and gardens (828 Vegetated garden)
- u1b5 Buildings
- Pond (non-priority)
- Individual trees



Figure 2: UKHab map

4.3 Target note 1: u1 Built-up areas and gardens (828 Vegetated garden)

Mown garden paths

- 4.3.1 A network of narrow formal lawns that act as grass paths are present radiating out from the central ornamental pond (see Plate 1 below). The lawns are regularly mown with cuttings removed. The sward supports abundant to locally abundant creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, alongside frequent to locally frequent yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, common cat's-ear *Hypochaeris radicata*, daisy *Bellis perennis*, common ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, dove's-foot cranes-bill *Geranium molle* and white clover *Trifolium repens*.

Ornamental flower, shrub and fruit beds

- 4.3.2 The garden has a formal structure with ornamental beds present throughout. The beds have been neglected for a number of years and support native and non-native shrubs and small trees, as well as tall ruderal species that are beginning to outcompete the original planting (see Plates 2 and 3 below). Native tree and shrub species present include hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, goat willow *Salix caprea*, aspen *Populus tremula*, pedunculate oak *Quercus robur* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. Non-native tree and shrub species include bay *Laurus nobilis*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, black mulberry *Morus nigra*, leatherleaf viburnum *Viburnum rhytidophyllum*, fig *Ficus carica*, tree-of-heaven *Ailanthus altissima* and rosemary *Rosmarinus officinalis*. The non-native invasive tree-of-heaven is listed as a 'Species of special concern' by the UK government because of its ability to spread in the wild.
- 4.3.3 Native and non-native tall ruderal species beginning to dominate in ornamental beds include common nettle *Urtica dioica*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, tansy *Tanacetum vulgare*, cleavers *Galium aparine* and Canadian goldenrod *Solidago canadensis*.
- 4.3.4 The habitat type u1 Built-up areas and gardens (828 Vegetated garden) is automatically assigned 'Condition Assessment N/A' within the Statutory Metric and therefore does not require a condition assessment.

4.4 Target note 2: Pond (non-priority)

- 4.4.1 A small ornamental circular pond with a 3m radius was present in the centre of the garden in 2024 (see Plate 4 below). The pond supported white water-lily *Nymphaea alba* alongside a sedge *Carex* sp. The pond had been removed prior to the survey carried out in January 2026. Please refer to Table 2 below for a condition assessment which assessed the pond as being in moderate condition.

Table 2: Target note 2 condition assessment

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - applicable to all ponds (woodland ¹ and non-woodland):			
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	Yes	
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	No	
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. or filamentous algae.	Yes	
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Yes	
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams ² , pumps or pipework.	Yes	
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species ³ .	Yes	
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Yes	
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:			
H	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed) ⁴ cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3 m deep.	Yes	
I	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	Yes	
Number of criteria passed		8	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Results for non-woodland ponds which require assessment of 9 criteria			
Passes 9 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 6 to 8 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓	
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			

N/A
Footnote 1 - A woodland pond will be surrounded on all sides by woodland habitat. Footnote 2 – This excludes natural dams such as those created by Eurasian beaver <i>Castor fiber</i>. Footnote 3 - Any species included on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) UKTAG GB High Impact Species List should be absent: WFD UKTAG (2021) <i>Classification of aquatic alien species according to their level of impact</i> [online]. Available from: UKTAG classification of alien species working paper v8.pdf (wfduk.org) • Frequently occurring non-native plant species include water fern <i>Azolla filiculoides</i>, Australian swamp stonecrop <i>Crassula helmsii</i>, parrot's feather <i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>, floating pennywort <i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i> and Japanese knotweed <i>Reynoutria japonica</i>, giant hogweed <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i> (on the bank). • Frequently occurring non-native animals include signal crayfish <i>Pacifastacus leniusculus</i>, zebra mussels <i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>, killer shrimp <i>Dikerogammarus villosus</i>, demon shrimp <i>Dikerogammarus haemobaphes</i>, carp <i>Cyprinus carpio</i>. Footnote 4 - If the pond is seasonal (as in, it dries out in most summers) then emergent species alone are likely to be found.

