

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Little Ashridge, Forest Road, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG405RB

Client:

Mr & Mrs Cooper

Survey date:

06/05/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Wokingham Borough Council. Single storey and first floor extensions, revisions to fenestration including new Juliet balcony and associated driveway.

On the assumption that site conditions and habitats remain unchanged, the results of this assessment will remain valid for 18 months from the date of this survey i.e. until November 2027, in accordance with CIEEM guidance in the lifespan of Ecological Reports and Surveys. This survey and report should be updated if a planning application has not been submitted within this timeframe.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in the proceeding sections of this report.

Table 1: summary of key findings arising from this survey.

Key Findings
• The habitats on site are of no specific conservation value but have value at the local level. These are to be partially destroyed. Loss or damage will contribute to net losses of biodiversity locally. There are no specific concerns relating to Protected or otherwise Important Species or Assemblages of a scale warranting further investigation. • A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be requested by the LPA via condition. • Two Bat Emergence and Re-Entry surveys will be required for B1 and one survey will be required for B2. No works to the property that may block or remove potential roosting features should be carried out until the required surveys have been completed. Undertaking such work beforehand could unlawfully affect bats if present and may compromise the validity of the surveys and hinder the planning application process. • A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting¹. • Environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys will be required on all ponds within 100m of the site to determine the presence or absence of great crested newts (GCNs). This is because the site currently generates a Amber risk score. Alternatively, a District Level Licensing could be obtained. Details of this are included in the amphibian section of this report. • Various precautionary working methods have been recommended which have been fully detailed within the fauna section of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development. The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

Methodology

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2025.](#)

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2025.](#)

Survey Details

The site survey was undertaken on 06/05/2026 by Leah Cook, Ecological Consultant with over 7 years of experience.

Table 2: the weather conditions during the survey.

Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
12.5	52.0	91	19.3	None

Survey Limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

2. SITE LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Site Location & Context

The site is centred at National Grid reference SU 81374 70883 and has an area of approximately 0.27ha.

The site is well-connected to nearby habitats including a tree line to the east of site which is connected to parcels of woodland located to the north and south.

Priority Habitats

There are five priority habitats within 2km of the site. These comprise deciduous woodland, ancient & semi-natural woodland, wood pasture and parkland, ancient replanted woodland and traditional orchard. The closest priority habitat comprises deciduous woodland, located 70m NW from the site.

Designated Sites

Statutory Designations within 2km

There is one statutory designation within 2km of the site, as detailed below:

Table 3: the statutory designated sites within 2km of the site boundary.

Designation	Distance from Site
Holt Copse & Joel Park Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	1600m SW

SSSI Risk Zone

The site falls within the impact risk zone for Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) for recreational pressure, however, due to the development not resulting in an increase in residential units, it is considered that there will be no risk to the site.

Non-Designated Sites

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from the local records centre. Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.

2.2 Foreseen Impacts

No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small scale and low overall impact of the development from such sites (where known), alongside additional factors such as distance in combination with connectivity disrupting barriers.

2.3 Recommendations

No recommendations.

3. ONSITE HABITATS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

3.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Built-up areas and gardens (u1) - Vegetated garden (828) - Scattered trees (32), Introduced shrub (847)

The dominating habitat onsite is vegetated garden primarily consisting of grassland with areas of tall ruderal, introduced shrubs and an ornamental hedgerow. There are various ornaments and pieces of outdoor furniture within the garden as well as several sheds and a number of trees including small fruiting species within the grassland and large conifers to the west.

Species present within this habitat include yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), barren brome (*Anisantha sterilis*), ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), herb-robert (*Geranium robertianum*), buddleja (*Buddleja davidii*), common & atlantic ivy (*Hedera helix*), curled dock (*Rumex crispus*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), dandelion (*Taraxacum*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), petty spurge (*Euphorbia peplus*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), dove's-foot crane's-bill (*Geranium molle*), foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*), white bryony (*Bryonia dioica*), bristly oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), greater celandine (*Chelidonium majus*), prickly sow-thistle (*Sonchus asper*), great forget-me-not (*Brunnera macrophylla*), green alkanet (*Pentaglottis sempervirens*), mediterranean spurge (*Euphorbia characias*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), himalayan clematis (*Clematis montana*), germander speedwell (*Veronica chamaedrys*), common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), greater burdock (*Arctium lappa*) and broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*).

