

Land at Millworth Recreation Ground
Millworth Lane
Shinfield
Reading
Berkshire
RG2 9EN

Updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & BNG Assessment

Ref.: R2468_PEA_d

<i>Report Quality Control Information</i>	
<i>Author</i>	<i>John Wenman MCIEEM</i>

June 2026



1 Diesel House, Honey Hill, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 3BL
Telephone: 0118 327 1810 Mobile: 07979 403099 E-mail: info@wenman-ecology.co.uk
www.wenman-ecology.co.uk

John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales with registered number OC339057.
Registered office: 1 Diesel House, Honey Hill, Wokingham RG40 3BL where you may look at a list of members' names.

1	EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
2	INTRODUCTION	4
2.1	Project Background	4
2.2	Site Location and Context	4
2.3	Objectives	4
3	LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND	6
3.1	Overview	6
3.2	European Protected Species Mitigation Licensing	6
4	PLANNING POLICY	8
4.1	National Planning Policy	8
4.2	Local Planning Policy	9
5	SURVEY METHODOLOGY	12
5.1	Desk Study	12
5.2	Field Survey	12
6	DESK STUDY FINDINGS	14
6.1	Designated Sites and Habitats	14
6.2	Protected and Notable Species	16
6.3	Historic and Current Land Use	19
7	FIELD SURVEY FINDINGS	20
7.1	Overview	20
7.2	g4 - Modified grassland	20
7.3	u1b – Developed land, sealed surface	21
7.4	u1c - Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface	21
7.5	Individual Trees	21
8	DISCUSSION	22
8.1	Overview	22
8.2	Designated sites	22
8.3	Habitats	23
8.4	Bats	24
8.5	Hazel dormice	24
8.6	Great Crested Newt (and other amphibians)	25
8.7	Reptiles	25
8.8	Nesting birds	26
8.9	Badgers (and other mammals)	26
8.10	Invertebrates	27
9	RECOMMENDATIONS	28
9.1	Habitats	28
9.2	Bats	28
9.3	Amphibians, Small Mammals and Reptiles	29
9.4	Ecological Enhancement	30
10	BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT	31
10.1	Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Approach	31
10.2	Strategic Significance	32
10.3	Baseline Habitats	33
10.4	Proposed Habitats	35
10.5	Biodiversity Net Gain Result	38
10.6	BNG Delivery	38
11	REFERENCES	40
	APPENDIX 1 – LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND	41
	APPENDIX 2 - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS	45
	APPENDIX 3 – EXISTING SITE PLAN	48
	APPENDIX 4 – PROPOSED SITE PLAN	49

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP (JWEC) was commissioned by Tony Grover of BDS Surveyors Limited, on behalf of Shinfield Parish Council, to undertake an updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Millworth Recreation Ground, in Shinfield, Berkshire. The updated PEA follows a survey completed in 2024 and was commissioned to support a planning application to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for the construction of new fitness building and surrounding landscaping at the recreation ground.
- 1.1.2** The survey methodology included an updated desk study (comprising a Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre 1km data search) and a field survey (using UKHab classification system).
- 1.1.3** The desk study found that: the application site falls within the Zone of Influence (ZoI) for the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) and within two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZs). The site is immediately surrounded by allotments, a school playing field and arable and pasture farmland, with residential development to the north.
- 1.1.4** The field survey identified the following UKHab habitats: developed land; sealed surfaces (u1d); modified grassland (g4) and artificial, unsealed surface (u1f).
- 1.1.5** Section 9 provides recommendations regarding: habitat protection and compensation measures; sensitive lighting measures for bats; precautionary avoidance measures for amphibians, small mammals and reptiles; and ecological enhancements.
- 1.1.6** Section 10 sets out the biodiversity net gain measures. The metric shows an onsite loss but with tree planting in the wider land holding, that a gain of over 10% can be delivered.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

- 2.1.1** John Wenman Ecological Consultancy LLP (JWEC) was commissioned by Tony Grover of BDS Surveyors Limited, on behalf of Shinfield Parish Council, to undertake an updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment at Millworth Recreation Ground, in Shinfield, Berkshire.
- 2.1.2** The updated PEA and BNG assessments were commissioned to support a planning application to be submitted to Wokingham Borough Council seeking consent for a new fitness building and associated landscaping at the recreation ground (see existing and proposed plans in **Appendices 3 & 4**).
- 2.1.3** The updated survey follows a preliminary ecological appraisal and biodiversity net gain assessment of the wider recreation ground completed by John Wenman Ecological Consultancy in 2024 (R2468_PEA_c).

2.2 Site Location and Context

- 2.2.1** Millworth Recreation Ground is located to the south east of the suburban village of Shinfield, south of the town of Reading (OS grid reference: SU 73451 67456).
- 2.2.2** The site is situated within an semi-rural setting, immediately surrounded by allotments, a school playing field and arable and pasture farmland, with residential development to the north.
- 2.2.3** The application site covers approximately 0.16 hectares of land, which includes the existing access track and car parking, a small part of the playing field and club house.

2.3 Objectives

- 2.3.1** The aim of this PEA is to understand the nature of the site and assess its ecological value. The key objectives are to:
- identify any likely ecological constraints associated with the planning proposals;

- establish appropriate mitigation measures in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy (i.e. avoid > minimise > remediate > compensate);
- determine any additional surveys that may be required following on from this preliminary stage; and
- recognise opportunities to deliver ecological enhancements in line with national and local planning policy.

3 LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The following legislation is considered relevant for the purpose of this preliminary ecological appraisal:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act (W&CA) 1981 (as amended)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations ('Habitat') Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

3.1.2 These acts hold relevance to both protected and invasive species and the degree of protection varies depending on faunal/floral group or species. For example, some species of European importance receive full protection within the UK under the Habitat Regulations (e.g. bats), whereas others, may only be afforded protection through national legislation such as the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (e.g. common lizard). For a detailed overview of species-specific legislation, please refer to **Appendix 2**.

3.2 European Protected Species Mitigation Licensing

3.2.1 The Government's statutory nature conservation advisory organisation, Natural England, is responsible for issuing European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences that permit activities that would otherwise lead to an infringement of the Habitat Regulations. An EPS mitigation licence can be issued if the following three tests derived from Regulation 55 have been satisfied:

- (2)(e) – the derogation is for the purposes of '*preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.*'
- (9)(a) – there is '*no satisfactory alternative*' to the derogation; and
- (9)(b) – '*the action authorised will not be detrimental to the*

maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.'

