

## **Park Lane, Charvil**

### **Preliminary Ecological Appraisal**

Prepared on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd

May 2026

**Park Lane, Charvil**  
**Ecology 8960**  
**Version 02**

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|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------|---------------|
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## **1.0 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Client is proposing a residential development at land off Park Lane, Charvil, following the granting of an outline planning application (232704) for up to 75 dwellings on the site. Pro Vision were commissioned in August 2025 to conduct the update ecological assessment of the site.
- 1.2 Previous surveys were completed by Collington Winter Environmental in 2023 with surveys comprising a preliminary ecological appraisal and reptile surveys. The update walkover confirmed there have been no substantial changes to the site since these surveys were completed and the ecological measures provided during the outline planning application are still valid.
- 1.3 The site comprises a grass field with a line of trees in the north, woodland habitat around the western and southern boundaries, along with mixed scrub in the southeastern corner of the site. A gravel track runs from the eastern boundary into the centre of the site, used as part of the adjacent construction site in the north.
- 1.4 The site lies adjacent to Sandpit Copse BLWS, which is an area of ancient woodland. The development includes a 15-metre buffer with the edge of the woodland and there will be no access into the woodland from the development site once it is complete. The Construction Environmental Management Plan will ensure there are no impacts during construction.
- 1.5 The site has been assessed as holding high suitability for foraging and commuting bats. The development retains all the suitable boundary features and includes an ecological buffer which will include areas of wildflower grassland and provide a dark corridor. This will ensure there are no impacts to foraging and commuting bats on the site.
- 1.6 The grassland, areas of scrub and hedgerows provide suitable habitat for reptiles. Surveys completed in 2023 recorded a low population of common lizard and a medium population of slow worm. The development site is still suitable for reptiles and prior to construction a reptile translocation will be completed with reptiles moved to an off-site location.
- 1.7 The woodland and scrub on site provide foraging and nesting opportunities for common bird species. Any vegetation clearance will avoid the bird nesting season (1<sup>st</sup> March – 31<sup>st</sup> August) unless inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works. If the presence of nesting birds is confirmed, any works which may disturb them will be delayed until the young birds have fledged the nest of their own accord.
- 1.8 The development will provide a 1% net gain for biodiversity in line with the requirements outlined in the S106 agreement, these details are provided in the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment report. The development will also include hedgehog highways, bat and bird boxes locations which will be detailed in the Ecological Permeability plan required for condition 43.

## 2.0 Introduction

### Project Background

- 2.1 Pro Vision were commissioned in August 2025 to carry out an update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site at Park Lane, Charvil, Berkshire. The site currently has outline planning permission from Wokingham Borough Council for the proposed erection of up to 75 dwellings with only access to be considered via Park Lane. Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale to be matters reserved (232704). The site location is provided in **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 This report has been produced to support the application for the approval of the reserved matters with detailed plans provided in **Appendix B**.
- 2.3 This report describes the current ecological baseline of the site based on the findings of the ecological assessment and the previous ecology surveys completed in 2023 in support of the outline planning application.
- 2.4 This report should be read alongside the following reports, previously submitted to the LPA:
- Collington Winter Environmental (2023) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report
  - Collington Winter Environmental (2023) Reptile Mitigation Strategy
  - Collington Winter Environmental (2024) Herptile Mitigation Statement
- 2.5 The update walkover completed in 2025 confirmed the site was largely unchanged from when these surveys were completed and therefore the conclusions drawn from these surveys are still considered valid.

### Brief

- 2.6 To carry out an update PEA of the land within the site boundaries, to inform the Client of the ecological implications of their proposals.

### Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.7 The key legislative provisions of relevance to this report with respect to the development proposals and their potential effects on ecological features are listed below:
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
  - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
  - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
  - The Protection of Badgers Act (1992)
  - The Environment Act (2021)
- 2.8 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was the Governments response to the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity (The Rio Convention), with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity in the UK. The new UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework replaced the previous BAP and is the government's response to the new strategic plan on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Although the UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework supersedes the UK BAP, the UK BAP

lists of priority species and habitats still remain an important reference source for identifying habitats and species of principal importance within the UK. Within England, Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) lists species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.

- 2.9 The Government has set out its policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).
- 2.10 The site is located within Wokingham Borough Council. The Wokingham Borough Core Strategy (adopted January 2010) includes the core policy CP7 relating to biodiversity.

#### *CP7 – Biodiversity*

*Sites designated as of importance for nature conservation at an international or national level will be conserved and enhanced and inappropriate development will be resisted. The degree of protection given will be appropriate to the status of the site in terms of its international or national importance.*

#### *Development:*

- a) Which may harm county designated sites (Local Wildlife Sites in Berkshire), whether directly or indirectly, or*
- b) Which may harm habitats or, species of principle importance in England for nature conservation, veteran trees or features of the landscape that are of major importance for wild flora and fauna (including wildlife and river corridors), whether directly or indirectly, or*
- c) That compromises the implementation of the national, regional, county and local biodiversity action plans*

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

- i. Mitigation measures can be put in place to prevent damaging impacts; or*
- ii. Appropriate compensation measures to offset the scale and kind of losses are provided*

- 2.11 In addition to this the Managing Development Delivery DPD (adopted February 2014) includes policy TB23 which states:

