



Landscape & Ecological Management Plan

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Report	Landscape & Ecological Management Plan (Condition 18)
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Client	Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ecosupport Ltd were commissioned by Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd to produce a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for the development of Linear Park Phase 3, Arborfield Green within the wider Arborfield Garrison development site. This was requested to satisfy the discharge of Condition 18 of the planning approval for the site with ref O/2014/2280, as well as to provide an updated Ecological Assessment.

A series of reports / surveys have been carried out in association with this phase of the development, and the wider Arborfield Garrison development site. As part of this work, the following relevant reports were produced:

- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – BAP;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Bat Mitigation Strategy;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Bat Survey Report;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Bat Roost Locations;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Non Statutory Designated Sites;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Protected Species Records (Within 2km) – Excluding Bats;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Protected Species Records (Within 5km) – Bats Only;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Reptile Habitat Survey Locations and Results Summary;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Statutory Designated Sites;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Waterbodies In The Vicinity Of The Arborfield Garrison Site;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Great Crested Newt Survey Report;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Hedgerow Survey Report and Strategy;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Non-Native Invasive Species Strategy;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Reptile Mitigation Strategy;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – SANG Habitat Creation and Ecological Management Plan;
- AECOM (2015). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location. Environmental Statement – Addendum. Reference AGLC/HPA/DOC/5 Addendum B;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location. Environmental Statement – Additional Information. Reference AGLC/HPA/DOC/5;
- AECOM (n.d.). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location. Environmental Statement – Additional Information;
- AECOM (n.d.). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location. Environmental Statement Volume 2 Main Report;
- Simon Jones Associates Ltd (2015). Arboricultural Implications Report ADDENDUM. Proposed re-development at Arborfield Garrison, Reading, Berkshire;
- Simon Jones Associates Ltd (2015). Arboricultural Implications Report ADDENDUM #2. Proposed re-development at Arborfield Garrison, Reading, Berkshire; and

- Simon Jones Associates Ltd (2014). Tree Protection Plan. Arborfield Barracks, Reading, Berkshire. Drawing No: SJA TPP 13279-01a-01.

In July 2026, Ecosupport Ltd undertook an updated walkover surveys and ecological surveys of which, in combination with the aforementioned reports, forms the basis of this report. This report addresses the necessary mitigation and compensation for protected species present on site and also includes a series of management prescriptions to enhance the site for biodiversity in perpetuity as well as the targeted biodiversity enhancements to be included within the site.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief

Ecosupport Ltd were commissioned by Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd to produce a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for a site known as 'Linear Park Phase 3, Arborfield Green'. The aim of this report is to provide a prescription of the management of habitats and ecological enhancement measures for a period of 10 years, and detail mitigation, compensation, and enhancement measures for protected species, and use them to inform a site-wide Landscape Ecological Management Plan, in line with the approved Arborfield Garrison – BAP. This will ensure the creation and management of habitats is suitable and beneficial to biodiversity within the site and all features of ecological importance are protected. This report will meet the requirements of Condition 18 of the planning approval for the site with ref O/2014/2280. The condition states:

Condition 18 – Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)

"The reserved matters for any phase of the development shall include a detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan. Each detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plan shall be in accordance with the mitigation, contingency and enhancement measures contained within table 13.23 of the submitted Environmental Statement Reference AGLC/HPA/DOC/5 (AECOM, October 2014) and the submitted Arborfield Garrison – BAP (AECOM, October 2014). The detailed Landscape and Ecological Management Plans shall include all the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures contained within table 13.23 of the submitted Environmental Statement Reference AGLC/HPA/DOC/5 (AECOM, October 2014) and shall be implemented in accordance with the approved plan unless otherwise approved in writing by the local planning authority."

Reason: In order to ensure that the approved landscaping is satisfactorily maintained in accordance with NPPF, Wokingham Borough Core Strategy policies CP1, CP3 and CP7 and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan Policies CC03 and TB21 and the Arborfield Strategic Development Location Supplementary Planning Document (2011)."

This document has therefore been produced to enable the above conditions to be discharged.

1.2 Aim

The aim of this report is to bring together all relevant sections of the ecological reports, in cooperation with updated surveys, associated with the above application to devise a site wide Landscape and Ecological Management Plan. This will ensure all features of ecological value and all legally protected species are protected, their presence on site retained in perpetuity and targeted and proportionate recommendations for enhancements made.

1.3 Site Description

The site comprises a parcel of land located off Biggs Lane, Arborfield Green, Reading, RG2 9SY (centred on OS grid reference SU 77308 65557) (**Fig 1**). The site is bound by Biggs Lane to the north, land associated with the wider Arborfield Garrison strategic development to the east and south, and residential dwellings and associated gardens to the west. The immediate surrounding environment is

urban, comprising a mix of residential housing, commercial buildings, a school, and areas of greenspace.

Figure 1. Approximate redline boundary of the site (Google Satellite, 2026).



1.4 Development Proposals

Application for Approval of Reserved Matters pursuant to Outline planning consent (O/2014/2280) for the provision of an area of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG), including car parking, pathways / walkways, fencing, associated landscaping and access.

2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION & POLICY

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 *The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019*

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transposes the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into UK domestic law. It provides protection for sites and species deemed to be of conservation importance across Europe. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or injure species listed in Schedule 2 or to damage or destroy their breeding sites or shelter. It is also illegal to deliberately disturb these species in such a way that is likely to significantly impact on the local distribution or abundance or affect their ability to survive, breed and rear or nurture their young.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit) makes changes to the three existing instruments which transpose the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives so that they continue to work (are operable) upon the UK's exit from the European Union (EU). These include The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This instrument also amends section 27 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to ensure existing protections continue. The intention is to ensure habitat and species protection and standards as set out under the Nature Directives are implemented in the same way or an equivalent way when the UK exits the EU.

In order for activities that would be likely to result in a breach of species protection under the regulations to legally take place, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence must first be obtained from Natural England.

2.1.2 *The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)*

This is the primary piece of legislation by which biodiversity is protected within the UK. Protected fauna and flora are listed under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. They include all species of bats, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost or to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost. Similarly, this Act makes it an offence to kill or injure any species of British reptiles and also makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to take, damage or destroy their eggs and nests (whilst in use or being built).

The Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) states that it is an offence to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild' any plant listed in Schedule 9 part II of the Act. This list over 30 plants including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Parrot's Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).

2.1.3 *The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)*

This Act strengthens the Wildlife & Countryside Act by the addition of "reckless" offences in certain circumstances, such as where there is the likelihood of protected species being present. The Act places a duty on Government Ministers and Departments to conserve biological diversity and provides police with stronger powers relating to wildlife crimes.

2.1.4 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires that public bodies have due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. This means that Planning authorities must consider biodiversity when planning or undertaking activities. Section 41 of the Act lists species found in England which were identified as requiring action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the *UK Post – 2010 Biodiversity Framework*.

2.1.5 Protection of Badgers Act

The Protection of Badgers Act (1992) relates to the welfare of Badgers (*Meles meles*) as opposed to nature conservation considerations. The Act prevents:

- The wilful killing, injury, ill treatment or taking of Badgers and / or
- Interference with a Badger sett
- Damaging or destroying all or part of a sett
- Causing a dog to enter a set and
- Disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett

Provisions are included within the Act to allow for the lawful licensing of certain activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under the Act.

2.1.6 The Environment Act (2021)

The Environment Act 2021 is the UK's new legislation for environmental protection in the UK, which includes protection of water quality, clean air, and biodiversity among other key protections. This Act provides the government power to set targets to reach long-term aims relating to the environment, which will be periodically reviewed and updated. This legislation also establishes a new environmental watchdog organisation, the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP), which will hold the government accountable on environmental issues.

Part 6 of The Environment Act relates to nature and biodiversity. This section makes provision for biodiversity net gain to be a condition of planning permission in England and a requirement for nationally significant infrastructure projects. Biodiversity net gain will require maintenance for a period of at least 30 years after the completion of enhancement works to be achieved.

The legislation also includes updates to existing environmental legislation, such as the NERC Act 2006, to strengthen biodiversity enhancement rather than just conservation and includes a requirement for local, or relevant, authorities to publish biodiversity reports. Further, The Environment Act places a requirement on responsible authorities to prepare local nature recovery strategies, which will outline nature conservation sites and priorities and opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity within the local area. Within England, the legislation also provides Natural England with the power to publish 'species conservation strategies' and 'protected site strategies' to identify activities that may affect a species or site's status and outline their opinions on measures that would be appropriate to avoid, mitigate or compensate any adverse impacts.

2.2 Policy

2.2.1 National

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2026) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

Chapter 19 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that planning decisions should safeguard and enhance the natural environment, recognising the hierarchy of designated sites and the wider value of natural capital. Development should be directed to land of least environmental value and must avoid, minimise or appropriately mitigate ecological impacts. The Framework emphasises nature recovery, requiring opportunities for habitat creation, restoration and strengthening ecological networks to be identified and delivered, informed by Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Proposals must incorporate high-quality green infrastructure and achieve statutory biodiversity net gain. Development affecting irreplaceable habitats should be refused unless wholly exceptional circumstances apply. For designated sites—including habitats sites, SSSIs and locally important wildlife sites—development is only acceptable where impacts are avoided or clearly justified and mitigated. Overall, Chapter 19 sets a clear expectation that development contributes positively to biodiversity, integrates nature-based solutions, and supports long-term ecological resilience.

Specifically, the NPPF states determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

1. Development plans should safeguard and enhance the natural environment, and reflect the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, by using Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Protected Landscape Management Plans, River Basin Management Plans, National Forest Strategies, Community Forest Plans and other relevant evidence at the most appropriate level to:
 - a. Set out the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and areas of importance for their landscape, geodiversity or biodiversity value in the plan area, and identify other features which require particular consideration in managing development due to their environmental value such as chalk streams;
 - b. Identify opportunities for the conservation, enhancement and recovery of landscapes, sensitive waterbodies, habitats and priority or threatened species, including through habitat restoration, the use of nature-based solutions, and the creation and strengthening of ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures (including opportunities which exist at a catchment or landscape scale across plan boundaries);
 - c. Steer the location of development, including through site allocations, in ways which utilise land of least environmental value where that would be consistent with other policies in this Framework. This should include limiting the scale and extent of development within Protected Landscapes, avoiding the use of higher quality agricultural land where land of poorer quality is available and avoiding and minimising harm to designated sites of importance for nature. Areas which could become of particular importance for nature

- identified in Local Nature Recovery Strategies should be taken into account as opportunities to integrate development with environmental restoration, but should not necessarily preclude the allocation of land for development; and
- d. Set out standards for green infrastructure provision, in a way which complements and/or incorporates those for recreational land (as set out in policy HC1). These should draw upon Natural England's Green Infrastructure Standards for England, tailored as necessary to local circumstances.
2. Development plans should only set local standards for biodiversity net gain which are in excess of the statutory net gain requirement where this is for specific site allocations and is fully justified and deliverable. Local standards should not extend to categories of development which are exempt from statutory biodiversity net gain.

2.2.2 Local Planning Policy – Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework (2010)

Policy 'CP7 – Biodiversity' states that sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site in terms of its international or national importance.

Development which may compromise the implementation of the national, regional, county and local biodiversity action plans, harm designated sites, habitats, species of principle importance, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna whether directly or indirectly will be only permitted if it has been clearly demonstrated that the need for the proposal outweighs the need to safeguard the conservation importance, that no alternative site is available and mitigation and compensation measures can be put in place to prevent damaging impacts.

The Local Plan recognises that the need to protect European sites from likely significant effects could mean that housing targets are not achievable. The Habitats Regulations Assessment indicates that the development envisaged through the Core Strategy can be delivered without likely significant harm upon any European sites (either on their own or in-combination with other plans or projects). However, the Council will assess each plan or project to confirm that it can be delivered without likely significant harm (either on their own or in-combination with other plans or projects). The need for a development that affects a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) will be deemed to outweigh the need to safeguard the nature conservation interest where the development has clear social or economic benefits of national importance. The need for a development that affects Local Wildlife Sites, habitats or, species of principal importance in England for nature conservation, ancient woodland, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna will be deemed to outweigh the need to safeguard the nature conservation interest where the development has clear social or economic benefits of regional or national importance. Similarly Policy 'CP8 - Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area' states 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.