- 3.2.2** Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a statutory duty under Regulation 7(3)(e) of the Habitat Regulations consider and determine whether these three tests are likely to be satisfied by planning proposals affected EPS before granted planning permission. If an EPS mitigation licence is necessary, a licence can be sought once all the necessary planning consents have been granted. Natural England aims to issue a decision on licence applications within 30 working days of submission.

4 PLANNING POLICY

4.1 National Planning Policy

4.1.1 The biodiversity duty imposed through the Environment Act 2021 states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must consider what action they can take to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.

4.1.2 The ODPM Circular 06/2005 provides guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation in England, stating that *'the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat.'*

4.1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), updated in December 2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. Section 15 of the NPPF sets out the approach local authorities should adopt to conserve and enhancing the natural environment when preparing planning policy and when considering planning applications. Paragraph 186 sets out the principles local authorities should apply when determining planning applications as follows:

4.1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2024, sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. Section 15 of the NPPF sets out the approach local authorities should adopt to conserve and enhancing the natural environment when preparing planning policy and when considering planning applications. Paragraph 193 sets out the principles LPAs should apply when determining planning applications, as follows:

'When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest,

and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.'

- 4.1.5** In England, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory from the 12th February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). In practice, planning permission in England is now subject to a condition to secure a minimum 10% net gain for biodiversity, unless the development is a type that is exempt from mandatory BNG requirements. A Biodiversity Gain Plan detailing BNG management and monitoring over a 30 year period will be required as a condition following the grant of planning permission; the development cannot commence until the Plan has been approved in writing by the LPA.

4.2 Local Planning Policy

- 4.2.1** Wokingham Borough's development plans is formed of a number of documents including the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) (January 2010), Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan (February 2014), and supplementary planning documents (SPDs), which set out planning criteria used to determine applications for planning permission in the Borough. The Local Plan Update aims to refine the current Core

Strategy and provide a strategy for the Borough up to March 2036. The following policies relate to biodiversity:

Core Strategy DPD: 'Policy 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.*

Core Strategy DPD: 'Policy CP8 – Thames Basin Heaths

Development which alone or in combination is likely to have a significant effect on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area will be required

to demonstrate that adequate measures to avoid and mitigate any potential adverse effects are delivered.

MDD Local Plan: '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; and*
 - 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.*

5 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

5.1 Desk Study

5.1.1 An updated desktop study was conducted by John Wenman MCIEEM. The study utilised data from the local environmental records centre (TVERC) and online resources to acquire information on the nature of the site and its surroundings and highlight any potential ecological features.

5.1.2 Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) was commissioned to undertake an updated search of pre-existing records of protected and/or notable species and non-statutorily designated wildlife sites held by them within a 1km radius around a central point inside the site. NatureSpace impact risk zone maps were consulted which accurately predict great crested newt (GCN) presence through the analysis of habitat suitability in the landscape.

5.1.3 The DEFRA Data Services Platform and the MAGIC website was used to obtain geospatial datasets for designated sites (i.e., RAMSAR, SPA, SAC, SSSI) and habitat inventories (i.e., Priority Habitat Inventory, Ancient Woodland Inventory) to be analysed in QGIS. The Multi-Agency Geographical Information Centre (MAGIC) website was examined for granted European Protected Species (EPS) licence applications. Furthermore, geospatial datasets and Google Earth satellite imagery were used to determine the extent and connectivity of habitats, how the site is linked to the surrounding landscape and whether the development could have wider scale impacts on biodiversity.

5.1.4 Historical OS maps and Google Earth satellite imagery were consulted to provide insight into historic and current land use; such information helps contextualise the continuity of habitats and determine the importance of existing ecological features.

5.2 Field Survey

5.2.1 An updated site walkover was undertaken on the 3rd June 2026 by John Wenman MCIEEM. The site was surveyed using the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) system (UKHab Ltd. 2023) in accordance with the CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal 2nd Edition (CIEEM 2017). Particular attention was given to evidence of protected and priority

species (NERC Act 2006 Section 41 species of principal importance) and the site's potential to support such species.

- 5.2.2** Photographs of habitats and ecological features were taken during the site walkover and mapped using QGIS software after the survey visit (**Appendices 2 & 3**). Plant species were recorded to aid habitat classification.

6 DESK STUDY FINDINGS

6.1 Designated Sites and Habitats

- 6.1.1** The desk study highlighted: one statutorily designated site of international importance and two statutorily designated sites of national importance within a 5km radius of the application site; and three non-statutorily designated sites of county importance within a 1km radius (see Tables 1a & 1b).

Table 1a. Statutorily designated sites within the vicinity of the site (Source: DEFRA).

Site name	Designation	Description	Distance from nearest site boundary (m)
Thames Basin Heath	Special Protection Area (SPA)	Thames Heath SPA is classified under Article 4.1 of EC Directive 79/409 on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the Birds Directive). The site consists of tracts of heathland, scrub and woodland. The site supports important breeding populations of a number of birds of lowland heathland, especially nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i> and woodlark <i>Lullula arborea</i> , both of which nest on the ground, often at the woodland/heathland edge, and Dartford warbler <i>Sylvia undata</i> , which often nests in gorse <i>Ulex</i> sp.	4.5 km S
Stanford End Mill and River Loddon	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	The site comprises Stanford End Mill meadows, a series of traditionally-managed seasonally waterlogged hay meadows, and a 4 km stretch of the River Loddon, a tributary of the River Thames. The valley is situated on Tertiary deposits of Valley Gravel and River Alluvium overlying London Clay. The site is of interest particularly for nationally important populations of two rare plants: the fritillary <i>Fritillaria meleagris</i> , a native bulb of unimproved damp meadows now mainly confined to scattered localities in southern Britain, and the Loddon pondweed <i>Potamogeton nodosus</i> , a very rare aquatic species for which this length of the River Loddon is the national stronghold.	2.5 km SW
Longmoor Bog	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Longmoor Bog is one of a few examples in Berkshire of a base-poor valley mire, its main features being a well-developed carr of alder <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> , grey willow <i>Salix cinerea</i> , downy birch <i>Betula pubescens</i> and alder buckthorn <i>Frangula alnus</i> and an area of wet heathland dominated by purple moor-grass <i>Molinia caerulea</i> and cross-leaved heath <i>Erica tetralix</i> . The remainder of the site is predominantly secondary mixed woodland.	4.8 km SE

Table 1b. Non-statutory designated sites within the vicinity of the site (Source: TVERC).

Site name	Designation	Criteria	Distance from nearest site boundary (m)
Arborfield Bridge Meadow	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	This is an eyot within the River Loddon with a few manmade channels created between the two. It is predominantly an area of wet woodland with widespread mature hybrid crack-willow and dense common sallow across the site along with some mature weeping willow. Alder is locally abundant and there's frequent sycamore. Many other trees such as ash, elder and pedunculate oak are only occasional throughout the site. The sub-canopy is very dense in places with bramble and snowberry lining some of the routes. Common nettle and Himalayan balsam dominate the ground flora throughout. There's also some Japanese knotweed. Riparian margins contain some fen species such as purple loosestrife, common figwort, great yellow-cress, gypsywort and water mint. It used to be more open with more indicators of fen and marshy grassland. In the past species such as arrowhead, common meadow-rue and yellow loosestrife have also been recorded.	810m NE
Rounds Copse	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	Rounds Copse is a small area of hazel coppice with oak standards. The canopy includes old ash coppice regrowth, small amounts of aspen and, in wetter areas of the wood, crack willow. To the north east, there are areas of hazel coppice lacking standard trees and parts locally dominated by young ash. Some areas of the site are quite acidic with abundant bracken and smaller amounts of foxglove and wood sorrel. Many species associated with ancient woodland have been recorded here including wood melick, wood meadow-grass, primrose, ramsons, wood anemone and bluebell. There are also small amounts of Solomon's seal and wild service-tree.	680m E
Loddon River (part)	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	A seventeen kilometre stretch of the River Loddon running from Swallowfield to its confluence with the River Thames near Wargrave. This section of the river has a diversity of features such as adjacent marsh, islands, inlets, riffles, river cliffs and extensive and varied channel vegetation. This includes the uncommon Loddon Pondweed <i>Potamogeton nodosus</i> . Water vole and a variety of dragonflies and damselflies are also found along its length.	426m E
Loddon Valley South	Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA)	The Loddon Valley from Winnersh to Stratfield Saye and includes the lower reaches of the River Blackwater and Swallowfield Park and the north end of Stratfield Saye Park in Hampshire. The area within Hampshire is indicative only. The extent is largely dictated by the extent of the alluvium and sand and gravels in the valley. Biodiversity: • River: The River Loddon is a Wildlife Heritage Site and the southern end is an SSSI. It supports a range of uncommon aquatic species. • Lowland Meadow: Stratfield Meadows SSSI is the main area of this habitat. • Wet woodland: there are some small patches of wet woodland close to the River and the wetter parts of some of the larger woodlands are also wet woodland.	360m E

		• Parkland: Swallowfield Park is an extensive area of parkland with grassland and lies mainly on the sand and gravel. • Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland: A small number of woodlands are found within the area including Great Wood at Swallowfield. There is an extensive area of recently planted community woodland near Lower Early. • Species: the farmland near Swallowfield is important for farmland birds such as yellowhammer. These are also found along the River Blackwater along with lapwing.	
Moor Copse	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	This site is ancient woodland. The site has been modified by the planting of sweet chestnut throughout the much of the site. Otherwise the canopy is dominated by oak and ash with frequent hazel coppice in the understorey. Birch is abundant in places. A few alder buckthorn are present. The wettest areas are dominated by alder and willow. The western arm has been replanted with conifers. Species associated with long established woodland recorded here include ransoms, pignut, wood melick, wood sorrel, primrose, wood speedwell and yellow archangel.	625m S

6.1.2 Tanner's Copse - approximately 40m from the southern boundary of the site - is a priority habitat (NERC Act 2006 Section 41 habitats of principle importance) ancient and semi-natural deciduous woodland, and an additional priority habitat deciduous woodland approximately 110m to the west - but the application site itself does not feature this priority habitat.

6.2 Protected and Notable Species

6.2.1 The search of the TVERC database revealed a range of protected and/or notable species records dating from the 1990s onwards. Only recent records defined as fewer than ten years old are included in this report (see Tables 2a & 2b).

Table 2a. Recent protected and/or notable species records within the vicinity of the site (Source: TVERC).

Common name	Scientific name	No. of records	Most recent record	Nearest record (m)	Precision (m)	Status
Amphibians						
Great crested newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>	1	2020	1100m		HabReg_2, WCA_5s94b/c NERC S41
Terrestrial Mammals (excl. bats)						
West European Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	4	2019	84m	n/a	NERC S41
Eurasian Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>	26	2022	n/a	1000m	PBA
Invertebrates						
Stag beetle	<i>Lucanus cervus</i>	17	2020	0.1 m	n/a	WACA-Sch5-s9.5a

						NERC S41
Small heath butterfly	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>	2	2016	169 m	n/a	NERC S41
Common darter dragonfly	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	22	2019	24 m	n/a	RL-GB-post2001-DD
Cinnabar moth	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	2	2019	130 m	n/a	NERC S41
Bats						
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	34	2024	259m	100m	Hab_4 HabReg_2 NERC S41 WCA_5s94b/c
Brown long-eared	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	8	2024	235m	100m	Hab_4 HabReg_2 NERC S41 WCA_5s94b/c
Myotis	<i>Myotis</i> sp.	6	2024	259m	100m	Hab_4 HabReg_2 NERC S41 WCA_5s94b/c
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	17	2024	259m	100m	Hab_4 HabReg_2 NERC S41 WCA_5s94b/c
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	9	2024	706m	100m	Hab_4 HabReg_2 NERC S41 WCA_5s94b/c
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	16	2024	259m	100m	Hab_4 HabReg_2 NERC S41 WCA_5s94b/c
Western Barbastelle	<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	3	2017	706m	100m	Hab_4 HabReg_2 NERC S41 WCA_5s94b/c
Higher Plants						
Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	2	2017	59 m	n/a	WACA-Sch8
Reptiles						
Grass snake	<i>Natrix helvetica</i>	1	2023	679 m	n/a	WACA-Sch5-s9.1k/s9.5a NERC S41
Birds						
Black headed gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>	3	2021	N/A	1000m	Bird-Amber
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	10	2021	N/A	1000m	Bird-Amber NERC S41
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	18	2024	360m	100m	NERC-S41 Bird-Amber
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>		2022	910m	100m	Bird-Red
Fieldfare	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	8	2021	n/a	1000m	WACA-Sch1-p1 Bird-Red
Dartford Warbler	<i>Curruca undata</i>	2	2023	940m	100m	BirdsDir-A1 WACA-Sch1-p1
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	22	2021	n/a	1000m	WACA-Sch1-p1 RL-Global-post2001-NT

Redwing	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	7	2021	n/a	1000m	WACA-Sch1-p1 Bird-Amber
Brambling	<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>	2	2017	611 m	1000m	WACA-Sch1-p1
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	14	2023	n/a	1000m	NERC S41 Bird-Red
Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	32	2023	n/a	1000m	NERC S41 Bird-Red
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	14	2020	n/a	1000m	NERC S41 Bird-Red
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	15	2019	1 m	1000m	NERC S41 Bird-Red

Table 2b. Species status key.

Abbreviation	Legislation
Hab_4	Annex IV of the Habitats Directive - Animal and plant species of Community interest (i.e. endangered, vulnerable, rare or endemic in the European Community) in need of strict protection. They are protected from killing, disturbance or the destruction of them or their habitat
HabReg_2	Schedule 2 of Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (European Protected Species animal) - It is an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade in the animals listed in Schedule 2.
NERC S41	Priority Species listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
PBA	Protection of Badgers Act 1992 – Badgers and their setts are protected; making it illegal to kill, injure or take, possess or cruelly ill-treat badgers or to interfere with a badger sett.
RL GB Post2001 NT	The IUCN Red List category - Near Threatened - Taxa where it has been evaluated against the criteria but does not qualify for Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable now, but is close to qualifying for or is likely to qualify for a threatened category.
WCA_5s94b/c	Schedule 5 Section 9 Parts 4b/c of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) - Animals which are protected from intentional disturbance while occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection / Animals which are protected from their access to any structure or place which they use for shelter or protection being obstructed.
Bird_red/amber	Birds of Conservation Concern Red or Amber list – Globally threatened according to IUCN criteria; those whose population or range has declined rapidly in recent years; and those that have declined historically and not shown substantial recovery.

6.2.2 The NatureSpace great crest newt (GCN) impact map identified the site as in the Green Risk Zone, i.e. moderate habitat suitability – great crested newts may be present.

6.2.3 Mapping shows there to be two ponds within a 500m radius of the application site: one 135 m to the northwest, the second pond approximately

150 m to the north east. The ponds are situated across Hyde End Road to the west and to the north of Shinfield St Mary's School.

- 6.2.4** No granted European Protected Species mitigation licences for great crested newts were found on MAGIC within a 2 kilometre radius of the application site.

6.3 Historic and Current Land Use

- 6.3.1** Google Earth Satellite imagery dating back to 2003 shows that there has not been a significant change in the land use within the application site boundary.

7 FIELD SURVEY FINDINGS

7.1 Overview

- 7.1.1** The application site covered 0.16ha of land at Millworth Recreation Ground and included an access track and car parking, a small part of the wider playing field, the club house and small areas of hard standing.
- 7.1.2** The following UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) habitats were observed during the site walkover: buildings (u1b5), developed land; sealed surfaces (u1b); artificial, unvegetated unsealed surface (u1d), and modified grassland (g4). Secondary codes observed included: scattered trees (32), frequently mown (108) natural sports pitch (820), car park (804), 81 Ruderal or ephemeral and commercial building (805).
- 7.1.3** The UKHab primary habitats and secondary codes are described below; associated photographs are displayed in **Appendix 2** and the habitat survey is mapped in **Appendix 3**.

7.2 g4 - Modified grassland

32 Scattered trees/ 81 Ruderal or ephemeral/ 108 Frequently mown/ 820 Natural sports pitch

- 7.2.1** The southern part of the application site comprised part of the recreational sports pitch covering most of the wider recreation grounds. The grassland was closely mown grassland with margins of less frequently cut grassland either side of the access track close to the pavilion (**Photographs 1 & 2**). The sports pitch area was frequently mown and was species poor with perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*) and smooth meadow grass (*Poa pratensis*) the dominant species.
- 7.2.2** The strips of grassland alongside the access track supported a different mixture of species including wall barley (*Hordeum murinum*), perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), nettle (*Urtica*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale* agg.), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), lesser trefoil (*Trifolium dubium*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), (**Photograph 3**).

7.3 u1b – Developed land, sealed surface

Car park; 815 Commercial building

- 7.3.1** There was pavilion building (**Photograph 4**) with associated small area of hard standing. Areas of concrete hard standing were situated to the south of the pavilion (**Photograph 5**).

7.4 u1c - Artificial unvegetated – unsealed surface

- 7.4.1** The access track leading to the pavilion comprised of a gravel surface with occasional ruderal plant species (**Photograph 6**).

7.5 Individual Trees

- 7.5.1** Mature oak (*Quercus robur*) trees were growing on the boundary of the access road at the northern end of the site. The trees lacked visible features suitable for roosting bats (**Photographs 7 – 11**).

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 Overview

- 8.1.1** The planning proposals involve construction of a new building (Fitness Zone) with associated fencing and hard standing on an area of existing sports pitch and hard standing to the south of the pavilion; all other land within the application site will be unaffected (see proposed plans in **Appendix 5**).

8.2 Designated sites

Evaluation of Baseline

- 8.2.1** The desk study revealed that the application site is not statutorily or non-statutorily designated for its wildlife interest and therefore is not currently recognised as being of international, national or county level conservation significance. However, the site does fall within the SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for Stanford End Mill & River Loddon SSSI (2.5km from the site) and Longmoor Bog SSSI (4.8km from the site). The site also falls within the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) Zone of Influence (Zoi), situated just over 4.5km from the site.
- 8.2.2** The desk study data included four locally designated sites of county importance within a 1km radius of the application site: Arborfield Bridge Meadow (LWS), Loddon River (part) (LWS), Rounds Copse (LWS) and Moor Copse (LWS).
- 8.2.3** The land-use between the development site and designated sites is predominantly industrial and residential and fragmented by road infrastructure.

Impact Assessment

- 8.2.4** There will be no increase in residential units on the site so there will be no additional recreational pressure on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. Furthermore, the planning proposals do not fall into any categories specified in the IRZ for the SSSIs and are not of a nature i.e. involve no physical changes to the site, that would directly affect any of the statutorily or non-statutorily designated sites. There is an barrier of existing residential

development and infrastructure between the site and designated sites within the search area, therefore, there will be no direct or indirect adverse effects from the proposals.

8.3 Habitats

Evaluation of Baseline

8.3.1 The application site is predominantly characterised by a building, hard standing and modified grassland – urban habitats of low distinctiveness and negligible ecological value. These habitats are not priority habitats (NERC Act 2006 Section 41 habitats of principle importance).

8.3.2 The mature oak trees within the red line are habitats of medium distinctiveness and of highest ecological value within the application site boundary. The trees lacked visible features suitable for roosting bats, but they form part of a wider network of trees linking to the small woodland copse at the south eastern corner of the playing fields and are likely to be of ecological value at the site level.

Impact Assessment

8.3.3 The proposals will be affecting a small area of species poor modified grassland and hard standing, which are habitats of negligible ecological value and not priority habitats; therefore, the proposals are highly unlikely to have an adverse impact.

8.3.4 The mature trees alongside the access road, which are of the greatest ecological value within the site, are to be retained and will therefore continue to provide habitat suitable for a range of species e.g. for foraging and commuting bats and nesting habitat for birds. Furthermore, there would be scope to enhance and create more diverse grassland communities of low to medium distinctiveness within the wider recreation ground (refer to Section 9).

8.4 Bats

Evaluation of Baseline

- 8.4.1** The site large comprises of a simply constructed pavilion building that lacks features suitable for roosting bats and areas of species poor modified grassland and hard standing and unvegetated ground i.e. habitats of negligible value to roosting or foraging/commuting bats.
- 8.4.2** The mature oak trees bordering the access road at the northern end of the application site lacked any visible bat roost features, but as part of wider network of trees and woodland, they are likely to be used by commuting and foraging bats locally; however, they are unlikely to be of more than site level value to local bat populations.

Impact Assessment

- 8.4.3** The proposals will not have an adverse impact on the availability of roosting, foraging or commuting habitat for bats locally, in particular around the mature oak trees to the northern edge of the site that will be retained.
- 8.4.4** Measures to avoid or limit the impact of artificial lighting from or close to the new building should be adopted to avoid any impacts on bat or other nocturnal species (refer to recommendations in **Section 9**).

8.5 Hazel dormice

Evaluation of Baseline

- 8.5.1** Hazel dormice favour dense habitat connected to woodland that allows animals to move easily through habitats without coming to the ground (English Nature 2006). There were no records of hazel dormice in the search radius of the application site and no suitable on-site habitat – the site has no dense vegetation structure that is required by dormice and the site is therefore unsuitable, and this species will not be found on site.

8.6 Great Crested Newt (and other amphibians)

Evaluation of Baseline

- 8.6.1** The desk study data included one record of great crested newt (GCN) from land just over 1km to the south west, and a search of MAGIC for granted EPS licence applications returned none within a 2km radius and no Natural England Class Licence returns for great crested newts. The site lacks standing water and is therefore not suitable for breeding amphibians. The habitat on site comprised mostly of built development and heavily managed grassland, terrestrial habitats of low suitability for use by GCN. The slightly taller areas of grassland and land beneath mature trees at the site's northern end may provide some limited cover and feeding opportunities for amphibians but is low suitability.

Impact Assessment

- 8.6.2** Two ponds that could potentially support breeding GCN were identified within a 500m radius of the application site. The ponds are situated within residential areas, separated from the application site by a busy road and further built development. Therefore, it is considered highly unlikely that they will be found on site and highly unlikely that individuals would be harmed. Also, with reference to the Natural England Rapid Risk Assessment Tool, the loss of a c. 252m² of land more than 100m from potential breeding ponds, would have no impact on local populations. There is a low risk that individual amphibians could be found on site and therefore simple precautions should be taken during construction (refer to recommendations in **Section 9**).

8.7 Reptiles

Evaluation of Baseline

- 8.7.1** The TVERC database has records of grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) within the search area, with the closest record being 735m away from site. The site is very poor habitat for reptiles comprising built development, or short grassland, and therefore reptiles are unlikely to be found on site.
- 8.7.2** The adjacent allotments to the north west has potential to support reptiles, with the chain link dividing fence allowing free access onto site, there is a

low likelihood that they could occasionally use the slightly taller grassland vegetation on the site's north western margin.

Impact Assessment

- 8.7.3** There is a low risk that reptiles are using the small area of grassland on the sites north western boundary opportunistically, however, the habitats to be directly affected by the proposals is unlikely to directly impact individual animals, particularly if non-licensed avoidance measures are adopted during construction (refer to recommendations in **Section 9**).

8.8 Nesting birds

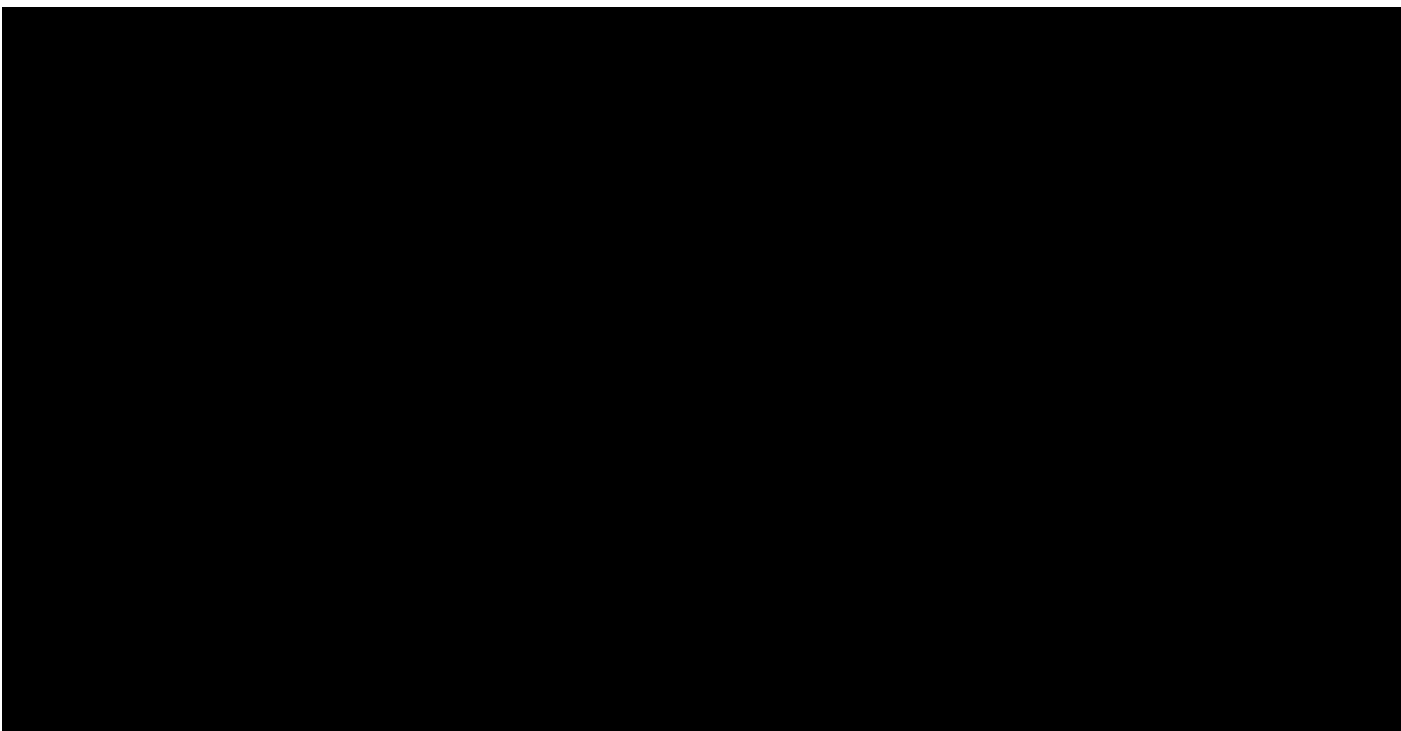
Evaluation of Baseline

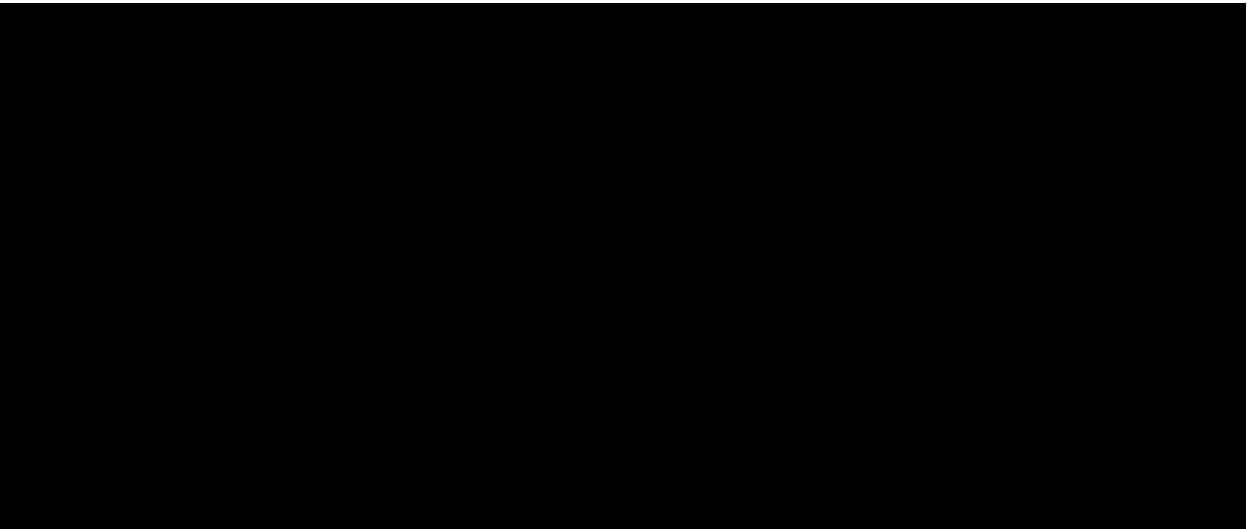
- 8.8.1** The mature trees towards the northern end of the site are likely to provide some limited nesting and foraging opportunities for common and widespread bird species; the remainder of the site lacks habitat suitable for nesting birds and is of very low suitability for birds. It is unlikely that the application site supports an assemblage of birds of conservation importance.

Impact Assessment

- 8.8.2** The proposals will be retaining the mature trees suitable for nesting birds and therefore no impact on nesting birds or habitat suitable for feeding birds is predicted.

8.9 Badgers (and other mammals)





8.10 Invertebrates

Evaluation of Baseline

- 8.10.1** The habitats within the site boundary are mostly built development and species poor grassland considered unlikely to support invertebrate assemblages of conservation importance. The mature oak trees at the site's northern end are of higher value to invertebrates and therefore likely to support the greatest abundance and diversity of invertebrates, but are unlikely to be of importance beyond the scale of the site.

Impact Assessment

- 8.10.2** The proposals will be affecting habitats of negligible value to invertebrates and are therefore highly unlikely to have an adverse impact.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Habitats

Trees

9.1.1 The retained trees towards the northern boundary of the site are unlikely to be affected by the work, but some simple avoidance measures should be adopted. The following measures are recommended:

- Prohibition of construction activities, material storage, use of vehicles, fires etc. within Root Protection Areas (RPAs) to prevent damage to tree roots and compaction of the soil; and
- Compliance with up-to-date pollution prevention guidelines and environmental protection legislation to mitigate any impacts of ground disturbance, surface water flow, dust and chemicals.

Grassland

9.1.2 To enhance the recreation grounds overall value for biodiversity in accordance with the targets set within the Berkshire Nature Recovery Strategy, there is scope to enhance areas of grassland to increase species and structural diversity. Selected areas of grassland outside of the sports pitches e.g. on the south western and south eastern boundaries, could be managed to provide a mosaic of habitats through low intensity management e.g. 2-3 cuts per year with the cuttings being removed and composted offsite to reduce nutrient levels. Consideration could be given to seeding grasslands with native seed mixes to increase the species diversity.

9.2 Bats

9.2.1 During construction, external lighting should be kept to a minimum as it can have an adverse impact on commuting and foraging bats (BCT & ILP 2023) and if security lighting is required, this should be controlled by passive infra-red motion sensors with no light spillage onto trees bordering the site.

9.2.2 In the long-term, a sensitive lighting scheme should be designed as part of the scheme. Lighting should be avoided, or if essential, the lighting period should be restricted so that lighting operates only when necessary. The light fittings should be directional so that light is directed downwards and shielded

with reflector hoods to prevent upward and outwards light spill that may illuminate retained trees and vegetation. The lighting design should make use of lamps of the lowest possible intensity and use warm white LED lamps i.e. 2700k.

9.3 Amphibians, Small Mammals and Reptiles

9.3.1 To avoid the very small risk of contravening legislation and harming individual amphibians, small mammals e.g. hedgehogs or reptiles during the works, the following precautionary avoidance measures should be adopted during the construction phase:

- The grassland within the construction area should be kept short prior to the commencement of site work to minimise the likelihood of animals being present during the works. Any vegetation in the development area should be kept closely mown during the course of the construction work;
- During construction, any open excavations and trenches should be backfilled before nightfall or alternatively, escape ramps should be installed to allow individual slow worms (and other small animals) to escape if they become trapped;
- Any building materials or materials excavated during the development that need to be stored on site prior to use/disposal should be positioned on hard standing and raised off the ground on pallets or in skips to avoid them providing temporary resting places or hibernation sites for individual slow worms; and
- In the unlikely event that amphibians, mammals or reptiles are encountered during the construction phase, the works will stop immediately and an ecologist will be called onto site to attend to the animal and to advise on the next steps.

9.4 Ecological Enhancement

9.4.1 The development proposals could provide opportunities for the enhancement of the site's biodiversity value over and above delivering a net gain as set in Section 10 below. The inclusion of the following recommendations would be of ecological benefit and be in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

- The aim of the landscaping across the site should be to increase the structural diversity and species diversity of the site. New planting should make use of native plant species of local provenance.
- The provision of bird nest boxes at the eaves on the north eastern side of the new building for Priority Species such as the house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*).
- The provision of integral bat boxes in the south western elevation of the new building and erecting tree mounted bat boxes.
- If fencing is replaced along the boundaries it should be designed to allow the free movement of wildlife, such as hedgehogs by using open fencing e.g. post and rail or

10 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

10.1 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment Approach

10.1.1 This Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment uses the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (July 2025) to calculate the losses and gains in biodiversity unit value resulting from the proposed redevelopment. The metric tool has been used to guide the proposed site layout and landscaping to deliver an overall net gain for the project.

10.1.2 The biodiversity metric rules must be followed for a valid biodiversity net gain and are as follows:

***Rule 1:** The trading rules of this biodiversity metric must be followed.*

***Rule 2:** Biodiversity unit outputs, for each type of unit, must not be summed, traded, or converted between types. The requirement to deliver at least a 10% net gain applies to each type of unit.*

***Rule 3:** To accurately apply the biodiversity metric formula, you must use the statutory biodiversity metric calculation tool or small sites biodiversity metric tool (SSM) for small sites.*

The tools remove the need for a user to manually calculate the change in biodiversity value.

The tool will summarise the results of the calculation and inform a user whether the biodiversity net gain objective has been met.

***Rule 4:** In exceptional ecological circumstances, deviation from this biodiversity metric methodology may be permitted by the relevant planning authority.*

10.1.3 The biodiversity metric principles inform the use of the biodiversity metric tool and are as follows:

***Principle 1** - The metric assessment should be completed by a competent person.*

***Principle 2** - The use of this biodiversity metric does not override existing biodiversity protections, statutory obligations, policy requirements, ecological mitigation hierarchy or any other requirements. This includes consenting or licensing processes, for example woodlands.*

Principle 3 - *This biodiversity metric should be used in accordance with established good practice guidance and professional codes.*

Principle 4 - *This biodiversity metric is not a complex or comprehensive ecological model and is not a substitute for expert ecological advice.*

Principle 5 - *Biodiversity units are a proxy for biodiversity and should be treated as relative values.*

Principle 6 - *This biodiversity metric is designed to inform decisions in conjunction with locally relevant evidence, expert input, or guidance.*

Principle 7 - *Habitat interventions need to be realistic and deliverable within a relevant project timeframe.*

Principle 8 - *Created and enhanced habitats should be, where practical and reasonable, local to any impact and deliver strategically important outcomes for nature conservation.*

Principle 9 - *This biodiversity metric does not enforce a minimum habitat size ratio for compensation of losses. Proposals should aim to:*

- *maintain habitat extent - supporting more, bigger, better and more joined up ecological networks.*
- *ensure that proposed or retained habitat parcels are of sufficient size for ecological function.*

10.2 Strategic Significance

10.2.1 The Berkshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) shows that sites falls within land where there is Baseline Biodiversity (the mature trees to the northern edge of the site) and Opportunities for Biodiversity specifically: PM03 (Restore Grassland), PM06 (Create Wildflower Grassland) and PM11 (Create Wet Woodland). As per the guidance (DEFRA 2025), the baseline habitats are classified as 'low' distinctiveness with the proposed habitats that do not deliver these targets classified as 'low' also.

10.3 Baseline Habitats

10.3.1 The UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) habitats observed during the site walkover and their assigned condition are listed in **Table 1**; a plan of the baseline UK Habitat Classification habitats for the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation (Metric available in a separate spreadsheet) is presented in **Figure 1 below** and the completed habitat condition assessment sheets are in a separate document '*Millworth Recreation Ground – Condition Assessment Sheets (R1658_BNG_b)*'.

Table 1. Baseline on-site habitats for the Biodiversity Metric calculation.

Habitat Type (UKHab code)	Condition	Distinctiveness	Strategic Significance	Area (ha)
Modified grassland (g3c)	Poor	Low	Low	0.0621
Developed land sealed surface (u1b)	N/A	Very Low	Low	0.02
Artificial, unvegetated – unsealed surface (u1c)	N/A	Very Low	Low	0.0811
Individual trees	Moderate	Medium	Low	0.1018 (1 large tree & 4 medium trees)
Total area (excluding individual trees)				0.16

Figure 1 – Baseline Habitat Plan



10.4 Proposed Habitats

- 10.4.1** The proposed habitats to be created onsite and offsite, and their proposed conditions, are set out in **Tables 2 and 3** and in the proposed habitat plan in **Figure 2** below and descriptions of the proposed habitats to be created through planting or enhancement as follows:

Table 2. Proposed on-site habitats for the Biodiversity Metric calculation.

Habitat Type (UKHab code)	Delivery	Condition	Distinctiveness	Strategic Significance	Area (ha)
Modified grassland (g3c)	Retention & creation	Poor	Low	Low	0.0621
Developed land sealed surface (u1b)	Retention & creation	N/A	Very Low	Low	0.0586
Artificial, unvegetated surface (u1c)	Creation	Very Low	Low	Low	0.0811
Individual trees	Retention	Moderate	Medium	Low	0.1018 (1 large tree & 4 medium trees)
Total area (excluding individual trees)					0.16

Table 3. Proposed off-site habitats for the Biodiversity Metric calculation.

Habitat Type (UKHab code)	Delivery	Condition	Distinctiveness	Strategic Significance	Area (ha)
Modified grassland (g3c)	Retention	Poor	Low	Low	0.659
Individual trees	Creation	Moderate	Medium	Low	0.0651 (16 small trees)
Total area (excluding individual trees)					1

Individual trees

- 10.4.2** Sixteen(16) individual native trees will be planted within the wider recreation ground outside of the red line i.e. in areas of existing modified grassland towards the southern end of the playing field i.e. offsite on site. These will comprise a range of smaller native trees such as field maple and rowan that will be planted close the south western and south eastern boundaries to create a natural buffer to the existing tree lines and woodland.
- 10.4.3** The newly planted trees will require minimal management and maintenance beyond the initial planting and care. Each tree will be mulched to suppress competition from weeds using locally sourced wood chips (the use of compost or plastic mulch should be avoided). The trees will be given an

initial soak with water and should only be watered again in a period of drought if necessary.

10.4.4 Stakes and ties will be used to support the newly planted trees and will be inspected monthly and adjusted/replaced as necessary; the use of plastic spirals and tree guards will be avoided. The trees will be firmed in after strong winds or heavy frosts as necessary. Tree and shrub health will be assessed monthly in the first year and replacement trees will be planted if any fail.

10.4.5 The trees will be small and in moderate condition within the time to target condition.

Figure 2 - Proposed Onsite Habitat Plan



10.5 Biodiversity Net Gain Result

10.5.1 The Biodiversity Metric calculation tool demonstrates that a minimum 10% on-site net gain for biodiversity can be achieved as part of the proposals. A total on-site net change of -10.04%% in habitat will be achieved, but with offsite habitat creation within the wider recreation ground, a gain of +11.17% in habitats can be achieved as shown in the '*Headline Results*' section taken from the Metric spreadsheet – as seen in the metric extract below.

Land at Millworth Recreation Ground

Return to results menu

Headline Results

Scroll down for final results ▲

On-site baseline

Area habitat units0.94

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

On-site post-intervention

(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units0.84

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

On-site net change

(units & percentage)

Area habitat units-0.09-10.04%

Hedgerow units0.000.00%

Watercourse units0.000.00%

On-site net gain is less than target set ▲

Off-site baseline

Area habitat units2.00

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

Off-site post-intervention

(Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units2.20

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

Off-site net change

(units & percentage)

Area habitat units0.209.95%

Hedgerow units0.000.00%

Watercourse units0.000.00%

Combined net unit change

(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units0.10

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

Spatial risk multiplier (SRM) deductions

Area habitat units0.00

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

FINAL RESULTS

Total net unit change

(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units0.10

Hedgerow units0.00

Watercourse units0.00

Total net % change

(Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)

Area habitat units11.17%

Hedgerow units0.00%

Watercourse units0.00%

Trading rules satisfied?

Yes ✓

Unit Type

Target

Baseline Units

Units Required

Unit Deficit

Area habitat units

10.00%

0.94

1.03

0.00

Hedgerow units

10.00%

0.00

0.00

0.00

Watercourse units

10.00%

0.00

0.00

0.00

No additional area habitat units required to meet target ✓

No additional hedgerow units required to meet target ✓

No additional watercourse units required to meet target ✓

10.6 BNG Delivery

10.6.1 The long term delivery of offsite units i.e. for 30 years, would need to be agreed by the local authority either by appropriate planning condition or legal agreement as deemed appropriate by the authority. If offsite units are not delivered when the Biodiversity Gain Plan is completed post planning, a

deficit of 0.19 habitat units would need to be purchased from an offsite habitat bank.

11 REFERENCES

Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals (2023). *Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and artificial lighting at night*. ILP, Rugby.

Bright, P., Morris, P. & Mitchell-Jones T. (2006). *The dormouse conservation handbook – second edition*. English Nature.

CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

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

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

UKHab Ltd. (2023). *The UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 2.0* at <http://www.ukhab.org/>

APPENDIX 1 – LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND

Amphibians

The seven native species of amphibian receive protection under the W&AC 1981 (as amended). The four widespread and common amphibians (common frog, toad, smooth newt and palmate newt) receive only limited protection – making their sale illegal.

The great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) receives full protection under the W&CA 1981 (as amended) and under the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended). The combined legislation makes it illegal to:

- intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take a great crested newt;
- possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a great crested newt;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a great crested newt; and
- intentionally or recklessly disturb great crested newts; in particular, any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migrating animals, to hibernate or migrate.

Great crested newts (*T. cristatus*) and common toads (*Bufo bufo*) are species of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England ('UKBAP Priority Species') under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Badgers

Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. The Act makes activities such as development that would harm or disturb badgers or damage, obstruct or destroy their setts illegal. If badgers are to be affected by the proposed

development, activities can be undertaken only under a licence issued by Natural England.

Bats

All bat species in Britain are fully protected by the W&CA 1981 (as amended) and by the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended). In summary, the combined legislation makes it an offence to:

- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place or intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter by a bat;
- deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; in particular, any disturbance which is likely to impair the ability of bats to survive, breed or reproduce or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migrating bats, to hibernate or migrate; or to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species; and
- deliberately kill, injure or take any bat.

Birds

All wild birds are protected under the W&CA 1981 (as amended). The Act makes it an offence to kill, injure or take a wild bird or to damage or destroy the nest of a wild bird whilst in use or being built. Species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act, such as barn owls and kingfishers, are afforded additional protection against disturbance while nesting.

Hazel dormice

Hazel dormice receive full protection under the W&CA 1981 (as amended) and under the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended). These make it illegal to:

- intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take a dormouse;
- possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a dormouse;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place or intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter by a dormouse; and
- intentionally or recklessly disturb dormice; in particular, any disturbance which is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce or nurture their young; or in the case of hibernating or migrating animals, to

hibernate or migrate.

Invasive non-native plants

The W&CA 1981 (as amended) provides the primary controls on the release of non-native species into the wild in Great Britain. It is an offence under Section 14(2) of the Act to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild' any plant listed in Schedule 9, Part II. The species listed in the Act include Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*).

Otters

Otters are fully protected by the W&CA 1981 (as amended) and by the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended). In summary, the combined legislation makes it an offence to:

- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place or intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter by an otter;
- deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb otters; in particular, any disturbance which is likely to impair the ability of otters to survive, breed or reproduce or nurture their young; or to significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species; and
- deliberately kill, injure or take any otter.

Reptiles

The four widespread reptiles most likely to be encountered (adder, grass snake, slow worm and common lizard) are protected under the W&CA 1981 (as amended). The Act makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure, possess or sell any of the species.

The aforementioned species are all listed as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England ('*UKBAP Priority Species*') under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Water voles

Since April 2008, water voles have received full protection under Section 9 in Schedule 5 of the W&CA 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take water voles or to possess or control live or dead water

voles or derivatives. It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection or intentionally or recklessly disturb water voles whilst occupying a structure or place used for that purpose.

The water vole is listed as being of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England (*'UKBAP Priority Species'*) under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Wild mammals

Under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 it is an offence to intentionally inflict unnecessary suffering, as specified by the Act, on any wild mammal.

APPENDIX 2 - SITE PHOTOGRAPHS



1. The modified grassland of the playing field within the application site



2. The species poor modified grassland of the playing field.



3. The strip of modified grassland alongside the access track.



4. The pavilion building and associated hard standing.



5. The hard standing to the south of the pavilion.



6. The gravel access road to the north of the pavilion building.



7. Oak tree (BNG reference 1)



8. Oak tree (BNG reference 2)



9. Oak tree (BNG reference 3)



10. Oak tree (BNG reference 4)



11. Oak tree (BNG reference 5)

APPENDIX 3 – EXISTING SITE PLAN



APPENDIX 4 – PROPOSED SITE PLAN