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment.

Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)

There is a concrete access path around the west, south and east of the dwelling providing connectivity to the storage buildings to the east.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment.

Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)

There is a gravel access track to the property along with a parking area to the west of the dwelling large enough for two cars.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, this habitat is not subject to a condition assessment.

Scattered Trees (32)

21 scattered trees were recorded across the site, comprising a mix of native and non-native species. A group of nine common yew (*Taxus baccata*) trees, predominantly mature and ranging in stature from small (2) to large (1), with six medium-sized specimens are located along the west of the site. In the southwestern corner of the site there are two small Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*), and to the east of the site, a group of three small pussy willows (*Salix caprea*) were noted. Additionally, towards the northwestern corner of the site, six small unidentified fruit trees were observed, alongside T1, a large mature common oak (*Quercus robur*).

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the trees were assessed as follows:

Table 4: the condition assessment scores for the scattered trees on site.

Tree / Group	Common Name	Condition Score
Group 1	Common Yew x9	Good
Group 2	Japanese Maple x2	Moderate
Group 3	Fruit (unidentified) x6	Poor
Group 4	Pussy Willow x3	Moderate
T1	Common Oak	Good

Building (u1b5)

There are seven buildings on site; one is a residential dwelling, five are sheds and one is a garage.

3.2 Foreseen Impacts

The proposed development will result in the loss of a small area of vegetated garden. This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of these habitats. However, this could lead to a net loss in biodiversity at the site.

3.3 Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution must be implemented during construction. This should include the following measures:

- Remove only the minimum of habitat required to facilitate the development
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto retained habitats.
- Protect retained turf and soil resource from destruction and compaction using plastic matting and wooden boarding. Do not store skips and other heavy materials on retained turf.
- Grasscrete, cell web or any other porous surface treatment facilitating recovery of vegetation is preferred to hard standing.

4. INVASIVE SPECIES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

4.1 Summary of Survey Findings

No non-native invasive or otherwise problematic plants were recorded on site or are considered likely to be on site, but, given seasonal limitations and the sites wider context, may be visible at other times of year.

4.2 Foreseen Impacts

None.

4.3 Recommendations

No further surveys but remain vigilant.

5. FAUNA: BATS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

5.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There are 5 EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site, as detailed below:

Table 5: EPSL survey returns for bats within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Bat Species Affected	Distance from Site <i>(EPSL records are accurate to 100m)</i>	Impacts Allowed by Licence
2020-48489-EPS-MIT	BLE,C-PIP,S-PIP	950m south	Damage and destruction of a resting place
2015-8658-EPS-MIT	BLE,C-PIP	950m north	Destruction of a breeding and resting place
2015-8658-EPS-MIT-1	BLE,C-PIP	950m north	Destruction of a breeding and resting place
2016-24486-EPS-MIT	C-PIP	1.4km southwest	Damage and destruction of a resting place
EPSM2009-1496	NOCT	1.7km southwest	Destruction of a breeding and resting place

There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site.

Foraging and commuting habitat

Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of vegetated garden, and offsite within 2km including deciduous woodland, ancient & semi-natural woodland, wood pasture and parkland, ancient replanted woodland and traditional orchard. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations. Additionally, the presence of several water bodies within the surrounding environment provide further foraging opportunities for bats.

Roosting habitat

Buildings to be impacted by the proposed development were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. There are a total of seven buildings on site; residential dwelling (B1), five sheds (B2, B3, B4, B5 & B6) and garage (B7). B1 and B2 were surveyed, while B3, B4, B5, B6 and B7 were not due to not being impacted by the proposed development. There was no evidence of roosting bats identified. The trees onsite were also not surveyed due to being retained as part of the proposed development.

Buildings

B1 : Residential dwelling

The building is a residential dwelling with a clay tile roof and wooden soffits. The clay tiles, despite being in good condition, present numerous gaps suitable for crevice roosting bats, and damaged soffit box on the western elevation offers potential access points into the eaves and possibly further into the structure. While the internal void, recently re-roofed and insulated, showed no visible evidence of bats from the loft entrance, this does not preclude their presence, as access opportunities may exist and evidence can be subtle. Due to the presence of suitable foraging and commuting habitats in the local environment along with the multiple roosting opportunities with the building, the building is considered to have ***moderate habitat value***.