#### *Policy TB23: Biodiversity and Development*

- 1. Sites of national or international importance are shown and sites of local importance are defined on the Policies Map.*
- 2. Planning permission for development proposals will only be granted where they comply with policy CP7 – Biodiversity of the Core Strategy and also demonstrate how they:*
  - a. Provide opportunities, including through design, layout and landscaping to incorporate new biodiversity features or enhance existing*
  - b. Provide appropriate buffer zones between development proposals and designated sites as well as habitats and species of principle importance for nature conservation*

- c. *Ensure that all existing and new developments are ecologically permeable through the protection of existing and the provision of new continuous wildlife corridors, which shall be integrated and linked to the wider green infrastructure network.*

## 3.0 Methodologies

### Desk Study

- 3.1 The desk study methodology is based upon guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM, 2017). A data-gathering exercise was undertaken to obtain any available information relating to statutory nature conservation sites and protected species (**Table 1**).

**Table 1:** Summary of information sources used for the Desk Study.

| Organisation / Source                              | Information Sought                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) | Records of the presence of key protected and notable species and non-statutory wildlife sites within two kilometres of the site were requested by Pro Vision.                                                                                                                                                         |
| MAGIC                                              | Locations of and citations for all national statutory wildlife sites, including SSSI, within two kilometres and all international sites including SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites within five kilometres of the site.<br><br>Records of European Protected Species Licences and class licence returns within two kilometres. |
| Ordnance Survey Maps                               | Large scale habitat information and identification of off-site habitats which may require consideration (such as ponds) within 500m.                                                                                                                                                                                  |

### Baseline Surveys

#### *Habitats*

- 3.2 A site visit was carried out on the 13<sup>th</sup> August 2025 by experienced ecologist Louisa Standbrook-Jones MCIEEM in overcast weather conditions with a light breeze and an ambient temperature of 24°C. The survey employed techniques based on UK Habitat Classification System.
- 3.3 The collection of botanical information focused on the dominant and/or key indicator species for each habitat, to allow allocation of habitats to hierarchy levels 3 and/or 4 and where relevant to identify any priority habitats which are present on site.

#### *Protected species*

- 3.4 The PEA included an assessment of the potential for habitats on or immediately adjacent to the site to support legally protected or conservation-notable species. The location and nature of any signs of the presence of protected species (such as droppings, footprints, burrows, etc.) were

documented and mapped accordingly. Indicative survey methods for protected species are outlined below.

#### *Badgers (Meles meles)*

- 3.5 The site and where possible 30 metres outside the site boundary was assessed for its suitability to support badgers. A direct search was undertaken for evidence of badgers. Evidence includes;
- Active or disused setts;
  - Diggings;
  - Latrines / dung pits;
  - Foraging ('snuffle holes');
  - Footprints; and
  - Badger hairs.
- 3.6 Holes characteristic of badger sett entrances were recorded during the initial walkover. A trail camera was deployed between 15<sup>th</sup> October and 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025. Cameras were set to record 15 second segments of video footage which were later reviewed following collection of the trail camera.

#### *Bats*

- 3.7 The majority of bat species roost within trees. Therefore, an assessment of trees with potential to be impacted by the proposed works was undertaken identifying any Potential Roost Features (PRFs). The assessment was undertaken from the ground looking for features which may support bats such as cavities, crevices, and peeling bark. The assessment was based on BCT guidelines (Collins, 2023) shown below in **Table 2**.

**Table 2:** Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees to support bat roosts

| Suitability | Criteria                                                                  |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| None        | No PRFs on the tree or highly unlikely to be any present.                 |
| FAR         | Further assessment required to establish if PRFS are present in the tree. |
| PRF         | A tree with at least one PRF present                                      |

- 3.8 Bats use features in the landscape to navigate and also habitats may provide key foraging areas. Foraging and commuting habitat was assessed based on based on BCT guidelines (Collins, 2023) shown in **Table 3** below.

**Table 3:** Assessment of foraging/commuting habitat

| Suitability | Criteria                                                                                                               |
|-------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| None        | No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year                |
| Negligible  | No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight paths or by foraging bats                              |
| Low         | Suitable but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats                                              |
| Medium      | Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats                                         |
| High        | Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape and is likely to be regularly used bats. |

#### *Birds*

- 3.9 Any habitat features, for example, scrub and trees, which could potentially be used by nesting birds, were surveyed and any nesting activity was noted. The habitat was also assessed regarding its potential for bird activity.

#### *Great Crested Newts (Triturus cristatus)*

- 3.10 Ponds within the vicinity of the site were noted and the potential of the land to act as a commuting route, shelter or foraging resource for great crested newts was assessed.

#### *Hazel dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius)*

- 3.11 An assessment of the suitability of the habitat to support hazel dormouse was undertaken in accordance with The dormouse Conservation Handbook Third Edition (Bullion *et al*, 2025). Any small mammal feeding signs were checked and assessed, including:
- Examination of hazel nuts; and
  - Evidence of nest building.

#### *Invasive species*

- 3.12 During the survey any invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were noted

#### *Invertebrates*

- 3.13 An assessment was undertaken to assess the potential of the habitats recorded on site to support diverse communities of invertebrates, or any Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species. The

assessment was based on the presence of a number of habitat features which may support important invertebrate communities such as:

- An abundance of deadwood;
- Presence of diverse plant communities;
- Presence of varied woodland structure and sunny woodland edge;
- Presence of ponds or watercourses; and
- Presence of free draining soil exposures.