4.5 Garden wall

- 4.5.1 A high brick-built wall encloses the ornamental garden along the north, east, south and west (see Plate 5 below). The wall includes three blocked access points on the east, south and west elevations with the main entrance on the west elevation (see Plate 6 below). The majority of the wall is in reasonable condition with only limited cracks and crevices present providing potential bat roosting features or nesting bird habitat. The majority of these features are located on the northern exterior elevation (see Plate 7 below).

4.6 Target notes 3, 4 and 5: u1b5 Buildings

- 4.6.1 Two timber sheds and a single polytunnel were present within the garden (see Plates 8, 9 and 10 below). The structures provided negligible potential to support roosting bats. The structures provided potential nesting bird habitat. The buildings had been removed prior to the survey carried out in January 2026). The habitat type u1b5 Buildings is automatically assigned 'Condition Assessment N/A' within the Statutory Metric and therefore does not require a condition assessment.

4.7 Target notes 6, 7 and 8: Individual trees

- 4.7.1 Six small urban individual trees were present on site including four bay (see Figure 2, Target note 6), one sycamore (see Figure 2, Target note 7) and one black mulberry (see Figure 2, Target note 8). All six of the trees were assessed as being in moderate condition in relation to the Statutory Metric Condition Assessment criteria, please refer to Table 3 below.

Table 3: Condition assessment table for individual trees

Condition Assessment Criteria		Target note number					
		6	6	6	6	7	8
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)					
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	No	No	No	No	No	No
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	No	No	No	No	No	No
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	No	No	No	No	No
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of criteria passed		3	3	3	3	3	3
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓					
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)						
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)						
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.							
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score²							
N/A							
Footnotes							
Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from:							
Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)							
and:							
Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)							

Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.



Plate 1: Formal lawns radiating out from the central pond



Plate 2: Native and non-native shrubs and trees developing within garden



Plate 3: Native and non-native shrubs, trees and tall ruderal developing within garden



Plate 4: Ornamental pond



Plate 5: Harris Garden Wall – west exterior elevation



Plate 6: Main entrance west interior wall



Plate 7: Gaps and potential bat roosting features and nesting bird habitat on exterior north elevation



Plate 8: Timber shed



Plate 9: Timber shed



Plate 10: Polytunnel

Species

4.8 Bats

4.8.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) currently holds multiple records for nine species of bats within 2km from the site. None of the records exist for the site. The closest bat roost record is for a common pipistrelle day roost located 165m southwest from the site boundary.

4.8.2 A search of Granted European Protected Species Applications (Bats) using the MAGIC website confirmed that no bat mitigation licences have been issued for the Harris Garden. Three bat mitigation licences have been issued for the University of Reading campus to the north of the Harris Garden Wall. The closest licence issued was for destruction of a common pipistrelle and brown long-eared breeding site located c.600m northwest of the site. The two remaining licences issued were for

destruction of common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle resting places located c.615m to the north and destruction of a common pipistrelle resting place located c.1km to the northwest.

- 4.8.3 No bat evidence was recorded during the preliminary roost assessment survey. Potential bat roosting features (PRF's) are present within the northern wall on both the north and south elevations (see Plates 11 and 12 below). The PRF's include gaps where timbers were previously inserted in to the wall associated with a lean-to structure. An additional PRF was present within thick-stemmed ivy on the north elevation of the same wall (see Plate 13 below) and within a chimney type structure (see Plate 14 below). PRF's associated with the northern wall were assessed as providing moderate potential to support roosting bats. A single PRF located on the west interior elevation of the eastern wall was assessed as providing low potential to support roosting bats (see Plate 14 below).
- 4.8.4 It was noted on the updated survey carried out on 13th January 2026 that two potential bat roosting features associated with the northern wall (north elevation) had been blocked during wall repair work and that the section of thick-stemmed ivy had been removed (see Plate 15 below).
- 4.8.5 The structure has been assessed as a 'non-classic' hibernation site, however PRF's located particularly on the north elevation of the northern wall do have potential to support bat hibernation roosts supporting small numbers of bats.



Plate 11: PRF's on exterior north elevation of northern wall (red circles)



Plate 12: PRF's on interior southern elevation of northern wall (red circles)



Plate 13: Thick-stemmed ivy on exterior north elevation of northern wall



Plate 13: PRF on interior western elevation of eastern wall (red circle)



Plate 14: Chimney type structure on north elevation of northern wall



Plate 15: New butress blocking PRF, repointed coping bricks and removal of thick-stemmed ivy

4.8.6 The timber sheds, polytunnel and trees present within the site boundary were assessed as providing negligible potential to support roosting bats. All these structures and trees have been removed.