3.0 BASELINE DATA

AECOM undertook a series of ecological surveys, summarized into several reports, with the relevant reports and maps comprising:

- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – BAP;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Bat Mitigation Strategy;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Bat Survey Report;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Bat Roost Locations;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Non Statutory Designated Sites;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Protected Species Records (Within 2km) – Excluding Bats;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Protected Species Records (Within 5km) – Bats Only;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Reptile Habitat Survey Locations and Results Summary;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Statutory Designated Sites;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison EIA. Waterbodies In The Vicinity Of The Arborfield Garrison Site;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Great Crested Newt Survey Report;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison – Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report;
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- AECOM (2015). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location. Environmental Statement – Addendum. Reference AGLC/HPA/DOC/5 Addendum B;
- AECOM (2014). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location. Environmental Statement – Additional Information. Reference AGLC/HPA/DOC/5;
- AECOM (n.d.). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location. Environmental Statement – Additional Information;
- AECOM (n.d.). Arborfield Garrison Strategic Development Location. Environmental Statement Volume 2 Main Report;
- Simon Jones Associates Ltd (2015). Arboricultural Implications Report ADDENDUM. Proposed re-development at Arborfield Garrison, Reading, Berkshire;
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- Simon Jones Associates Ltd (2014). Tree Protection Plan. Arborfield Barracks, Reading, Berkshire. Drawing No: SJA TPP 13279-01a-01.

In July 2026, Ecosupport Ltd undertook an updated walkover survey and data request to Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, in combination with the aforementioned reports, forms the basis of this report. The methodology for updated survey work can be found in **Appendix A** of this report.

3.1 Designated Sites

A data request was submitted to the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre to ascertain any records held of nature conservation designations and protected species within the wider area (2km) which could be impacted upon as a result of the proposed plans.

The data search covered:

- Statutory designated sites;
- Non-statutory designations such as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS); and
- Records of protected and notable species.

3.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) identified two statutory designated sites within a 2km search radius of the site (**Fig 2**). This is Longmoor Bog Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Site of Special Scientific Interest, located approximately 0.48km east of the site at its closest point.

3.1.2 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

TVERC identified twelve non-statutory designated sites from within 2km of the site (**Fig 2**), a summary of these are shown within **Table 1**, below. Additionally, a number of priority habitats were identified on and adjacent to the site, comprising an area of lowland mixed deciduous woodland to the north and a river running along the eastern boundary, connecting to a pond (**Fig 3**).

Table 1. Summary of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site as provided by TVERC and shown in **Fig 2**.

Site Code	Name	Designation	Area (ha)	Distance from Site
76M01	Farley Hill Woods, Great Copse, New Plantation	Berkshire LWS	34.46	1.77km (W)
SU76M03	Long Copse (South) And Robin Hood Copse	Berkshire LWS	5.61	1.2km (W)
SU76M04	Wyvol's Copse	Berkshire LWS	14.59	1.9km (SW)
SU76M06	Long Copse (North) And Spring Copse	Berkshire LWS	4.46	1.4km (W)
SU76R02	Woodlands Near Banisters Farm	Berkshire LWS	4.81 and 0.99	1.86km (SE)
76R04	Claypits Copse	Berkshire LWS	1.61	1.45km (SW)
SU76T01	Hazeltons Copse	Berkshire LWS	2.55	1.76km (NW)
76S02	Westwood Copse	Berkshire LWS	3.71	1.56km (SW)
SU76S03	Hogwood Shaw	Berkshire LWS	1.59	0.45km (S)
76S05	Shepperlands Copse	Berkshire LWS	9.42	0.86km (SE)
76X02	Longmoor Woodland And Bog, California Country Park	Berkshire LWS	12.34	0.39km (E)
SU76X06	Longmoor Lake	Berkshire LWS	3.05	1.11km (E)
SU76Y06	Brook Farm Meadows	Berkshire LWS	4.8	1.57km (NE)
SU76T04	The Coombes	Berkshire LWS	33.4	1.5km (N)

Figure 2. Statutory and non-statutory designated sites located within 2km of the site as provided by TVERC.

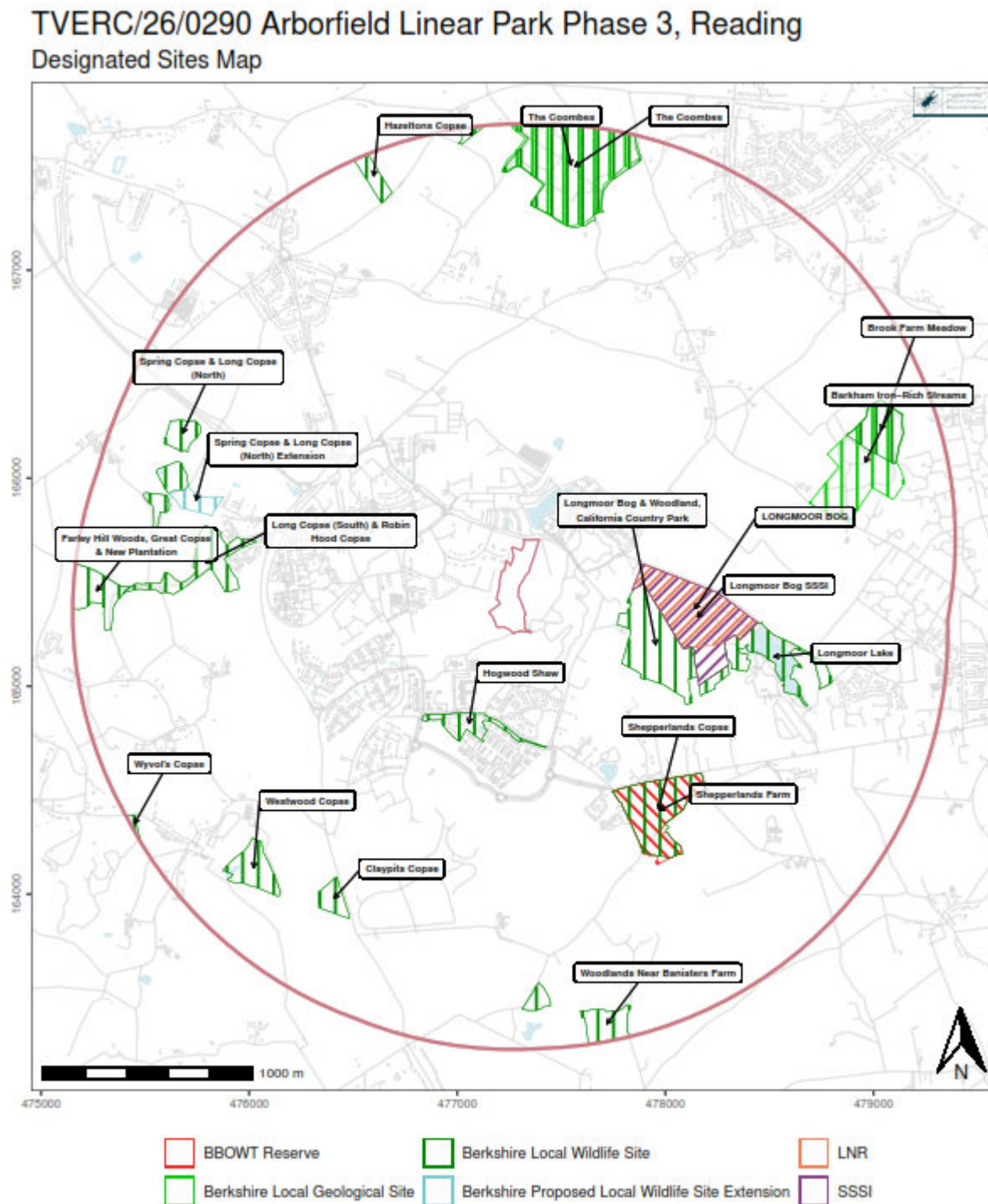
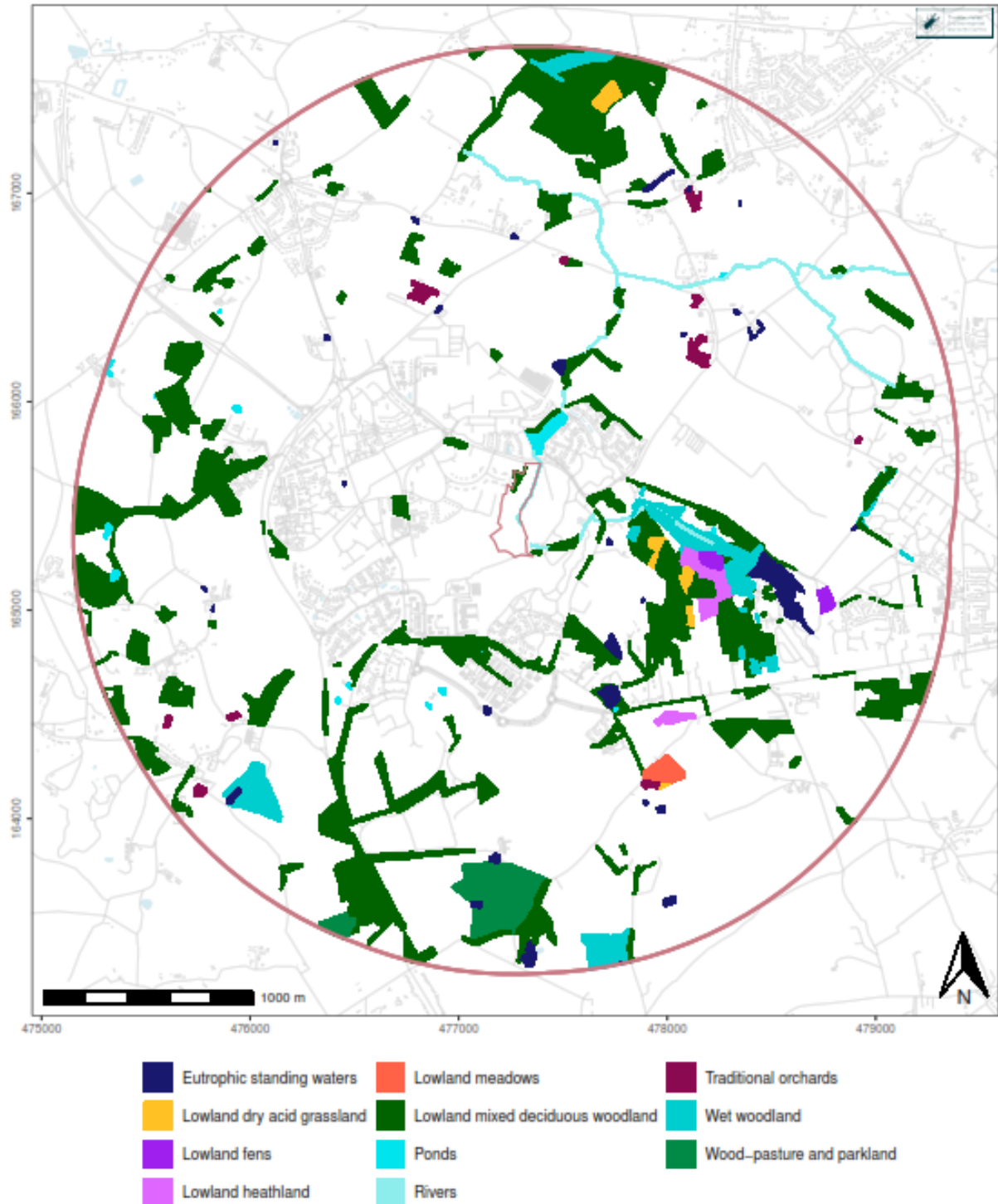


Figure 3. S41 Priority habitats within 2km of the site as provided by TVERC.

