



**Ecological Appraisal Update and BNG
Report**

Land adjacent to Jardines Meadow, Croft
Road, Spencers Wood Wokingham RG7 1YP

Ref: CDL25001

May 2025

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Prepared by:

Mike Bird

Calyx Environmental Ltd.

May 2025

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Calyx Environmental Ltd was originally instructed in 2023 by Calcot Developments Limited to carry out a preliminary ecological appraisal to inform development proposals for two new dwellings on land adjacent to Jardines Meadow, Croft Road, Spencers Wood, Wokingham RG7 1YP. This application (ref 233039) was refused. Calcot Developments Limited now wish to submit a revised application. This report therefore updates the original assessment, based on a recent site visit undertaken on 13 February 2025 and includes a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment because proposed development of the site is now subject to Biodiversity Net Gain requirements under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).
- 1.2 This report is supported by the following drawings: CDL25001-BNG1 (Baseline Habitat Plan) and CDL25001-BNG2 (Proposed Development). It is also supported by a BNG calculations using the current statutory BNG metric spreadsheet and a condition assessment spreadsheet.

Planning Legislative and Policy Context

- 1.3 Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021) requires most new developments to incorporate new habitat creation and/or enhancement to achieve a minimum increase of 10% in biodiversity units, as defined under associated regulations and calculated using an official statutory metric spreadsheet¹.
- 1.4 Wokingham Borough Core Strategy Development Plan Policy CP7 states that inappropriate development affecting sites designated for nature conservation at international and national level will be resisted (with the degree of protection given being related to the level designation). It also states that development which may harm a local wildlife sites habitats or species of principle importance in England for nature conservation, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna (including wildlife and river corridors), or compromise the implementation of biodiversity action plans, will be only permitted where the need for development outweighs the need and there is no alternative site that meets the need whilst causing less harm.
- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework NPPF Policy 180 requires that planning proposals are only granted where significant harm to biodiversity can be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for. It requires that, in assessing the significance of impacts on biodiversity, more weight is given to designated sites, with the greatest weight given to internationally-important European statutory sites. The policy also stipulates that development that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitat types should be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons. Irreplaceable habitats are defined as those “which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity”.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>

- 1.6 The NPPF also states that opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature, where appropriate.
- 1.7 Local authorities are also required to have regard to 'habitats and species of principal importance' published under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) as well as having a general duty to promote biodiversity conservation through their activities.
- 1.8 Policy CP8 of the local plan makes specific provisions for the protection of the internationally-important Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area in line with statutory requirements, stating that development which alone or in combination is likely to have a significant effects on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered. The policy, in accordance with the views of Natural England, considers that residential proposals involving increases of one or more net additional dwelling within 5km (linear) of the SPA will need to be assessed for whether there is likely to be significant impacts.
- 1.9 Policy TB23 of the Local Plan supplements CP7 stating that development proposals need to incorporate new biodiversity, or enhance existing, features; provide appropriate buffer zones between development proposals and designated sites and habitats and habitats of principle importance for nature conservation; and ensure ecological permeability through the protection of existing and the provision of new continuous wildlife corridors, which shall be integrated and linked to the wider green infrastructure network. The local planning authority have also published guidance on biodiversity within a supplementary planning document, Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document Adopted 28 May 2010. Amongst other matters, this requires that development proposals incorporate and enhance existing habitats and green corridors and native species in planting plans. The SPD encourages the use of green and brown roofs, bird nest and bat roost boxes, and green facades.
- 1.10 Proposed Policy NE1: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation, included in the Draft Local Plan (understood to currently be at submission stage), reflects statutory requirements for development proposals to achieve a 10% net increase in biodiversity, either within the site boundary, or, where necessary, off-site contributing towards a larger strategic habitat restoration network.
- 1.11 Certain species of animal and plant have specific legal protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which of particular relevance to lowland terrestrial developments, includes all bat species and great crested newts and dormice amongst other species less likely to occur in this locality. Specific protection also applies to these and other animals and plants under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), including reptiles and birds, and under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which is relevant to development where they may be harmed by site clearance or construction works.