4.8.7 The walled garden will provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats in the local area. The Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site (LWS) located immediately adjacent to the site will provide an important foraging and commuting route for bats in the local area.

4.9 Badger

4.9.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) currently holds fourteen badger records within 2km from the site. None of the records exist for the site or

within 1km from the site boundary. The closest record is located c.1.4km from the site boundary.

- 4.9.2 No badger setts were identified within the site boundary or within close proximity to the site. No badger foraging or commuting evidence was recorded within the site or immediately adjacent to the site. The garden wall prevents access for badgers to the interior of the garden.

4.10 Hedgehog

- 4.10.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) currently holds multiple hedgehog records within 2km from the site. None of the records exist within the site boundary. Six of the records are located within the University of Reading Whiteknights campus and two additional records are located on Wilderness Road. The closest record is for a dead hedgehog on Wilderness Road located 95m to the southwest of the site boundary.

- 4.10.2 Suitable habitat existed for hedgehogs within the site including tall ruderal, scrub and disused buildings. The wall prevents access for hedgehogs to the interior of the garden and therefore it is highly unlikely hedgehogs accessed the interior walled garden.

4.11 Great crested newt

- 4.11.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) does not currently hold any great crested newt records within 2km from the site. The citation for Rushy Way Pond Local Wildlife Site (LWS) located 1.38km to the southeast of the site included in the TVERC Biodiversity Report does mention historic presence of great crested newts. However, during surveys carried out in 2021 no great crested newts were recorded.

- 4.11.2 A small ornamental circular pond with a 3m radius is present in the centre of the garden (see Plate 4 above). Two additional waterbodies are located within 500m of the site including Whiteknights Lake 170m northwest and a pond 245m to the west within Harris Garden. Whiteknights Lake previously supported dense populations of carp and although these fish were removed in 2014, recent observations indicate continued presence. Waterfowl are frequent on the lake. The lake has been assessed as providing poor suitability to support great crested newts. In 2013 presence of what appeared to be smooth newt larvae (identification to species level was not added in the blog text) was recorded in the pond located 245m to the west of

the site in the Harris Garden. Newt hibernacula have been constructed in close proximity to the pond.

4.11.3 The site is located within a 'Red zone' on the NatureSpace GCN Impact Risk Zone map suggesting that the site and area surrounding the site supports habitat of high suitability to support great crested newts. It should be noted that the map does not confirm presence of great crested newts in the area.

4.11.4 Great crested newt surveys carried out between 2017 and 2019 and Class survey licence returns in and around the Reading area as identified in the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) map (see Figure 3 below) indicate that great crested newt are likely absent in the local area surrounding the site. However, this does not confirm absence in ponds within 500m of the site.

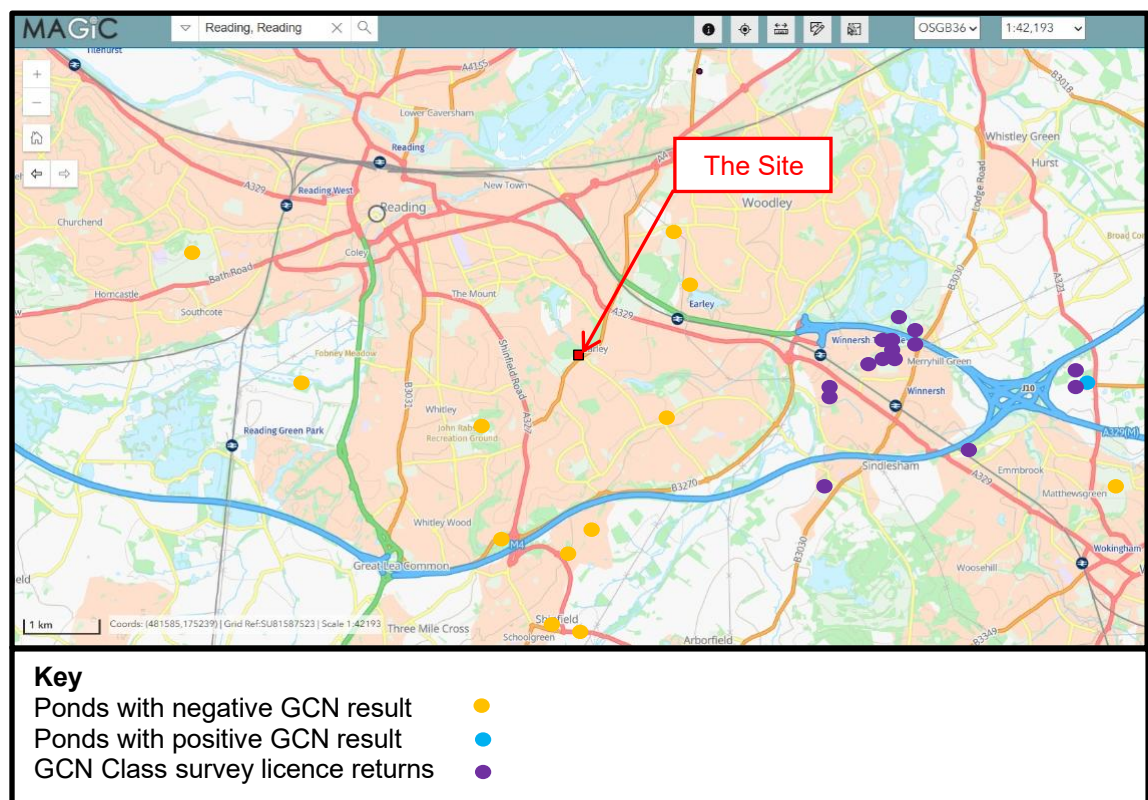


Figure 3: Class licence returns & positive/negative great crested newt survey results 2017 - 2019

4.11.5 The brick wall surrounding the site acts as a significant dispersal barrier to newts accessing the site. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that great crested newts are present within the interior walled area of the garden. If newts are present in ponds within 500m of the site it is possible that they may seek refuge in habitat present

immediately adjacent to the exterior of the wall. The repair works to the wall are unlikely to affect great crested newts if present.

4.12 Additional amphibians

4.12.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) currently holds multiple records for three amphibian species within 2km from the site including common frog, common toad and smooth newt. A single common toad record and a single smooth newt record originated within the Harris Garden but not located within the site boundary of the walled garden.

4.12.2 A common toad was recorded under a timber panel inside the garden close to the northern wall. Common toad is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species.

4.13 Reptiles

4.13.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) currently holds multiple records for three reptile species within 2km from the site including common lizard, grass snake and slow-worm. None of the records are located within the site or within close proximity to the site.

4.13.2 The site supported potential reptile habitat within the neglected garden and in habitat surrounding the exterior of the site. Potential reptile hibernation habitat was present within log piles and brick piles within the garden (see Plates 16 and 17 below). The brick wall surrounding the site acts as a significant dispersal barrier to reptiles accessing the site. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that reptiles are present within the interior walled area of the garden.



Plate 15: Brick piles



Plate 16: Log piles

4.14 Nesting birds

- 4.14.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) currently holds multiple records for eighty-two protected/notable bird species within 2km from the site. A large proportion of the records originate from within the University of Reading Whiteknights Campus. It is expected that some of these species will use the site.
- 4.14.2 The site provided suitable habitat to support nesting birds in the neglected garden including scrub, tall ruderal, trees and buildings/wall. A disused nest of the size and appearance of robin was recorded in the roof of a timber shed (see Plate 8 above). Recent clearance of the site commenced on 8th October 2025 outside of the nesting bird season.
- 4.14.3 No protected bird species under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded on site during site visits. No Red List Birds of Conservation Concern were recorded on or adjacent to the site during the survey. The following Amber List birds of Conservation Concern were recorded: dunnock, woodpigeon and wren.

4.15 Invertebrates

- 4.15.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) currently holds multiple records for seventy-nine protected/notable invertebrate species within 2km from the site. A proportion of the records originate from within the University of Reading Whiteknights Campus. It is expected that some of these species will use the site.
- 4.15.2 The site supports habitats that are common and widespread within the local area and are therefore likely to support common and widespread invertebrate species only. The gardens do provide a sheltered habitat suitable for invertebrates and the variety of native and non-native plant species provide nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of the year. The adjacent Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is likely to be of importance to a range invertebrate species.

4.16 Plants

- 4.16.1 The Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) currently holds multiple records for twenty-four protected/notable plant species within 2km from the site. A proportion of the records originate from within the University of Reading Whiteknights Campus. TVERC also hold records for six non-native invasive plant species within 2km from the site. These include the following species that have been recorded

within the University of Reading Whiteknights Campus: butterfly-bush, Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed and rhododendron.

- 4.16.2 No protected/notable plant species were recorded during the ecological walkover survey. The non-native invasive tree-of-heaven *Ailanthus altissima* was recorded in the walled garden during the 2024 survey. The species is listed as a 'Species of special concern' by the UK government because of its ability to spread in the wild, although currently is not included in the list of invasive species in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The plants had been removed by the 2026 survey.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

- 5.1.1 A desk study, extended UKHab survey and preliminary roost assessment have been carried out at the Harris Garden Wall and interior garden at the University of Reading Campus.

5.2 Nature conservation sites

- 5.2.1 There are no likely impacts to any statutory or non-statutory nature conservation sites including Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site (LWS) located immediately to the north of the site.

5.3 Habitats and plants

- 5.3.1 The site supported habitats that are common and widespread in the local area. No habitats of Principal Importance for Nature Conservation were recorded on site. The entire site will be re-landscaped resulting in the loss of all habitats present within the site boundary including the pond and individual trees.
- 5.3.2 The non-native invasive tree-of-heaven *Ailanthus altissima* was recorded in the walled garden. The plant has been removed from the site and the area will be monitored for regrowth and controlled as necessary.

Habitat protection measures

- 5.3.3 The following protection measures will apply to habitats present immediately adjacent to the site boundary:
- Trees located within Harris Garden immediately adjacent to the walled garden and woodland associated with Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site (LWS) will be protected in accordance with recommendations set out in BS 5837:2012 - Trees in Relation to design, demolition and construction.

Habitat enhancements

- 5.3.4 The following habitat enhancements are proposed for the site
- 157m² of g3c Other neutral grassland in good condition see Table 4 below
 - 103m² of Pond (non-priority) in moderate condition see Table 5 below
 - Six small native urban trees in moderate condition see Table 6 below

- Sixteen small non-native urban trees in moderate condition see Table 7 below
- More than 25% of the proposed planting will either be native and/or included on the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) Plants for Pollinators lists.

Table 4: Proposed g3c Other neutral grassland condition assessment

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description). ¹ Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Yes	
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	No	The habitat will be managed by cutting resulting in an even sward
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ² .	Yes	
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	Yes	
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition ³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Yes	
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Yes	The seed mix contains 32 species
Essential criterion for Good condition achieved (for non-acid grassland) (Yes or No)		Yes	
Number of criteria passed		5	
Condition Assessment	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved	

Result		x/✓
Acid grassland types (Result out of 5 criteria)		
Passes 5 criteria	Good (3)	
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)	
Non-acid grassland types (Result out of 6 criteria)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and additional criterion F.	Good (3)	✓
Passes 3 - 5 criteria, including essential criterion A.	Moderate (2)	
Passes 2 or fewer criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F.	Poor (1)	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score		
N/A		
Notes		
Footnote 1 - Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description. Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches not exceeding 5% cover. Footnote 3 - Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i>, spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i>, curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i>, broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>, common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>, creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i>, greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i>, white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site. Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement. Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).		

Table 5: Proposed Pond (non-priority) condition assessment

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
Core Criteria - applicable to all ponds (woodland¹ and non-woodland):			
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	Yes	
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	No	
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. or filamentous algae.	Yes	