TVERC/26/0290 Arborfield Linear Park Phase 3, Reading
S41 Habitats of Principal Importance Map



3.2 Habitats

An initial ecology appraisal survey was undertaken in 2014 by AECOM. The field survey work which forms the basis of the findings of this report was carried out by Laura Purnell BSc (Hons) AMRSB on the 10th July 2026. The habitats on site were considered to be broadly similar to those identified by AECOM, with the only change noted on site comprising of demolition of previously present buildings and removal of pre-existing hedgerow. The habitats identified within the site are outlined below using classification terminology as described within Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd, 2023). The habitats are shown in **Figures 4a – 4f**.

- Modified Grassland (g4) with secondary code (510) Bare Ground and (32) Scattered Trees;
- Other Neutral Grassland (g3c);
- Developed Land; Sealed Surface (u1b);
- Bramble Scrub (h3d);
- Other Woodland Broadleaved (w1g) with secondary code (33) Line of Trees;
- Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland (w1f); and
- Other Rivers and Streams (r2b) with secondary code (50) Ditch.

An area of modified grassland (g4) was present to the south of the site. The species composition varied between parcels. Species identified within the grassland parcel to the south of the site comprised of Annual Beard-grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*), Common Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Common Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*), Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*), and Hoary Willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*). Within this parcel, bare ground (secondary code 510) was present where pre-existing buildings were previously situated prior to demolition.

Towards the south of the site, a number of individual scattered trees (secondary code 32) are present, comprising of primarily Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), with occasional European ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*).

Areas of other neutral grassland (g3c) were present on site, stretching from north to south in between the woodland parcels and beneath the trees present to the south. The species composition varied between parcels. The grassland parcel at the north of the site comprised of species including Green Alkanet (*Pentaglottis sempervirens*), Oxeye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), Meadow Vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), Common Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Tall Fescue (*Lolium arundinaceum*), Hemlock Water Dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), Common Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), and Bristly Oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echinoides*). Furthermore, within this field parcel a hardstanding path (u1b) is present.

The grassland parcel at the west of the site comprised of species including False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*), Common Knapweed, Common Tufted vetch (*Vicia cracca*), Creeping Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Broad-leaved Dock, and Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*).

The grassland parcel at the south-western corner of the site comprised of species including Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), False Oat-grass, Broad-leaved Dock, Common Knapweed, Common Yarrow, Creeping Thistle, Common Ragwort, Pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*), Meadow Vetchling, Bristly Oxtongue, Common Bent, St John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), and Wild Mint (*Mentha arvensis*).

Small sections of scrub (h3d) were located along the edges of the woodland. The scrub was predominantly comprised (*Rubus fruticosus* agg), with scarce Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), and Willow (*Salix spp.*).

Other woodland broadleaved (w1g) is present forming several treelines intersecting the site, along the boundaries, and connecting to a parcel of lowland mixed deciduous woodland (w1f) to the north-west. This is shown in the S41 priority habitats map. Species composition noted within the woodland comprised of Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), European Ash, Poplar species (*Populus spp.*), Pedunculate Oak, Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), and Field maple (*Acer campestre*).

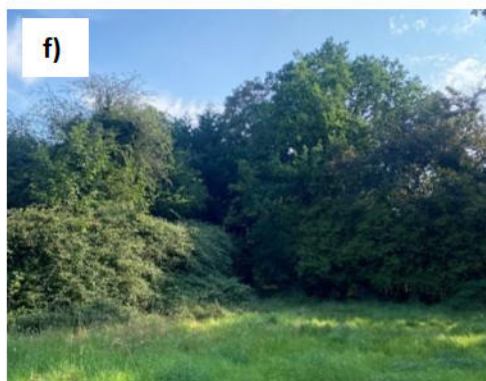
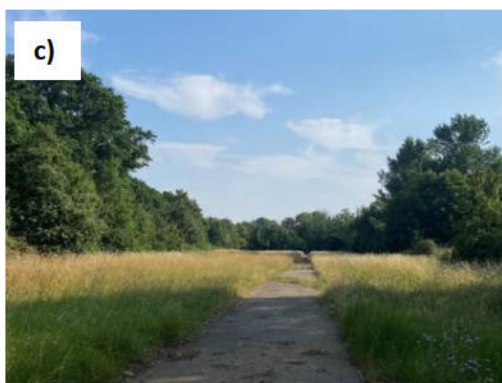
One stream (r2b) is present on site, running north to south along the eastern boundary of the site. There is also a ditch (secondary code 50) running north to south through the middle of the site which was noted to be dry and overgrown with vegetation, suggesting that they had been dry for a significant period of time.

No non-native invasive species were identified within the site. Notwithstanding this, AECOM (2014) identified the presence of Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*), and Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) within the wider site, albeit not within close proximity. As such, measures will be implemented to prevent the risk of establishment on site.

Images of all habitats present can be found below in **Figure 4**.

Figure 4. Habitats present identified during the walkover at Linear Park phase 3, Arborfield Green, in July 2026 (taken July, 2026).





3.3 Bats

3.3.1 Pre-existing Information

The data request from TVERC returned the following record within 2km of the site boundary (Table 2).

Table 2. List of bat records within 2km of the site provided by TVERC.

Taxon Name	Species Name	Number of Records (TVERC)	Year of Latest Record
<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	Barbastelle	18	2019
<i>Chiroptera spp.</i>	Bat Species	51	2025
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	Serotine	57	2025
<i>Myotis spp.</i>	Myotis Bat	78	2023
<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Daubenton's Bat	8	2023
<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Natterer's Bat	12	2021
<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	Leisler's Bat	27	2022
<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Noctule	170	2025

<i>Pipistrellus spp.</i>	Pipistrelle species	78	2025
<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	Nathusius' Pipistrelle	26	2022
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Common Pipistrelle	362	2026
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Soprano Pipistrelle	242	2025
<i>Plecotus spp.</i>	Long-eared Bat	27	2018
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Brown Long-eared Bat	197	2025

3.3.2 Summary of Previous Survey Work

Previous survey work undertaken by AECOM (2014) involved comprehensive activity surveys of the wide Arborfield Garrison site, including transect surveys, automated detector surveys, and emergence surveys, during 2014.

With the site boundary itself, one transect route intersected the south of the site, just beneath the woodland parcels. Transect route 2 surveys were undertaken on the 16th of June 2014, 3rd of July 2014, and 5th of August 2014. Species identified comprise Common Pipistrelle and Soprano Pipistrelle, both recorded as commuting, foraging and producing social calls, along with Noctule commuting in June 2014, and Serotine commuting in August 2014.

No automated static detectors were erected on site. The nearest automated static detector was static No 11, which identified passes of Noctule (4 passes), Nathusius' Pipistrelle (1 pass), Common Pipistrelle (513 passes), and Soprano Pipistrelle (14 passes), overall.

The survey effort undertaken by AECOM (2014) also included a Preliminary Roost Assessment of the buildings present within the red line in July 2014. Building NW7 was assessed as having high potential for roosting bats, NW8 was assessed as having low potential, and 54 was assessed as having moderate potential, with no evidence of bats being identified. The subsequent emergence surveys identified confirmed presence of Natterer's Bat and probable emergence of Common Pipistrelle in NW7, confirmed presence of Common Pipistrelle in 54a and 54b, and finally, no roosting bats were identified in NW8 and were considered likely absent from this building. Since the completion of these surveys, these buildings were demolished in c.2016 / c.2017 under granted outline permission O/2014/2280.

It is important to note that the site falls within a primary area designated for dark corridors, therefore, no light / minimal light will be incorporated within the site design. However, no specific bat mitigation measures are proposed within the redline boundary (bat barns / bat bricks) aside from a wildlife pond within the SANG, in line with Figure B of the submitted Arborfield Garrison – Bat Mitigation Strategy (AECOM, 2014).

Additionally, during the site walkover, it was noted that a bat box had been installed on one of the trees within the site boundary (**Fig 5**). Although not specifically mentioned within the

Bat Mitigation Strategy as mentioned above, this feature will remain in place to act as an additional mitigation measure for bats on site.

Figure 5. Image showing an erected bat box on one of the woodland trees.



3.3.3 Foraging and Commuting Bats

The onsite habitats are considered to be broadly similar to the previous habitat survey, with the surrounding area subject to heavy disturbance and built development in line with approved adjacent planning and part of the wider Arborfield Garrison development. As such, it is anticipated that the assemblage of bat species present is consistent with those identified during the 2014 bat surveys undertaken by AECOM (AECOM, 2014).

3.3.4 Ground Level Tree Assessment

A Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) of trees on site to be removed or subject to remedial works was undertaken during the walkover survey, in line with the Tree Protection Plan (SJA Trees, 2026). Trees to be removed comprise tree numbers 802, 803, 806, 807, 808, 1287, 1530, 1531, 1534, 1543, 1593, 1694, G85, G88, G119, and G246, with trees 819, 921, 922, 939, 1526, and G90 to be pruned. The majority of trees did not comprise any potential roosting features, nor the diameter to support features. Notwithstanding this, trees 808 (Ash), 1530 (Oak) and 1531 (Oak) were noted to contain thick Ivy along the trunk. As such, the most practical approach to removal of aforementioned trees would be through a Precautionary Working Method Statement.

Furthermore, a low number of trees around the perimeter of the site were noted to support potential roosting features, however these trees will be retained and as such, no further mitigation measures in regard to retained trees is required.

3.4 Reptiles

3.4.1 Pre-existing Information

TVERC have provided the following reptile records on-site within 2km of the site; Slow Worm (*Anguis fragilis*) (885 records), Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) (230 records), Adder (*Vipera berus*) (76 records), and Grass Snake (*Natrix helvetica*) (224 records).

3.4.2 Summary of Previous Survey Work

AECOM, ENTEC, and ARUP surveyed the site and wider area throughout 2008 to 2014, it was noted that habitats in the wider area had varying degrees of suitability for reptiles, due to the presence of agricultural land and then areas with more suitable grassland. Whilst the current application site was not surveyed for reptiles during the most recent set of surveys in 2014, surveys conducted by ENTEC in 2008 identified a population of slow worms to the north of the site.

Furthermore, the site falls within an area of 'potential reptile habitat' in line with the Arborfield Garrison – Reptile Mitigation Strategy (AECOM, 2014).

3.4.3 Updated Site Assessment

The majority of the site is considered to offer suitable habitat to support common reptiles, in the form of unmanaged grassland, woodland and scrub parcels. Whilst the site is predominantly surrounded by residential development, the woodland and grassland are somewhat connected to suitable grassland habitats to the south of the site, however, precautionary clearance of these areas for a bordering phase in 2026 did not identify any reptiles. Therefore, considering the previously identified presence of slow worms on site, along with the suitability of habitats, the site is considered to offer **moderate potential** to support common reptiles.

3.5 Great Crested Newt

3.5.1 Pre-existing Information

TVERC returned 7 records for Great Crested Newt (GCN) (*Triturus cristatus*) within 2km of the site. The nearest record is situated over 250m from the site boundary and is separated by a construction site (**Fig 6**). Additionally, no GCN survey licence returns were identified within 2km of the site.

Figure 6. The location of the Great Crested Newt records (red) within 2km of the site (yellow), as provided by TVERC (OS Grid Reference Finder, 2026).