#### *Reptiles*

- 3.14 Habitat features that could be suitable as hibernacula, foraging or basking areas were noted. Extant refugia were lifted and examined for evidence of reptiles, including sloughs (shed skins).

## 4.0 Results and Analysis

### Designated sites

#### *Statutory Designated Sites*

- 4.1 The data search returned no records of internationally designated sites within five kilometres of the site
- 4.2 The data search returned four records of national statutory designated sites within two kilometres, including one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and three Local Nature Reserves (LNR):
- **Alder Moors LNR.** This 8.53-hectare site comprises an area of alder woodland with a health range of ground flora due to regular coppicing. The woodland also contains ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), hawthorn (*Crataegus mongyna*) and willow (*salix spp.*) trees. This site is located 0.77 kilometres to the south of the development site.
  - **Ali's Pond LNR.** This 2.3-hectare site is surrounded by large private gardens and recreational fields, and is comprised of ponds, marginal vegetation, grassland and trees and is known to support a population of great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*), as well as stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*) and pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus spp.*) bats. This site is located 1.5 kilometres to the west of the development site.
  - **Lodge Wood & Sandford Mill SSSI.** This 2.3-hectare site is comprised of two small wet woodlands bordering the River Loddon, notable for large populations of the rare Loddon Lily (*Leucojum aestivum*). Both woodlands are dominated by alder and crack willow (*Salix fragilis*) and ash. This site is located 1.7 kilometres southeast of the development site.
  - **Lavells Lake LNR.** This 12.45-hectare site is known for its rich and varied bird population and is nationally known for migratory and resident species. There is a varied selection of waterfowl, dragonfly and amphibian ponds, water scrapes, tern islands and meadows. This site is located 1.9 kilometres to the south of the development site.
- 4.3 The development site is considered to lie sufficiently far from the nationally designated sites to avoid impacts

#### *Non-Statutory Designated Sites*

- 4.4 The data search identified seven non-statutory designated sites within two kilometres of the development site, all are designated as Berkshire Local Wildlife Sites (BLWS). Of these, the closest is **Sandpit Copse BLWS**, which lies adjacent to the site on its southern boundary. **Sandpit Copse BLWS** is a 1.9-hectare site that comprises an ash and hazel woodland with alder dominating the wetter areas around a stream that flows through the site.
- 4.5 Due to the scope of the development proposals, there is the potential to impact **Sandpit Copse BLWS** during the construction phase. Mitigation has been outlined in **Section 5.0**.

## Ecological Assessment

### Introduction

- 4.6 The results of the PEA are presented below. A Habitat Survey Map is provided in **Appendix C**. The map illustrates the location and extent of the sites surveyed, along with additional notable features. The site remains largely unchanged since the initial surveys carried out in 2023.

### Habitats

#### *Surrounding habitat*

- 4.7 The site at Park Lane lies just south of the village of Charvil, Berkshire. The site is bordered by residential land to the north, a golf course to the west, woodland to the south, and Charbil Piggott Primary School to the east. Further afield the local area comprises a mosaic of urban residential land, commercial land, and agricultural land, as well as woodland and lakes associated with the River Lodden to the east of the site.

#### *Artificial unsealed, unvegetated surface*

- 4.9 An artificial track runs from the eastern boundary into the centre of the site, and forms the site compound for the pre-existing development located adjacent to the site on the northern boundary.

#### *Modified grassland*

- 4.8 The site is predominantly comprised of grassland (**Figure 1 and 2**), containing species characteristic of modified and other neutral grassland habitat. The grassland is currently unmanaged and includes varying sward heights. The grassland field has been subject to damage from the use of plant in the area as part of the adjacent development. Large spoil mounds were present at the time of the walkover survey. Species present in the grassland included perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*).



**Figure 1 and 2:** View of grassland in the north of site, facing west, and south respectively.

#### *Mixed scrub*

- 4.9 The southeastern periphery of the site is comprised of mixed scrub habitat comprised predominantly of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

#### *Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*

- 4.10 The southern, western and the northwestern corner of the site are comprised of woodland with species including pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), hawthorn, ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), holly (*Ilex aquafolium*) and European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). A veteran oak is located within this parcel, in the northwestern corner of the site. These areas connect into Sandpit Copse adjacent to the southwestern corner of the site.
- 4.11 The area of woodland along the western boundary was previously classified as a tree line but trees are scattered in this location, with a wide area covered by the tree canopy. The ground flora in this area is largely characteristic of the grassland over the wider site and there is an absence of woodland flora.

#### *Line of trees*

- 4.12 A line of mature oak trees runs along the northern boundary of the site (**Figure 3**).



**Figure 3:** Line of oak trees on the sites northern boundary.

#### *Adjacent habitat*

- 4.13 A stream runs along the southern boundary of the site. This was not easily accessible during the survey due to the density of vegetation. Mitigation has been provided within the scheme to ensure there are no impacts to this watercourse which is detailed further in **Section 5.0**.

