

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Grove Cottages, Sandford Lane, Hurst, Reading, Wokingham, Berkshire RG10 0SX

Client:

Edward Harris

Survey date:

22/06/2026

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with Wokingham Borough Council. The creation of a single-storey rear extension to the rear of the main dwelling.

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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

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

Key Findings
▪ A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be requested by the LPA via condition. ▪ A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting¹. ▪ Various precautionary working methods have been recommended which have been fully detailed within the fauna section of this report.

1. INTRODUCTION

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

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author’s knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

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

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

Survey Details

The site survey was undertaken by Thomas Doarks BSc (Hons), accredited agent for Level 1 activities on Natural England Bat Licence (2025-83880-CL18-BAT).

Table 2: The weather conditions during the survey.

Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
25	63	100	8	None

Survey Limitations

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

Access to areas of land up to 30m from the site to search for signs of badger was not possible, however, land to the north and east was

accessible, and no signs of badger setts were apparent. It is understood the proposed development will be largely restricted to the existing buildings and hardstanding with a small impact on introduced shrubs with limited sett-building opportunities. Therefore, the slightly limited access to off-site areas to assess the potential for badger presence is not considered to represent a significant constraint.

2. SITE LOCATION AND LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

2.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Site Location & Context

The site is centred at National Grid Reference SU 78769 72582 and extends to approximately 0.33ha. Habitats present within the site comprise three buildings (B1, B2 and B3), vegetated garden, developed land in the form of sealed and artificial unvegetated surfaces, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, modified grassland, scattered trees and a pond.

The site is well connected to the surrounding landscape through a network of field margins, hedgerows and tree lines, which provide ecological connectivity for a range of fauna species. The local landscape is characterised by a mosaic of woodland parcels, agricultural land and wetland habitats, including Dinton Pastures Country Park, which lies in close proximity to the site (~200m west) and supports extensive areas of open water, grassland and woodland habitats of ecological value.

Priority Habitats

The site contains deciduous woodland. There are a further five types of priority habitats within 2km of the site. These comprise wood pasture and parkland, traditional orchard, ancient & semi-natural woodland, lowland fens and open mosaic habitats on previously developed land.

Designated Sites

Statutory Designations within 2km

There are three statutory designations within 2km of the site, as detailed below:

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

Designation	Distance from Site
Lodge Wood & Sandford Mill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	780m NW
Lavells Lake Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	215m NW
Alder Moors LNR	1755m NW

Statutory Designations within 10km

There is one national network site (SAC, SPA, Ramsar) located within 10km, as detailed below:

Table 4: The additional national network sites within 10km of the site boundary.

Designation	Distance from Site
Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA)	9400m SE

SSSI Risk Zone

The site falls within the impact risk zone for Lodge Wood & Sandford Mill SSSI however, the proposed development type is not listed as possible high risk with regard to this designation. Therefore, consultation with Natural England is not required.

Non-Designated Sites

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

2.2 Foreseen Impacts

The area of impact of the proposed works is located ~20m west of the deciduous woodland and ~12m west of the pond on site, as a result no direct impacts to any priority habitats or designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, indirect effects such as pollution during construction, or increased recreational pressure, could occur.

2.3 Recommendations

Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution and damage on the on-site woodland and pond must be implemented during construction. A Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) may be requested by the LPA via condition. This should include the following measures:

- Retained trees adjacent to the site will be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard 'Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations' (BS 5837) (2012).
- Appropriate buffering between the development zone and retained habitats.
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto adjacent habitats.

3. ONSITE HABITATS

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

3.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Built-up areas and gardens (u1) - Vegetated garden (828)

An amenity lawn is present to the west of site. This grassland is actively managed via regular mowing, resulting in a short sward of ~5cm. No signs of compaction or damage are present, resulting in areas of bare ground totalling <10% of the site. Some areas of the site are planted with ornamental garden species including shrubs, saplings, and flowerbeds.

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

Table 5a: Vegetated garden species abundance.

Abundance	Species
Dominant	Perennial rye-grass <i>Lolium perenne</i>

Abundant	White clover <i>Trifolium repens</i>
Frequent	Lesser celandine <i>Ficaria verna</i> , ribwort plantain <i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Occasional	-
Rare	Cleavers <i>Galium aparine</i>

Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)

To the south of B1 is an area of hardstanding comprising a patio and associated footpath, providing access around the property and connecting the building to the surrounding garden.

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

Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)

To the north of B1 is a shingle driveway, which provides vehicle access to the property and is of negligible ecological value due to its regularly disturbed and unvegetated nature.

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

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland (w1f)

The eastern portion of the site comprises a parcel of lowland mixed deciduous woodland that extends beyond the site boundaries to the south and east, forming part of a larger and well-connected woodland block within the local landscape. The woodland canopy is dominated by mature oak *Quercus spp.*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa* and occasional Lawson cypress *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*.

The woodland floor is well vegetated particularly within the northeastern section of the site where the presence of the on-site pond has resulted in wetter ground conditions. This area supports abundant moisture-loving flora associated with wet woodland and pond margins, creating a diverse understorey structure. The woodland provides a structurally diverse habitat comprising mature trees, understorey vegetation, standing and fallen deadwood, leaf litter and shaded microhabitats. The continuity of the woodland beyond the site boundaries increases its ecological value by providing habitat connectivity and facilitating the movement of wildlife throughout the wider landscape. However, much of the woodland is frequently managed reducing its ecological value.