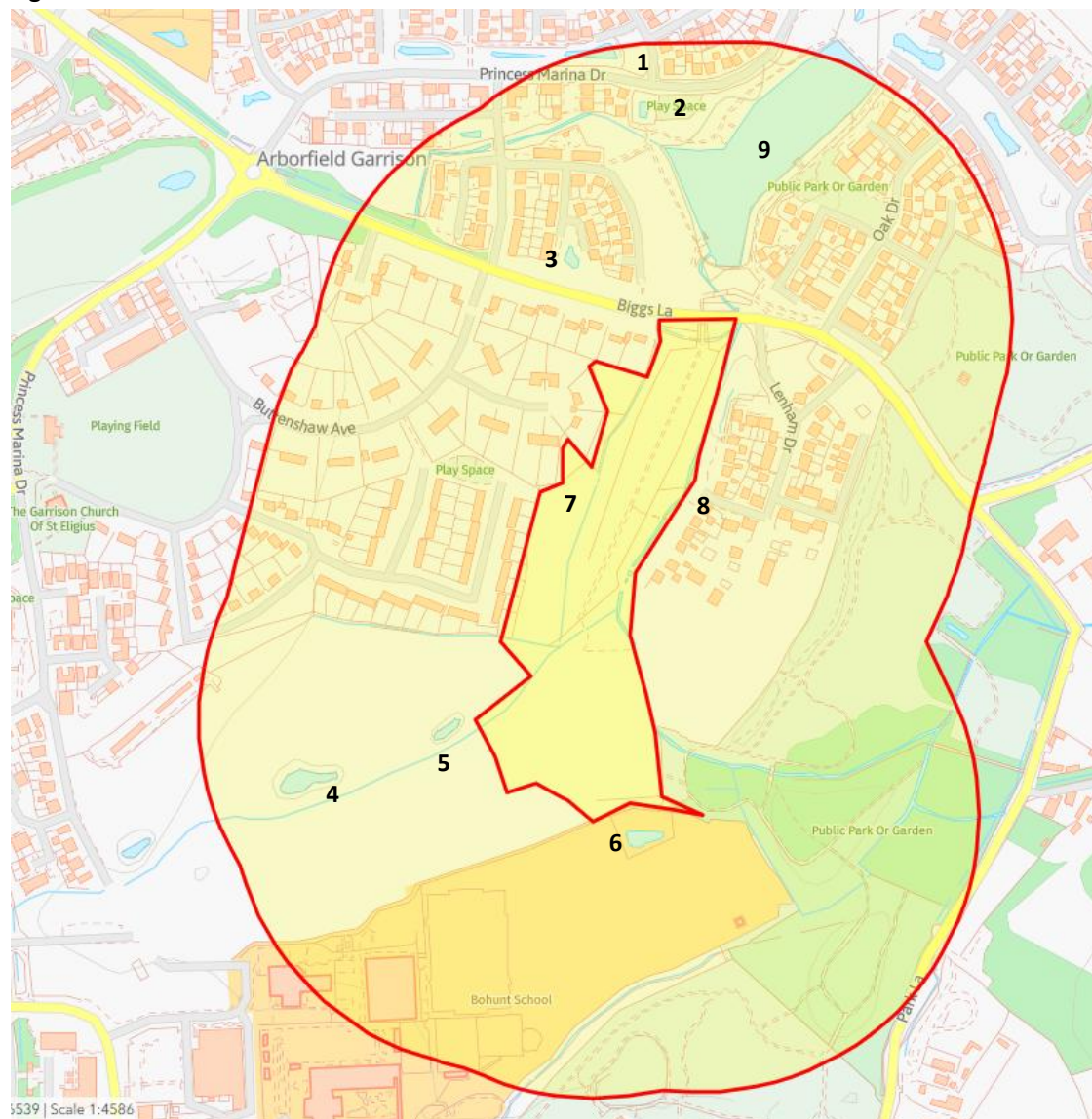


3.5.2 Summary of Previous Survey Work

AECOM identified several waterbodies within 500m of the wider application site and in excess of. The majority of the waterbodies were scoped out of assessment, with five waterbodies scoped in and considered suitable to support Great Crested Newts (GCN). Notwithstanding this, no GCN were identified during further survey work in 2014 and as such it was considered that GCN are unlikely to be present.

3.5.3 Waterbodies within 250m

A total of nine waterbodies were identified within 250m of the site, as shown below in **Figure 7**. Following a review of aerial imagery, waterbodies one to seven waterbodies are either recently constructed Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) or temporary waterbodies and are unlikely to contain water throughout the year (particularly the warmer breeding season months). Waterbody eight was identified as a stream though no water was present at the time of the site walkover.

Figure 7. Locations of waterbodies within 250m of the site.

3.5.4 Updated Site Assessment

Similarly to reptiles, the grassland, woodland and scrub habitats are considered to be suitable for terrestrial GCN. However, Waterbodies 1-6 largely comprise newly built SUDs features and temporary waterbodies. Waterbody 7 and Waterbody 8, a ditch and stream on site (respectively), is noted to be dry. The ditch and stream (Waterbody 7 & 8) are functionally connected to a large pond to the north (Waterbody 9) which was subject to an eDNA test in June 2026. The results of this eDNA were negative (Ecosupport Ltd, 2026) and can be found appended to this report. As such, considering these results and the lack of suitable waterbodies within a 250m radius, Great Crested Newts are considered to be **likely absent** from the site.

3.6 Dormice

3.6.1 Pre-existing Information

TVERC returned 2 records of Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) within 2km of the site, with the closest record situated approximately 1.75km south-west of the site.

3.6.2 Summary of Previous Survey Work

Several Hazel Dormouse surveys have been undertaken on site in line with best practice guidelines between 2008 and 2009. Dormice were scoped out of the assessment as data searches and previous survey results concluded the likely absence of this species.

3.6.3 Updated Site Assessment

The woodland on site offers some suitable habitat for Hazel Dormice, with some connectivity to the woodland within the wider environment. However, considering both the limited number of records and distance to the local record, the site is considered to be **likely absent** of Hazel Dormouse.

3.7 Badgers & Other Terrestrial Mammals

3.7.1 Pre-existing Information

TVERC returned 22 records for European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within 2km of the site.

3.7.2 Summary of Previous Survey Work

AECOM did not identify any evidence of Badger within the application boundary.

3.7.3 Updated Site Assessment

During the updated walkover, no evidence of Badger (such as mammal trails, setts, or snuffle holes) was identified. However, the woodland and grassland habitats present on site offer suitable commuting and foraging habitat for badgers and other terrestrial mammals. Therefore, the site is considered to offer **low potential** for commuting and foraging Badgers and other terrestrial mammals such as Hedgehogs.

3.8 Breeding and Nesting Birds

3.8.1 Pre-existing Information

TVERC have returned several records of 'notable and protected' bird species including a number of NERC S41 listed species, Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) or those protected under W&CA Schedule 1 Part 1 and Part 2 (the list will not be reproduced here due to the number of records).

3.8.2 Summary of Previous Survey Work

Across the wider site, AECOM noted that the site comprised a mixture of urban and rural habitat types suitable for an assemblage of breeding birds. "A previous 2008 survey recorded 29 species holding territories within the Site including 6 BAP, 4 red list and 7 amber list species. Additional species (including kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and little owl

(*Athene noctua*) were also incidentally recorded as potentially holding territories during other protected species surveys. At least two swift (*Apodidae* sp.) colonies are known to be present within buildings on site, being recorded during the 2014 bat surveys. These are within the Bailleul Sergeants Mess and abandoned Hazebrouck Officers Mess. A known red kite (*Milvus milvus*) nest is also present on Site. Other notable bird species recorded incidentally during the AECOM 2014 surveys included mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), buzzard (*Buteo buteo*), tawny owl (*Strix aluco*), little owl, green woodpecker (*Picus viridis*), great spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*), mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), sedge warbler (*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*) and willow warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*) amongst others.”.

Bird species of varying distribution and population status nationally and locally were identified however the majority of birds considered relatively common within Berkshire.

3.8.3 Updated Site Assessment

The habitat on site is considered to offer a range of suitable habitats for breeding and nesting birds, including woodland, and mature trees and scrub. The site is situated within the midst of urban development, and it is anticipated that local breeding and nesting birds are likely to be of common species. As such, the site is considered to offer **low potential** for breeding and nesting birds.

3.9 Additional BAP Species

TVERC provided records of Otter (*Lutra lutra*) (1 records), White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) (1 record), and several records of invertebrates within 2km of the site. The site does not comprise suitable habitat for aquatic or riparian mammals. Although the onsite ditch and stream is hydrologically connected to the pond located to the north, both were dry at the time of the walkover and exhibited extensive vegetation overgrowth, indicating that it has not held water for a prolonged period. Combined with the surrounding urban development and absence of functional wet features, the site and its immediate environs offer no meaningful habitat for aquatic or riparian species.

Furthermore, TVERC provided 228 records of invertebrates across a total of 23 species within 2km of the site. The woodland, grassland and scrub habitats present on site comprise a well-structured, diverse habitat which offers suitable habitat to support invertebrate species such as Stag Beetle (*Lucanus cervus*) and a number of other invertebrate species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedule 5 Section 9, and S41 (Priority) and Annex II species.

4.0 MITIGATION & ENHANCEMENTS

This section details the measures that will be implemented to mitigate against the impacts to the species identified on site and provide targeted and proportionate ecological enhancements following on from the baseline assessment, in line with Condition 18 of the planning approval for the site with ref O/2014/2280 (Table 13.23 of the approved Arborfield Garrison – Bap Environmental Statement). A summary can be found within **Table 4**, with further details described in the sections below.

Table 4. Mitigation items as detailed in Table 13.23 of the Environmental Statement (Arborfield Garrison – BAP) and relation to the site proposals.

Ref	Mitigation Item	Action
Construction Phase		
1	Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP)	A CEMP is recommended to be produced independently (Section 4.1.1).
2	Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement	Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement to be produced independently.
3	Stag Beetle / Reptile Mitigation – Retained Dead Wood Piles	Any deadwood will be retained to act as refugia habitat for reptiles and Stag Beetle (Section 4.3.2 & 4.6.2).
4	Reptile Mitigation – Hibernacula and Refugia	Several hibernaculum, log piles, and brash piles will be created and installed around the site (Section 4.3.3).
5	Bird Mitigation – Mitigation for Veteran Tree Loss	N/A – There are no veteran trees on site.
6	Bird Mitigation – Existing Swift Colony Replacement	N/A – There is no existing Swift colony on site.
7	Priority Bird Species Construction Mitigation – Red Kite Noise and Disturbance Mitigation Strategy	N/A – However, the site is considered to offer suitable habitat to support nesting birds and as such, reasonable avoidance measures will be implemented (and Section 4.5.1).
8	Bat Mitigation – Alternative Roost Provision: Bat Barns	N/A – No bat roosts will be impacted as part of the proposed development.
9	Bat Mitigation – Alternative Roost Provision: Bat Bricks / Boxes on Buildings	N/A – No bat bricks are proposed within the SANG however alternative enhancement features for bats (boxes) will be provided on trees (Section 4.2.2).
10	Bat Mitigation – Alternative Roost Provision on Trees	Further surveys are required to determine the status of roosting bats in trees on site (Section 4.2.1.1). Bat boxes will be incorporated into the SANG as an enhancement measure (Section 4.2.2).
11	Hedgehog Mitigation – Hedgehog Boxes	Two Hedgehog Homes will be incorporated into the SANG (Section 4.4.2).
12	Badger Mitigation – Bait Marking and Monitoring	N/A – There are no Badger setts on site.
13	Badger Construction Mitigation – Construction Phase Badger Sett Closure	N/A – There are no Badger setts on site. General Badger mitigation will be

		implemented during the construction phase (Section 4.4.1).
14	Non-native Invasive Plant Species Mitigation Strategy	There are no non-native invasive plant species on site. Notwithstanding this, non-native invasive plant species have been identified within the wider site and as such, mitigation will be undertaken in line with Section 4.7.1 .
Operational Phase		
15	Habitat Creation – Woodland	No woodland creation is proposed as part of this phase of the development however the existing woodland will be managed and additional scattered parkland trees will be planted throughout the SANG (Section 5.2.2 & 5.2.6).
16	Habitat Enhancement – Tree Lines and Hedgerows	N/A – No tree lines or hedgerows are being enhanced as part of this phase of the development. As above and below, new hedgerows and trees will be created throughout the SANG.
17	Habitat Creation – Hedgerows	Hedgerow creation and management will be undertaken in line with Section 5.2.1 .
18	Habitat Enhancement – Semi-Improved Grassland	Semi-improved grassland creation and management will be undertaken in line with Section 5.2.3 .
19	Habitat Creation – Ponds	Pond creation and management will be undertaken in line with Section 5.2.5 .
20	Watercourse Mitigation – SuDS (Sustainable Drainage System) Installation	N/A – No SuDS are being installed as part of this phase of the development.
21	Habitat Mitigation – Green Corridor Retention and Management	The site forms part of the Green Corridor network throughout the centre of the site and will maintain a functional link between habitats and biodiversity through appropriate mitigation strategies and management (Section 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4.2, and 5.0)
22	Habitat Mitigation – Dark Corridor Management	The site falls within a primary area designated for dark corridors; therefore, no light / minimal light will be incorporated within the site design (Section 4.2.1.2)
23	Bird Mitigation – Urban Bird Boxes (Starling / House Sparrow / House Martin)	N/A – No urban bird boxes are required as no residential dwellings will be constructed with this phase, however, alternative enhancement features for birds (boxes) will be provided on trees (Section 4.5.2).
24	Hedgehog Mitigation – Hedgehog Friendly Fencing	Hedgehog friendly fencing with 'Hedgehog Highways' will be incorporated into the development (Section 4.2.2).
25	Badger Mitigation – Provision of Road Crossing Tunnels	N/A – No crossing tunnels are being proposed as part of this phase of the development.