D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Yes	
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams ² , pumps or pipework.	Yes	
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species ³ .	Yes	
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Yes	
Additional Criteria - must be assessed for all non-woodland ponds:			
H	Emergent, submerged or floating plants (excluding duckweed) ⁴ cover at least 50% of the pond area which is less than 3 m deep.	Yes	
I	The pond surface is no more than 50% shaded by adjacent trees and scrub.	Yes	
Number of criteria passed		8	
Condition Assessment Result	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓	
Results for woodland ponds which require assessment of 7 core criteria			
Passes 7 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Moderate (2)		
Passes 4 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Results for non-woodland ponds which require assessment of 9 criteria			
Passes 9 criteria	Good (3)		
Passes 6 to 8 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓	
Passes 5 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)		
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score			
N/A			
Footnote 1 - A woodland pond will be surrounded on all sides by woodland habitat. Footnote 2 - This excludes natural dams such as those created by Eurasian beaver <i>Castor fiber</i>. Footnote 3 - Any species included on the Water Framework Directive (WFD) UKTAG GB High Impact Species List should be absent: WFD UKTAG (2021) <i>Classification of aquatic alien species according to their level of impact</i> [online]. Available from: UKTAG classification of alien species working paper v8.pdf (wfd.uk.org) - Frequently occurring non-native plant species include water fern <i>Azolla filiculoides</i>, Australian swamp stonecrop <i>Crassula helmsii</i>, parrot's feather <i>Myriophyllum aquaticum</i>, floating pennywort <i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i> and Japanese knotweed <i>Reynoutria japonica</i>, giant hogweed <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i> (on the bank). - Frequently occurring non-native animals include signal crayfish <i>Pacifastacus leniusculus</i>, zebra mussels <i>Dreissena polymorpha</i>, killer shrimp <i>Dikerogammarus villosus</i>, demon shrimp <i>Dikerogammarus haemobaphes</i>, carp <i>Cyprinus carpio</i>. Footnote 4 - If the pond is seasonal (as in, it dries out in most summers) then emergent species alone are likely to be found.			

Table 6: Proposed native individual trees condition assessment

Condition Assessment Criteria		Tree Location (relates to proposed landscape planting design document)					
		N-D	N-D	N-D	N-D	H-A	H-B
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)					
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Yes Hazel	Yes Silver Birch	Yes Silver Birch	Yes Silver Birch	Yes Silver Birch	Yes Silver Birch
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	No	No	No	No	No	No
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	No	No	No	No	No
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of criteria passed		4	4	4	4	4	4
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved x/✓					
Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)						
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)						
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.							
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score ²							
N/A							
Footnotes							
Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from:							
Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)							
and:							
Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)							
Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.							

Table 7: Proposed non-native individual trees condition assessment

Condition Assessment Criteria		Tree Location (relates to proposed landscape planting design document)															
		M-H	N-D	N-D	N-D	H-B	H-B	WF	M-C	M-C	M-C	M-F	M-F	M-F	M-F	M-F	M-F
		Criterion passed (Yes or No)															
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	No French Tamarisk	No Black Mulberry	No Plum 'Victoria'	No Plum 'Peregrine'	No Scots Pine	No Scots Pine	No Scots Pine	No Stone Pine	No Kermes Oak	No Cork Oak	No Italian Cypress	No Italian Cypress	No Italian Cypress	No Olive	No Turpentine tree	No Grecian Strawberry
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Number of criteria passed		3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Condition Assessment Result (out of 6 criteria)	Condition Assessment Score	Score Achieved ×/√															

Passes 5 or 6 criteria	Good (3)																
Passes 3 or 4 criteria	Moderate (2)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Passes 2 or fewer criteria	Poor (1)																
Note that 'Fairly Good and Fairly Poor' condition categories are not available for this broad habitat type.																	
Suggested enhancement interventions to improve condition score ²																	
N/A																	
Footnotes																	
Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from:																	
Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)																	
and:																	
Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)																	
Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.																	

5.4 Legally protected and notable species

Bats

- 5.4.1 Potential bat roosting features are present in gaps/holes associated with the northern interior and exterior wall (assessed as providing moderate potential to support roosting bats) and the interior of the western wall (assessed as providing low potential to support roosting bats). During repair works to the wall the majority of these features were retained. However, two gaps were repointed and thick-stemmed ivy removed without the necessary further dusk emergence surveys to confirm absence.
- 5.4.2 The structure has been assessed as a 'non-classic' hibernation site, however PRF's located particularly on the north elevation of the northern wall do have potential to support bat hibernation roosts supporting small numbers of bats. The majority of these PRF's have been retained.
- 5.4.3 No external artificial lighting is proposed for the site and the proposed landscaping will not reduce the existing value of the site for foraging and commuting bats.
- 5.4.4 To mitigate for the loss of potential bat roosting features and enhance the site for bats, it is recommended that a minimum of eight suitable self-cleaning bat boxes are attached to the existing brick wall including two on each interior and/or exterior elevation. Bat boxes should be positioned as high as possible on the wall away from disturbance and existing artificial lighting.
- 5.4.5 Suitable bat boxes to attach to the wall include the following:
- Beaumaris Woodstone Bat Box
 - Eco Kent Bat Box
 - 1WQ Schwegler Summer & Winter Bat Roost
 - 1FQ Schwegler Bat Roost

Hedgehog

- 5.4.6 Hedgehogs cannot currently access the interior of the walled garden. Therefore, it is recommended that a suitable hedgehog access point is created beneath the main door located on the western wall (see Plate 6 above). This will be achieved by

creating a hedgehog access point (measuring a minimum of 13 x 13 cm at ground level). A 'Hedgehog Highway' sign will be attached to the door on both sides to prevent access points from being blocked. Available from:

<https://shop.britishhedgehogs.org.uk/product/hedgehog-highway-sign/>.