2.0 Methodology

- 2.1 A desk study for the original 2023 report was undertaken involving a desktop search for statutory nature conservation designations, ancient woodland, and granted protected species licences, using the government's online MAGIC Multi-agency Geographic Information System²; a search of the online mapping for local wildlife sites (LWS); a protected and notable species records within 1km of the site from Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC); and analysis of aerial imagery available via Google Earth and OS maps (for presence of water bodies in the local area). An update check was made of the MAGIC system and online LWS mapping³ for any changes in nearby designated sites and information on local great crested newts provided by NatureSpace in response to the previous application was reviewed. It is considered that information previously supplied by TVERC is sufficiently up to date given lack of significant changes to the site and immediate surrounding area.
- 2.2 The BNG metric gives additional weighting to sites that are within a strategically important area for biodiversity as defined in local nature recovery strategies or, pending publication of these strategies, any other similar existing plan stipulated by the LPA. Therefore, the current status of the local nature recovery strategy for the county was checked along with the LPA BNG webpage⁴ for any interim guidance.
- 2.2 A site visit to assess any significant changes since the original visit on 28 September 2023 was undertaken by Mike Bird (see Appendix 1 for qualifications and experience) on 13 February 2025. Both visits included an assessment of potential for protected or notable species to use the site and classification of habitats using the UKHab system (UKHab Ltd, 2023) and assessment of condition using condition criteria published by the government for BNG assessment.

3.0 Limitations and Constraints

- 3.1 The main area proposed for the development was found to have been cleared of vegetation prior to the first visit in 2023. As such it was not possible to make a full assessment of the site conditions present before site preparation for the proposed development or fully assess potential for protected / notable species. Under BNG legislation any loss or degradation of habitat that has occurred since 30 of January 2020 (unless in accordance with a previous planning permission) needs to be taken into account with the biodiversity value based on that prior to the loss or degradation in habitat value. Where there insufficient evidence about the biodiversity value of the onsite habitat immediately before the degradation, the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat must be taken to be the highest biodiversity value of the habitat which is reasonably supported by any available evidence relating to it. As such the type of habitat has been based on: Google Earth aerial imagery from 23/06/2018 (the closest available preceding the cut-off date); evidence from clearance arisings still present, and noted by the author, during the visit on 28 September 2023; and evidence from an the arboricultural implications assessment report by SJA Trees (submitted

² <http://www.magic.gov.uk>

³ [My Wokingham](#)

⁴ [Biodiversity net gain \(BNG\)](#)

with the previous planning application), based on visits on 14 June 2023 and 20 September 2023. The condition has been based on the remaining section of woodland belt, presence of species, including cherry laurel noted in the remains of cleared vegetation and information within the SJA Trees arboricultural implications assessment report.

- 3.2 Any matters relating to pre-clearance risk assessment, avoidance or mitigation measures in respect of protected species are outside of the scope of this report.
- 3.3 As site conditions can change over time, this report should not be relied upon for planning decisions after 12 months from this date or following significant site changes, unless the assessment and recommendations are verified by an update-survey.

4.0 Site and Context

- 4.1 The site is approximately 0.24Ha and is located adjacent to Jardines Meadow, Croft Road, Spencers Wood, Wokingham RG7 1YP. The OS grid reference is SU724668. The site location with approximate red line site boundary and area covered by the survey is shown in Figure 1. Surrounding land is residential with a mix of private gardens and public amenity space, with woodland belts, linking to trees on site, to the immediate south running east/west along Croft Road.