4.1 Habitats

4.1.1 Protection of Retained Habitats (Ref 1 & 21)

All existing trees and other habitats that will be retained will be protected from damage during the works. All the site boundaries outside the area of impact will be fenced using Heras fencing or similar, to prevent access by machinery, throughout works. Where large, mature trees are present, they will be protected using standard arboricultural tree protection measures which include protection of the canopy and prevents root compaction. Access will not be permitted behind this fencing by construction personnel. This will protect the retained habitats from direct damage/disturbance.

Due to proximity of retained habitats, it is recommended that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is implemented prior to construction.

4.1.2 Hedgerows

No hedgerows are present on site and therefore no further mitigation or compensation measures regarding hedgerows are required.

4.2 Bats

4.2.1 Mitigation (Ref 10, 21, & 22)

The site falls within a primary area designated for dark corridors, therefore, minimal lighting has been incorporated within the site design. The only lighting incorporated into the scheme comprises LED lighting with shields located along the central 3.5m pathway (limited to the pathway itself with no light spill onto retained or boundary vegetation). Furthermore, the LED lighting will be dimmed at night.

No additional specific bat mitigation measures are proposed (such as bat barns or bat bricks) within the redline boundary aside from a wildlife pond within the SANG, in line with Figure B of the submitted Arborfield Garrison – Bat Mitigation Strategy (AECOM, 2014). Further details regarding dark corridors and sensitive lighting prescriptions are described in **Section 4.2.1.2** below. Additional mitigation measures as a result of the updated walkover undertaken by Ecosupport in July 2026 are described in **Section 4.2.1.1** below. Furthermore, targeted landscaping specifications are recommended in **Section 5.0**, including the incorporation of evening-scented flowering species and native trees to increase foraging resources for bats, in turn enhancing the green corridor for local species.

4.2.1.1 Ground Level Tree Assessment / PRF Inspection

Trees 808 (Ash), 1530 (Oak) and 1531 (Oak) were identified as supporting thick Ivy and as such, in accordance with the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2025), any works or remedial works to these trees will follow a precautionary working method statement (PWMS). The following PWMS will be undertaken to ensure no bats are harmed in the unlikely case that individuals are present on site:

- Immediately prior to removal, Ivy will be carefully pulled back and checked for bats prior to felling / works.
- Any additional PRFs uncovered will require further assessment, such as endoscopy, before being felled.
- The height of these trees varies and as such it is recommended that a MEWP / Cherry Picker / Scissor Lift is used to access the PRF(s).

Bats are most vulnerable during the maternity season and the hibernation period. Therefore, it is recommended that trees works avoid the maternity season (May - August) and hibernation period (November – February). Optimal time for works is generally considered to be in spring and autumn when bats are least vulnerable to disturbance (Reason & Wray, 2023). Works will take place in suitable weather conditions (i.e. it is dry/calm and temperatures are no lower than 8°C for at least an hour or two from dusk on 3-4 consecutive nights prior to works) (Reason & Wray, 2023).

In the unlikely instance that a bat or evidence of bats is found during any works, all works must immediately stop and the project ecologist must be informed. Natural England will then need to be contacted in order to obtain a European Protected Species development licence before any further works proceed. It is essential that these processes are immediately followed to ensure that no offence is committed under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

No further trees other than those identified as requiring removal are to be impacted upon by the proposals and as such, no further mitigation other than the aforementioned is required. Notwithstanding this, if any further trees are identified as requiring removal, an updated Ground Level Tree Assessment and potential for further survey work may be required.

4.2.1.2 Dark Corridors (Ref 22)

As noted, the site is situated within a primary designated area for dark corridors. It is understood that minor lighting will be required along the formal footpaths, following the recommendations set out below. Mown footpaths and the SANG boundaries (including mature trees and woodland) will remain unlit. Furthermore, the SANG will be enhanced with new native tree, scrub, wildflower meadow, and pond creation.

Lighting During Construction

In order to avoid any disturbance to bats (and other potential nocturnal wildlife) construction works should be limited to daylight hours and should not be undertaken 30 minutes prior to dusk through to dawn. All lighting should be sensitive to the use of the site by nocturnal wildlife, for example by including low-level downward-facing / hooded lights that are sensor-operated where possible. No lighting will be facing the boundaries of the site.

Lighting During SANG Operation

The only lighting incorporated into the scheme comprises LED lighting with shields located along the central 3.5m pathway (limited to the pathway itself with no light spill onto retained or boundary vegetation). Furthermore, the LED lighting will be dimmed at night. This lighting

is mandatory as required by Wokingham Borough Council as the proposed pathway is situated as part of a strategic route for residents to and from Bohunt School. This ensures compliance with the dark corridors, providing unlit mature vegetated boundaries for bats to commute and forage within.

4.2.2 Enhancements – Bat Boxes (Ref 10)

To act as a biodiversity enhancement, in the absence of brick-built infrastructure, a total of 6 No bat boxes will be erected on site onto suitable retained trees along the site boundaries. The boxes will be erected at a minimum height of 4m, on an aspect that will benefit from some degree of light exposure (south, south-eastern, or south-western). The following boxes are recommended to provide roosting resources for both crevice and void dwelling species, all year round:

- 2 No Schwegler 1FW Hibernation Bat Box;
- 2 No General-Purpose Wood Concrete Bat Box; and
- 2 No Large Multi Chamber WoodStone Bat Box.

The bat boxes will be erected by or under the supervision of an ecologist to ensure they are placed in the most appropriate / effective locations.

4.3 Reptiles

The site falls within an area of ‘potential reptile habitat’ in line with the Arborfield Garrison – Reptile Mitigation Strategy (AECOM, 2014) and as such, as outlined above, the site is considered to offer moderate potential to support reptiles. Furthermore, targeted landscaping specifications are recommended in **Section 5.0**, including the incorporation of areas of native scrub and wildflower meadows, in turn enhancing the green corridor for local reptile species.

4.3.1 Passive Dispersal Clearance

Due to the extent of the potential reptile habitat, the identification of slow worms on site during previous surveys, and nature of the proposed works (habitat enhancements and minor clearance to facilitate footpaths, allotments, NEAP, and Skate Park), a precautionary working method following passive dispersal methodology will be implemented.

This will involve suitable reptile habitat to be removed / enhanced, being strimmed in two phases under the supervision of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW). The first cut will be down to a height no lower than 15cm, directing cuts towards retained habitats at the site boundaries. A second cut (following day) will take the vegetation right down to ground level. These works will be done immediately prior to any ground works commencing to prevent the habitats from re-growing and will be done during the active reptile period (April – September) when temperatures are above 10°C with sunshine.

Following the clearance, it may be necessary to undertake a destructive search of the topsoil, which will also be carried out under the supervision of an ECoW. Topsoil will be gently stripped to 100mm depth using a digger with a toothed bucket. The supervising ecologist will capture any reptiles found and relocate them to suitable retained habitat. Please note, any suitable habitat within the root protection zone will not have the topsoil stripped and will only be

maintained cut at ground level. These works will be undertaken during the active reptile period (April – October) when temperatures are above 10°C with sunshine. This area of habitat will be regularly managed and maintained unsuitable for reptiles for the duration of the works and will be cordoned off from the site to prevent vehicles entering the area. The arisings will be removed and any materials will be stored off the ground using pallets or skips if stored on site to prevent sheltering reptiles from using them.

4.3.2 Deadwood (Ref 3)

Any trees felled on site in accordance with the arboricultural method statement will have suitable limbs and stem sections retained within the SANG to deliver deadwood habitat enhancements, in line with the Arborfield Garrison BAP objectives:

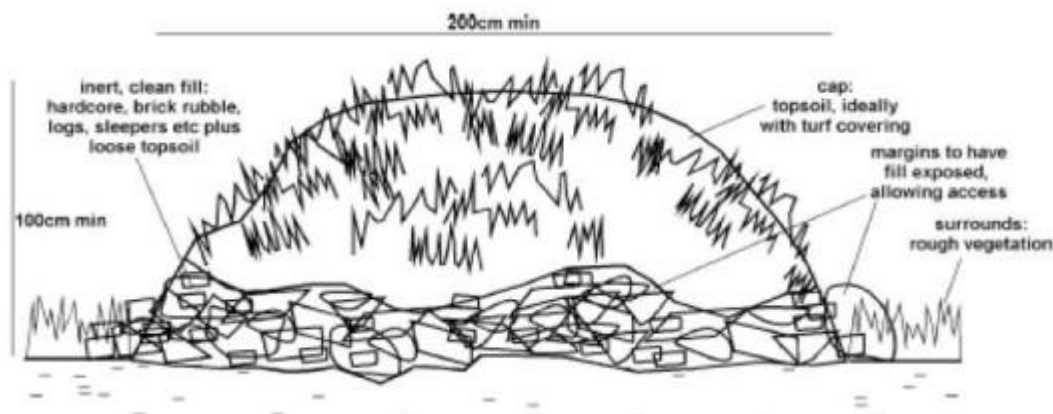
- Large trunk sections will be placed flat on the ground in appropriate locations to provide stable, long-term deadwood resources.
- Loggeries comprising multiple vertically positioned trunk or stem sections (10–15cm diameter) will be installed by sinking them approximately 60cm into the ground to mimic natural decay processes.
- Log piles incorporating leaf litter and finer woody material will be created to diversify microhabitats.

Any suitable arisings from neighbouring land parcels will also be incorporated to maximise habitat provision.

Collectively, these measures will establish a robust deadwood resource that supports Stag Beetle and other saproxylic invertebrates, while also providing refugia for reptiles and hedgehogs should they be present within the wider landscape.

4.3.3 Reptile Refugia (Ref 4)

4 No log / brash piles are recommended to be provided within the SANG to further enhance the site for reptiles as well as mammals (Hedgehogs), invertebrates and amphibians. The log / brash piles will be created from vegetation removal and/or habitat management on site. This may use a combination of logs, branches, brash and grass cuttings from the sensitive clearance above and any tree surgery. An example of a log pile hibernaculum is shown in **Fig 8** below. These should be located within areas receiving partial sun / partial shade.

Figure 8. Example of a hibernaculum design.

4.4 Badgers & Other Terrestrial Mammals

As outlined in **Section 3.7.3**, the site is considered to offer low potential to support commuting and foraging Badger and other terrestrial mammals, such as Hedgehogs.

4.4.1 Mitigation

During the construction phase, any open excavations left overnight will either be covered to prevent commuting Badgers and other mammals (such as Hedgehogs) falling in or escape ladders will be used to prevent them from becoming trapped. Any open pipework should be checked and then capped nightly.

4.4.2 Enhancements – Hedgehogs (Ref 11 & 24)

Hedgehog Home

The development will incorporate 2 No Hedgehog home (**Fig 9**) (such as the Igloo Hedgehog home or Hogitat Hedgehog house). This will be provided within or adjacent to areas of trees / shrubs and will provide a rapidly declining species with a place to shelter / hibernate.