Table 5b: Species abundance for lowland mixed deciduous woodland.

Abundance	Species
Dominant	Perennial Rye-grass
Abundant	Meadow Buttercup <i>Ranunculus acris</i> , Garlic Mustard
Frequent	White Clover
Occasional	Wood avens <i>Geum urbanum</i> , Herb-Robert <i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Rare	Male fern <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i> , Greater stitchwort <i>Stellaria holostea</i>

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the lowland mixed deciduous woodland was assessed to have a moderate condition value.

Modified grassland (g4)

The site is covered with grassland comprised of a low variety of common grassland species. This grassland is actively managed via regular mowing, resulting in a short sward of ~5cm. No signs of compaction or damage are present, resulting in areas of bare ground totalling <10% of the site. The species composition is good, with 6-8 vascular plant species present per m².

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the modified grassland was assessed to have a good condition value.

Table 5: Species abundance for lowland mixed deciduous woodland.

Abundance	Species
Dominant	Perennial rye-grass
Abundant	White clover
Frequent	Lesser celandine, ribwort plantain

Occasional	Wood avens
Rare	Cleavers

Pond

A pond is located on the eastern section of the site. A description and Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment of the pond can be found within the Fauna section of this report.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the pond was assessed to have a moderate condition value.

Scattered Trees (32)

There is one scattered tree (T1) on site, located in the centre of the site, to the west of P1. A description of T1 can be found within the Fauna section of this report.

In accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Matrix, the tree was assessed to have a good condition value.

Building (u1b5)

There are three buildings on site; one is a residential dwelling, one is an outbuilding and one is a garage. A description of the buildings on site can be found within the Fauna section of this report.

3.2 Foreseen Impacts

No direct impacts to any notable habitats will occur as a result of the proposed development. However, indirect effects such as pollution or habitat damage could occur during construction, whilst encroachment on the grassland and garden areas by contractors and machinery could result in plants and biodiversity value being dug up or trampled on.

3.3 Recommendations

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

- Remove only the minimum of habitat required to facilitate the development
- Use of Heras or other appropriate fencing to prevent encroachment by contractors onto retained habitats.

- Protect retained turf and soil resource from destruction and compaction using plastic matting and wooden boarding. Do not store skips and other heavy materials on retained turf.
- Grasscrete, cell web or any other porous surface treatment facilitating recovery of vegetation is preferred to hard standing.

The proposed development is unlikely to trigger the requirement for a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment, as it falls under one of the exemptions (less than 25m² of habitat being impacted).

4. INVASIVE SPECIES

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

4.1 Summary of Survey Findings

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

4.2 Foreseen Impacts

None.

4.3 Recommendations

No further surveys but remain vigilant.

5. FAUNA: BATS

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

5.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

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

Table 6: EPSL survey returns for bats within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Bat Species Affected	Distance from Site <i>(EPSL records are accurate to 100m)</i>	Impacts Allowed by Licence
2017-32001-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	~0.95km NE	Destruction of a resting place
2014-649-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	~0.97km NW	Destruction of a resting place
2019-43858-EPS-MIT	Soprano pipistrelle	~1.2km N	Destruction of a resting place
2016-27109-EPS-MIT-1	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Brown long-eared <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	~1.35km NW	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2012-4899	Common pipistrelle Brown long-eared	~1.4km NE	Destruction of a resting place
2016-25277-EPS-MIT	Soprano pipistrelle	~1.7km NE	Destruction of a resting place

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

Foraging and commuting habitat

Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of lowland mixed deciduous woodland, a pond and scattered trees. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations. Most notably, the woodland in the eastern section of the site extends beyond the site adding to the continuity of vegetated linear features present in the wider landscape. Bats are well known to utilise linear features to aid navigation whilst travelling between foraging resources and roost sites.

Roosting habitat

Buildings and trees to be impacted by the proposed development were assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. There is a total of three buildings on site; residential dwelling (B1), outbuilding (B2) and garage (B3). All buildings were surveyed and there was no evidence of roosting bats identified.

Buildings

B1: Residential dwelling

B1 is a two-storey residential dwelling with a gabled roof constructed of interlocking clay tiles. The roof tiles are tight-fitting, presenting no obvious roosting features or access points. Three dormer windows are located on the northern and southern elevation. The uPVC soffit boxes are also in good condition with no gaps. Internally, an insulated loft void was noted to be in good condition with no light spill and no identified access points. No bat roosting features or access points, or evidence was identified throughout the structure.

In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B1 is assessed to have **negligible** habitat value for roosting bats.



The northern elevation of B1.

Table 7a: The roosting features associated with building B1.

Feature	Materials/Details	Condition / description / suitability	Photograph
Roof	Interlocking clay tiles	Condition/description The main roof tiles, ridge tiles and roof verges are tight-fitting. Suitability/access/evidence of bats No bat roosting features or access points were identified.	 Southern elevation roof of B1.  A section of the northern elevation roof of B1.