## Protected and/or notable species

### *Badgers*

- 4.14 The TVERC data search returned 43 records of badger within one kilometre of the site, dated 2008 to 2024.
- 4.15 Overall, the site has good suitability for badger, with the vast majority of the sites boundaries woodland and scrub habitat, with the grassland in the centre of site, all of which are all suitable habitat for foraging and sett creation. During the walkover survey a mammal hole indicative of badgers was recorded adjacent to the woodland on the southwestern boundary of the site. It appeared unused, with the entrance full of leaf litter. A camera trap was deployed to monitor activity with no badgers recorded over the course of the surveys.
- 4.16 Therefore, it is considered that badger are absent from the site.

### *Bats*

- 4.17 The TVERC data search returned 993 records of bats within one kilometre of the site between 2005 and 2024. Species recorded include:
- Barbastelle (*Barbastellus barbastellus*)
  - Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*)
  - Myotis (*Myotis* spp.)
  - Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*)
  - Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*)
  - Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*)
  - Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)
  - Pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus* spp.)
  - Nathusius's pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*)
  - Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
  - Soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*)
  - Long-eared bat (*Plecotus* spp.)
  - Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*)
- 4.18 The Defra run website, MAGIC, was searched for a list of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSL's). Twelve granted EPSL in respect of bats were recorded within two kilometres for common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats. Of these, one EPSL, located 1.6 kilometres to the northeast of the site, was granted for the destruction of a breeding site.

### *Trees*

- 4.19 The site contains mature oak trees along the boundaries and within the areas of woodland. The previous surveys recorded three trees as having potential to support bat roosts which are all located along the boundaries of the site. No other trees were considered to have potential roost

features and the tree loss within the scheme has not changed since the outline application was approved. All boundary trees will be retained within the development and no bat roosts within trees will be impacted by the development.

#### *Foraging and commuting*

- 4.20 Overall, the site has high suitability for commuting and foraging bats owing to the presence of mature trees along the boundary and areas of woodland, however the central areas of the site have lower suitability. The central grassland areas likely provide some foraging potential but the key areas for bats are considered to be the boundary features.
- 4.21 The development will retain the key areas for bats along the boundary edges with ecological buffers provided. Lighting will be restricted in these areas which is discussed further in **Section 5.0**.

#### *Birds*

- 4.22 The data search provided records for the following red list bird species of conservation concern that may be present on the site: bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), dunnoek (*Prunella modularis*), greenfinch (*Chloris chloris*), house martin (*Delicon urbicum*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), reed bunting (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), swift (*Apus apus*), tree sparrow (*Passer montanus*), and yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*).
- 4.23 In addition to these records the following schedule 1 and/or Annex I species were returned which may breed in the area: barn owl (*Tyto alba*), Cetti's warbler (*Cettia cetti*), hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), lesser spotted woodpecker (*Dryobates minor*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*) and red kite (*Milvus milvus*).
- 4.24 The site comprises scrub and woodland habitats which provide foraging and nesting opportunities for birds. The development proposals will retain the majority of these habitats, with the works area focused on the grassland. Recommendations for the clearance of vegetation outside of nesting bird season have been provided in **Section 5.0**.

#### *Great crested newts*

- 4.25 A total of 26 records of great crested newt (GCN) within two kilometres of the site were returned by TVERC, dated 2005 to 2023. The Defra run website, MAGIC, was searched for a list of granted EPSLs and GCN class licence returns. There were no records of granted EPSLs, and there was one class licence return, located 1.6 kilometres northeast of the development proposals, where GCN were confirmed to be present.
- 4.26 The site is located within a green risk zone for GCN under the Natural England District Licencing scheme. Green risk zones contain sparsely distributed GCN and are less likely to contain important pathways of connecting habitat for this species.

- 4.27 The habitats on the site are considered suitable to support populations of great crested newts with the unmanaged grassland providing good quality terrestrial habitat alongside woodland edges. Great crested newts may be present on site if any suitable waterbodies are present within 250 metres of the site.
- 4.28 A stream runs southwest along the southern boundary of the site which is considered unsuitability for great crested newts as it includes flowing water. There are no other suitable waterbodies within 250 metres of the site boundary.
- 4.29 It is considered that GCN are unlikely to be present on site due to the absence of suitable waterbodies within 250 metres of the site boundary.

#### *Hazel dormouse*

- 4.30 The TVERC data search returned no records of hazel dormouse within two kilometres of the site. The Defra run website, MAGIC, was searched for a list of granted EPSLs in relation to hazel dormouse, there are no records of granted EPSL's within two kilometres of the site.
- 4.31 The peripheral habitats, including the woodland edges and scrub, are all suitable for hazel dormouse, and are all connected to further suitable habitat in the form of the hedgerow that runs north of the site and the adjacent golf course on the west, as well as to the south into Sandpit Copse BLWS to the south.
- 4.32 The development proposals look to retain all of the suitable habitat on the northern, western and southern boundaries, and no hazel dormouse records were returned during the desk study. It is therefore considered that hazel dormouse are likely absent from the site, and if present, it would be highly unlikely that they would be disturbed. No further action is considered necessary.

#### *Invertebrates*

- 4.33 The TVERC data search returned 473 records of protected invertebrate species within two kilometres of the site, with many of the records located within Charvil Country Park and BBOWT Loddon Reserve.
- 4.34 No habitats of note that could support assemblages of rare invertebrates were recorded on the site. Therefore, no further action is required.