It is recommended that the hedgehog home is maintained to ensure it remains suitable for use by Hedgehogs. The hibernation period for Hedgehogs typically spans from October – April, therefore it is recommended that the hedgehog home is inspected every year in mid to late-April, after hibernation but prior to the nesting period. During these inspections the hedgehog home should be checked for any damage and replaced/repaired where necessary.

Additionally, the hedgehog home should be cleared of any old nesting material and would be beneficial to be replaced with fresh, dry hay. The hedgehog home should be placed back in their original location, unless the hedgehog homes have been interfered with by the public or not utilised by any Hedgehogs, an alternative discrete location should be considered.

Figure 9. Example of the Igloo Hedgehog Home.



Gaps in Fencing

Should any new fencing be erected on site, these will ensure that at least 1 gap is present within the gravel boards to allow for movement of Hedgehogs throughout and into the wider area (with the exception of around the allotments). The gaps should be at least 15 cm high by 15 cm wide with permeability for small mammals.

Small signage could be installed at these points to ensure they remain open upon completion of the development. The People's Trust for Endangered Species provide such signage, the purchase of which also supports conservation efforts (**Fig 10**).

Figure 10. Example of Hedgehog Highway signage to be placed above fence gaps provided to allow movements between gardens (PTES, 2019).



4.5 Breeding and Nesting Birds

4.5.1 Mitigation (Ref 7)

In order to avoid disturbance of breeding and nesting birds or damage to their nests, works to the buildings and any works to the trees on site should avoid bird nesting season (typically March – August, dependent on weather). If this is not possible, the buildings / trees should be thoroughly checked by an ecologist immediately prior to works. If any active nests are found, they should be left undisturbed with a suitable buffer within which works cannot take place (ca. 5m) until nestlings have fledged.

4.5.2 Enhancements – Bird Bricks (Ref 23)

To act as a biodiversity enhancement, in the absence of brick-built infrastructure, a total of 6 No bird boxes will be erected on site onto suitable retained trees around the site boundaries. The following boxes are recommended:

- 2 No Schwegler 1B
- 2 No Schwegler 2H
- 2 No Schwegler 2M

The 1B is the most popular box for garden birds and appeals to a wide range of species. The 2H is attractive to Robins, Pied Wagtails, Spotted Flycatcher, Wrens and Black Redstarts whilst the 2M is an example of a general-purpose design (*NB if there are issues obtaining these boxes, alternatives can be used if first agreed with the ecologist*). The bird boxes will be erected by or under the supervision of an ecologist to ensure they are placed in the most appropriate / effective locations.

4.6 Additional UK BAP Species

4.6.1 Overview

As outlined in **Section 3.9**, the site is considered to offer negligible potential to support riparian or aquatic UK BAP species and as such, no further mitigation or contingency measures are required for these species. Notwithstanding this, the site comprises suitable habitat to support Hedgehog and Stag Beetle and as such, further mitigation is required.

Measures to ensure no adverse impacts occur towards Hedgehogs during the construction phase and enhancement measures during the operational phase are outlined in **Section 4.4.2**.

4.6.2 Stag Beetle Mitigation (Ref 3)

Any trees felled on site in accordance with the arboricultural method statement will have suitable limbs and stem sections retained within the SANG to deliver deadwood habitat enhancements, in line with the Arborfield Garrison BAP objectives:

- Large trunk sections will be placed flat on the ground in appropriate locations to provide stable, long-term deadwood resources.
- Loggeries comprising multiple vertically positioned trunk or stem sections (10–15cm diameter) will be installed by sinking them approximately 60cm into the ground to mimic natural decay processes.
- Log piles incorporating leaf litter and finer woody material will be created to diversify microhabitats.

Any suitable arisings from neighbouring land parcels will also be incorporated to maximise habitat provision.

Collectively, these measures will establish a robust deadwood resource that supports Stag Beetle and other saproxylic invertebrates, while also providing refugia for reptiles and hedgehogs should they be present within the wider landscape.

4.7 Non-native Invasive Species

No non-native invasive species were identified within the site. Notwithstanding this, AECOM (2014) identified the presence of Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*), and Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) within the wider site, albeit not within close proximity. As such, measures will be implemented to prevent the risk of establishment on site.

4.7.1 Mitigation (Ref 14)

To minimise the risk of inadvertent spread from the wider site, all personnel will follow strict biosecurity measures during works.

This will include cleaning and inspecting tools and machinery before entering and leaving the site, removing all visible soil and plant material, and using designated wash-down points where available. PPE, footwear, and hand tools will be regularly disinfected between work areas and phases to prevent cross-contamination. Any imported materials (e.g., soils, aggregates) will be sourced from certified clean suppliers, and vehicle movements will be restricted to agreed access routes to avoid contact with potential invasive plant fragments. Site staff will remain vigilant for any signs of invasive species colonisation, with any suspected occurrences reported immediately for verification and appropriate action.

5.0 HABITAT MANAGEMENT

5.1 Introduction

As outlined within Condition 18 of the planning approval with ref O/2014/2280, a landscape and ecological management plan is required. This section outlines the proposed habitat management measures proposed in line with the proposed development, and Ref 21 (**Table 3 in Section 4.0**) (Table 13.23 of the approved Arborfield Garrison – Bap Environmental Statement).

5.2 Created Habitats (Ref 21)

A full landscape plan and planting specification has not been provided at this stage; however, it is presumed the habitats created below will follow the habitat management as set out within **Section 5.2.1 – 5.2.7**.

5.2.1 Hedgerows (Ref 17)

5.2.1.1 Management

A new hedgerow will be created along the southern boundary of the proposed NEAP & Skate Park. The hedgerow will comprise of native species such as Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), or Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*).

The most favourable approach to managing hedgerows for the benefits of biodiversity is to encourage minimal interference and ensure cutting takes place after autumn fruiting (so late winter is preferable). The key points of the management prescriptions will therefore be as follows wherever practical (adopting recommendations as outlined within Bright and MacPherson (2002)):

- Cutting will be done on a 3-year cycle (part of the hedges on site cut during the first year, another part of the hedges cut during second year and no cutting during the third year), to provide sustained foraging opportunities across the site every active season. Hedgerows will be allowed to develop into a tall, dense, bushy structures and maintained at a height of 3 – (preferably 4) meters.
- A proportion of hedges (at least 30%) should be left to grow for at least 7 – 10 years.
- Not all hedgerows should be cut in any one year, so some heavy fruiting hedges are always present.
- Flails should not be used if possible, meaning management works will likely involve cutting using hand tools.
- Coppicing or laying should be used to manage any of the hedgerows on site which become gappy or sparse.
- If the size of the hedgerow needs to be reduced, avoid cutting the top and cut one side.

In more formal locations, hedges may need to be maintained more regularly than is stated above.

5.2.1.2 Replacement

Any plants that are removed, die or become seriously damaged or defective during the monitoring period of planting shall be replaced like for like in the next planting season.

If hedgerows become very thin, coppicing of selected plants / laying of short lengths of hedgerow may be required and will be beneficial to promote vigorous, dense regrowth. Such works must be undertaken during the period October – February to avoid the breeding bird season.

5.2.2 Tree / Scrub Planting

5.2.2.1 Planting

It is recommended that native tree planting for parkland and open space should focus on widely spaced, long-lived species such as Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*), Small-leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), creating a light, open canopy with scattered feature trees typical of UK parkland.

For buffer zones and scrub planting, a denser mix of native species such as Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*) and Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) provides structural diversity, shelter, and strong ecological value. Together, these planting approaches create a layered, resilient landscape that enhances biodiversity and supports amphibians, birds, and invertebrates across both open and enclosed habitats.

5.2.2.2 Management

Following establishment, scrub management will be undertaken annually (as needed) to maintain a suitable matrix between grassland, scrub and other habitats. This can be achieved by manual cutting as well as mechanical clearance in winter months that can be carried out to ensure the area does not become overgrown.

Scrub and trees will require minimal ongoing management. New trees and scrub will be watered whenever necessary during the first growing season. Wooded and scrub areas will be weeded following first planting, and thinned every five years. Bramble will be reduced in density and will be maintained at approximately 15% density within the scrub patches. In addition, ongoing management will be undertaken to prevent successional scrub developing within the grassland areas; scrub should be limited to a total site coverage not exceeding 10% of the total area of the site and in blocks not exceeding 10 x 10m to maintain the site's current habitat status. Trees and scrub will be replaced as necessary.

Management of trees and scrub will be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season, which spans March – August inclusive (Natural England, 2015). Management must take into account the requirement for maintaining habitat connectivity across the site. Should any such vegetation die or its density become sparse, additional planting will be undertaken, replacing like-for-like

5.2.3 Wildflower Grassland (Ref 18)

5.2.3.1 Planting

Native wildflower meadow creation should use a diverse, UK-native seed mix such as Emorsgate EM3 or EM2, providing a balanced sward of fine grasses and nectar-rich forbs. Key species typically include Oxeye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), Meadow Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) and Red Campion (*Silene dioica*), creating a structurally varied meadow that supports pollinators and enhances landscape character.

To increase nocturnal insect activity for bats, include evening-scented species such as White Campion (*Silene latifolia*), Night-flowering Catchfly (*Silene noctiflora*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) at edges, and Sweet Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*), all of which release scent at dusk and attract moths (an important prey group for bats). Together, these meadow and margin species create a high-value foraging resource, improve ecological connectivity, and deliver a resilient, biodiverse open-space habitat.

5.2.3.2 Management

Wildflower areas do not require any additional watering or fertilizer. Cutting a meadow and removing the clippings retains low nutrient levels in the soil and suppresses coarse grasses which would otherwise out-compete the wildflowers. It is recommended the wildflower grassland undergoes two annual cuts. The growth should be cut back to a height of 150mm. The cut grass should be dried on site. Cuttings should be left in situ for approximately one week, after this the arisings are to be removed from site. Should any areas of ground become bare or damaged, additional planting will occur within the next planting season.

First year management: Perennial species take at least a full year to establish. For newly sown areas the first summer will be dominated by annual weeds arising from the soil seed bank and by grass growth. This should be controlled by mowing throughout the first year to minimise competition and weed seed production.

Management Once Established: During the second year it is recommended that the wildflower areas are left to flower and will be cut in mid-summer. However, this should not be cut in May or early June due to nesting birds. Mowing in mid-June brings a premature end to the flowers and can compromise nesting birds, which do not fledge until late July, insects and other wildlife. If some mowing has to take place at this time, sections should be cut at different dates to prolong the overall flowering season and give wildlife a chance to move. The second annual cut should be undertaken during late Autumn. Grassland which is consistently cut late in the season, in August and September, year on year reduces species diversity as late cutting gives more time for coarse grasses and other dominant plants to grow unchecked. To maintain maximum diversity and flowering interest the development buffers should be managed in sections at different times from late June to the end of August. Varying the mowing times from year to year is the best way to maintain a diverse balanced sward.

Targeted scrub and bracken removal should also be carried out as needed to prevent excessive encroachment into the grassland.

5.2.4 Amenity Grassland

Should any areas of ground become bare or damaged, additional planting will occur within the next planting season. The sowing of these seeds will be completed either during the Spring (March-May) or the late Summer (August-October) when the temperatures are warm, and the ground is dry. The seed must be surface sown at an even distribution throughout the entire landscaped area.

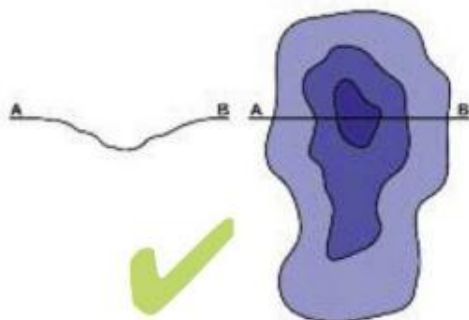
Regular mowing is expected within these areas which will result in a shorter sward height however grass should not be cut lower than 25-40mm. Wherever possible, mowing will be relaxed from late June for 4-8 weeks to allow flowering of herbaceous species and enhance the benefit of this habitat for local wildlife. Targeted scrub, bracken and invasive plant removal should also be carried out throughout the modified grassland parcels as needed to prevent encroachment into the grassland.