Dormer windows	Hanging tiles	Condition/description The hanging tiles on the dormer windows of B1 are in good condition with no gaps or cracks. Suitability/access/evidence of bats No bat roosting features or access points were identified.	 <i>The hanging tiles in good condition on the northern elevation of B1.</i>
Soffit boxes	uPVC	Condition/description The uPVC soffit boxes of B1 are in good condition with no gaps. Suitability/access/evidence of bats No bat roosting features or access points were identified.	 <i>Soffit boxes on the southern elevation of B1.</i>

Internal void	Blanket insulation	The internal void is 10m long, 1.5m tall and 1.5m wide. It is lined with blanket insulation which is in good condition. No rips or tears were identified in the lining, and no light spill was observed, indicating an absence of access points into the internal void. The flooring of the loft void is covered in plywood allowing access to all areas. No rodent droppings were identified within the loft void. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within this void.	 <i>Internal void, facing east.</i>
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B2: Annex

B2 is a one-storey annex with a hipped roof constructed of interlocking clay tiles. The roof tiles are tight-fitting, presenting no obvious roosting features or access points. The uPVC soffit boxes are also in good condition with no gaps. Internally, a roofing felt lined loft void was noted to be in good condition with no light spill and no identified access points. No bat roosting features or access points, or evidence was identified throughout the structure.

In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B2 is assessed to have **negligible** habitat value for roosting bats.



Northeastern elevation of B2.

Table 7b: The roosting features associated with building B2.

Feature	Materials/Details	Condition / description / suitability	Photograph
Roof	Interlocking clay tiles	Condition/description The main roof tiles, ridge tiles and roof verges are tight-fitting. Suitability/access/evidence of bats No bat roosting features or access points were identified.	 <i>Eastern elevation roof of B2.</i>
Doors, windows and soffit boxes	uPVC	Condition/description The uPVC soffit boxes of B2 are in good condition with no gaps. Suitability/access/evidence of bats No bat roosting features or access points were identified.	 <i>The doors and soffits on the eastern elevation of B2.</i>

Internal void	Timber rafters. Bitumen felt lining	The internal void is in an L-shape. It is lined with roofing felt which is in good condition. No rips or tears were identified in the lining, and no light spill was observed, indicating an absence of access points into the internal void. The flooring of the loft void is partially covered in plywood allowing access to all areas. No rodent droppings were identified within the loft void. No evidence of roosting bats was identified within this void.	 <i>Internal void, facing west.</i>
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B3: Garage

B3 is a one-storey garage with a hipped roof constructed of interlocking clay tiles. Internally, a roofing felt lined internal space was noted to be in good condition with no light spill and no identified access points. No bat roosting features or access points, or evidence was identified throughout the structure.

In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B3 is assessed to have **negligible** habitat value for roosting bats.



Southern elevation of B3.

Table 7c: The roosting features associated with building B3.

Feature	Materials/Details	Condition / description / suitability	Photograph
Roof	Interlocking clay tiles	Condition/description The main roof tiles are tightly fitted with no significant gaps identified. A continuous gap was present between the ridge tiles and the roof tiles along the entirety of the ridgelines. This feature was fully visible and inspected from ground level and was found to be shallow, measuring approximately 100mm in width and 100mm in depth. Due to its large dimensions and exposed nature, the	<i>Western elevation roof of B3.</i>

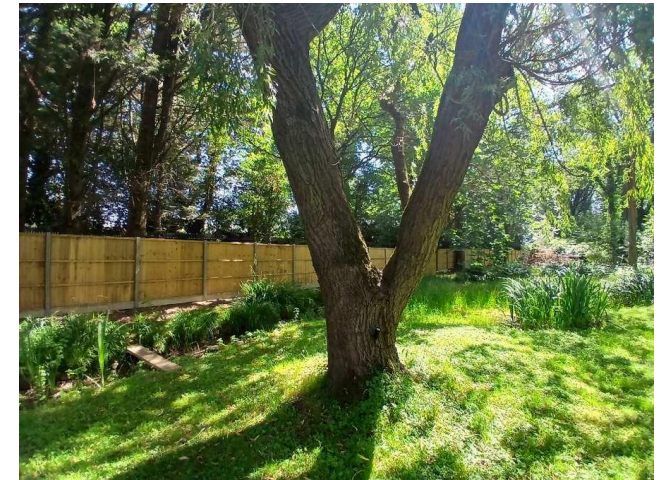
		feature does not provide the confined, sheltered and thermally stable conditions typically preferred by roosting bats and is therefore considered unlikely to support a bat roost. Suitability/access/evidence of bats No bat roosting features or access points were identified.	 <i>Southern elevation roof of B3.</i>
Internal space	Timber rafters. Bitumen felt lining	The ceiling within B3 is vaulted and as a result the internal aspect of the roof is well lit when the garage is in use. The roof is lined with bitumen felt in good condition with no gaps or tears. No roosting features, access points, light spill or evidence of bats were noted within the garage.	 <i>Internal space of B3, facing east.</i>

Trees

T1: Weeping Willow

T1 is a large, mature, weeping willow located at SU 78767 72599 to the west of P1. The tree has a DBH of 75cm and is in good condition.