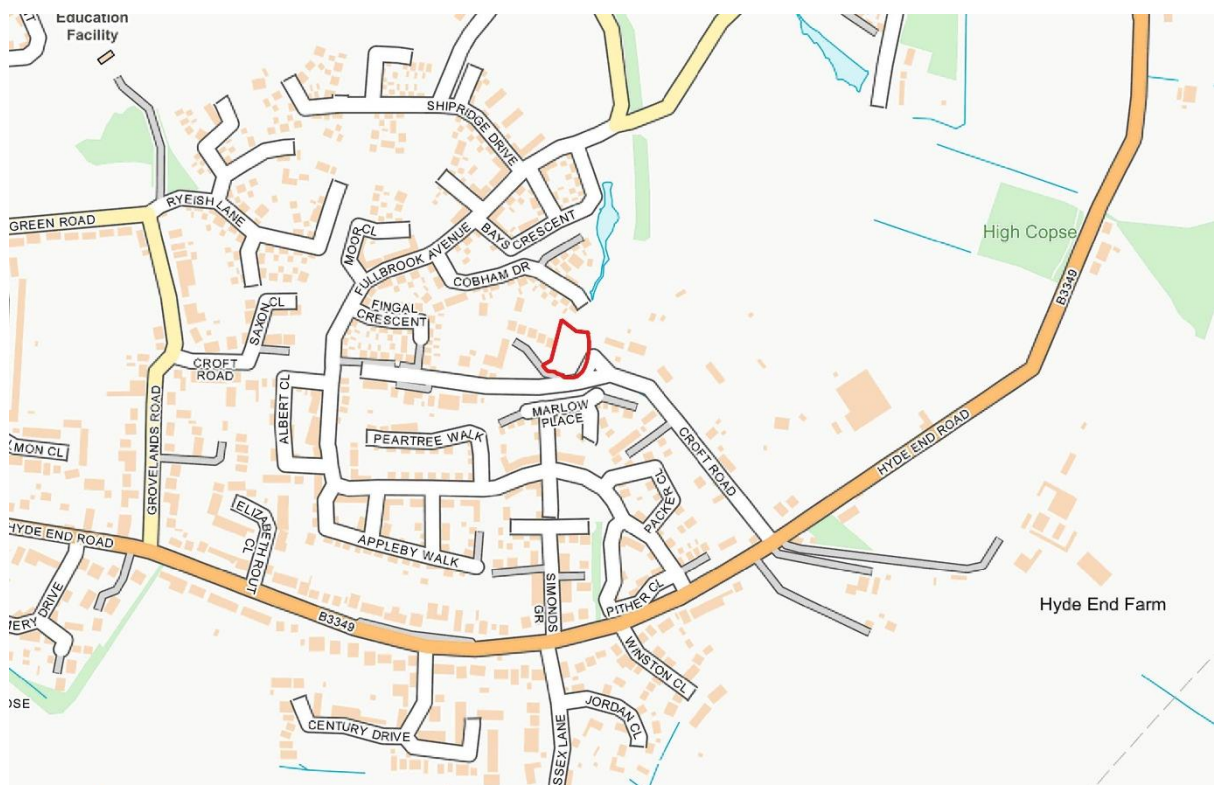


Figure 1: site location and context. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2025. Used under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

5.0 Designated Nature Conservation Sites and Development Implications

- 5.1 The nearest designated sites, based on a 5km search zone for international/national sites and 2km search zone for local sites, are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Designated sites			
Site name	Designation	Level	Distance (km)
Thames Basin Heaths	SPA	International	4.26
Stanford End Mill and River Loddon	SSSI	National	1.62
Bramshill	SSSI	National	4.26
Swallowfield Meadow	NNR	Local	2
Clare's Green Road Grasslands	LWS	Local	0.4
Woods Between Whitehouse and Highlands	LWS	Local	1.4
River Loddon	LWS	Local	1.12
Great Wood	LWS	Local	1.3
Moor Copse	LWS	Local	1.21
Round's Copse	LWS	Local	1.62
The Grove	LWS	Local	1.88
Shinfield Park, Nore's Hill	LWS	Local	1.9
SAC – Special Area of Conservation, SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest, NNR – National Nature Reserve, LNR Local Nature Reserve, LWS – Local Wildlife Site			

- 5.2 The Natural England SSSI risk zone mapping relevant for the proposed site does not highlight any risk from residential development for the site.
- 5.3 The nearest non-designated ancient semi-natural woodlands are 0.46 and 0.5 km from the site.
- 5.4 At the time of writing, the local nature recovery strategy for Berkshire is still in preparation and no specific guidance on interim sources to be used for determining strategic significance is given on the LPA BNG webpage. Therefore, the site is categorised as not in a “local strategy / no local strategy” for the purposes of the BNG metric.

6.0 Site Habitats and Protected / Notable Species Implications

Habitats

- 6.1 The area that had been recently cleared during the first site visit in September 2023 is now closely mown grassland which is classified under UKHabs as modified grassland g4. There are small groups of retained trees to the north and the south including ash, pine, common lime and Norway maple.
- 6.2 There is a remaining belt of woodland along the east of the site comprising a canopy layer of sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*),

common lime (*Tilia platyphyllos x europaea*) with some pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), a shrub layer of bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*), a few young stems of English elm (*Ulmus procera*), most likely suckers, Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), crack willow (*Salix x fragilis*) and significant amounts of non-native invasive cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*). Ground flora includes cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), sweet violet (*Viola odorata*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), hedge woadwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), and stinging nettle (*Urtica dioica*). It is considered to be recent secondary woodland (that is arising on previously non-wooded land after the 1600CE cutoff date for ancient woodland). Based on a review of historic 19th Century Ordnance survey maps, it is likely to have been associated with a large historic house and possible garden / avenue planting, the current species composition representing a mix of self-sown native species and introduced species typical of formal garden planting. Based on this, the wood is considered to best match the habitat classification w1g Other Broadleaved Woodland under UKHabs. Under current conditions, there is a strong likelihood of the cherry laurel coming to dominate the shrub layer and suppress native shrubs and ground flora to the detriment of biodiversity.