5.2.5 Wildlife Pond (Ref 19)

5.2.5.1 Considerations for Construction

Ideally the margins of the pond should be shallow. The best ecologically valuable ponds have 'gentle shelving edges. Therefore, whilst excavating the pond, it will be ensured that the pond has sloping edges to ensure there is a shallow water environment at less than 1:5 (12°) and preferably less than 1:20 (3°) (Freshwater Habitats, 2013) (**Fig 11**). The pond depth will vary across the pond. Creating shelves is one option for obtaining different depths.

Figure 11. Design of pond showing varying depths at a gently sloping level (Freshwater Habitats, 2013).



5.2.5.2 Planting

Native wildlife pond creation should combine open water, varied depths, and structurally diverse planting. A UK-native pond mix such as Emorsgate EP1 provides a good baseline, supplemented with key submerged species like Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) and Water-starwort (*Callitriche spp.*) to improve oxygenation and egg-laying habitat for amphibians. Marginal planting should include Water Mint (*Mentha aquatica*), Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*), Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) and

Brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*), creating shaded edges, open sunny margins, and dense cover for invertebrates and amphibians.

5.2.5.3 Management

In the early years, blanket weed could cover ponds. This should be pulled out carefully. Once the pond has settled blanket weed will usually be kept in check by pond animals. Any plant that starts to dominate should be thinned out. Only one third of a pond should be cleared per year.

Once cleared, plants or debris should be left along the edge for a few days to allow any trapped wildlife to return to the water.

Frog (*Rana temporaria*) spawning is usually the first to take place within freshwater habitats, starting as early as January. From February adult Newts emerge from hibernation and make their way to aquatic habitat where they then breed. Common Toads (*Bufo bufo*) also congregate in ponds in early spring, often shortly after Frogs. All three amphibians then lay eggs in early Spring. Common Toads then move away from ponds into terrestrial habitat. In summer metamorphosis takes place.

As a result, the best time for pond management is late October. Tadpoles would have left the pond and adult amphibians have not yet gone into hibernation at this time. Ponds should not be disturbed in mid-winter as this might expose hibernating amphibians to severe cold, for example Newts will be hibernating in damp areas nearby to the pond and Frogs are known to hibernate at the bottom of ponds (Freshwater Habitats Trust, 2015b).

Aquatic vegetation within the ponds will be managed every five years to maintain a ratio of approximately 50:50 plants to open water to provide opportunities for breeding amphibians. In addition, the ponds will be dredged every five years to remove decomposing organic matter and silt, which will help to maintain depth and water quality.

The tussocky grassland and wildflower areas surrounding the ponds will be cut once annually in September, once the wildflower species have set seed, and to a minimum sward height of 15cm (with arisings removed). Cutting within these habitats will be undertaken by hand-held strimmer to prevent unnecessary disturbance and harm to reptiles and amphibians. These areas will be cut in rotation to leave areas of longer grass. The best time of year to carry out management to minimise the impact on reptiles is from October – late February. This will involve reducing the grass level to no shorter than 15cm.

5.2.6 Woodland

The following measures will be undertaken with regard to long term management of the woodland:

- Should any non-native invasive species establish, these will be removed / treated continuously until permanent eradication has been achieved.

- The woodland will be divided into coupes with the understory coppiced on a 5-7 year rotation. Arisings will be utilised to create dead hedges to protect new growth from browsing pressure.
- Selective thinning of mature trees/ shrubs will be conducted as required to promote a vigorous and dense understory, with the optimal canopy cover targeted at 75% to allow the greatest development of the understory to create a more diverse woodland.

Suitable arisings and deadwood generated from any thinning operations and vegetation clearance on site will be retained and used to create deadwood habitat piles within suitable locations throughout the woodland. Standing deadwood (with suitable trees reduced to a safe height) will also be created where possible to create additional features and opportunities for wildlife. The creation/ retention of deadwood features will provide a range of microhabitats that can be utilised by invertebrates, birds and small mammals.

A suitability qualified ecologist will be consulted with regard to prospective tree remediation works, with appropriate ecological surveys undertaken as required.

5.2.7 Ditch / Watercourse

Aquatic vegetation within the ditch and stream will be managed every five years to maintain a ratio of approximately 50:50 plants to open water to provide opportunities for breeding amphibians. Management should be minimal however thinning of any species that have become dominant may be necessary in the early years. Any management that affects in channel vegetation will be carried out in late September – October.

Wetland habitats are also particularly vulnerable to colonisation by invasive non-native plant species. Should any establish on site, these will be removed at the earliest possible time (Freshwater Habitats Trust, 2013b).

Mowing or cutting can also be implemented in a similar way to the management of other neutral grassland. One cut can be undertaken in mid-summer with another in late Autumn. Different sections will need to be cut on rotation in order to promote plant diversity and varied vegetation structure.

Whilst a varied vegetation structure is recommended, to prevent any naturally establishing scrub from becoming dominant or overgrowing and shading the edges of the ditch, further management will also be required. It is recommended this is achieved by manual cutting to keep scrub from overgrowing. This can be carried out annually as needed. However, it is important to leave tussocky bankside edges and areas of tussocky grassland as this habitat is favourable for any protected species that may be using the site.

6.0 MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING

6.1 Monitoring

A compliance visit will be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist once the construction phase of the development has been completed. The ecologist will check that all ecological enhancements and habitat creation set out in **Section 4.0** and **Section 5.0** have been completed as described.

6.2 Safeguarding

The developer and project manager will be responsible for briefing all site personnel of the ecological sensitivities of the site and implementing the mitigation measures outlined within this report. If any protected species are encountered during the construction works, it will be the responsibility of the project manager to cease works and immediately contact an ecologist for advice.

The safeguarding of the integrated species-specific enhancement features (such as swift and bat bricks) will be included within the deeds of the relevant dwellings to inform any new owners of their ecological sensitivity and protect them in perpetuity.

6.3 Maintenance

Habitat management must be undertaken to ensure the successful establishment of newly created habitats. ***The responsibility of the management of the on-site enhancements will be placed with a management company following the completion of the development. Until that point the responsibility will remain with the developer.***

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN SUMMARY

Schedule of mitigation and enhancements on site. Locations of enhancements are shown in **Plan 1**, appended.

General Activity	Year	Specific Activity	Dates / Timing	Description
Protection of Retained Habitats Section 4.1	Prior to commencement	Protection of existing trees / habitats	Anytime	• All the existing boundary vegetation and trees that will be retained will be protected from damage during the works. • All the site boundaries will be fenced using Heras fencing or similar to prevent access by machinery • All protective fencing must be in place prior to any construction machinery arriving on site, before any works on site get underway, and will remain in place until all work is completed. • It is recommended that a CEMP is implemented prior to construction works.
Bats Section 4.2	Prior to commencement	Mitigation	Anytime	• Trees 808 (Ash), 1530 (Oak) and 1531 (Oak) were identified as supporting thick Ivy and as such, in accordance with the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2025), any works or remedial works to these trees will follow a precautionary working method statement (PWMS). The following PWMS will be undertaken to ensure no bats are harmed in the unlikely case that individuals are present on site: • Immediately prior to removal, Ivy will be carefully pulled back and checked for bats prior to felling / works. • Any additional PRFs uncovered will require further assessment, such as endoscopy, before being felled.

				- The height of these trees varies and as such it is recommended that a MEWP / Cherry Picker / Scissor Lift is used to access the PRF(s). - Bats are most vulnerable during the maternity season and the hibernation period. Therefore, it is recommended that trees works avoid the maternity season (May - August) and hibernation period (November – February). Optimal time for works is generally considered to be in spring and autumn when bats are least vulnerable to disturbance (Reason & Wray, 2023). Works will take place in suitable weather conditions (i.e. it is dry/calm and temperatures are no lower than 8°C for at least an hour or two from dusk on 3-4 consecutive nights prior to works) (Reason & Wray, 2023).
	During SANG construction / creation	Mitigation	During the construction phase	During the construction phase, construction works should be limited to daylight hours and should not be undertaken 30 minutes prior to dusk through to dawn. All lighting should be sensitive to the use of the site by nocturnal wildlife, for example by including low-level downward-facing / hooded lights that are sensor-operated where possible. No lighting will be facing the boundaries of the site.
	During SANG operation	Mitigation	During the operational phase	The only lighting incorporated into the scheme comprises LED lighting with shields located along the central 3.5m pathway (limited to the pathway itself with no light spill onto retained or

				boundary vegetation). Furthermore, the LED lighting will be dimmed at night. This ensures compliance with the dark corridors, providing unlit mature vegetated boundaries for bats to commute and forage within.
	Prior to SANG use	Enhancements	Anytime	A total of 6 No Bat Boxes will be erected onto retained mature suitable trees.
Reptiles Section 4.3	During SANG construction / creation	Mitigation	During the construction phase	To facilitate the creation of the footpaths, NEAP, Skate Park, and allotments, any suitable habitat will be cleared using a two stage passive dispersal methodology, under supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist.
	Prior to SANG use	Enhancements	Anytime	Any trees felled on site in accordance with the arboricultural method statement will have suitable limbs and stem sections retained within the SANG to deliver deadwood habitat enhancements: - Large trunk sections will be placed flat on the ground in appropriate locations to provide stable, long-term deadwood resources. - Loggeries comprising multiple vertically positioned trunk or stem sections (10–15cm diameter) will be installed by sinking them approximately 60cm into the ground to mimic natural decay processes. - Log piles incorporating leaf litter and finer woody material will be created to diversify microhabitats.

				Any suitable arisings from neighbouring land parcels will also be incorporated to maximise habitat provision.
	Prior to SANG use	Enhancements	Anytime	4 No log / brash piles will be installed within the SANG grounds.
Badgers & Other Terrestrial Mammals Section 4.4	Prior to commencement	Mitigation	Prior to commencement	During the construction phase, any open excavations left overnight will either be covered to prevent commuting Badgers and other mammals (such as Hedgehogs) falling in or escape ladders will be used to prevent them from becoming trapped. Any open pipework should be checked and then capped nightly.
	Prior to SANG use	Enhancements – Hedgehog Home	Anytime	2 No Hedgehog home will be installed within the SANG grounds.
		Enhancements – Gaps in Fencing	Anytime	Gaps in any new fences (except around allotments) will be provided to ensure the manoeuvrability of Hedgehogs is maintained
Breeding and Nesting Birds Section 4.5	During SANG construction / creation	Mitigation	During the construction phase	In order to avoid disturbance of nesting birds or damage to their nests, clearance of any vegetation will be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (typically March – August dependent on weather). If this is not possible, sections to be cleared should be thoroughly checked by a suitability qualified ecologist immediately prior to clearance. If any active nests are found they should be left undisturbed

				with a suitable buffer of vegetation (5m) until the nestlings have fledged.
	Prior to SANG use	Enhancements	Anytime	A total of 6 No Bird Boxes will be erected onto retained mature suitable trees.
Stag Beetle Section 4.6.2	During SANG construction / creation	Mitigation / Enhancement	Anytime	Any trees felled on site in accordance with the arboricultural method statement will have suitable limbs and stem sections retained within the SANG to deliver deadwood habitat enhancements: - Large trunk sections will be placed flat on the ground in appropriate locations to provide stable, long-term deadwood resources. - Loggeries comprising multiple vertically positioned trunk or stem sections (10–15cm diameter) will be installed by sinking them approximately 60cm into the ground to mimic natural decay processes. - Log piles incorporating leaf litter and finer woody material will be created to diversify microhabitats. Any suitable arisings from neighbouring land parcels will also be incorporated to maximise habitat provision.
Non-native Invasive Species Section 4.7	During SANG construction / creation	Mitigation	During the SANG construction phase	- To minimise the risk of inadvertent spread from the wider site, all personnel will follow strict biosecurity measures during works. - This will include cleaning and inspecting tools and machinery before entering and leaving the

				site, removing all visible soil and plant material, and using designated wash-down points where available. PPE, footwear, and hand tools will be regularly disinfected between work areas and phases to prevent cross-contamination. Any imported materials (e.g., soils, aggregates) will be sourced from certified clean suppliers, and vehicle movements will be restricted to agreed access routes to avoid contact with potential invasive plant fragments. Site staff will remain vigilant for any signs of invasive species colonisation, with any suspected occurrences reported immediately for verification and appropriate action.
Habitat creation Section 5.0	During SANG construction / creation	Habitat creation	Ideally Autumn or Spring	• Creation / enhancement of hedgerows, trees, scrub, wildflower grassland, amenity grassland, wildflower pond, ditch, and watercourse. • Management of aforementioned habitats.