No roosting features were identified for this tree.



T1, facing east.

5.2 Foreseen Impacts

Roosting habitat [Buildings]

Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within B1, B2 or B3 due to the absence of suitable roosting features and access points. As such, no impacts on roosting bats are anticipated as a result of the proposed development.

Roosting habitat [Trees]

T1 and the deciduous woodland on site will be retained and therefore no impacts to roosting bats are anticipated.

Foraging and commuting habitat

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

Artificial lighting

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

5.3 Recommendations

Roosting habitat [Buildings and Trees]

In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice.

Foraging and commuting habitat

No further surveys are required.

Artificial lighting

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

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of one bat box at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats.

The bat boxes will be incorporated into the fabric of the extension. Suitable bat boxes include Habibat Bat Box, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar alternative brand.

Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.

6. FAUNA: BIRDS

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

6.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Buildings

No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within any of the buildings on site. However, the buildings may provide suitable shelter and could be used by common nesting birds.

Trees and vegetation

No bird nests were identified within the vegetation on-site, however vegetated garden, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, modified grassland and scattered trees offer nesting opportunities and nest-building resources for birds.

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

Barn Owls

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

6.2 Foreseen Impacts

Buildings, trees and vegetation

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

Barn Owls

None foreseen.

6.3 Recommendations

Buildings, trees and vegetation

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

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

Barn Owls

No further barn owl surveys required.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

The installation of a minimum of one bird box on mature trees around the site or on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings), Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace (buildings), Schwegler 1B Nest Boxes (trees), Schwegler 2H Robin Boxes (trees), Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) or a similar alternative brand.

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

Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the extension during construction.

7. FAUNA: REPTILES

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

7.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

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

Habitat suitability

Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging, commuting, basking and refuge opportunities for reptiles. The deciduous woodland provides elevated value for reptiles as this habitat provides a suitable structure for refuge, whilst also providing foraging and commuting opportunities.

However, it is important to note that the west of the site is dominated by frequently managed vegetated garden, modified grassland, introduced shrubs, buildings, and hardstanding of limited value to reptiles. These habitats are suboptimal due to an absence of notable habitat structure and diversity, which significantly limits refuge, foraging, and commuting opportunities, albeit they do provide some basking opportunities when located adjacent to potential refugia.

The site has good connectivity to further suitable reptile habitat in the wider landscape via the on-site woodland. The presence of reptiles on site cannot be discounted, albeit likely limited to low numbers within the woodland to the east of the site.

Wider landscape

The local areas of woodland and grassland are of elevated ecological value within the wider landscape and may represent important resources for local reptile populations. These local habitats provide optimal foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for reptiles and are well connected to further suitable habitat in the wider landscape. The presence of reptiles utilising these adjacent habitats cannot be discounted.

7.2 Foreseen Impacts

A small area of introduced shrubs will be removed during construction. The loss of this habitat is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations owing to its low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of reptiles, if present.

7.3 Recommendations

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

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

8. FAUNA: AMPHIBIANS

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

8.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL and survey data

A review of the MAGIC database returned two EPSL records for amphibians within 2km of the site. The MAGIC database also returned evidence indicating the presence of great crested newts (GCN) resulting from historic pond surveys undertaken in 2017. These records are located ~0.9km southwest. Great crested newts exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001). As such, the great crested newt metapopulation known to be present ~0.9km southwest are not suitably connected to the site.

Table 8: EPSL survey returns for amphibians within a 2km radius.

EPSL Reference	Amphibian Species Affected	Distance from Site <i>(EPSL records are accurate to 100m)</i>	Impacts Allowed by Licence
2015-14054-EPS-MIT	GCN	~1.1km S	Destruction of a resting place
EPSA2013-6712-A-AD2	GCN	~1.6km SW	Destruction of a resting place

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

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

Table 9: Great crested newt search results.

Record type	Distance from Site
GCN class survey licence return	~0.9km SW
GCN class survey licence return	~1km SW
GCN class survey licence return	~1.1km SW
GCN class survey licence return	~1.2km SW
GCN class survey licence return	~1.2km SW
GCN class survey licence return	~1.2km SW
GCN class survey licence return	~1.3km SW
GCN class survey licence return	~1.4km SW
GCN class survey licence return	~1.6km SW

Aquatic habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m)

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

Pond P1 is a natural pond. The pond is supplied by rainwater and as a result it dries annually during dry periods. The pond measures approximately 60m x 10m. P1 comprises a natural pond with gently sloping margins and extensive aquatic and emergent vegetation. Emergent vegetation is dominated by yellow flag iris *Iris pseudacorus*, with additional marginal and aquatic species present around the pond perimeter. Areas of open water remain between dense stands of vegetation, providing structural diversity within the pond.

The pond is situated within a woodland setting and is surrounded by modified grassland to the west and mature trees, providing suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians in the immediate vicinity. However, at the time of the survey the pond area had greatly reduced to ~90m² and the client has advised that the pond dries out annually. This reduces the reliability of the waterbody for successful amphibian breeding and larval development. Consequently, whilst the pond may be utilised opportunistically by amphibians during wetter periods, its ephemeral nature reduces its suitability for great crested newts and other amphibian species when compared to more permanent waterbodies. As a result of the Habitat

Suitability Index (HSI), P1 scored 0.55, indicating below average suitability to support great crested newts.