Building B1

Table 6a: The roosting features associated with building B1.

Feature	Materials/Details	Condition / description / suitability	Photograph
Walls	N/A	N/A	N/A

Roof	Clay tiles	Condition/description The roof is in good condition with no missing tiles or visible damage. Suitability/access/evidence of bats Due to the shape of the clay tiles, there are numerous gaps providing potential access for bats. This is suitable for crevice roosting bats which may roost between the external tiles and internal lining.	 <i>View of the western roof elevation.</i>
Eaves	Timber board	Condition/description The soffit boxes show damage with a lifted board on the underside of the western elevation and a missing end on the northwestern corner. Suitability/access/evidence of bats The gaps in the soffit may provide access for bats which may roost within the soffit of this may provide access into other internal structures which may be used by roosting bats within the eaves.	 <i>View of missing end of soffit on the northwestern corner of B1.</i>

Internal void 1	Timber rafters. Fiberglass insulation	Condition/description The client advised that the building has recently been re-roofed approximately 8 months prior. The internal insulation was retained and showed no visible evidence of bats from the loft entrance. As a result, the internal roof lining is in immaculate condition with no signs of tears or damage. Dimensions (approx): 13m long, 7m wide, 2.5m tall Suitability/access/evidence of bats There were no visible access opportunities or evidence of bats visible from the entrance to the loft. However, the loft was not fully inspected due to the requirement for a taller ladder and evidence may have been missed. This is not considered to be a significant limitation due to the requirement for further surveys and the fact that evidence of bats is often not visible even where bats are present.	 <i>View of the internal ridge.</i>  <i>View of the internal gable wall.</i>  <i>View of timber rafters and internal lining.</i>
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B2 : Shed

The building is a timber-clad shed with a single-skinned corrugated metal roof. While the timber walls offer minimal overlap and the metal roof is single-skinned, some limited roosting opportunities for crevice-roosting bats may exist within small gaps beneath the external cladding and at the junctions where the walls meet the roof, as well as where the corrugated sheets overlap. The building therefore is considered to have **low habitat value**.



North and eastern elevations of B2.

Table 6b: The roosting features associated with building B2.

Feature	Materials/Details	Condition / description / suitability	Photograph
Walls	Timber clad	Condition/description The wooden clad walls are single skinned with minimal overlap and therefore provide no opportunities for roosting bats. Suitability/access/evidence of bats There are limited roosting opportunities for bats with the only potential roosting features being small gaps beneath the external cladding and internal joists which may provide minimal opportunities for crevice roosting bats.	 B2 walls

			 <i>B2 walls</i>  <i>B2 walls</i>
Roof	Metal sheeting	Condition/description B2 is a shed/workshop which shows evidence of weathering and as a result is in a state of disrepair. The roof is corrugated metal which is also single skinned and of suboptimal value for bats due to the absence of thermoregulation. Suitability/access/evidence of bats There are limited roosting opportunities for	 <i>B2 roof</i>

		bats with the only potential roosting features being where the walls meet the roof and where the corrugated metal sheets overlap.	
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B3 : Shed

B3 was not surveyed for roosting bat suitability.



Eastern elevation of B3.

B4 : Shed

B4 was not surveyed for roosting bat suitability.



Building B4

B5 : Shed

B5 was not surveyed for roosting bat suitability.



Building B5

B6 : Shed

B6 was not surveyed for roosting bat suitability.



Building B6

B7 : Garage

B7 was not surveyed for roosting bat suitability.



Building B7

Trees

T1 : Common Oak

T1 is a common oak located at SU 81454 67345. The tree has a DBH of >60cm.



Scattered trees; T1

5.2 Foreseen Impacts

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

The proposed development will result in the demolition of B2 and the extension of B1 including the addition of a second story. This could result in the destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

Trees onsite were not assessed for value for roosting bats due to there being no effect on these trees as part of the proposed development.

Foraging and commuting habitat

The proposed development will result in the loss of small areas of vegetated garden but given the low value and the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats.