#### *Reptiles*

- 4.35 The TVERC data search returned 297 records of reptiles within two kilometres of the site for slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*), common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) and grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*).
- 4.36 To the north of the site, the adjacent residential development was subject to a reptile translocation in 2018. The development site was the receptor site for this translocation. A total of two juvenile grass snake and 73 slow worms were captured and moved to the development site.
- 4.37 Collington Winter Environmental conducted reptile surveys of the development site in 2023 (CW20-875 RPT 001). These surveys recorded a peak count of one adult common lizard and 13 adult slow worms, suggesting a low population of common lizard and medium population of slow

worm were present on site as of 2023. While no grass snakes were recorded during the surveys it was considered likely they were present due to the previous translocation records.

- 4.38 The habitats present on the site are still considered suitable and reptiles are therefore still considered to be present. Prior to construction a reptile translocation will be completed with animals moved to an off-site receptor. This is discussed further in **Section 5.0**.

## 5.0 Impacts and Mitigation

### Impacts and Required Mitigation for the Proposed Development

#### *Designated sites*

- 5.1 The site lies adjacent to Sandpit Copse BLWS, which is also registered as Ancient Woodland. To ensure that the development does not lead to long-term impacts to Sandpit Copse the development includes a 15-metre buffer between the development and the woodland edge. This buffer will ensure there are no impacts to the retained woodland. There will be no access from the development site into the woodland to prevent impacts from increased recreational pressure.
- 5.2 Construction mitigation will be detailed within a Construction Environmental Management Plan provided alongside this report. The following matters will be addressed (but not restricted to) in the CEMP:
- Appropriately store and control materials/chemicals to avoid pollution and siltation incidents (e.g. fit all plant with drip-trays and re-fuel machinery off-site);
  - Standard dust suppression methods will be employed as necessary e.g. dampen down with water, or the use of dust sheeting;
  - Standard noise suppression methods will be employed as necessary e.g. use of vehicle and plant silencers;
  - The storage and removal of waste material on site (e.g the storing of waste material on hardstanding).
- 5.3 Furthermore, construction workers should ensure that fuel, oil and chemical storage on site is secure. The storage should be sited on an impervious base within a secondary containment system such as a bund. The base and bund walls should be impermeable to the material stored and able to contain at least 110% of the volume stored. The storage area should be sited above any flood water level and where possible away from high-risk locations, to minimise the risk of a spill entering the aquatic environment.
- 5.4 Fresh concrete and cement are very alkaline and corrosive and can cause serious pollution. Concrete and cement mixing and washing areas should:
- Be sited 10 metres from any watercourse or surface water drain to minimise the risk of run off entering a watercourse.
  - Have settlement and re-circulation systems for water reuse, to minimise the risk of pollution and reduce water usage.
  - Have a contained area for washing out and cleaning of concrete batching plant or ready-mix lorries.

- 5.5 Wash waters should be collected and, where necessary, discharged to the foul sewer (you must have permission from the local sewerage provider for this), or contain wash water for authorised disposal off site.

#### *Stream*

- 5.6 A stream runs along the southern boundary of the site and to ensure there are no impacts to this watercourse a 10-metre buffer has been included within the development. The measures outlined with the CEMP will ensure this watercourse is not impacted during the construction of the development.

#### *Bats*

- 5.7 The site has been assessed as holding high suitability for foraging and commuting bats. Due to the nature of the site, it is considered that the woodland margin to the west and south of the site is likely to be used by bats to forage and commute, particularly with Sandpit Copse BLWS located adjacent to the site in the south, as well as Sonning Golf course located to the west. The northern and eastern boundaries of the site are considered less suitable for bats due to the presence of residential land, leading to an increase in light pollution.
- 5.8 The development retains all the boundary features, including the mature trees present. An ecological buffer has been incorporated into the design which will include wildflower grassland areas to provide enhanced foraging corridors.
- 5.9 This includes a dark corridor of 10 metres, with wider areas provided along the southern edge of the scheme. To ensure bats continue to utilise the site post development the proposed development will include lighting which adheres to the following guidelines (ILP, 2023):
- Additional light spill will be minimised on the boundaries and tree lines.
  - LED luminaires should be used of a warm white spectrum (<2700 Kelvin) which will feature peak wavelengths higher than 550 nm.
  - Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, should be considered.
  - Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt.
  - Where appropriate, external security lighting will be set on motion sensors and set to as short as possible.
  - Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed.

#### *Reptiles*

- 5.10 The 2023 reptile surveys recorded a low population of common lizard and a medium population of slow worm.

- 5.11 The construction zone encompasses 4.7 hectares of suitable reptile habitat, including tussocky grassland and scrub. Vegetation clearance and construction therefore pose a risk of injury and harm to reptiles present within this section of the site. Prior to construction a reptile translocation will be completed to relocate reptiles present within the construction zone to a suitable off-site receptor area.