The scores for each HSI parameter can be viewed in the table below:

Pond P1.

SI Factor	Score
Geographic location	1
Pond area	1
Pond permanence	0.1
Water quality	0.67
Shade	0.2
Water fowl effect	0.67
Fish	1
Pond density	1
Terrestrial habitat	1
Macrophytes	0.3
HSI Score	0.55
HSI Category	Below Average

Table 10: HSI scores for P1.

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

Terrestrial habitat suitability

The site provides optimal terrestrial habitat for amphibians. The eastern portion of the site comprises deciduous woodland, which offers suitable refuge, foraging and hibernation opportunities through the presence of leaf litter, deadwood, tree roots and shaded microhabitats. These features provide favourable conditions for amphibians during their terrestrial life stages and increase the ecological value of the site for amphibian species.

To the west of the site is a residential dwelling with an intensively managed vegetated garden. Whilst the regular management of the garden is likely to reduce its structural diversity and ecological value, areas of vegetation may still provide limited sheltering and dispersal opportunities for amphibians.

Overall, the on-site woodland significantly enhances the suitability of the site for amphibians by providing high-quality terrestrial habitat, although the intensively managed garden areas are of comparatively lower value.

8.2 Foreseen Impacts

When georeferencing the proposed development plans over scaled mapping of the site, it is noted that the development area is likely to result in the loss or significant disturbance of ~0.001ha of introduced shrub. If great crested newts are present within the Pond 1, when completing the rapid risk assessment published by Natural England (Natural England 2015), the proposed development produces a green risk score, which states: Offence Highly Unlikely.

Component	Likely effect (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	Notional offence probability score
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	0.001 - 0.01 ha lost or damaged	0.05
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
Maximum:		0.05
Rapid risk assessment result:	GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY	

Table 11: GCN Rapid Risk Assessment Results.

8.3 Recommendations

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

- A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any amphibians to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter amphibians from the working area.
- Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.
- If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.
- In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

9. FAUNA: RIPARIAN ANIMALS

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

9.1 Summary of Survey Findings

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

Habitat suitability

The site provides negligible suitability for otters and low suitability for water voles.

Pond P1 comprises a natural rain-fed pond measuring approximately 60m by 10m and supports extensive emergent and aquatic vegetation, including abundant yellow flag iris *Iris pseudacorus*. The pond is situated within a woodland setting and is surrounded by modified grassland and mature trees, creating a relatively undisturbed environment with suitable cover for wildlife.

The absence of a permanent water supply and the annual drying of the pond during dry periods substantially reduce its suitability for otters, which typically utilise larger, more permanent watercourses and waterbodies for resting and holt creation. Whilst otters are known to forage and commute along a wide variety of aquatic habitats, including small streams and ditches, the ephemeral nature of P1 and lack of connectivity to a permanent watercourse make regular use by otters unlikely.

The pond provides some habitat features suitable for water voles, including abundant marginal and emergent vegetation which may provide foraging opportunities and cover from predators. However, the gently sloping margins and apparent absence of steep, earthy banks reduce the suitability of the pond for burrow construction, which represents optimal habitat for the species. Furthermore, the annual drying of the pond is likely to limit its value for sustaining a resident population. Consequently, whilst occasional use by dispersing individuals cannot be entirely ruled out, the pond is considered to provide low to moderate suitability for water voles.

9.2 Foreseen Impacts

Otters

The proposed development will not result in the loss of any riparian habitats and no works will be undertaken within 8m of the watercourse (as per Environment Agency regulations). However, due to the presence of the pond within close proximity of the area of impact (~12m), indirect effects such as pollution could occur during construction.

Water vole

No works will be undertaken within 5m of the top of the banks of the pond. Therefore, no impacts are anticipated on water vole as a result of the proposed development.

9.3 Recommendations

No further surveys for riparian animals required.

10. FAUNA: HAZEL DORMOUSE

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

10.1 Summary of Survey Findings

EPSL data and local records

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

Habitat suitability

The site provides low suitability for hazel dormice. The surrounding woodland and mature trees may provide some foraging opportunities and habitat connectivity for arboreal mammals; however, the woodland lacks the dense, structurally diverse understorey and species-rich shrub layer typically associated with suitable dormouse habitat. Furthermore, the modified grassland surrounding Pond P1 provides limited value for dormice due to the absence of woody vegetation and foraging resources.

The pond itself does not provide habitat for hazel dormice, although the emergent and marginal vegetation may contribute marginally to habitat complexity within the site. Overall, the absence of species-rich hedgerows, scrub habitat and interconnected woody vegetation reduces the likelihood of the site supporting hazel dormice. Consequently, the site is considered to provide low suitability for the species.

10.2 Foreseen Impacts

A small area of introduced shrub which is separated from the woodland by an intensively managed vegetated garden will be removed during construction. The loss of this habitat is likely to be inconsequential to local dormouse populations owing to its low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of dormice, if present.

10.3 Recommendations

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

- Site clearance will be undertaken outside of the dormouse hibernation season (November to March) insofar as is possible.
- A toolbox talk will be given to contractors regarding the possible presence of dormice at the site.
- Heras fencing will be erected around the working area to prevent encroachment into retained habitats where dormice could be present.
- A pre-commencement inspection of the site will be undertaken for dormice.

In the unlikely event that a dormouse or evidence of dormouse is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

11. FAUNA: BADGERS

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

11.1 Summary of Survey Findings

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

11.2 Foreseen Impacts

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

11.3 Recommendations

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

- A toolbox talk will be given to contractors regarding the possible presence of badgers at the site.
- A pre-commencement inspection of the site will be undertaken for any new badger activity if works do not commence within three months.
- Heras fencing will be erected around the working area to prevent encroachment into retained habitats where badger setts could be present.
- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which badgers could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations

In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

12. FAUNA: INVERTEBRATES

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

12.1 Summary of Survey Findings

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

12.2 Foreseen Impacts

A small area of introduced shrubs will be removed during construction. The loss of this habitat is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to its low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally.

12.3 Recommendations

No further surveys.

Suggested biodiversity enhancements

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

13. FAUNA: OTHER NOTABLE SPECIES

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

13.1 Summary of Survey Findings

Hedgehogs

The deciduous woodland, modified grassland and vegetated garden on site provide suitable foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs.

13.2 Foreseen Impacts

Hedgehogs

A small area of introduced shrubs will be removed during construction. The loss of this habitat is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to its low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.

13.3 Recommendations

Hedgehogs

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

- Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.
- The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use.
- Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

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

13.4 Suggested Biodiversity Enhancements

Hedgehogs

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

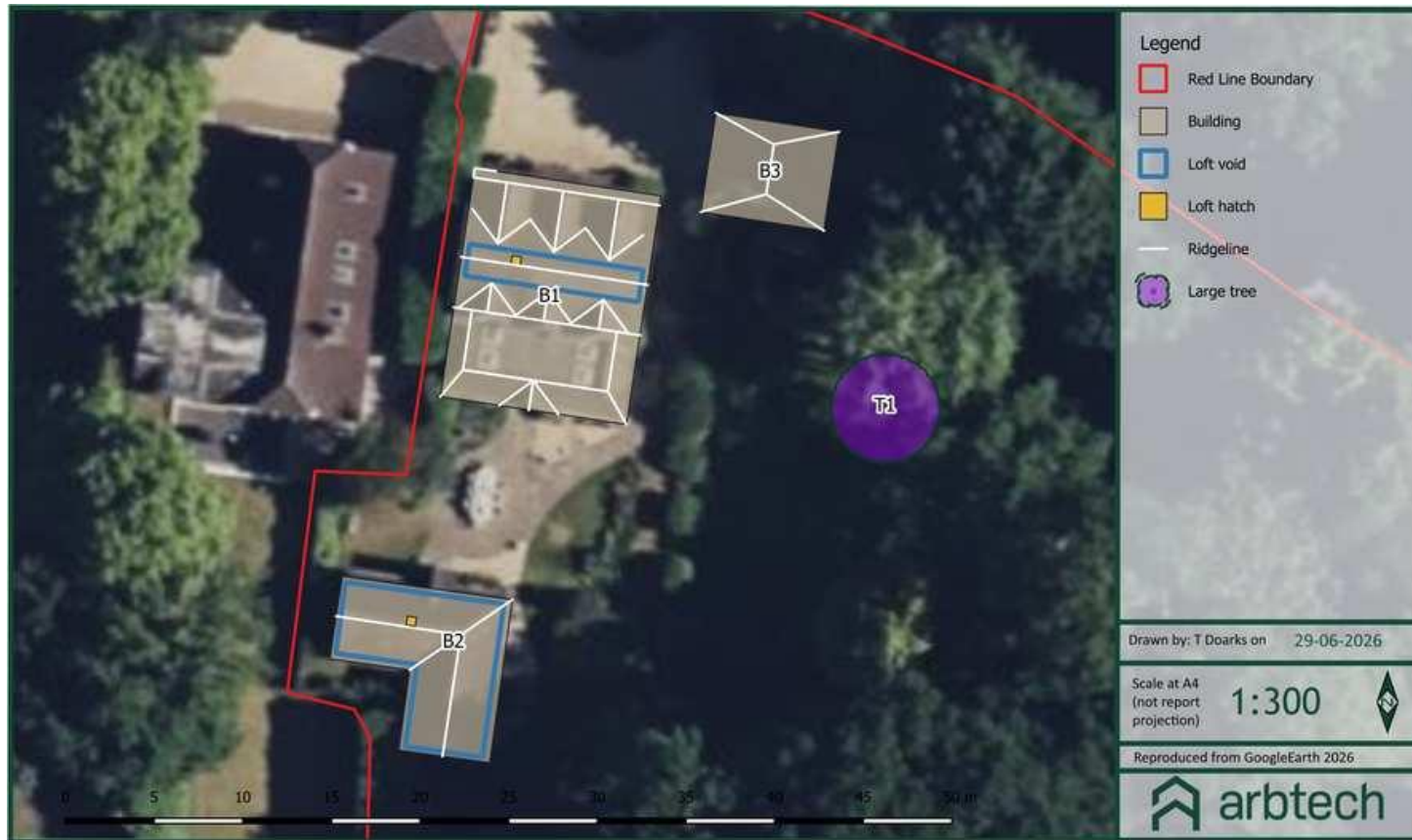
- Installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.
- Installation of gaps under boundary fencing to enable hedgehogs to move freely through the site.