Artificial lighting

The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the retained building without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.

5.3 Recommendations

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

Two bat emergence/re-entry surveys are required on B1 and one bat emergence/re-entry survey is required on B2 during the active bat season (May – September) to confirm presence/likely-absence of bats roosting in or on the buildings.

These survey visits should be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. The survey visits should be at least three weeks apart.

Sub-optimal: early May and September. Would require greater justification of timing e.g., weather conditions, known local bat activity.

One of the surveys could be a dawn re-entry survey, or both can be at dusk if supported by night vision aids (NVA).

Four survey positions are required to provide full coverage of the building's elevations to look for emerging/re-entering bats. An infrared camera should also be employed as part of the survey to see where any specific roost locations are located.

Lighting mitigation may be required based on the outcome of the night bat survey(s).

If any bat roosts are confirmed from this survey schedule, a bat licence would be required to demolish the buildings as it would involve the destruction of roosts. This is applied for with the help of a class 2 licensed bat ecologist after planning permission is granted, but before commencement of works.

An EPSL application to Natural England will be required. The EPSL application requires that all surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

If any trees are to be removed during the proposed development, a ground level tree assessment (GLTA) will be required prior to removal.

Foraging and commuting habitat

No further surveys are required.

Artificial lighting

A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: <https://www.bats.org.uk/news/2023/08/bats-and-artificial-lighting-at-night-ilp-guidance-note-update-released>

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

Enhancements are dependent on the outcome of further surveys.

6. FAUNA: BIRDS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

6.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Buildings

The buildings onsite provide nesting opportunities for birds.

Trees and vegetation

There are several wooden bird boxes fixed to mature trees along the western boundary of the site. Additionally, the trees and shrubs onsite provide further nesting opportunities for birds.

Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.

Barn Owls

The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls.

6.2 Foreseen Impacts

Buildings / vegetation

The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.

Barn Owls

None foreseen.

6.3 Recommendations

Buildings / trees

Any building or vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged or an ecologist has confirmed the nesting attempt has concluded.

Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged or an ecologist has confirmed the nesting attempt has concluded.

Barn Owls

No further barn owl surveys required.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on mature trees around the site boundaries will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) or a similar alternative brand].

Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole.

7. FAUNA: REPTILES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

7.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site.

Habitat suitability

Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging, commuting, basking and refuge opportunities for reptiles within the grassland and ruderal areas and a large historically felled tree in the centre of the garden. The presence of reptiles on site cannot be discounted, albeit likely limited to low numbers due to the suboptimal habitats including the hard standing areas, ornamental shrubs and absence of field layer vegetation beneath the Yew trees.

Wider landscape

The site is bordered by further vegetated garden habitats along with grassland, tree lines, hedgerow and woodland. These adjacent habitats provide optimal foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for reptiles and are well-connected to further suitable habitat in the wider landscape. The presence of reptiles utilising these adjacent habitats cannot be discounted.

7.2 Foreseen Impacts

Although a small area of suitable habitat is being removed as part of the development, there is a low risk that a low number of reptiles could be present in the vicinity of the works. These could be injured or killed without mitigation.

7.3 Recommendations

A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures:

- Grassland will be subject to a two-stage cut (if sward is >10cm) prior to removal in a directional manner, the first cut at 10cm and the second to ground level and maintained as a short sward (5cm) or bare ground throughout construction.
- Removal of any root systems / refugia will be undertaken outside the reptile hibernation season (November – February).
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
- In the unlikely event that a reptile is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

8. FAUNA: AMPHIBIANS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

8.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL and survey data

A review of the MAGIC database returned seven EPSL records for amphibians within 2km of the site. The MAGIC database also returned evidence indicating the presence of great crested newts (GCN) resulting from historic pond surveys undertaken in 2017. These records are located 800m west. Great crested newts exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001). As such, the great crested newt metapopulation known to be present 800m west are not suitably connected to the site.

Table 7: EPSL survey returns for amphibians within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Amphibian Species Affected	Distance from Site <i>(EPSL records are accurate to 100m)</i>	Impacts Allowed by Licence
2020-47555-EPS-MIT	GCN	950m south	Damage and destruction of a resting place
2020-47555-EPS-MIT-1	GCN	950m south	Damage and destruction of a resting place
2020-47555-EPS-MIT-2	GCN	950m south	Damage and destruction of a resting place
EPSM2013-5426	GCN	950m southeast	Destruction of a breeding place
2014-915-EPS-MIT	GCN	950m southeast	Destruction of a breeding place

2014-915-EPS-MIT-2	GCN	950m southeast	Destruction of a breeding place
2014-915-EPS-MIT-1	GCN	950m southeast	Destruction of a breeding place

A review of the MAGIC database for EPSL for great crested newts (GCN) within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. 7 EPSL were identified, as detailed below:

A check was also completed for great crested newt class survey license returns and historic pond surveys. 3 records were identified, as detailed below:

Table 8: great crested newt search results.

Record type	Distance from Site
Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017 - 2019	800m west
Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns (England)	850m west
Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns (England)	900m west

The site location falls within a red risk area covered by the NatureSpace Partnership GCN District Level Licensing scheme.

Aquatic habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m)

Great crested newts (GCN) exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001).

There are no ponds on the site, but a review of aerial imagery (MAGIC and OS Maps) indicates the presence of eight ponds within 500m. The closest pond is located 5m south.

A pond map showing approximate pond locations is provided in Appendix 6.

Terrestrial habitat suitability

Areas of shrubbery, grassland and stored items may provide foraging and sheltering opportunities for amphibians.

8.2 Foreseen Impacts

It is noted that the development area is likely to result in the loss or significant disturbance of vegetated garden. If great crested newts are present within the ponds less than 100m from the site, when completing the rapid risk assessment published by Natural England (Natural England 2015), the proposed development produces an amber risk score, which states: Offence likely. Without appropriate mitigation the proposed development would likely result in impacts to great crested newts.

8.3 Recommendations

eDNA surveys will be required for ponds 1 and 2 to determine the presence or likely absence of GCN. Should GCN be present a licence may be required to lawfully progress the development.

There are two licence options in Berkshire comprising an EPSL or entering the District Level Licence (DLL) scheme.

In order to obtain an EPSL, population class size surveys of all ponds within 500m of the site with terrestrial connectivity will be required, which must comprise 6 visits between mid-March and mid-June, where at least 3 must be completed during the optimal period between mid-April and mid-May. Each visit must comprise at least 3 survey types, typically consisting of bottle trapping, torching, and egg searching. These will be required to inform the planning application. Once planning is granted, an EPSL application can then be made to Natural England, which will include a detailed method statement. The method statement will detail all necessary mitigation measures and compensatory habitat creation to be completed prior to development works on your site.

Alternatively, a district level licence (DLL) could be obtained. A DLL can be sought without any further survey work and will require no compensatory habitat creation and less stringent on site mitigation during construction. However, it's important to note that entering the DLL scheme requires the applicant to make a conservation payment to the DLL provider to provide the compensatory habitat creation off-site on their behalf. The cost of which is relative to the scale of the impacts. As a general recommendation, if no ponds are being removed to facilitate the development, entering the DLL scheme is likely to be the most cost-effective licensing option, if necessary.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The site could be enhanced for amphibians post-development through creation of amphibian hibernacula using rubble and logs from site clearance. Information on how to construct a hibernaculum can be found here: <https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/hibernaculum>

9. FAUNA: RIPARIAN ANIMALS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

9.1 Summary of Survey Findings

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed for riparian animals (otters and water voles). No EPSLs relating to riparian animals are present within a 2km radius of the site.

Habitat suitability

There are no water courses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.

9.2 Foreseen Impacts

No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.

9.3 Recommendations

No further surveys for riparian animals required.

10. FAUNA: HAZEL DORMOUSE

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

10.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed for hazel dormouse. No EPSLs relating to hazel dormouse are present within a 2km radius of the site.

Habitat suitability

Dormice typically utilise a three-dimensional habitat structure as to commute between feeding and breeding sites whilst avoiding predation. As such habitats on site are considered unsuitable for hazel dormice and therefore the likelihood of this species being present on site is considered acceptably low.

10.2 Foreseen Impacts

No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.

10.3 Recommendations

No further hazel dormouse surveys required.

11. FAUNA: BADGERS

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

11.1 Summary of Survey Findings

No badger setts were noted on site or within a 30m radius of the site. Further, no evidence of foraging badgers was noted within the development area. However, the site was considered suitable for badger sett excavation and foraging habitat.

11.2 Foreseen Impacts

No works will be undertaken within 30m of a badger sett. Vegetated garden will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local badger populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of badgers, if present.

11.3 Recommendations

Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to badgers, further badger surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which badgers could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities for badgers.

12. FAUNA: INVERTEBRATES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

12.1 Summary of Survey Findings

The habitats present on-site, including vegetated garden, likely provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for specialised or protected invertebrates.

12.2 Foreseen Impacts

Vegetated garden will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally.

12.3 Recommendations

No further surveys.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The incorporation of bee bricks (e.g. Ibstock BeeHabitat or similar alternative brand) into the fabric of the new buildings would provide sheltering opportunities for pollinators. These should be installed 0.5m above ground level on a south-facing elevation with no obscuring vegetation. The site could be further enhanced via the provision of native wildflowers or wildflower turf, which would provide foraging opportunities for invertebrates.

13. FAUNA: OTHER NOTABLE SPECIES

This section may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.

13.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Hedgehogs

The grassland and fruit trees provide foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs within the site. Additionally, the shrubs provide refuge opportunities.

13.2 Foreseen Impacts

Hedgehogs

Vegetated garden will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.

13.3 Recommendations

Hedgehogs

Similar to the badgers, a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:

- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use.

- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.

13.4 Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements

Hedgehogs

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs:

- Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities.
- Creation of brash piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY/HABITAT MAP

PEA Map



PRA Map



APPENDIX 2: LOCATION MAP



APPENDIX 3: PROPOSED PLAN

No plans available.

APPENDIX 4: HABITAT IMAGES



Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface parking area.



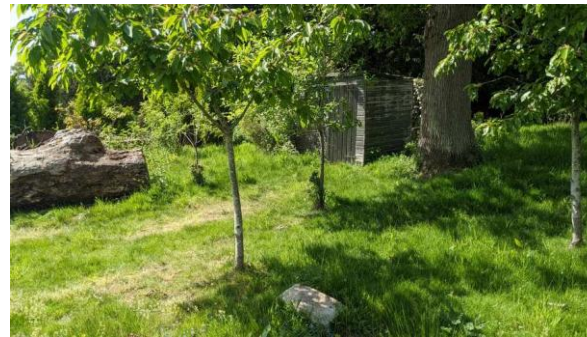
Developed land; sealed surface to the front of the dwelling.



Vegetated garden facing north from the parking area.



Vegetated garden facing east across the northern half of the site.



Vegetated garden facing southwest from the northern boundary of the site.



Scattered trees; group 1



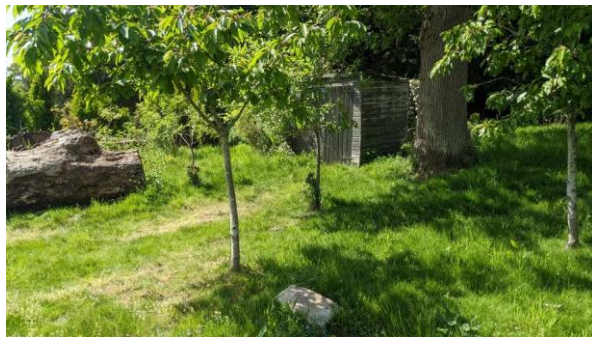
Scattered trees; group 1



Scattered trees; group 1



Scattered trees; group 2



Scattered trees; group 3



Scattered trees; group 4



Scattered trees; T1

APPENDIX 5: BASELINE CONDITION SCORE TABLES

Scattered trees (Group 1) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y
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).	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	Y
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.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Y
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y
		Total 6/6
	Condition good due to passing 6 of 6 criteria.	

Scattered trees (Group 2) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	N
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).	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	N
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.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y
		Total 3/6
	Condition moderate due to passing 3 of 6 criteria.	

Scattered trees (Group 3) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	N
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).	N
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	N
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.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y
		Total 2/6
	Condition poor due to passing 2 of 6 criteria.	

Scattered trees (Group 4) condition assessment.

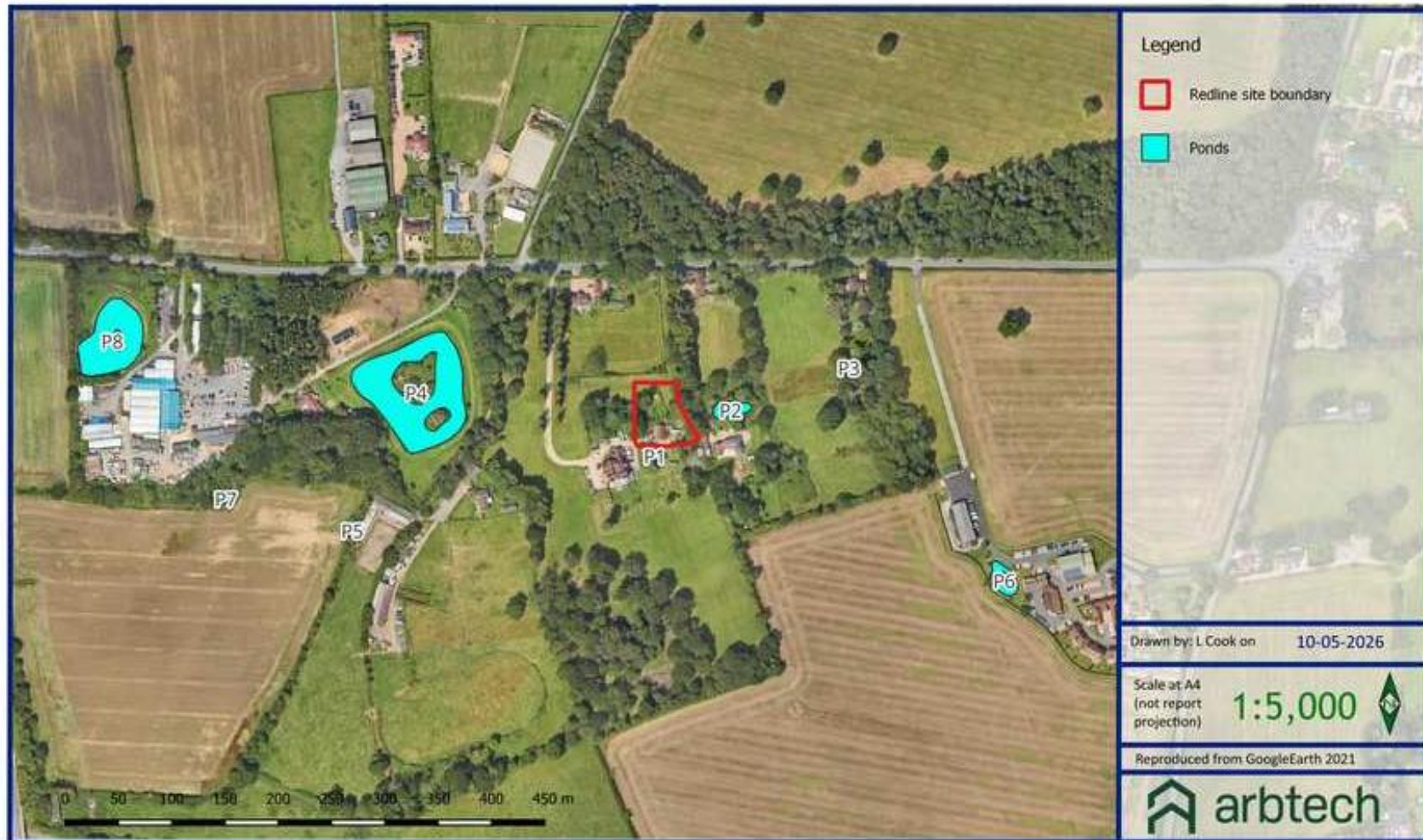
	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	N
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.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y
		Total 4/6
	Condition moderate due to passing 4 of 6 criteria.	

Scattered trees (T1: Common Oak) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y
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).	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	Y
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.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Y
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y
		Total 6/6
	Condition good due to passing 6 of 6 criteria.	

APPENDIX 6: PONDS

Pond Map



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