#### Prior to the translocation

- 5.12 Woody vegetation within the construction zone will be cut to ground level prior to the translocation to facilitate trapping.
- 5.13 A reptile fence will be erected around the construction zone to ensure all areas with future construction impacts are included. The reptile fence will be installed under the supervision of a qualified ecologist, using wooden posts and plastic sheeting. The fence will be partially buried to a depth of approximately 150 millimetres. The reptile fence will encompass the entire working area and is anticipated to align with the tree protection fencing. The final fence location will be determined through a site meeting to ensure all areas of impacted habitat are included.
- 5.14 Artificial refugia in the form of 0.5 m<sup>2</sup> sections of roofing felt, corrugated metal or unduline will be distributed within the construction zone in suitable areas of reptile habitat.

#### Translocation

- 5.15 The refugia will then be visited during suitable weather conditions (where possible, cloudy with sunny breaks and temperature between 10 and 20°C, no rain and moderate wind) between late March/April and October. Any reptiles encountered will be caught and relocated to the designated receptor site. Trapping will take place over a minimum of 30 days with visits stopping once the numbers have dropped significantly or reached 0 for a period of 5 days.
- 5.16 Any existing natural refugia such as log or rubble piles will be removed by hand. The site will then be subject to a destructive search. An ecological watching brief will be maintained throughout the search. An experienced reptile handler will work alongside a strimmer and move any reptiles that are encountered. The topsoil of the site will then be removed with the use of toothed bucket until all suitable reptile habitat has been removed from the site.

#### During and Post Construction

- 5.17 All contractors will be briefed on the importance of the reptile fence and ensuring it remains intact through the course of the development.
- 5.18 If any reptiles are then encountered during construction works the ecologist will be contacted for further advice. The construction zone must be maintained as unsuitable for reptiles during the works, with particular focus on a one-metre buffer adjacent to the reptile fence, to prevent recolonisation. Materials must be stored away from the fence and vehicle movement must be supervised adjacent to the reptile fence to prevent damage. The reptile fence will be inspected on a monthly-basis during construction to check for damage.

- 5.19 Once construction and all relevant landscaping has been completed the fence will be removed to allow reptiles to recolonise areas of open green space. The ecological buffer incorporated into the development will provide enhanced habitat for reptiles through the creation of wildflower grassland. These areas will be managed as tussocky grassland to provide suitable basking areas for the local reptile populations.

#### *Nesting birds*

- 5.20 The line of trees, scrub and woodland within the site provide habitat for nesting birds. It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use. Any vegetation clearance or building works required must be scheduled to avoid peak bird nesting season (1<sup>st</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> August, although this will vary between species and local conditions) to avoid contravention of protected species legislation; unless inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works.
- 5.21 If the presence of nesting birds is confirmed, a 5-metre buffer will be implemented, and no works will be permitted within this buffer. Works will be able to proceed once the young birds have fledged the nest of their own accord.

#### **Enhancement Measures for the Proposed Development**

- 5.22 In accordance with the Natural Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.
- 5.23 The following enhancement measures will be included within the design to provide a net gain for species and will be included within an Ecological Permeability Plan required for condition 43. These measures will include, but are not limited to:
- The provision of integrated bat boxes within the new houses. All new houses on the edge of the development backing onto the ecological corridors will have built-in bat roosting tubes.
  - The development will include integrated swift boxes within suitable elevations. These will be placed on suitable gable ends at least five metres high on the north or eastern elevations away from direct sunlight. The boxes will be placed in groups of four.
  - Plots will include hedgehog friendly gravel boards / holes (10 centimetres x 10 centimetres) in garden fencing between houses.

## 6.0 References and Bibliography

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Wokingham Borough Council (2010) The Wokingham Borough Local Development Framework, adopted June 2010.

## Appendices

**Appendix A:** Site Location

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

The proposal presented here is subject to review by specialist consultants, and is to be read in conjunction with all relevant specialist's drawings and information where available. Any discrepancies between this and any other consultant's drawings and information should be reported to Pro Vision immediately.



Legend

 Red Line Boundary



| ISSUE | DATE     | DESCRIPTION | DRAWN | CHECKED |
|-------|----------|-------------|-------|---------|
| v1    | 12.11.25 | First Issue | JP    | U       |
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|----------|--------------------|----------|--|
| CLIENT:  | Bellways Homes Ltd |          |  |
| PROJECT: | Park Lane, Charvil |          |  |
| DRAWING: | Site Location      | 1:30000  |  |
| NUMBER:  | -XX-E0-01          | A4       |  |
| ISSUE:   | v1                 | 12.11.25 |  |