APPENDIX 1: SURVEY/HABITAT MAP

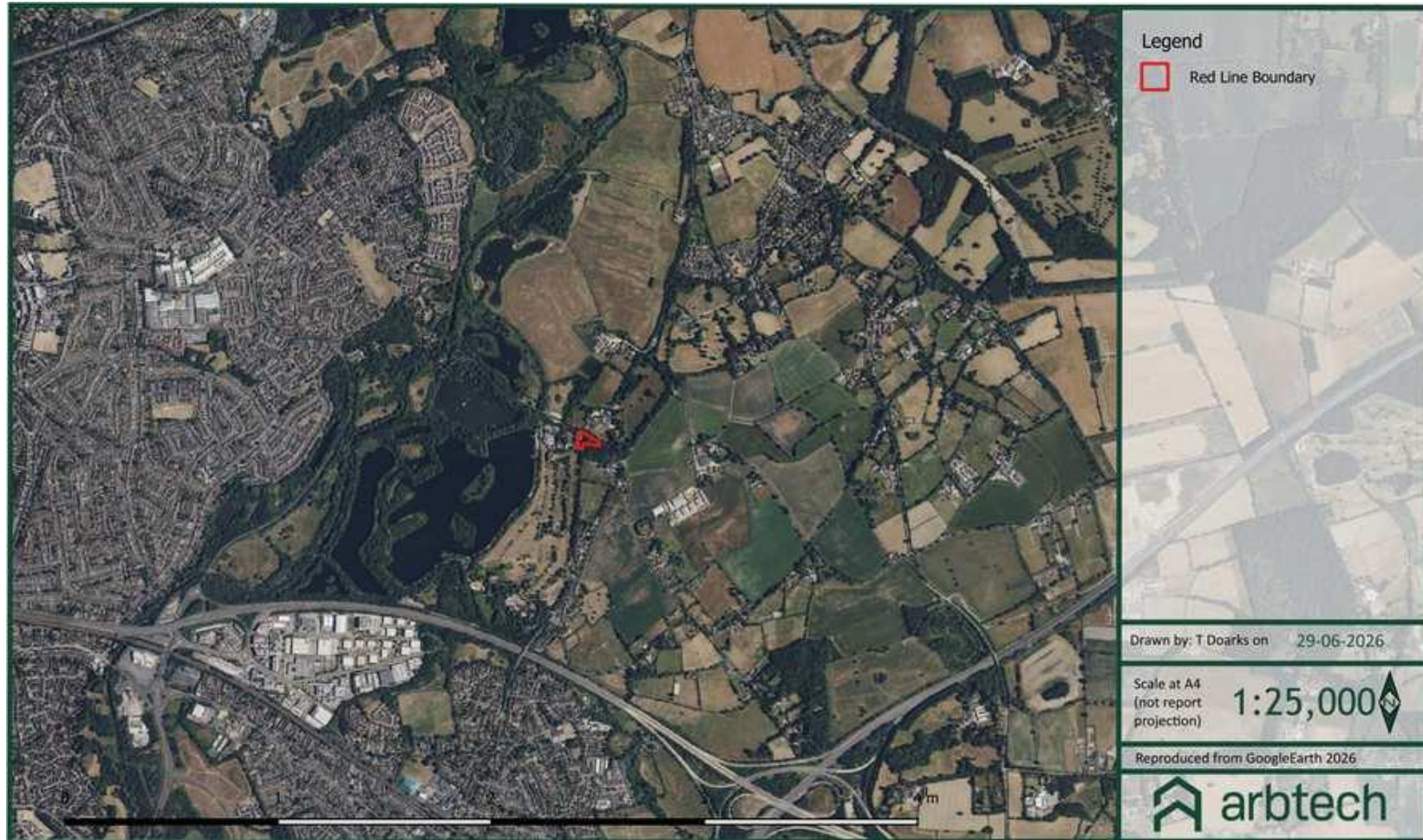
PEA Map



PRA Map



APPENDIX 2: LOCATION MAP



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Roost Assessment



APPENDIX 4: HABITAT IMAGES



Vegetated garden, facing south.



Patio and footpath to the south of B1, facing west.



Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, facing north.



Lowland mixed deciduous woodland to the east of the site.



Modified grassland in the centre of site, facing south.



Pond P1, facing north.

APPENDIX 5: BASELINE CONDITION SCORE TABLES

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland (w1f) condition assessment.