8.0 CONCLUSION

This document has been prepared to bring together all the existing ecological information for Linear Park Phase 3, Arborfield Green, with the aim of providing a means to address all of the ecological constraints identified and provide mitigation and opportunities for enhancement that are consistent with the aims of national and local planning policy, alongside prescriptions for habitat creation and management, in order to discharge Condition 18 of the planning approval for the site with ref O/2014/2280. It is considered that should all aspects of this document be implemented; adequate mitigation and enhancements can be achieved to minimise impacts of existing population of protected and notable species and a net gain in the site's biodiversity value achieved.

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10.0 APPENDICES

10.1 APPENDIX A - Methodology

10.1.1 Data Request

A data request was submitted to the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre) to ascertain any records held of nature conservation designations and protected species within the wider area (2km) which could be impacted upon as a result of the proposed plans.

The data search covered:

- Statutory designated sites;
- Non-statutory designations such as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS); and
- Records of protected and notable species.

10.1.2 Habitats

Habitats on site pre-development were identified in accordance with the categories specified for a UK Habitats survey, using Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). This was chosen as an appropriate habitat categorisation system as it fits within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation.

UKHab represents a method for classifying habitats which has been produced to provide an up-to-date replacement for the current industry standard phase 1 survey method. One of the main benefits of UKHab is that it supports the evaluation of habitats for EclA and no net loss/net gain analysis, providing a more detailed interpretation of habitat types, which is important for assessing the distinctiveness and condition of habitats against which biodiversity net gain is measured.

The standard survey methodology has been 'extended' in this report to include the following:

- Floral species lists for each identified habitat;
- Descriptions of habitat structure, the evidence of management and a broad assessment of habitat condition;
- Mapping of additional habitat types (e.g. hardstanding);
- Identification of Priority Habitats under Section 41 of the NERC Act;
- Evidence of, or potential for, the presence of certain species/groups

10.1.3 Ground Level Tree Assessment

A non-exhaustive Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) assessment of any notable trees on site was undertaken by Laura Purnell of Ecosupport in July 2026. This followed BCT (Collins (ed) 2023) best practice survey which includes aiming to identify the following Potential Roost Features (PRFs):

- PRFs formed by disease and decay: woodpecker holes, squirrel holes, knot holes, pruning cuts, tear outs, wounds, cankers, compression, forks, butt rots;

- PRFs formed by damage: lighting strikes, hazard beams, subsidence cracks, shearing cracks, transverse snaps, welds, lifting bark, desiccation features, frost cracks; and
- PRFs formed by association: fluting Ivy.

The presence or absence of any of the features listed above are then fed into the classification of the tree which is as follows (**Table 5**).

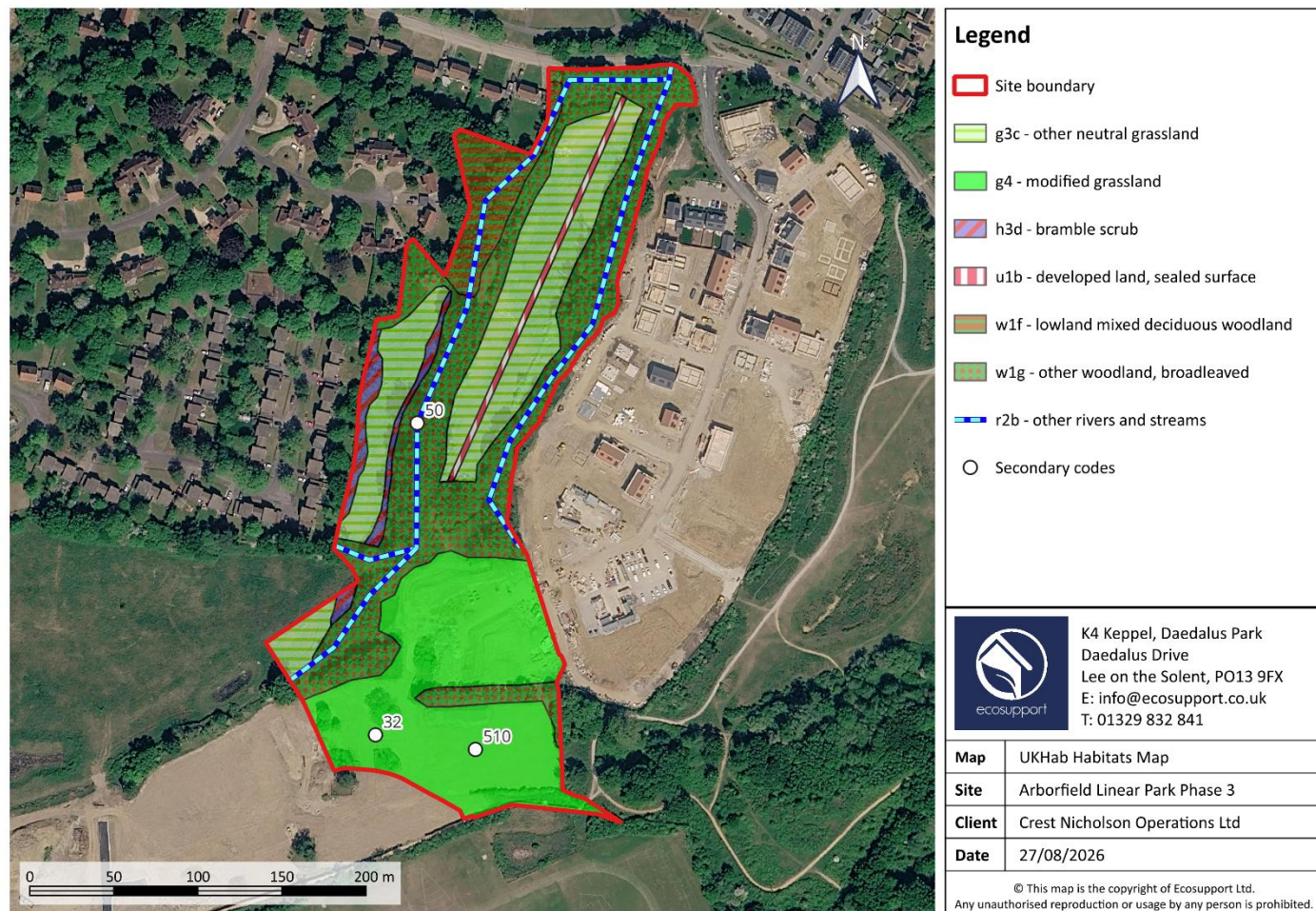
Table 5. Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees on proposed development sites for bats, to be applied using professional judgement (Collins (ed) 2023).

Suitability	Description
None	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further Assessment Required (FAR) to establish if any PRFs are present in the tree
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present.

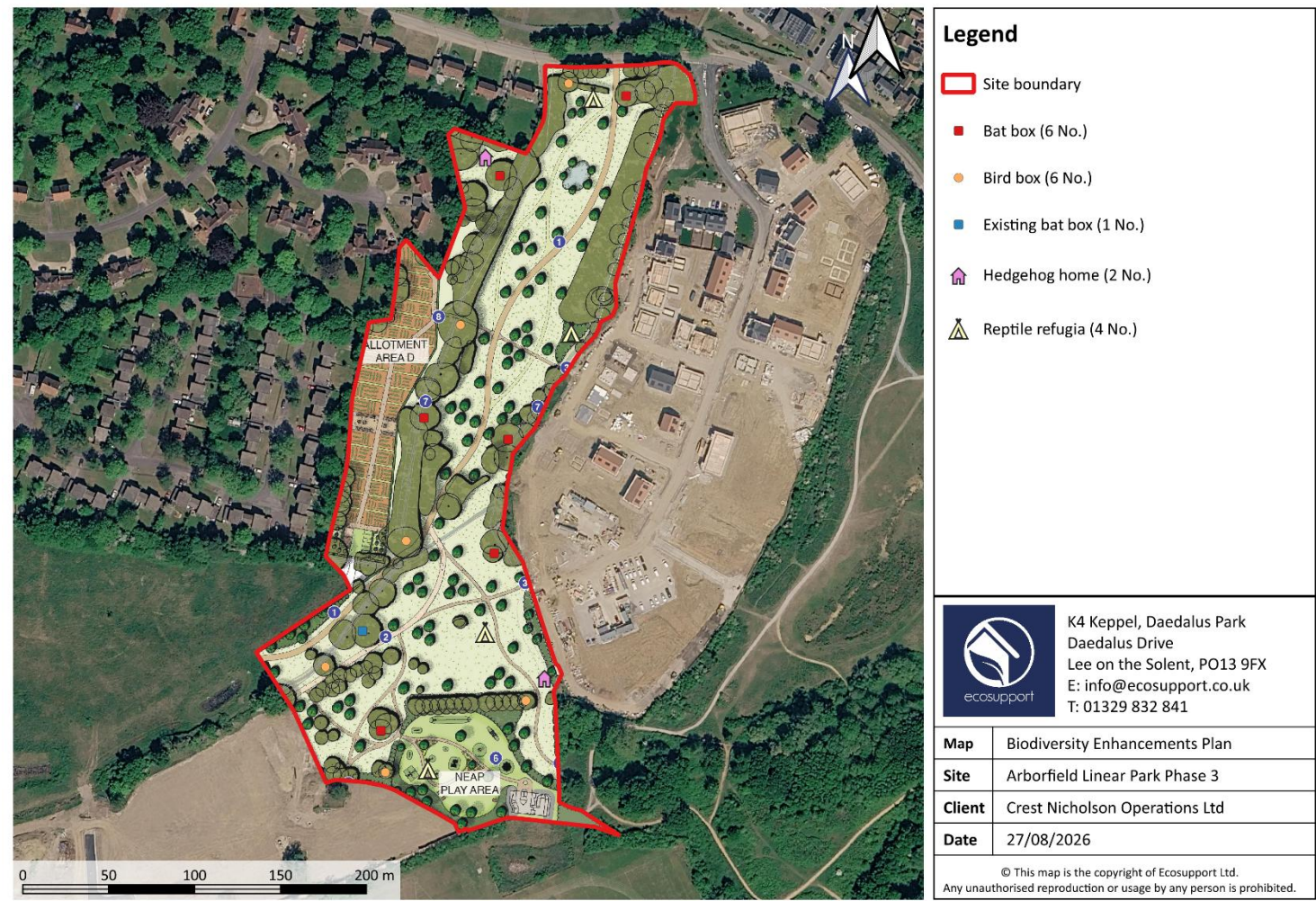
10.1.4 Badger

The site was thoroughly searched for evidence of use by Badgers (*Meles meles*), with the specific aim of identifying the presence and location of any setts. In accordance with the *Badgers and Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing* (Natural England, 2011) guidance, the survey accounted for a 30m from the site's boundary (observed where possible i.e. does not conflict with private dwellings). Evidence of Badgers could include latrines, dung pits, feeding remains and foraging evidence, trails and setts.

10.2 APPENDIX B – Habitat Map



10.3 APPENDIX C - Plan 1 (Enhancements)



10.4 APPENDIX D – eDNA results

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GCN eDNA Analysis

Summary

When great crested newts (GCN), *Triturus cristatus*, inhabit a pond, they continuously release small amounts of their DNA into the environment. By collecting and analyzing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
GCN26 01961	Arborfield Green - Pond	SU 77403 65843	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12

Matters affecting result: none

Reported by: Ruby Fielding

Approved by: Alice Cunningham