- 5.4.7 It is not recommended to create a hedgehog access point through the existing opening on the eastern wall due to the high level of disturbance on the adjacent land.
- 5.4.8 Access for hedgehogs to the interior of the site will only be created once landscaping works have been completed to prevent accidental harm to hedgehogs.

Great crested newts

- 5.4.9 The brick wall surrounding the site acts as a significant dispersal barrier to newts accessing the site. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that great crested newts would have been present within the interior walled area of the garden prior to vegetation clearance works taking place. If newts are present in ponds within 500m of the site it is possible that they may seek refuge in habitat present immediately adjacent to the exterior of the wall. The repair works to the wall are unlikely to have affected great crested newts.
- 5.4.10 The construction of 103m² of pond habitat and the inclusion of the proposed hedgehog access beneath the main door located on the western wall will enhance the site for great crested newts if present in nearby ponds.

Other amphibians

- 5.4.11 Common toad has been recorded on site. It was recommended that potential toad refuges present within the walled garden including brick piles, log piles and general materials were dismantled carefully by hand outside of the hibernation period to prevent harm to toads and other common species of amphibians. It is understood that the contractors carried out this work and no amphibians were encountered.
- 5.4.12 The construction of 103m² of pond habitat and the inclusion of the proposed hedgehog access beneath the main door located on the western wall will enhance the site for other amphibians.

Reptiles

- 5.4.13 The brick wall surrounding the site acts as a significant dispersal barrier to reptiles accessing the site. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that reptiles were present

within the interior walled area of the garden prior to vegetation clearance. As a precautionary measure it was recommended that potential reptile refuges present within the walled garden including brick piles, log piles and general materials were dismantled carefully by hand outside of the hibernation period. It is understood that the contractors carried out this work and no reptiles were encountered.

- 5.4.14 The construction of 103m² of pond habitat, open areas of garden habitat and the inclusion of the proposed hedgehog access beneath the main door located on the western wall will enhance the site for reptiles.

Nesting birds

- 5.4.15 The site provided suitable habitat to support nesting birds within the neglected garden including shrubs, garden beds, trees and buildings/wall. A disused nest of the size and appearance of robin was recorded on site.
- 5.4.16 Nesting birds and their nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Disturbance to nesting birds was avoided by carrying out vegetation removal works outside the main nesting season. The main nesting season is generally March to August inclusive. Vegetation clearance works commenced on 8th October 2025.
- 5.4.17 To mitigate for the loss of potential nesting bird habitat it is recommended that six WoodStone Swift Nest Boxes are attached to the northern elevations of the wall. The nest boxes should be located as high up in the wall as possible and away from areas of high disturbance. Guidelines advise use of swift nest boxes as they are a universal nesting feature that can accommodate a number of different bird species including swifts.

Invertebrates

- 5.4.18 The garden provided a sheltered habitat suitable for invertebrates and the variety of native and non-native plant species provided nectar sources for a range of invertebrates at different times of the year. The adjacent Whiteknights Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is likely to be of importance to a range of invertebrate species.
- 5.4.19 The proposed planting scheme and landscape plan includes a high proportion of native species and species included on the RHS Plants for Pollinators plant lists.
- 5.4.20 In addition to planting enhancements, a total of fifteen bee bricks have been incorporated in to the south facing interior garden wall.

5.5 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment

- 5.5.1 The biodiversity impact of the proposals has been calculated using the Statutory Metric. The on-site baseline value of the site equates to 0.60 Area habitat units. There are no Hedgerow units.
- 5.5.2 The site proposals will lead to a net biodiversity gain of 14.77%. No hedgerow units are required. Trading rules have been satisfied. Please refer to the following document for full details: *The_Statutory_Metric_Harris Garden_31.01.2026*.

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