Category	Good (3 points)	Moderate (2 points)	Poor (1 point)	Score
A. Age distribution of trees	Three age-classes present.	Two age-classes present.	One age-class present.	2
B. Wild, domestic and feral herbivore damage	No significant browsing damage evident in woodland.	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in less than 40% of whole woodland.	Evidence of significant browsing pressure is present in 40% or more of whole woodland.	3
C. Invasive plant species	No invasive species present in woodland.	Rhododendron Rhododendron ponticum or cherry laurel Prunus laurocerasus not present, and other invasive species <10% cover.	Rhododendron or cherry laurel present, or other invasive species ≥10% cover.	3
D. Number of native tree species	Five or more native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.	Three to four native tree or shrub species found across woodland parcel.	Two or less native tree or shrub species across woodland parcel.	2
E. Cover of native tree and shrub species	>80% of canopy trees and >80% of understory shrubs are native.	50 - 80% of canopy trees and 50 - 80% of understory shrubs are native.	<50% of canopy trees and <50% of understory shrubs are native.	3
F. Open space within woodland	10 - 20% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. Unless woodland is <10ha, in which case 0 - 20% temporary open space is permitted (given the increased ratio of edge habitat to woodland where the woodland is <10ha).	21 - 40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space.	<10% or >40% of woodland has areas of temporary open space. But if woodland <10ha has <10% temporary open space, please see Good category7.	2
G. Woodland regeneration	All three classes present in woodland; trees 4 - 7 cm Diameter at Breast Height (DBH), saplings and seedlings or advanced coppice regrowth.	One or two classes only present in woodland.	No classes or coppice regrowth present in woodland.	2

H. Tree health	Tree mortality 10% or less, no pests or diseases and no crown dieback.	11% to 25% tree mortality and or crown dieback or low-risk pest or disease present.	Greater than 25% tree mortality and or any high-risk pest or disease present.	3
I. Vegetation and ground flora	Recognisable NVC plant community at ground layer present, strongly characterised by ancient woodland flora specialists.	Recognisable woodland NVC plant community at ground layer present.	No recognisable woodland NVC plant community at ground layer present.	2
J. Woodland vertical structure	Three or more storeys across all survey plots, or a complex woodland.	Two storeys across all survey plots.	One or less storey across all survey plots.	2
K. Veteran trees	Two or more veteran trees per hectare.	One veteran tree per hectare.	No veteran trees present in woodland.	1
L. Amount of deadwood	50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, branch stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	Between 25% and 50% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	Less than 25% of all survey plots within the woodland parcel have deadwood, such as standing and fallen deadwood, large dead branches and or stems, stubs and stumps, or an abundance of small cavities.	1
M. Woodland disturbance	No nutrient enrichment or damaged ground evident.	Less than 1 hectare in total of nutrient enrichment across woodland area, and or less than 20% of woodland area has damaged ground.	1 hectare or more of nutrient enrichment, and or 20% or more of woodland area has damaged ground.	3
				Total 29/39
	Condition moderate due to scoring 29 of 39 points.			

Modified grassland (g4) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	There are 6-8 vascular plant species per m2 present, including at least 2 forbs (these may include Creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>). Where the vascular plant species present are characteristic of medium, high or very high distinctiveness grassland, or there are 9 or more of these characteristic species per m2 (excluding those listed in the previous sentence), please review the full UKHab description to assess whether the grassland should instead be classified as a higher distinctiveness grassland.	Y
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for vertebrates and invertebrates to live and breed.	N
C	Any scrub present accounts for less than 20% of the total grassland area. (Some scattered scrub such as bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. may be present). Note - patches of scrub with continuous (more than 90%) cover should be classified as the relevant scrub habitat type.	Y
D	Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. Examples of physical damage include excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, erosion caused by high levels of access, or any other damaging management activities.	Y
E	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%, including localised areas (for example, a concentration of rabbit warrens). For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing establishment of new species, or localised patches where not exceeding 10% cover.	Y
F	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20%.	Y
G	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA).	Y
		Total 6/7
	Condition good due to passing 6 of 7 criteria.	

Pond condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The pond is of good water quality, with clear water (low turbidity) indicating no obvious signs of pollution. Turbidity is acceptable if the pond is grazed by livestock.	Y
B	There is semi-natural habitat (moderate distinctiveness or above) completely surrounding the pond, for at least 10 m from the pond edge for its entire perimeter.	Y
C	Less than 10% of the water surface is covered with duckweed <i>Lemna</i> spp. or filamentous algae.	Y
D	The pond is not artificially connected to other waterbodies, such as agricultural ditches or artificial pipework.	Y
E	Pond water levels can fluctuate naturally throughout the year. No obvious artificial dams, pumps or pipework. (This excludes dams made by beavers)	N
F	There is an absence of listed non-native plant and animal species.	Y
G	The pond is not artificially stocked with fish. If the pond naturally contains fish, it is a native fish assemblage at low densities.	Y
		Total 6/7
	Condition moderate due to passing 6 of 7 criteria.	

Scattered trees (T1) condition assessment.

	Criteria Description	Criteria Passed?
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y
B	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Y
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).	Y
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Y
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	Y
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y
		Total 6/6
	Condition good due to passing 6 of 6 criteria.	

APPENDIX 6: POND MAP



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VERSION CONTROL

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	Thomas Doarks BSc (Hons), Graduate Ecologist	30/06/26
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