**Appendix B:** Development Proposals

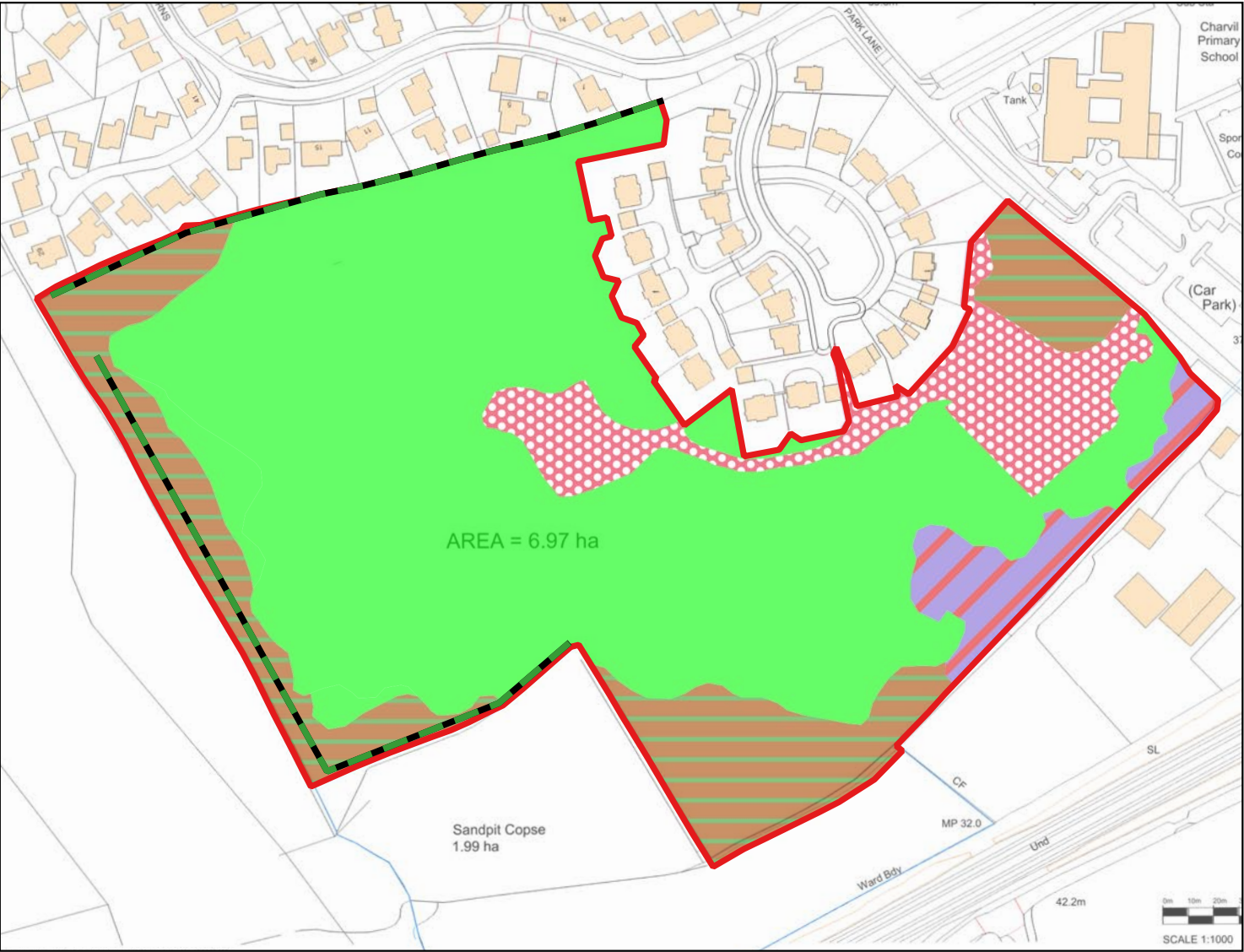


- 50m
- Proposed Site Boundary
  - 15m Exclusion Zone from Centre of the New Well for the Pumping Station
  - Proposed 2.4mBt Visibility at the Site Entrance
  - Indicative Tree Planting
  - Landscape Buffer Planting
  - Existing Trees & associated RPA to be retained
  - Existing Trees / Vegetation to be Removed or Reduced
  - Proposed Affordable Accommodation
  - Proposed First Home Accommodation
  - Proposed Shared Ownership Accommodation
  - Flood Zone -2
  - Flood Zone -3

**Appendix C: Habitat Survey Map**

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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## Legend

- Red Line Boundary
- Line of Trees
- Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface
- Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland
- Mixed Scrub
- Modified Grassland



| ISSUE | DATE     | DESCRIPTION | DRAWN | CHECKED |
|-------|----------|-------------|-------|---------|
| v1    | 14.11.25 | First Issue | JP    | U       |
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|----------|--------------------|----------|--|
| CLIENT:  | Bellways Homes Ltd |          |  |
| PROJECT: | Park Lane, Charvil |          |  |
| DRAWING: | Habitat Survey Map | 1:2500   |  |
| NUMBER:  | -8960-XX-E0-02     | A4       |  |
| ISSUE:   | v1                 | 14.11.25 |  |