Protected / Notable Species

Great Crested Newts and other amphibians

- 6.3 The record centre search provided a record for this species for a grid square 100m to the southeast, dated 9 September 2020. Although OS mapping did not reveal a water body at this location, subsequent information from NatureSpace⁵ indicates that there are "one or more artificial waterbodies at this location and that there is a great crested newt population nearby that these animals have dispersed from. As such, it is considered that the site is within a distance from which the animals may forage, seek shelter and hibernate during their terrestrial phase. However, the area of grassland where development is proposed is currently closely mown, offering negligible cover and poor habitat. Therefore, it is considered highly unlikely that great crested newts would be impacted by future development within this area, subject to continuation of this management and some basic precautions, in the form of exclusion fencing, during development to prevent entrapment or injury of any animals passing through the site, particularly at night. This also appears to be the opinion of NatureSpace, in their previous consultation response, which states: "*As the site has already been cleared and the development site is relatively small, impacts to newts unlikely to result from the proposed works. However, due to the nearby waterbody to the north, and the suitable habitat bordering the site and the known presence of great crested newts in the area, it is recommended that reasonable avoidance measures are used for the proposed works, if the application is approved.*" The consultation response goes on to refer to the option of registration under the council's District Licensing Scheme, which would provide an alternative to site-specific avoidance measures.

⁵ NatureSpace consultation response to planning application reference 233039, dated 21/12/23

Dormouse

- 6.4 There are no LRC records of dormouse for the site or immediate area. Given the small amount of woodland on site (currently and prior to clearance), its relatively poor quality and isolation, lacking suitable habitat connectivity to more likely dormouse habitat, it is considered that the presence of dormice is very unlikely.

Bats

- 6.5 Retained trees within the proposed development area lack significant bat roost potential. There is one dead tree in the northern part, which is clad with ivy, which is assessed as having low potential. In accordance with survey guidance published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023), no further surveys of this tree are deemed necessary prior to removal. Trees within the woodland belt typically have low to negligible potential in terms of natural bat roost features. It was noted that a retained tree within the southern part of the site has had a bat box recently installed, but there is scope for enhancing the woodland belt with additional bat boxes and for integration of bat roost features such as integrated tubes within the proposed new dwellings to address the lack of natural features. The site is likely to be used for foraging by widespread and relatively common pipistrelle species and brown long-eared bats, as evidenced by a number of records for the local area provided by the LRC. Subject to avoiding any illumination of the woodland belt edge eg. from security lights, no significant impacts on bat foraging are considered likely.

Badger

- 6.6 No field signs to indicate significant badger activity on the site or adjacent woodland belt were noted and no records for surrounding land were returned by the LRC. Therefore, no significant impacts on badgers are considered likely.

Birds

- 6.7 The retained trees within the proposed development area and the trees and shrubs within the woodland belt have the potential to be used by a range of nesting birds including smaller songbirds and larger species common in urban areas such as feral and wood pigeon, all of which are protected, along with any active nests and eggs. If any other trees or shrubs are removed, basic precautions are warranted (see recommendations section). It is noted that several bird boxes have been recently installed on retained trees. There is scope for further enhancement within the woodland belt and by integrating nest features into the proposed new dwellings as well as through use of native hedge planting. Subject to this, no significant impacts on local bird populations are considered likely as a result of the proposed development.

Reptiles

- 6.8 The main proposed development area is currently unsuitable for reptiles due lack of suitable cover within the area of mown grassland. Based on assessment of likely habitat prior to clearance, which appears to be recent secondary woodland similar to the remaining belt, it

is likely that much of the site would have been too shaded. Although presence of widespread species (eg. slow-worm) around margins cannot be ruled out.

Invertebrates

- 6.9 There are numerous records of stag beetles within the local area, though not specifically for the site, provided in the TVERC search results. This priority species for conservation relies on rotting stumps and other partly buried decaying wood for its larval stage. No remaining stumps were noted within the cleared area, but there is scope for enhancing the site by incorporating logs into more informal areas, such as the woodland edge (subject to care around tree roots). No other features or habitat were assessed as having the potential to support invertebrate species of conservation concern, but consideration should be given to conservation of more widespread species by incorporating native planting into landscape plans as well as incorporating other habitat features.

7.0 Assessment and Planning Policy Considerations

Designated Sites

- 7.1 Due to the proposed development being within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, where a risk of increased recreational pressure from new residential development has been identified, it is expected that the local planning authority will require mitigation/avoidance in the form of a financial contribution to suitable alternative natural green space (SANG) and strategic access management and monitoring (SAMM). Further advice on this issue should be obtained directly from the local planning authority and information is available on the council's website at: [Thames Basin Health Special Protection Area \(wokingham.gov.uk\)](https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/thames-basin-health-special-protection-area).
- 7.2 Given the distance and lower sensitivity of other designated sites within the local area, it is considered that any recreational impacts would be de minimis and no direct impacts from the site itself such as noise and lighting are considered likely. Therefore, no significant negative effects on other designated sites are considered likely.

Habitats

- 7.3 Based on the character and composition of the woodland belt along the east of the site, which comprises a mix of non-native as well as native species and lacks the characteristics of lowland deciduous woodland, it is not assessed as representing priority habitat / habitat of principal importance to which local planning authorities are required to have particular regard in determining planning applications and is not assessed to represent irreplaceable habitat. However, it is considered to provide valuable habitat at the site and neighbourhood level, which is enhanced by being a component of a tree / woodland belt which provides a 'corridor' through this urban area and thus it should be retained and improved through appropriate management, in line with the NPPF and Wokingham Borough Council Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, which encourage integration and enhancement of habitats with development designs.

- 7.4 In its current state, the cleared area of the site has very low biodiversity value. However, it appears to have had woodland cover prior to 30 January 2020. Arisings from clearance that appears to have been undertaken shortly before the first Calyx Environmental Ltd on 28 September 2023 show that non-native invasive species, cherry laurel and Norway maple were present. An arboricultural implications report by SJA Trees (see paragraph 3.1) indicates a pre-clearance canopy composition including native and non-native trees, including ash, pedunculate oak, horse chestnut, Scots pine, common lime, Lawson cypress and Norway maple. Some of these trees are still remnant. The arboricultural report also notes that most of the trees were semi-mature with the occasional mature specimen and that a high proportion of the ash were in decline due to ash-dieback disease. Based on the high proportion of non-native species, the habitat is assessed as other woodland; broadleaf w1g— the same as the extant belt along the east of the site.
- 7.5 Under BNG rules for assessing the prior condition of lost or degraded habitats, the pre-development biodiversity value must be taken to be the highest biodiversity value of the habitat which is reasonably supported by any available evidence relating to it. Based on the evidence available about species composition, presence of non-native invasive species, age class and ash-dieback disease, it is assessed as highly unlikely that the condition would have been better than the extant tree belt and has thus been classified as poor for BNG assessment purposes.
- 7.6 Although the cleared habitat would not have represented irreplaceable or priority habitat, the replacement of any type of woodland by buildings, hard surfacing and domestic gardens will clearly result in a localised loss of biodiversity. Biodiversity net gain requirements under the Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require not only that any such losses are compensated for, but that a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity units is achieved, as calculated using the government's published statutory metric. Where possible, this should be achieved through on-site habitat enhancement and creation, but provision is made for meeting the requirement through offsite schemes, including purchasing credits from another provider where this is not possible. Whilst there is scope for some enhancement of the retained tree belt, the increase in biodiversity units, as calculated by the metric falls short of the 10% required. Therefore, offsite credits will be required. These are calculated as 0.38 units (there are no hedgerow or water course elements for this site). In accordance with a 'spatial risk multiplier' used in the metric to weight offsite credits according to whether they are in the same LPA district, neighbouring LPA district or outside of these zones, the number of units actually required will depend on the availability of local credits, but preference should, in any case, be given to local schemes. As a last resort, statutory credits may be purchased from Natural England but would require purchase of double the units ie. 0.76.

Species

- 7.7 Given that the proposed area of development has already been cleared, a full assessment of impacts has not been possible. In terms of the current site conditions, it is not considered that any significant impacts are likely subject to continued mowing of the grass within the

proposed development area and precautions during construction, future tree belt management, and in respect of any lighting.

8.0 Recommendations

Biodiversity Net Gain requirements

- 8.1 There is good scope for the enhancement of the retained woodland belt which contains the non-native invasive species cherry laurel, which if not eradicated or at least effectively controlled, is likely to dominate the shrub layer and shade out other species, to the detriment of biodiversity. With the cherry laurel successfully dealt with (eg. through cutting and stump treatment), there would be benefit from supplementary planting of woody and herbaceous planting to create a more semi-natural species composition. Gradual removal of any Norway maple would also be desirable with a view to removing seed sources, without which the species is likely continue to regenerate. Sycamore could also be selectively removed to create space for native species, but complete eradication is likely to be difficult and is not necessarily desirable as it can provide useful features for wildlife, and it may help to fill a niche left by any ash succumbing to ash dieback disease. They can also be useful in taking the brunt of grey squirrel damage and subsequently providing deadwood habitat following stem girdling. Deer browsing pressure will limit natural regeneration and any enrichment planting so there would be benefit from excluding them with suitable fencing, either around the whole group or temporarily placed around sections until young trees have developed sufficiently, after which it may be moved to another section. Given the lack of veteran trees within the woodland belt providing natural features for bat roosting or nest holes for birds, there is also scope for installation of additional nest/roost boxes and for deliberate 'veteranisation' to artificially create features where this is compatible with the safety of adjacent land. A condition sheet to demonstrate enhancement options under the BNG metric has been added to the condition spreadsheet accompanying this report.
- 8.2 In addition to woodland belt enhancements, the biodiversity within the developed area could be enhanced through the planting of native hedges and native shrubs and fruit trees within the gardens and through the incorporation of bird nest and bat roost features within the new dwellings (eg. www.schwegler-natur.de). Any fences should incorporate holes to allow hedgehog movement through the gardens. These will contribute towards meeting planning policy requirements for enhancement, but do not contribute to meeting the statutory BNG requirements.
- 8.3 There are numerous records of stag beetles in the area so there would be benefit in creating larval habitat through the partial burial of logs (with appropriate care to avoid damaging tree roots), for example within shrub planting areas or woodland belt as well as deadwood piles to provide general benefit for various species.

- 8.4 Lawns could contribute towards site biodiversity through the use of a seed mix with higher plant diversity than normal amenity seed mixes (eg. <https://germinalamenity.com/wfg20-eco-species-rich-lawn>).
- 8.5 To achieve the 10% in biodiversity units under statutory BNG requirements, local credits should be sourced from a local provider if possible and an initial enquiry to BNGEnquiries@wokingham.gov.uk is recommended in the first instance. A number of other brokers and national providers also existing including: Environment Bank (<https://www.environmentbank.com/>) and Biodiversity Units UK ([Biodiversity Units UK — Developers](#)). In addition Natural England act as a provider of last resort where credits cannot be sourced from a more local provider [Statutory biodiversity credits - GOV.UK](#). Alternatively, a bespoke scheme on land where appropriate management can be secured through a legal agreement or wildlife covenant for a minimum of 30 years could be investigated.

Avoidance and Mitigation Measures for Protected Species

- 8.6 All wild bird species, including eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), which prohibits intentional killing or injury or the damage or destruction of a nest whilst in use or being built. Certain species (listed in Schedule 1 of the Act) are also protected against disturbance whilst nesting. The main period of nesting takes place from late February/early March until the end of August. Therefore, if any further trees or shrubs are removed to facilitate development or in the process of future management, work the work should be undertaken outside of this period. If this is not possible, a thorough check of any trees or shrubs to be removed should be carried out by a wildlife specialist prior to works.
- 8.7 To mitigate the risk of great crested newts, other amphibians, or reptiles, being injured by development, it is recommended that the grassland within the proposed development area be kept shorter than 5cm. Prior to ground works, reptile exclusion fencing should be erected around the construction area and maintained until practical completion.
- 8.8 Prior to any tree felling, including future management of the woodland belt, trees should be inspected for potential bat roost features in accordance with best practice set out in Collins (2023) and appropriate surveys and mitigation, including licensing where necessary. For the dead ivy-clad tree within the northern part of the proposed development area, bat potential is currently assessed as low and no further surveys are recommended if it is felled within the next 12 months.
- 8.9 To avoid impacts on bat foraging, external lighting should be avoided or carefully designed to ensure that light is directed only where and when needed and avoids illumination of the woodland belt edge.
- 8.10 To avoid any animals becoming trapped or injured during construction, open trenches should be covered at night, or if this is not possible, scaffold planks should be placed in them to create ramps, enabling escape.

- 8.11 To avoid any damage to the woodland belt / retained trees, they should be protected during ground works and construction with suitable protective fencing (eg. 'Heras' type panels on a braced scaffold framework). It is expected that this will be covered in a separate tree protection plan supported by an arboricultural report.

References

Collins, J. (ed) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

Cresswell, W. and Whitworth, C. (2004) *An assessment of the efficiency of capture techniques and the value of different habitats for the great crested newt Triturus cristatus*. English Nature Research Report Number 576. English Nature, Peterborough.

UKHab Ltd (2023) UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (at <https://ukhab.org>). Registration required.

Appendix 1: Qualifications and Experience

Mike Bird BSc (Hons), MSc, MCIEEM, M. Arbor A.

Mike is an experienced and qualified ecologist with over 20 years of experience within the planning sector. He holds a BSc (Hons) in Environmental Land Management, an MSc in Ecology and Management of the Natural Environment and an HND in Arboriculture. He has worked in local authority planning both as a tree officer and as a biodiversity officer. Between 2008 and 2012 he was the Principal Officer in charge of the Trees and Ecology team at Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council. He left local government in early 2013 to start an environmental consultancy practice, which became incorporated as Calyx Environmental Ltd in August 2013.

Appendix 2: Photographs

Update photographs from 13/02/2025



P1 – cleared area where development proposed (looking from south to north)



P2 showing edge of remaining tree belt (looking East from centre of site)

Original photographs from 28/09/2023



P1: Main site area looking south along western boundary



P2: Looking southeast across the main site area



P3: Cleared area with vegetation starting to re-grow



P4: Recently-installed bird box on retained tree



P5: Main site area looking northwards



P6: Northwest corner of main site area



P7: Retained trees at southern end of site



P8: Woodland along eastern part of site



P9: Mound of cleared vegetation and soil along edge of woodland belt



P10: Retained trees at southern end of site with recently-installed bat box



P11: Retained tree within northern part of site with low bat potential



P12: Interior of woodland belt along east of site



P13: Woodland belt showing horse chestnut (middle ground on left-hand side)



P14: Interior of woodland belt showing presence of non-native invasive cherry laurel

Appendix 3: Recorded Plant Species

Species	Abundance (DAFOR)
Main site area	
broad-leaved dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>)	O
creeping thistle (<i>Cirsium arvense</i>)	O
greater plantain (<i>Plantago major</i>)	O
Yorkshire-fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>)	O
ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	O
bristly oxtongue (<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>)	O
hemlock (<i>Conium maculatum</i>)	O
creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>)	O
annual meadow-grass (<i>Poa annua</i>)	F
Wooded area to East	
cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>)	A
pedunculate oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>)	O
horse-chestnut (<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>)	F
ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	A
lime (<i>Tilia platyphyllos x europaea</i>)	O
bramble (<i>Rubus sp.</i>)	A
cock's-foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>)	O
sweet violet (<i>Viola odorata</i>)	A
cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>)	A
English elm (<i>Ulmus procera</i>)	O
spindle (<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>)	O
garlic mustard (<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>)	F
hedge woundwort (<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>)	O
common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>)	A
weeping willow (<i>Salix x sepulcralis</i>)	O
sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>)	O
Within pile of cleared vegetation	

yew (<i>Taxus baccata</i>)	F
Norway maple (<i>Acer platanoides</i>)	F
ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>)	O
cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>)	F
Around edges of main cleared area	
field forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>)	O
hemlock (<i>Conium maculatum</i>)	F
cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>)	F
creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>)	A
smooth sow-thistle (<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>)	O
bittersweet (<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>)	O
spear thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>)	O
cherry laurel (<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>)	F
common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>)	F
broad-leaved dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>)	A
herb-Robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>)	O
cut-leaved crane's-bill (<i>Geranium dissectum</i>)	O
hedge woundwort (<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>)	O
garlic mustard (<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>)	O
foxglove (<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>)	O

DAFOR provides an estimate of abundance within a patch of vegetation where D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional and R = rare