## **Appendix D – Mitigation Plan**

Legend

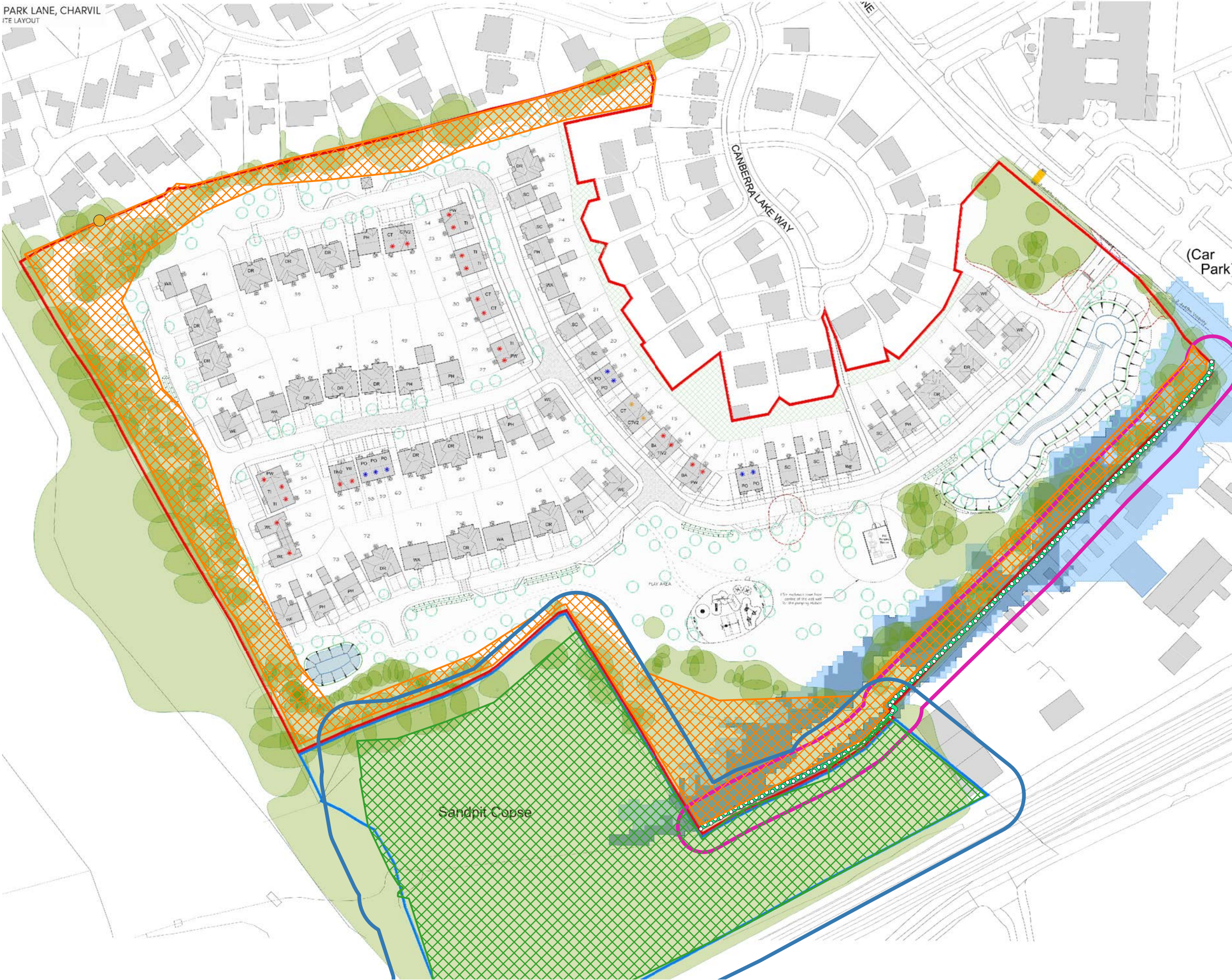
Veteran tree

Ancient woodland

Ecological buffer

Stream 10 metre-buffer

Other rivers and streams



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| ISSUE | DATE     | DESCRIPTION | DRAWN | CHECKED |
|-------|----------|-------------|-------|---------|
| v1    | 12/11/25 | First Issue | JP    | LSJ     |
| v2    | 11/12/25 | Update plan | LSJ   |         |
| v3    | 29/05/26 | Update plan | LSJ   |         |
|       |          |             |       |         |
|       |          |             |       |         |
|       |          |             |       |         |

|          |                    |          |
|----------|--------------------|----------|
| CLIENT:  | Bellway Homes      |          |
| PROJECT: | Park Lane, Charvil |          |
| DRAWING: | Mitigation Plan    | 1:1500   |
| NUMBER:  | 8960-XX-E1-02      | A3       |
| ISSUE:   | v2                 | 29.05.26 |



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## **Appendix E: Relevant Legislation**

### **The Conservation of Habitats and Species 2017**

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations) transpose Habitats Directive into UK legislation. The Habitats Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European Protected Species. European Sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which form part of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas across Europe.

European Protected Species (EPS) are those listed under Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations and include dormouse, great crested newt, otter and all species of bat. The regulations prohibit the deliberate capture, killing or disturbance of any EPS; it is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any of these species. In order to carry out a lawful operation (e.g. development work which has full planning permission) that may result in an offence under the Habitats Regulations, it is necessary to obtain a licence from Natural England. EPS Licences will only be granted after Natural England has been satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternative and that there will not be any adverse impacts on the favourable conservation status of the species.

### **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981**

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the principle piece of legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Various amendments have occurred since the original enactment. The Wildlife and Countryside Act contains both habitat and species protection. Certain bird, animal and plant species are afforded protection under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. Measures for the protection of the countryside, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are also included within the Act.

### **The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006**

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 improved wildlife protection by amending the WCA. The main function of the NERC Act was to raise the profile of biodiversity amongst public authorities. Section 40 (S40 of the Act places a 'Biodiversity Duty' on all public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions.

### **The Protection of Badgers Act 1992**

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 consolidates previous legislation (including the Badgers Acts 1973 and 1991 Badgers (Further Protection) Act 1991). It makes it a serious offence to:

- kill, injure or take a badger;
- attempt to kill, injure or take a badger; or
- to damage or interfere with a sett.

The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as "any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger".