



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

The Court Yard, Ickleford, Hertfordshire

Report Reference: BG26.234

September 2026



For every environment

Liability

Brindle & Green has prepared this report for the sole use of:

Clear Architects

The report is in accordance with the agreement under which our services were performed. No warranty, express or implied, is made as to the advice in this report or any other service provided by us. This report may not be relied upon by any other party except the person, company, agent or any third party for whom the report is intended without the prior written permission of Brindle & Green.

The content of this report is, at least in part, based upon information provided by others and on the assumption that all relevant information has been provided by those parties from whom it has been requested. Information obtained from any third party has not been independently verified by Brindle & Green unless otherwise stated in the report.

Copyright

© This report is the copyright of Brindle & Green. Unauthorised reproduction or usage by any person is prohibited.

www.brindlegreen.co.uk

Head Office

Brindle & Green Limited
The Old Estate Office, Silverhill Farm, Radbourne, Derby, DE6 4LY

Tel: 0800 222 9105

Sheffield Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Horizon House
Whiting Street
Sheffield S8 9QR

Barnsley Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Sergeants House
36 Edderthorpe Lane
Barnsley S73 9AT

London Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Nutter Lane
Wanstead
London E11 2HZ

Kent Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Sandy Lane
Sevenoaks
Kent TN13 3TP

Document Control

Report	Name	Date
Prepared by	Megan Derrick Graduate Ecologist	20/07/2026
1 st Check by	Alicja Kondula Senior Ecologist	22/07/2026
Issued by (PDF)	Alicja Kondula Senior Ecologist	14/09/2026
REV1 Issued by	N/A	N/A

Revision Details

Revision	Approved	Revision Details
N/A	N/A	N/A

Project Details

Project carried out by:

Brindle and Green

The Old Estate Office
Silverhill Farm
Radbourne
Derby.
DE6 4LY
Head Office: 01332 825771
Email: info@brindlegreen.co.uk
Website: www.brindlegreen.co.uk

Project carried out for:

Clear Architects

Ickleford Bury
Old Hale Way
Hitchin
SG5 3UW

Project site:

The Court Yard

1 Ickleford Bury
Hitchin
Hertfordshire
SG5 3UW

Grid reference: TL 18408 31300
W3W: [alarming.bangle.introduce](https://www.what3words.com/alarming_bangle_introduce)

Contents

Document Control	3
Revision Details	3
Summary.....	8
2 Introduction.....	10
2.2 Site Description.....	10
2.3 Proposed Development	11
2.4 Zone of Influence.....	11
3 Methodology	12
3.1 Desk Study.....	12
3.2 Surveyors	12
3.3 Survey Conditions	12
3.4 UK Habitat Classification Survey	13
3.5 Site Evaluation	14
3.6 Limitations	15
3.7 Report Lifespan.....	16
4 Results	17
4.1 Desk Study.....	17
4.2 Habitats.....	18
4.3 Fauna	22
5 Evaluation	28
5.1 Development Proposals	28
5.2 Desk Study Impacts.....	28
5.3 Habitats.....	28

5.4	Breeding Birds.....	28
5.5	Bats.....	29
		
5.7	Mammal Species of Principal Importance.....	30
6	Recommendations.....	31
6.2	Habitats.....	31
6.3	Breeding Birds.....	31
6.4	Foraging and Commuting Bats.....	32
6.5	Badgers.....	33
6.6	Mammal Species of Principal Importance.....	34
Appendix 1 – UK Habitat Classification Plan.....		35
Appendix 2 - UKHab Target Notes and Species List		36
Appendix 3 – General References		38
Appendix 4 – Legislation, Policy and Guidance		40
Appendix 5 – Legislation, Guidance and Methodology		41
Appendix 6 – Proposed Plans.....		47
Appendix 7 – MAGIC data		48
Appendix 8 – Potential Roost Suitability Photos.....		51

Figures

Figure 1: OSM Standard (2026) of the project site and surrounding area. Red line boundary depicts application site.	11
Figure 2: View of B1 taken from the northern elevation.....	19
Figure 3: View of hard standing taken from the southern elevation.....	20
Figure 4: View of bare ground along the northern boundary.	21
Figure 5: MAGIC Map showing pond locations within a 250-metre radius of the site.	25
Figure 6: View of part of River Oughton, located c. 40 m to the north of the site	26
Figure 7: Location of statutory sites within 1km of the site boundary (MAGIC, 2026)	48
Figure 8: Location of priority habitats within 1km of the site boundary (MAGIC, 2026)	50
Figure 9: Plan showing Potential Roost Suitability	56

Tables

Table 1: Ecological recommendations	9
Table 2: Ecological data resources	12
Table 3: The UKHab System five-level primary habitat hierarchy.....	13
Table 4: Definitions of each of the six evaluation brackets, indicating the importance of each habitat type and an example of their possible habitat status. (Table constructed following The CIEEM EcIA Guidelines, Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal (2024) pages 16 -17)	15
Table 5: Summary of designated sites within a 1km radius of the application site.....	17
Table 6: Summary of the priority habitats.....	18
Table 7: UKHab Habitat Types found on site and inclusion within UK BAP/HPI habitats	19
Table 8: Summary of bat roost suitability and evidence found within each of the structures on site (supporting Figures within Appendix 8)	22
Table 9: UKHab target notes.....	36
Table 10: Plant Species List with DAFOR Scale	37
Table 11: Guideline for assessing the suitability of a structure to support roosting habitat amended from Collins, J (2023)	43
Table 12: Guideline for assessing the suitability of a tree to support roosting habitat amended from Collins, J (2023)	44
Table 13: Potential suitability of foraging and commuting habitat within an application boundary. Features should be assessed following this guide and professional judgement. Adapted from Collins, J (2023)....	45
Table 14: Photographs showing Potential Roost Suitability.....	51

Summary

- 1.1.1 Brindle & Green Ltd were commissioned by Clear Architects to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) incorporating a UK Habitat (UKHab) Classification Survey and Protected Species Assessment at The Court Yard, Ickleford, Hertfordshire. This report summarises the potential ecological constraints to the full planning application for site clearance to facilitate the development of a dwelling along with associated infrastructure and landscaping. Design plans are provided within Appendix 6 of this report. The survey was carried out on the 1st of July 2026.
- 1.1.2 The red line boundary is approximately 0.04 ha in extent and comprised an area of developed land; sealed surface, double garage (B1) with a small area of bare ground. The eastern and southern boundaries were bordered by wall of varying composition. The site was evaluated to support 'Site' value on a 'Local' scale.
- 1.1.3 The habitats described within this report have the potential to support protected and/or notable species. As such, this report outlines important measures to protect species during site clearance, and recommendations to improve the biodiversity status of the site post development.
- 1.1.4 A full description of the recommendations can be found within Chapter 5.

1.1.5 Table 1 is a summary of the ecological issues recommended for further consideration as a result of our initial investigations.

Table 1: Ecological recommendations

Ecological Consideration	Recommendations (e.g. further survey, mitigation)	Timing
Breeding Birds	No further action required unless Building 1 is demolished. Should that be the case, works should be sympathetic to this group of species, with building demolition undertaken following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) outlined in Chapter 5.	During site clearance (Optimal timing between October – February outside of breeding bird season).
Foraging and Commuting Bats	If lighting is to exceed that of the current levels onsite, then a sensitive lighting scheme will be required to ensure the works are sympathetic to this group of species, detailed in Chapter 5.	During and post construction.
Mammal Species of Principal Importance	RAMs are recommended during site clearance and construction, detailed in Chapter 5.	During development.

2 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The purpose of this assessment was to provide a PEA of the site incorporating a UKHab Survey and protected species assessment to establish the likelihood of the site supporting protected species. The survey provides detail on the need for any additional, more detailed protected species surveys, likely mitigation, and any opportunities for enhancement.
- 2.1.2 The legislation relevant to protected species within the United Kingdom is summarised within Appendix 4.
- 2.1.3 Results and recommendations contained within this report have been prepared by an experienced ecologist and are therefore the view of Brindle & Green Limited. The survey is based on information provided by our client, the development proposals, results of the desk study and our survey of the site. This report pertains to this information only.

2.2 Site Description

- 2.2.1 The application site can be found at TL 18408 31300, positioned on the southern outskirts of Ickleford, a town to the north of Hitchin, Hertfordshire. The site was dominated by developed land with a double garage (B1) and a small area of bare ground. The eastern and southern boundaries were bordered by wall of varying composition. River Oughton was located approximately 40 m north of the site boundary.
- 2.2.2 The wider landscape was comprised of a mosaic of habitats, including residential development associated with Ickleford to the north and development associated with Hitchin to the south. Additionally, the landscape contained frequent areas of open grassland fields with waterbodies, woodland, hedgerows, tree lines and River Oughton. The site was well connected to the surrounding landscape via hedgerows, river and woodland edges.
- 2.2.3 However, barriers to terrestrial species dispersal are present within the locality, namely an active railway positioned approximately 370 m to east, A600 positioned approximately 630m to the west and the residential development positioned to the north and south.

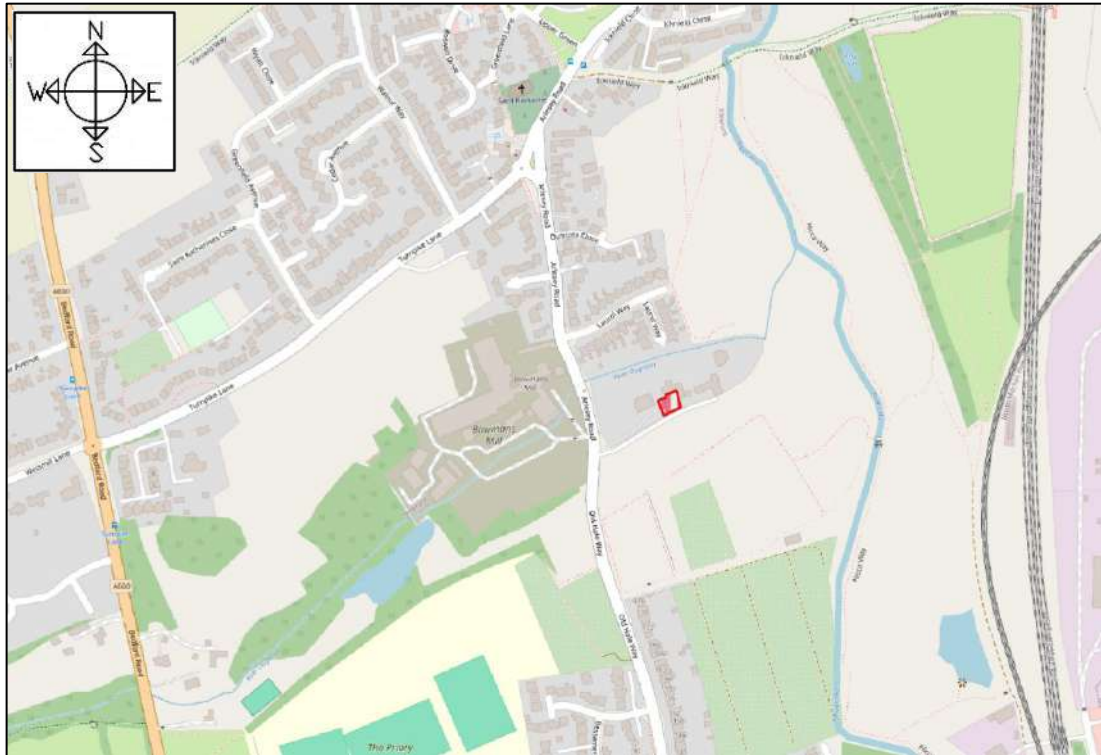


Figure 1: OSM Standard (2026) of the project site and surrounding area. Red line boundary depicts application site.

2.3 Proposed Development

- 2.3.1 The site is the subject of a full application seeking to facilitate the development of a dwelling with associated infrastructure and landscaping. It is understood that the proposals will be restricted to the already developed land area with removal of the area of bare ground. The double garage (B1) is set to be retained. Detailed design proposals are presented within Appendix 6 of this report.

2.4 Zone of Influence

- 2.4.1 The zone of influence describes the geographic extent of potential impacts of a proposed development. The zone of influence was considered to be 250 m from the application boundary for amphibians and reptiles, 150 m for otter (*Lutra lutra*), water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and white-clawed crayfish (WCC) (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), 30 m for terrestrial mammals such as [REDACTED] and within the area of impact for breeding birds and bats.

3 Methodology

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1 Table 2 lists organisations and/or resources used as part of the desk study process. Data regarding any known statutory or non-statutory sites, in addition to any records for protected species, were requested from the following sources:

Table 2: Ecological data resources

Consultant	Requested data	Search radius	Date requested
Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)	International and National Statutory Designated Sites	1 - 15km	09/07/2026
	Protected and Notable Species (including Granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSL)	1km	

- 3.1.2 A data search from the local biological record centre has not been requested in this instance. Due to the small scale of the proposed development, and habitat types recorded on site, a significant impact on species/habitats within the local area is not expected. It is therefore unlikely that additional biological data would impact the assessment of ecological impacts as a result of the proposed development.

3.2 Surveyors

- 3.2.1 The survey was carried out by Alicja Kordula MSc BSc (Hons), Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence, Senior Ecologist.
- 3.2.2 The survey was overseen by Victoria Halford-Meyer BSc (Hons), MCIEEM, Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence (2025-84739-SCI-CL08), Natural England Bat Licence Class 2 (2025-84983-SCI-CL18), Head of Ecology (Maternity Cover).

3.3 Survey Conditions

- 3.3.1 The survey was undertaken on the 1st of July 2026. The outside temperature was recorded as 20°C, with dry conditions, wind B1 and cloud cover of 7/8 okta.

3.4 UK Habitat Classification Survey

- 3.4.1 A UK Habitat Classification survey was undertaken where habitats were categorised and mapped (Appendix 1) following the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.01 (UK Hab Ltd., 2023) to establish the presence and distribution of habitat types within the site and potential ecological constraints to development
- 3.4.2 The UKHab System is comprised of a five-level Primary Habitat Hierarchy, with each successive level providing increasingly detailed descriptions of habitat parcels present onsite. The system encompasses all habitat types found in the UK, irrespective of scale or geographic range, including UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats and Habitats Directive Annex I habitats.

Table 3: The UKHab System five-level primary habitat hierarchy

Level	Description
Level 1	Description of each major ecosystem present; Terrestrial, Freshwater, and Marine.
Level 2	Includes nine ecosystem types; grassland, woodland and forest, heathland and shrub, wetland, cropland, urban, sparsely vegetated land, rivers and lakes, and marine inlets and transitional waters.
Level 3	Describes the 20 broad habitat types of the nine ecosystems outlined in Level 2. Examples include acid grassland, calcareous grassland, neutral grassland, modified grassland, broadleaved and mixed woodland, hedgerows, and dense scrub.
Level 4	Expands the 20 broad habitat types of Level 3 into 85 detailed habitat types, including lowland meadows, other neutral grassland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, and other woodland; mixed. This level also allows the separation of 46 UK BAP Priority habitats from other habitats of lower ecological significance.
Level 5	Provides a further detailed expansion to Level 4 habitat types. 119 habitats are described within this level including 72 habitats as listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive.

- 3.4.3 Primary habitat types are accompanied by a list of Secondary Codes, which are further categorised into 'Essential' and 'Additional' codes. Each recorded habitat parcel is assigned a single Primary Habitat Code from Levels 2-4 and includes all Essential Secondary Code features relating to the habitat parcel. Additional Secondary Codes are also applied where relevant. No more than six Secondary Codes are recommended per parcel (UKHabs Ltd. 2023) and a list of Secondary Code definitions relevant to the site have been provided within Appendix 1. Where additional details were required, Target Notes have also been provided (Appendix 2). A plant

species list (Appendix 3) summarising all plants identified on site was produced during the survey and all scientific nomenclature was produced according to Stace (2010).

- 3.4.4 This survey was extended to note the potential for habitats on site to support protected and/or notable species and for evidence of any such species. The habitats on site were assessed for their suitability to support protected species in relation to the habitat type found at the site. Any incidental sightings or field signs were noted at the time of survey. Where evidence of, or the confirmed presence of a protected species was identified, further species-specific surveys may be recommended to ensure that the presence or otherwise of a legally protected species is fully considered prior to the determination of any planning approval or to guide an EPSL.
- 3.4.5 Legislation, guidance and methodology for species relevant to this site are presented in full within Appendices 4 and 5 of this report.

3.5 Site Evaluation

- 3.5.1 Following the ecological appraisal, the site was classified into one of six groups (Table 4), to indicate whether the site is considered to hold ecological value on a local, national or international scale. This evaluation is intended as a guide and only targeted survey work can establish the significance of protected species populations onsite.

Table 4: Definitions of each of the six evaluation brackets, indicating the importance of each habitat type and an example of their possible habitat status. (Table constructed following The CIEEM EcIA Guidelines, Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal (2024) pages 16 -17)

Evaluation Value	Example of habitat or species
International	An internationally designated site or candidate site, including habitat or species included within Special Protection Areas (SPA)/Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar Sites, listed under Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive.
National	Sites designated at UK level, e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), supporting species considered nationally threatened or rare. A regularly occurring regionally or county significant population/number of any nationally important species A feature identified as of critical importance within Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).
Regional	Key habitat type included within BAP. A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a regionally important species.
County	Designated sites, such as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) or viable habitat/species populations of value at a county level (Local BAP (LBAP)).
District	District level designated sites, such as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) or habitats/species populations of value at a district (which have features qualifying for LWS status). Sites/features that are scarce within the district or which appreciably enrich the district habitat resource.
Local/Site	Habitats or species populations of value in a local (i.e. within ~ 5km of the site) context. Habitats of poor to moderate biological diversity e.g. established conifer plantations, species poor hedgerows and un-intensively managed grassland which supports species which are common to the local area and whose loss can be easily mitigated.

3.6 Limitations

- 3.6.1 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. The protected and notable species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of these species occurring on site, based upon the suitability of the habitats, known distribution of the species in the local area and any direct evidence on site. It should not be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group.
- 3.6.2 The desk study data is third party controlled data, purchased for the purposes of this report only. Brindle & Green Ltd. cannot vouch for its accuracy and cannot be held liable for any error(s) in these data.

- 3.6.3 Although a local record data search was not conducted on the site, it was considered that due to the size and habitats recorded onsite, a significant impact on habitats/species within the local area is not expected. It is therefore unlikely that additional biological data would impact the assessment of ecological impacts as a result of the proposed development.

3.7 Report Lifespan

- 3.7.1 Given the transient nature of the subject, we would consider the survey results contained to be accurate for up to 18 months, at the discretion as assessed by a suitably qualified ecologist.

4 Results

4.1 Desk Study

Designated Sites

- 4.1.1 The site was subjected to a search for designated sites within 2 km radius of the site using data supplied by the online desk-based resource MAGIC. A data search from the local biological record centre has not been requested in this instance. Due to the small scale of the proposed development, and habitat types recorded on site, a significant impact on species/habitats within the local area is not expected. It is therefore unlikely that additional biological data would impact the assessment of ecological impacts as a result of the proposed development.
- 4.1.2 A search of the online resource MAGIC Maps found one statutory designations within the 1km radius search, Oughtonhead Common Local Nature Reserve (LNR), located approximately 650m to the west. A summary of the closest or most relevant sites, within appropriate distances, is provided in Table 5.
- 4.1.3 Additionally, no internationally important statutory designated sites were identified within 15 km of the site boundary. MAGIC does not provide details on all non-statutory designations and therefore their presence within 2 km cannot be fully ascertained.
- 4.1.4

Table 5: Summary of designated sites within a 1km radius of the application site

Site Name	Grid Reference	Status	Reason for Designation	Distance from Site
Statutory Sites				
Oughtonhead Common	TL 169 303	LNR	Oughtonhead Common comprised a mosaic of important wildlife habitats, including wetland, grassland, woodland and scrub. The area is associated with a Greenspace Action Plan (North Hertfordshire District Council, 2023).	650 m W

- 4.1.5 The application site lies within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for Oughton Lane SSSI, which is positioned 1.8 km west, as long as the works do not include the addition of new pipelines,

underground cables, pylons and overhead cables, then no consultation with Natural England will be required, see Appendix 7 for further details on criteria.

Priority Habitats

- 4.1.6 Data supplied by MAGIC includes a UKBAP priority habitat inventory within 1 km of the site boundary. These are listed in Table 6, where more than one area of the same habitat has been identified, only the ones closest to the site are listed.

Table 6: Summary of the priority habitats

Habitat Type	Closest Distance to the Site
Chalk River	c.40m N of site boundary
Deciduous woodland	c.60m NE
No main habitat but additional habitat exits	c. 290m E
Reedbeds	c.360m SE
Floodplain Grazing Marsh	c.430m NE
Traditional Orchard	c.440m N of site boundary
Lowland Meadow	c.510m NE

Protected Species Assessment

- 4.1.7 MAGIC returned no records for EPSL for bat species within 1 km of the site boundary.
- 4.1.8 Historic records for signal crayfish (*Pacifastacus leniusculus*) and American mink (*Neogale vison*) have been noted within the River Oughton, which flows approximately 40 m to the north of the site, as stated within the Oughtonhead Common Greenspace Action Plan 2022 – 2027 (North Hertfordshire District Council, 2023).

4.2 Habitats

- 4.2.1 The habitat types recorded on site are summarised below, and the frequency and distribution of habitat types is displayed within a UKHab Survey Map (Appendix 1 and 2). Table 7 provides a list of habitat types present on site along with their inclusion (or otherwise) as a National and / or Local Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI) (previously referred to as Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)) (it should be noted that additional information is included within the text where a classification under UKHab survey methodology does not mirror habitat types considered to be conservation priorities).

Table 7: UKHab Habitat Types found on site and inclusion within UK BAP/HPI habitats

Habitat Type	N HPI	L HPI	N/A
Building (u1b5)			✓
Developed land; sealed surface (u1b - 845)			✓
Bare ground (s - 510)			✓

Buildings (u1b5)

- 4.2.2 Building 1 (B1) was a single storey brick garage, with a felt flat roof located in the southwestern corner of the site. The building was well sealed and in good condition. The garages were used for storage and regularly disturbed. Full building descriptions can be found within Section 4.3.5.



Figure 2: View of B1 taken from the northern elevation

Developed Land; Sealed Surface (u1b - 845)

- 4.2.3 An area of developed land; sealed surface dominated the majority of the site. This comprised a concrete driveway. Colonising vegetation was present along the cracks of the hard standing and included occasional perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), annual meadow grass (*Poa annua*), knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*), spurge species (*Euphorbia* sp.) wall barley (*Hordeum murinum*), groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), common sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), common nettle (*Urtica*

dioica), autumn hawkbit (*Scorzoneroidea autumnalis*), pineappleweed (*Matricaria discoidea*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), Germander speedwell (*Veronica chamaedrys*) and red dead nettle (*Lamium purpureum*).

- 4.2.4 The secondary code '845 – ground level planters' was applied to this habitat parcel. Two planters were located either side of the eastern access road onto site (see Appendix 2, TN01). These small planters contained species including groundsel, showy stone crop (*Hylotelephium spectabile*), Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), black medic (*Medicago lupulina*) and ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*) which were all found occasionally. Further images can be found in Appendix 2.

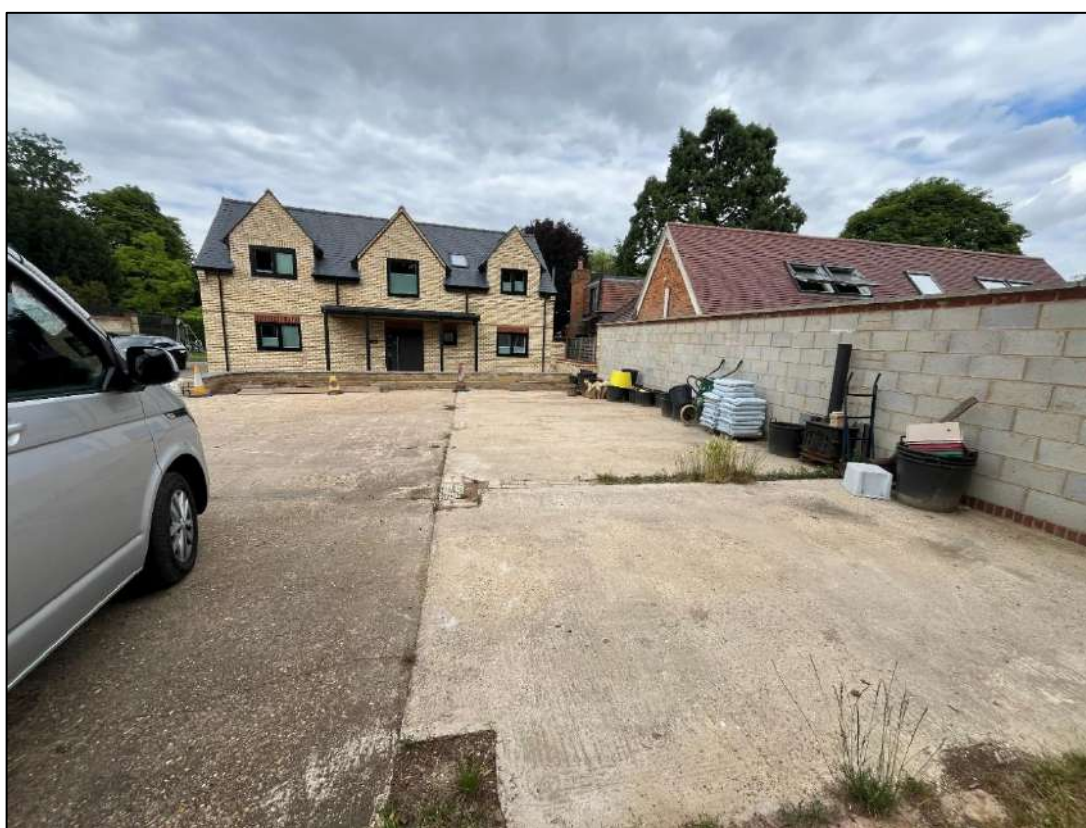


Figure 3: View of hand standing taken from the southern elevation

Bare Ground (s - 510)

- 4.2.5 An area of bare ground was present along the northern boundary, with very limited patches of vegetation. Occasional white goosefoot (*Chenopodium album*), groundsel, spurge, spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), knotgrass, garlic mustard, pineappleweed, black medic and common sowthistle were all found occasionally.



Figure 4: View of bare ground along the northern boundary.

Invasive Weeds Assessment

- 4.2.6 An assessment of the site was made to establish the presence of invasive weeds included on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 4.2.7 No recordings of schedule 9 invasive weed species were found within, or adjacent to the application area.

4.3 Fauna

Breeding Birds

- 4.3.1 The assessment of the site was undertaken during the breeding bird season. No birds were seen utilising the site.
- 4.3.2 Hardstanding dominated the site, which is not conducive to support nesting breeding birds. Additionally, the area of bare ground along the northern boundary is regularly disturbed, preventing use from ground nesting birds. The site overall lacked suitable vegetative features that breeding birds would utilise.
- 4.3.3 B1 was generally well-sealed and regularly disturbed, preventing nesting birds from building nests internally. However, the flat roof was considered suitable for nest making birds such as feral pigeons (*Columba livia domestica*) which are well documented to build nests on flat roofs.
- 4.3.4 Based on a review of the habitat types on site, the site is considered unlikely to support bird species of high conservation concern that are either legally protected or UK BAP species.

Bats

Roosting Bats

- 4.3.5 B1 was assessed to support 'Negligible' suitability to support roosting bats. The garage was well sealed and frequently used. There was a lifted section of felt roofing on the southern elevation, but it was not deemed to be a Potential Roost Feature (PRF) as it was not considered to lead into the building or a cavity.
- 4.3.6 Additionally, a wall (W1) was located along the southern boundary of the site, which supported long cracks between the bricks and the mortar. However, these were not deemed large enough to support opportunistic bats, see Appendix 8 for photos.
- 4.3.7 The main structural features of the building/structure, and their suitability for supporting roosting bats are summarised below (T
- 4.3.8
- 4.3.9 Table 8), and associated figures can be found with Table 14 in Appendix 8. A PRF plan has also been included in Appendix 8.

Table 8: Summary of bat roost suitability and evidence found within each of the structures on site (supporting Figures within Appendix 8)

High	Moderate	Low	Negligible	None
------	----------	-----	------------	------

Structure Number	Description	Bat Evidence / potential Roosting Features (PRFs)	Roost Suitability
B1	External: A single storey yellow brick, double garage. The walls were 2-brick thick. Accessed through two metal garage doors along the northern elevation. Supports a flat felt roof.	External: No potential features found, well sealed.	Negligible
	Internal: No void was present in the garages. The ceiling was wooden boarded and had wooden beams running along it for support.	Internal: No evidence of previous bat activity was recorded during the assessment.	
W1	External: A c. 1.7 m high red brick wall that extends along the southern boundary of the site. Long cracks present between the mortar of the bricks.	External: Crack not deemed large enough to support opportunistic bats.	Negligible

4.3.10 Due to the lack of potential roosting features within the structures on site, roosting bats are not considered any further within this report.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

4.3.11 The wider environment comprised of a mosaic of habitats, most notably woodland blocks, lines of trees, open grassland areas as well as River Oughton, located c. 40 m to the north, which acts as a suitable linear feature for foraging and commuting bats. However, the application site itself lacks onsite connectivity due to the absence of vegetative features. Consequently, the site is considered to provide 'Low' suitability for foraging and commuting bats, with bats expected to be present in the local area.

4.3.12



4.3.13 The site's position within a mosaic of habitats suggest that this transient species could forage and/or commute within the surrounding environment but are not likely dependant on the habitats within the site boundary.

Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*)

4.3.14 No waterbodies were noted within the site boundary during the site visit. Due to the size of the site, a 250 m IRZ buffer from the site boundary was deemed appropriate. As a result, three waterbodies were noted within 250 m of the site boundary (see Figure 5). Due to the flowing nature of the River Oughton (W1), the river was not considered suitable to support Great Crested Newts (GCN). Additionally, waterbody 2 (W2- sluices) and waterbody 3 (W3) are connected to the site via the River Oughton, however, due to its flowing nature was considered a dispersal barrier as mentioned previously.

4.3.15 Additionally, the majority of site comprised hardstanding, which does not offer suitable terrestrial habitat for GCN. It is considered highly unlikely that GCN will be present within the site boundary, particularly given the increasingly low densities at which GCN are found at increased distances from optimal habitat and breeding ponds. Therefore, these protected species are not regarded as a material constraint to this application and no longer considered within the scope of this report.

MAGiC Waterbodies within 250 m of Site Boundary

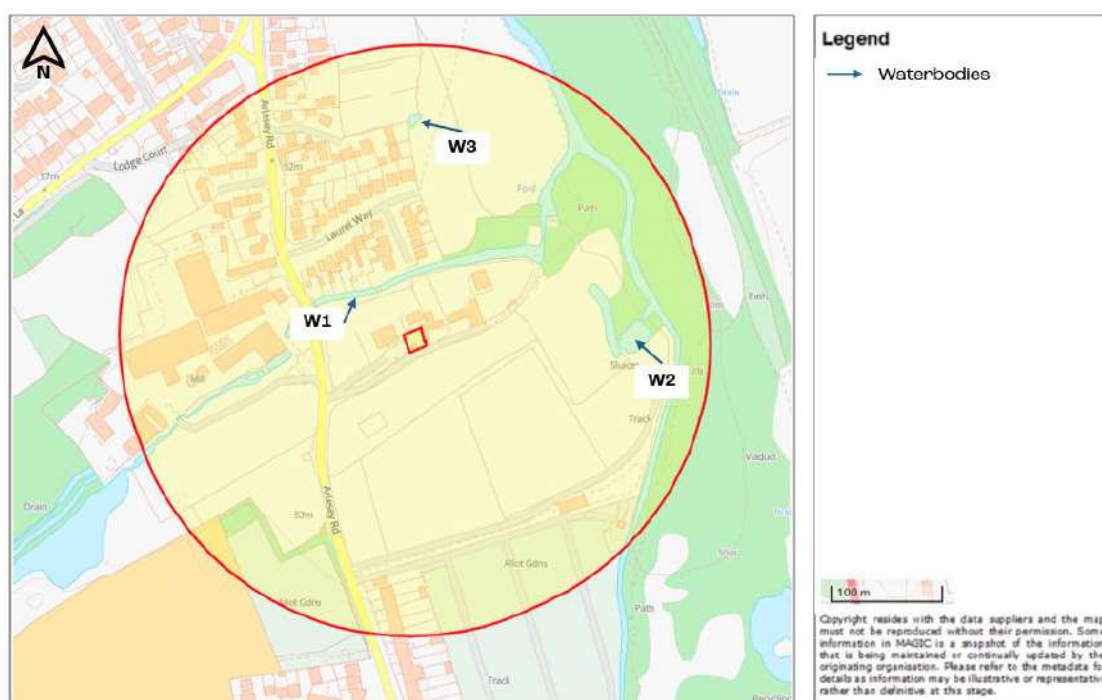


Figure 5: MAGiC Map showing pond locations within a 250-metre radius of the site.

Reptiles

- 4.3.16 The habitats on site were not considered optimal to supporting a resident population of reptiles due to a lack of structural variation and dominance of regularly disturbed hard standing across the survey area. Overall, it is highly unlikely that reptiles would be present and impacted by the proposed development. Therefore, these protected species are not regarded as a material constraint to this application and no longer considered within the scope of this report.

Mammal Species of Principal Importance

- 4.3.17 The NERC Act 2006, Section 41 highlights 17 species of principal importance within England.

Western European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

- 4.3.18 The habitats on site were not considered conducive to supporting western European hedgehog due to the lack of vegetative features. However, the site's location within a mosaic of habitats suggest that this transient species could forage and/or commute within the surrounding environment but are not likely dependant on the habitats within the site boundary.

Otter

- 4.3.19 River Oughton was located approximately 40 m to the north of the site boundary and was considered to provide suitable foraging and commuting grounds for otters (see Figure 6). Although, the southern bank was considered sub-optimal for holt creation opportunities, due to the regular disturbance from the residential development. Therefore, was it was considered that this part of the river is unlikely to support a resident population of otters.
- 4.3.20 Furthermore, due to the small extent and dominance of hard standing on site, it was considered highly unlikely that otters would utilise the habitats onsite. Therefore, these protected species are not regarded as a material constraint to this application and no longer considered within the scope of this report.



Figure 6: View of part of River Oughton, located c. 40 m to the north of the site

Water Vole

- 4.3.21 Historic records have been noted within the River Oughton, as stated within the Oughtonhead Common Greenspace Action Plan 2022 – 2027 (North Hertfordshire District Council, 2023).

4.3.22 River Oughton was located approximately 40 m to the north of the site boundary and was considered to provide suitable foraging and commuting grounds for water voles (see Figure 6), however, due to the sparsely vegetated nature of the banks, providing less potential cover and foraging resources, it was considered less likely to support burrow creation. Additionally, the southern bank was considered sub-optimal for burrow and refuge opportunities, due to the regular disturbance from the residential development. Therefore, it was considered that this part of the river is unlikely to support a resident population of water voles.

4.3.23 Furthermore, due to the nature of the habitats onsite, it was considered highly unlikely that water voles would utilise the application site. Therefore, these protected species are not regarded as a material constraint to this application and no longer considered within the scope of this report.

White Clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*)

4.3.24 Historic records have been noted within the River Oughton, as stated within the Oughtonhead Common Greenspace Action Plan 2022 – 2027 (North Hertfordshire District Council, 2023).

4.3.25 River Oughton located approximately 40 m to the north of the site. The river was considered potentially suitable to support this species, with pools, riffles and substrate such as scattered stones and tree roots within the bank providing potential refugia (see Figure 6).

4.3.26 However, due to the distance and nature of habitats onsite, it was considered unlikely that white-clawed crayfish would be present on site. Therefore, these protected species are not regarded as a material constraint to this application and no longer considered within the scope of this report.

5 Evaluation

5.1 Development Proposals

- 5.1.1 The site is the subject of a full planning application for site clearance to facilitate the development of a single residential dwelling. Design plans are provided within Appendix 6 of this report.

5.2 Desk Study Impacts

- 5.2.1 One nationally important designated site, Oughtonhead Common LNR, located approximately 650 m to the west of the site. The current proposals do not necessitate direct change to features and habitats to Oughtonhead Common LNR. Although the site is connected to the LNR through the River Oughton, located c.40 m to the north of the site, the river flows west to east. As a result of this and the presence of significant terrestrial barriers (A600) and residential development (associated with Ickleford) it is considered unlikely that the proposed works will cause indirect impacts on the designated site.
- 5.2.2 The application site lies within the IRZ for Oughton Lane SSSI, which is positioned 1.8 km west, as long as the works do not include the addition of new pipelines, underground cables, pylons and overhead cables, then no consultation with Natural England will be required, see Appendix 7 for further details on criteria.

5.3 Habitats

- 5.3.1 The habitats on site have been evaluated as having 'Site' value in relation to the immediate surroundings and a 'Local' context.
- 5.3.2 Ground clearance will result in the loss of hard standing. Sealed surfaces do not fall under national or local HPI and are deemed to have 'Negligible' ecological value. Though bare ground offers ecological value, the area located on site is limited due its small size (c.0.001 ha) and highly disturbed.
- 5.3.3 Consequently, the site is exempt from the need to perform Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) as it meets the 'de minimis rule'. Therefore, BNG is not considered any further within this report

5.4 Breeding Birds

- 5.4.1 All wild birds, their eggs and nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird whilst

nesting, or take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird while in use or being built. In addition, species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 or their dependant young are afforded additional protection from disturbance whilst they are at their nests.

5.4.2 The hardstanding and small patch of bare ground to the north of the site was not deemed suitable to support nesting birds due to the regularly disturbed nature of the area.

5.4.3 B1 was considered to offer breeding bird potential for common and widespread species (such as pigeon) through the flat felt roof, but under current plans is set to be retained. Should plans change or the roof be altered, Chapter 5 provides recommendations relating to the need for precautionary working methods.

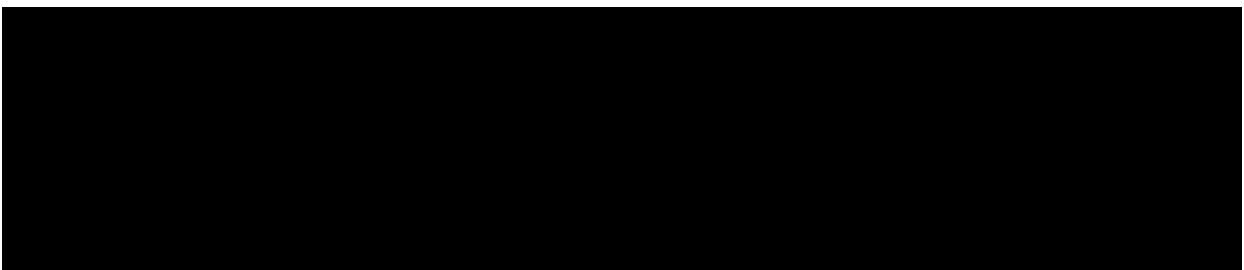
5.5 Bats

5.5.1 All bats in the United Kingdom and their habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). It is an offence to damage or destroy any bat roost, intentionally or recklessly obstruct a bat roost, deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat or intentionally kill, injure or take any bat.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

5.5.2 The application site comprised B1, areas of hardstanding and bare ground with 'Low' suitability for commuting and foraging bats. As a result, the impact of development works on foraging and commuting bats is not considered a constraint to the application. However, the mosaic of habitats within the locality and treeline beyond the southern border of the site offers linear features that bats may utilise.

5.5.3 Chapter 5 sets out important guidance on measures to avoid impacts on this species group in the wider area.



- 
- 5.6.3 Chapter 5 sets out important guidance on measures to avoid impacts on this species and measures to support its conservation status.

5.7 Mammal Species of Principal Importance

- 5.7.1 The NERC Act 2006, Section 41 highlights 17 species of principal importance within England. This includes several species of bat, however these have been addressed in Section 4.8.

Western European Hedgehog

- 5.7.2 The habitats on site were not considered conducive to supporting western European hedgehog due to a lack of vegetative features. However, hedgehogs are a transient species that can often be found commuting across areas of hard standing.
- 5.7.3 Chapter 5 provides recommendations aimed at safeguarding this species during construction.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1.1 The site does not require any further ecological assessment under current proposals however, RAMs should be detailed and implemented during the construction phase of the proposed development.

6.2 Habitats

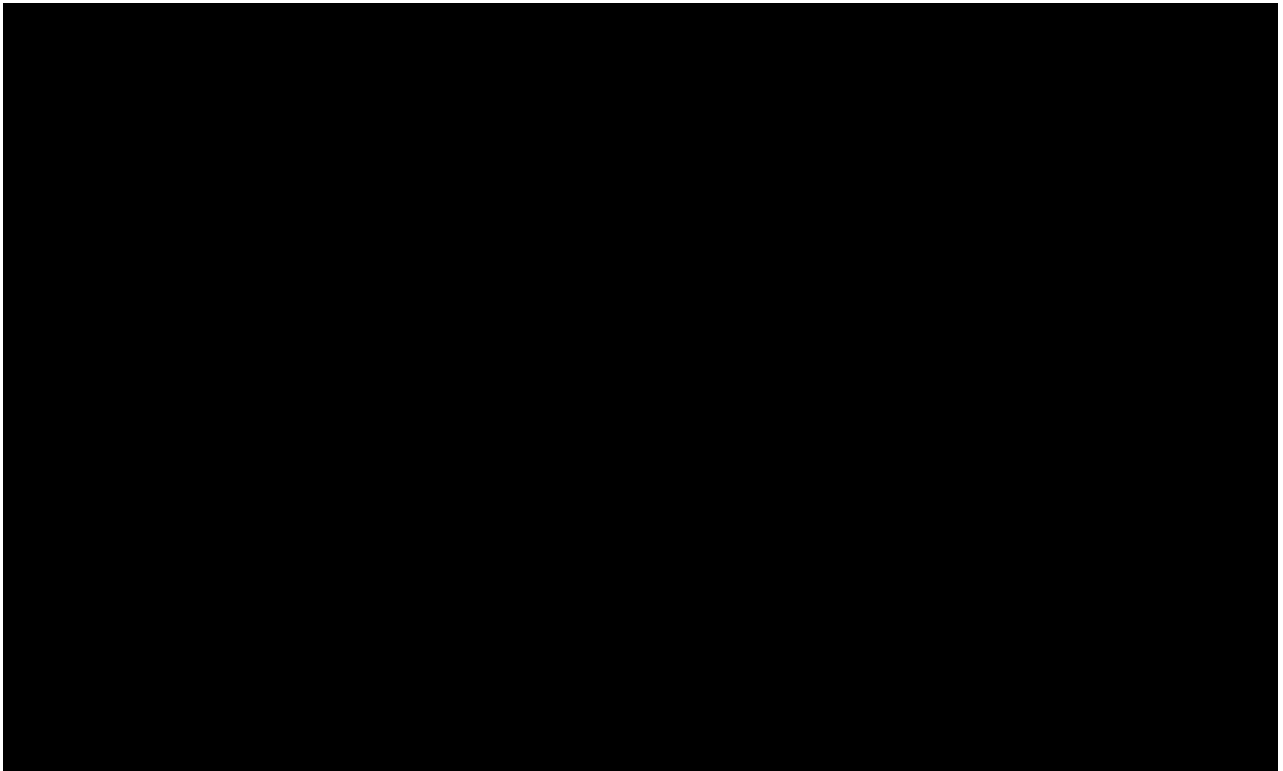
Habitats	Timing
Enhancement Prescriptions	
Though the need for BNG is not required, soft landscaping proposals should seek to include areas of open space to be enhanced with native planting for the benefit of biodiversity where possible.	During design stage.

6.3 Breeding Birds

Breeding Birds	Timing
Recommendations	
B1 offers external breeding bird suitability in the form of a flat felt roof. However current plans infer the retention of the garages. Should proposals change and the garage be demolished the following guidance is given: Given their protection, development must be sympathetic to the value of this habitat and potential impacts on breeding birds, their eggs, nests and young. The breeding bird season is generally accepted as being between March and September. Consideration and implementation must be given to the following options most appropriate to the scheme. - Undertake building demolition between the months of October and February where possible. - Demolition between the months of March and September should be subjected to a search for active birds' nests 24 hours prior to commencement of works.	No further action needed unless proposals seek to alter B1. Should that be the case works should be undertaken outside of the breeding season (Oct-Feb). If unachievable, follow steps in recommendation.

6.4 Foraging and Commuting Bats

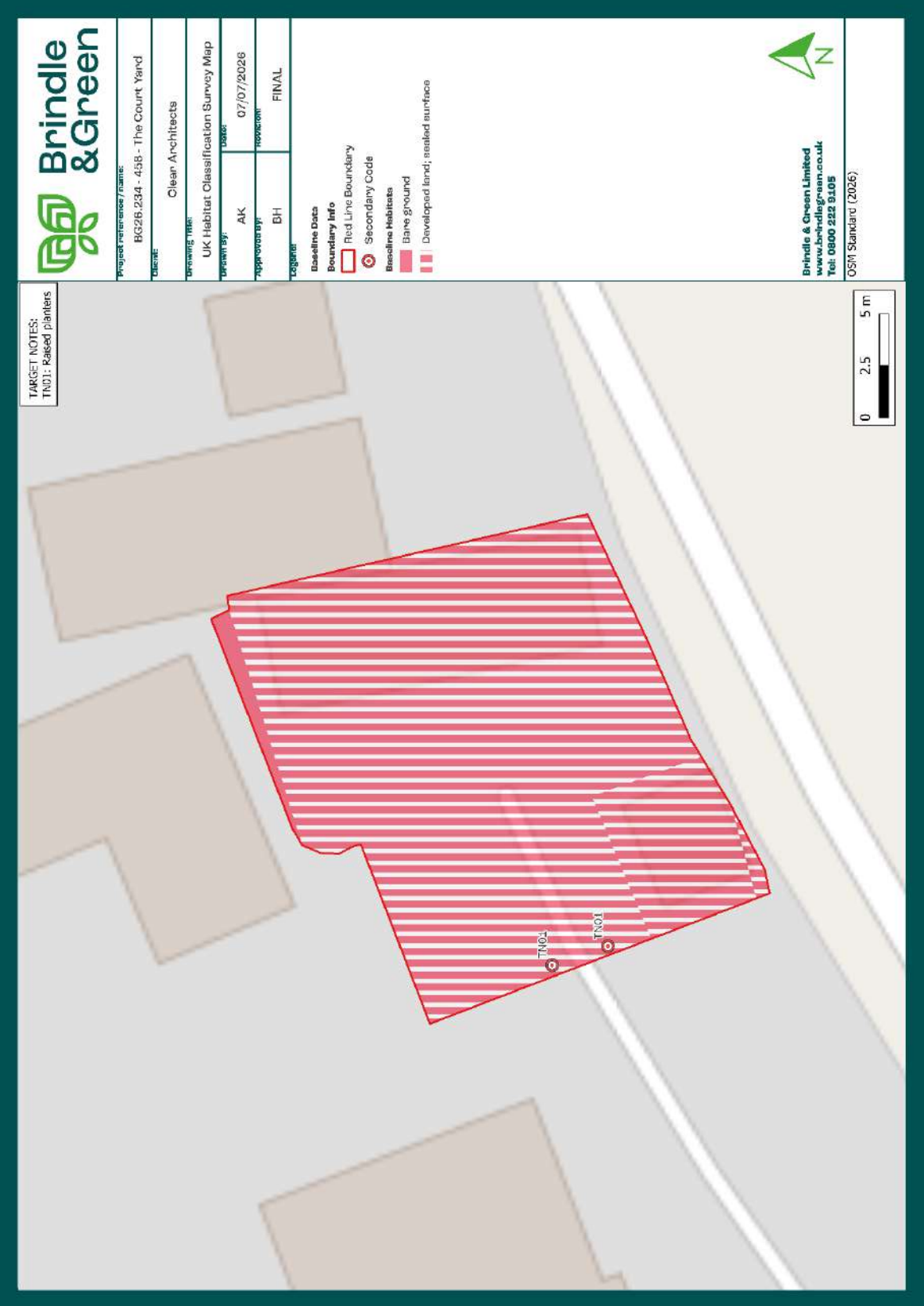
Foraging and Commuting Bats	Timing
Recommendations	
If lighting is set to exceed that of the current levels, then a lighting scheme will be required, to ensure that the extent of disturbance to foraging and commuting bats within the area is reduced where possible during construction works, and artificial security lighting should not be installed post construction in a way which directs lighting towards treeline beyond the southern boundary. If lighting is required, a scheme should be devised and positioned to have minimal disturbance following the guidance of an ecologist. Any lighting used during the development should be directed away from the southern boundary with overspill less than 1 lux (ideally 0) onto suitable habitats.	During and post development.
Enhancement Prescriptions	
Soft landscaping proposals should seek to incorporate native tree and shrub species wherever possible, which are beneficial to native invertebrate species, the primary component of UK bat species' diets. Planting should consider species that attract night-flying insects such as night-scented stock (<i>Matthiola longipetala</i>) and evening primrose (<i>Oenothera biennis</i>).	During design stage.



6.6 Mammal Species of Principal Importance

Mammal Species of Principal Importance	Timing
Recommendations	
Hedgehogs may use the site for commuting purposes. The recommended reasonable avoidance measures should be followed: a) Search areas of discarded items by hand before removing. b) Any exposed excavations to be left overnight are to be covered at the end of each working day or include a means of escape for any fallen animals (e.g., a scaffolding plank minimum a 45-degree angle and in place every 20-30m). c) Should individuals or any evidence of individuals be encountered during the construction phase, all works should cease, and the advice of a suitably qualified ecologist should be sought. No attempt should be made to catch the animal/s and all staff should move away from the area to avoid stressing the animal further.	During clearance and development.
Enhancement Prescriptions	
The inclusion of 'hedgehog highways' should be implemented into the design of the proposed gardens whereby a 13 cm x 13 cm hold should be cut into the base of fences creating a corridor across the site for hedgehogs.	During design stage.
Soft landscaping proposals should seek to incorporate native shrub planting, in line with the local character area, which will provide a variety of berry and seed-bearing species.	During design stage.

Appendix 1 – UK Habitat Classification Plan



Appendix 2 - UKHab Target Notes and Species List

Table 9: UKHab target notes

Target note number	Description
TN01	Two raised planters located at w3w///goodbye.cascaded.voters and w3w///joins.bathtubs.tower either side of the eastern access road. 

Table 10: Plant Species List with DAFOR Scale

Scientific nomenclature follows Stace (2010) for vascular plant species and common names follow BSBI List of British & Irish Vascular Plants and Stoneworts.

Please note that this plant species list was generated as part of a UKHab survey and does not constitute a full botanical survey.

Abundance was estimated using the DAFOR scale as follows:

D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional, R = rare, LF = locally frequent

Common Name	Scientific Name	Estimated Abundance (DAFOR)
Knotgrass	<i>Polygonum aviculare</i>	O
Groundsel	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	O
Common sowthistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	O
Autumn hawkbit	<i>Scorzoneroides autumnalis</i>	O
Pineappleweed	<i>Matricaria discoidea</i>	O
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	O
Spurge spp.	<i>Euphorbia</i>	O
Red deadnettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	O
Perennial rye grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	O
Annual meadow grass	<i>Poa annua</i>	O
Wall barley	<i>Hordeum murinum</i>	O
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	O
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	O
Red deadnettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	O
Ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>	O
Showy stonecrop	<i>Hylotelephium spectabile</i>	O
Black medic	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	O
White goosefoot	<i>Chenopodium album</i>	O
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	O

Appendix 3 – General References

Bell, S. McGillivray, D. (2006) Environmental Law. 6th ed. Oxford University Press.

Bright PW, Morris PA and Mitchell-Jones A (2006) Dormouse Conservation Handbook 2nd Edition. English Nature, Peterborough.

British Standards Institution (2023) BS 42020: Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development, British Standards Institution London

Byron, H (2000) Biodiversity and Environmental Impact Assessment: A Good Practice Guide for Road Schemes. The RSPB, WWF-UK, English Nature and the Wildlife Trusts, Sandy.

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

CIEEM (2024) Guidelines on Ecological Report Writing. 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. ISBN-978-1-7395126-0-6

Gilbert G, Gibbons DW, Evans J. (1998) Bird Monitoring Methods: Breeding Bird Survey (pages 389-393). RSPB.

[REDACTED]

Langton T, Beckett C and Foster J (2001) Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook. Froglife, Halesworth.

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024) National Planning Policy Framework

Mitchell-Jones A.J. Bat Mitigation Guidelines 2004. English Nature.

Mitchell-Jones A.J. McLeish, A.P. (2004) Bat Workers Manual (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

North Hertfordshire District Council (2023). Oughtonhead *Common Greenspace Action Plan 2022 – 2027*. [Online]. Available at: [Oughtonhead Common GAP 2022-27 Final](#)

Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*). Herpetological Journal 10 (4), 143-155.

Rodwell, J.S. Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). National Vegetation Classification: Users' handbook (2006). JNCC.

Rose, F. (2006). The Wild Flower Key (Revised edition). Penguin books Ltd, London

Stace, C. (2010). Field Flora of the British Isles. Cambridge University Press

Strachan R. MoorHouse T, and Gelling M (2011) Water Vole Conservation Handbook.(3rd Edition) Wildlife Conservation Research Unit.

Sutherland, W.J. (1996) Ecological Census Techniques. Cambridge University Press.

Treweek, J. (1999) Ecological Impact Assessment. Blackwell Science.

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

Williams, C. (2010) Biodiversity for Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, A Technical Guide for New Build. Riba Publishing.

Appendix 4 – Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Articles of British wildlife and countryside legislation, policy guidance and both Local and National Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) are referred to. The articles of legislation are:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Department for Communities and Local Government. National Planning Policy Framework. (2024)
- EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 79/409/EEC
- [REDACTED]
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Including National and Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP / HPI))
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997
- The Environment Act 2021
- Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Appendix 5 – Legislation, Guidance and Methodology

Breeding Birds

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. In addition, for species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly cause disturbance at, on or near an 'active' nest.

The bird breeding season is typically accepted to start in February/March and continue through until September/October, however breeding birds can be found all year round depending on the given species and climatic conditions.

A site's habitat composition, locality, association to designated sites as well as current usage and management are all considered in the decision as to whether further bird related surveys are required. In addition, surveys may be recommended based on incidental bird records collected during a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, species identified within an ecological data search or target species listed within a local biodiversity action plan.

Bird surveys are carried out in accordance with:

- Gilbert G, Gibbons DW, Evans J. (1998) Bird Monitoring Methods. RSPB.

Bats

Roosting Bats

All bats in the United Kingdom and their habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). It is an offence to damage or destroy any bat roost, intentionally or recklessly obstruct a bat roost, deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat or intentionally kill, injure or take any bat.

Areas of concern; can be encountered in many types of structure and care should therefore be taken when undertaking maintenance or demolition of suitable structures and trees.

Site assessments of buildings, commuting and foraging habitat and trees are undertaken in accordance with:

- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, (4th edition). Bat Conservation Trust, London. ISBN-978-1-7395126-0-6 (

– Table 11,

– Table 12 and Table 13).

Preliminary Ecological Surveys look for evidence of bat presence such as feeding remains, bat droppings, roosting individuals and staining around potential access points. The suitability of site features are also assessed because absence of bat evidence, is not confirmation of a negative result.

Within trees, features searched for include; natural holes, woodpecker holes, cracks/splits in major limbs, loose bark, hollows, and dense cover of ivy over the tree. If evidence is found, or a building supports features conducive to supporting roosting bats then further presence / absence bat surveys and/or roost characterisation surveys will be recommended.

Foraging and Commuting bats

Habitat features on site are assessed for their suitability to support foraging and commuting bat populations. This assessment is independent from the suitability of the site to support roosting bats, and provides information on the likeliness of bat foraging activity within the local environment, and the dependence of individuals on these features for commuting to alternative roosting sites, foraging and migration.

Table 11: Guideline for assessing the suitability of a structure to support roosting habitat amended from Collins, J (2023)

Category	Description of Roosting Habitat	Number of additional presence / absence surveys required
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats at any time of year (complete absence of potential roosting features).	None
Negligible Suitability	Suitable cavities may exist, but these are less than ideal. Uncertainty remains as bats can use these features on occasion.	None
Low Suitability	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. The feature and surrounding habitat do not provide enough shelter, conditions* space for larger roost types such as a maternity or hibernation roost.	One survey between May and August
Moderate Suitability	A structure considered to have one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions* and surrounding habitat but are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (With regard to roost type only – assessments are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Two surveys between May and September (with at least one survey undertaken between May and August). Surveys should be spaced at least 3 weeks apart.
High Suitability	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions* and surrounding habitat.	Three surveys between May and September (with at least two surveys undertaken between May and August). Surveys should be spaced at least 3 weeks apart.
Confirmed	This category is where positive evidence of bats has been recorded. For example, bats are found; bat droppings may be present at a suitable location for roosting bats; existing bat records may be associated with the structure.	

* In this context conditions refers to the level of disturbance, light, height above ground, temperature, and humidity etc

Table 12: Guideline for assessing the suitability of a tree to support roosting habitat amended from Collins, J (2023)

INITIAL STAGE (Site scoping/PEA/PRA)		
Category	Description	Survey effort to establish the presence/absence of bats
NONE	Either no PRFS in the tree or unlikely to be any	None
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree	Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) to further assess suitability
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present	Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) to further assess suitability
DETAILED STAGE (PEA/PRA/GLTA)		
PRF - I	PRF only suitable for individual bats or small numbers of bats due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats	None – precautionary method of works for removal and provision of roosting compensation
PRF - M	PRF suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony	Three Climbing inspection surveys for features to be undertaken May to September with at least 2 May to August. Surveys should be 3 weeks apart. If climbing and inspection not possible, 3 dusk emergence surveys with NVAs (Night Vision Aids) to be undertaken May to to September with at least 2 May to August. Surveys should be 3 weeks apart. Should a maternity colony be confirmed less invasive methods, such as dusk emergence survey with NVAs should employed.
Known roost	Known roost present through local records, evidence, sightings, etc	Three Climbing inspection surveys for features to be undertaken May to September with at least 2 May to August. Surveys should be 3 weeks apart. If climbing and inspection not possible, 3 dusk emergence surveys with NVAs (Night Vision Aids) to be undertaken May to to September with at least 2 May to August. Surveys should be 3 weeks apart. Should a maternity colony be confirmed less invasive methods, such as dusk emergence survey with NVAs should employed.

Table 13: Potential suitability of foraging and commuting habitat within an application boundary. Features should be assessed following this guide and professional judgement. Adapted from Collins, J (2023)

Category	Description of commuting and foraging habitat	Survey effort to establish the value of commuting and foraging habitat**
Negligible Suitability	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.	None
Low Suitability	Habitat which could be used by low numbers of commuting bats such as an isolated gappy hedgerow, or an unvegetated stream unconnected to suitable habitat in the wider environment. Suitable, yet isolated habitat that could be used by foraging bats such as individual trees, or a patch of scrub.	Nighttime bat walk (NBW) survey: One survey visit per active season (Spring – April/May, Summer (June/July/August) – autumn – September/October). AND Static automated surveys: Data to be collected over a five-night period, per season. (Spring – April/May, Summer (June/July/August) – autumn – September/October).
Moderate Suitability	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by commuting bats, notably tree lines, hedgerows or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape which could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, open water, scrub or grassland.	Nighttime bat walk (NBW) survey: One survey visit per active season (Spring – April/May, Summer (June/July/August) – autumn – September/October). AND Static automated surveys: Data to be collected over a five-night period, per month (April to October)
High Suitability	Continuous, High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape which is considered to be highly conducive to commuting bats including river valleys, stream, hedgerows, and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree lined watercourses, and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.	Nighttime bat walk (NBW) survey: One survey visit per active season (Spring – April/May, Summer (June/July/August) – autumn – September/October). AND Static automated surveys: Data to be collected over a five-night period, per month (April to October)

** This is only a guide for survey effort required, the complexity of the site and the proposed disturbance / loss of features will determine the extent of works required on a site by site basis



Ecological Enhancement

In December 2024 the Department for Communities and Local Government published the National Planning Policy Framework. This sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity through the planning system. The document states - opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.

For new buildings guidance such as in the following will be used:

- Williams, C. (2010) Biodiversity for Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, A Technical Guide for New Build. Riba Publishing.

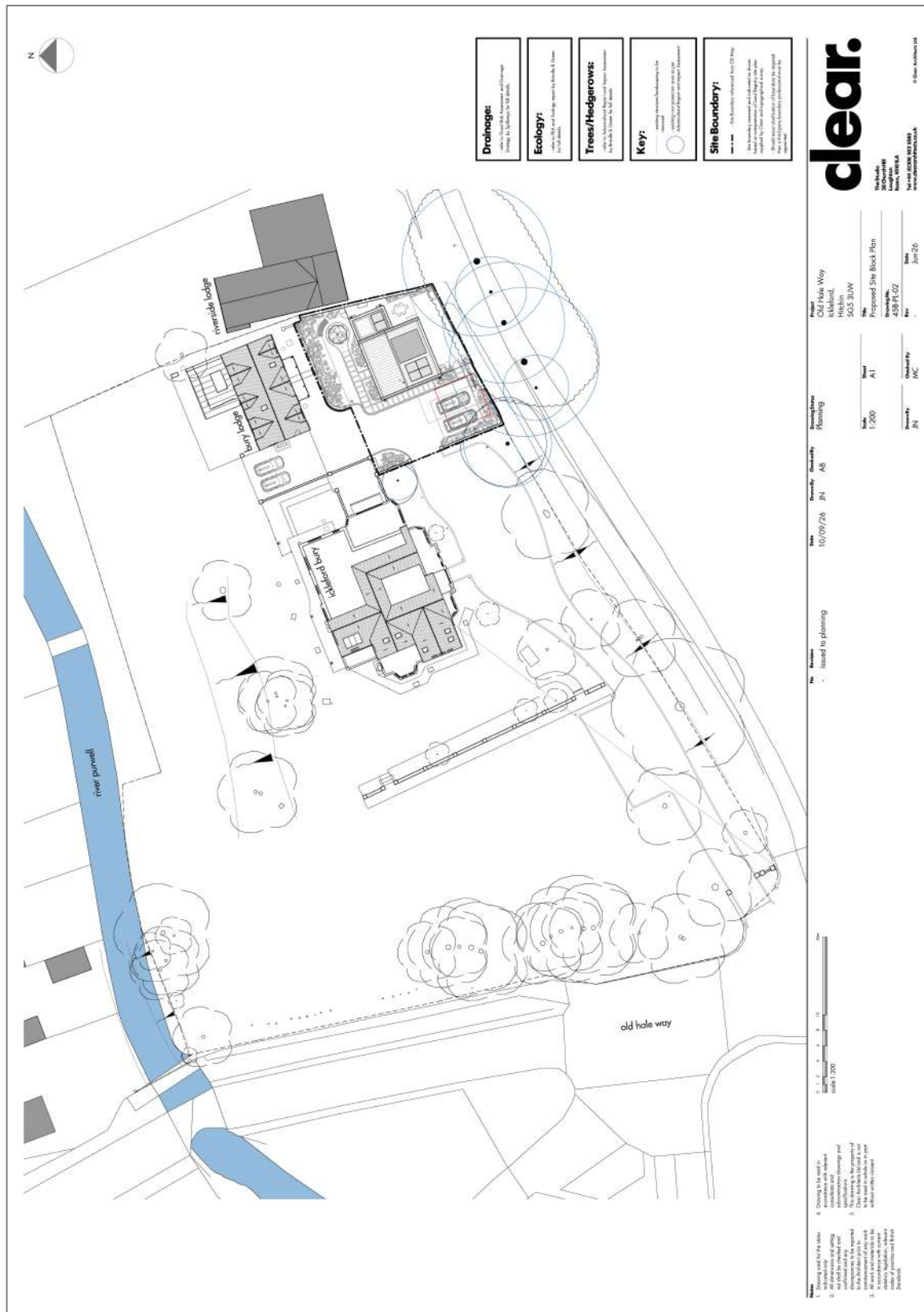
Designated Sites

Designated areas are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) while others have been designated as having European protection status. Local authorities can also designate areas for nature conservation and in doing so may impose local authority byelaws to support local nature conservation objectives.

European designated status includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) that preserve areas for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which provides protection for habitats and the species which these habitats support.

Information of Designated Protected Areas is received through Ecological Data Searches and Magic Map searches.

Appendix 6 – Proposed Plans



Appendix 7 – MAGIC data

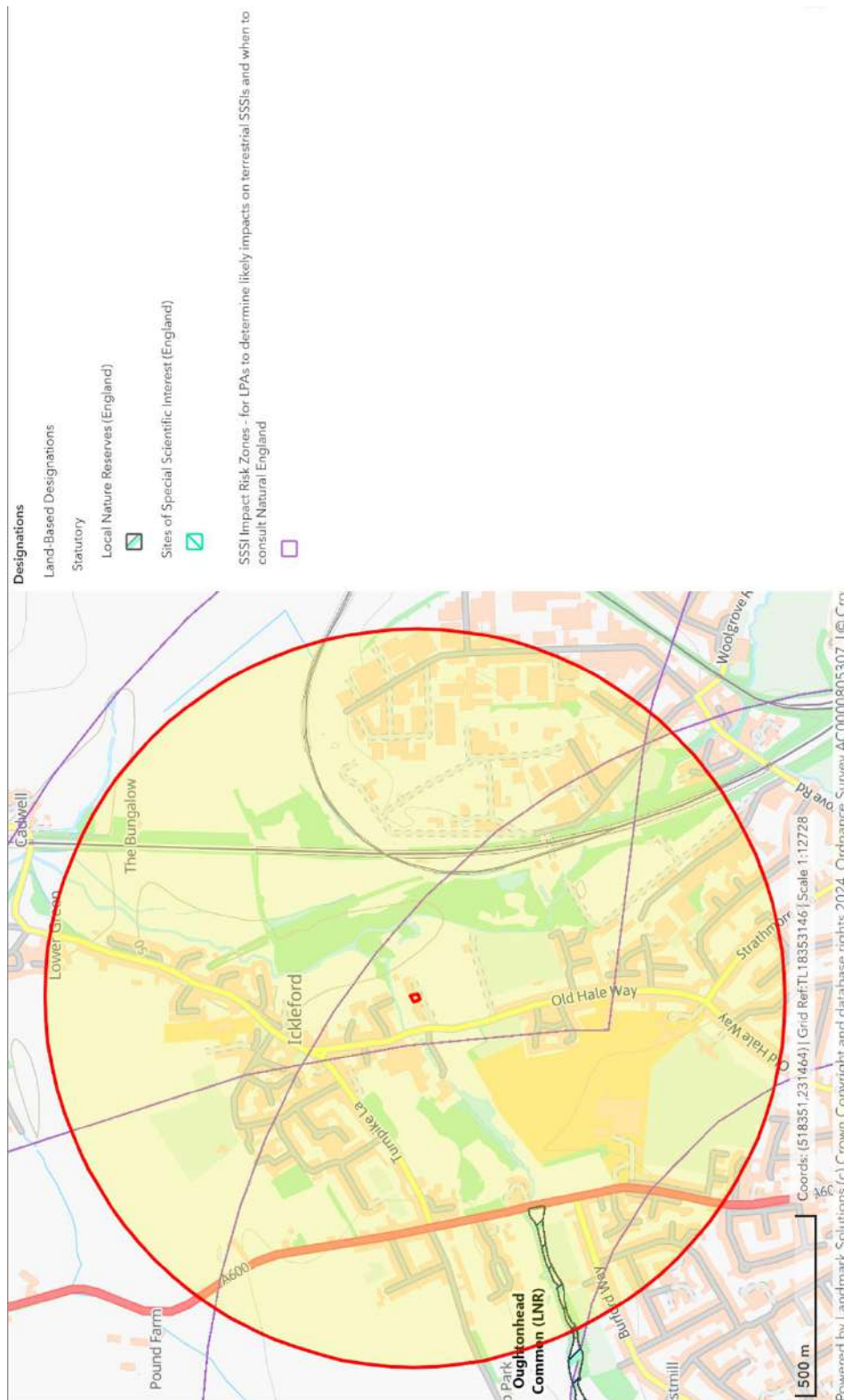


Figure 7: Location of statutory sites within 1km of the site boundary (MAGIC, 2026)



Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest

For local planning authorities to determine if a proposed development is likely to affect a terrestrial Site of Special Scientific Interest and when to consult Natural England.

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?

- **Infrastructure:** Pipelines and underground cables; pylons and overhead cables (excluding upgrades and refurbishment of existing network). Any transport proposal including new or extended footways, cycleways, roads/car parks, railways and waterways (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.
- **Minerals, Oil and Gas:** Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction.
- **Waste:** Landfill. Including: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill.
- **Water Supply:** Large infrastructure such as warehousing/industry where the total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is 1,000m² or more.

Appendix 8 – Potential Roost Suitability Photos

Table 14: Photographs showing Potential Roost Suitability

Image	Description
Building 1	
	Double brick built garage with felt roof.
	Internal of one of the sections of the garage. Well-sealed.

Image	Description
	Internal of one of the sections of the garage. Well-sealed.
	Internal of one of the sections of the garage. Well-sealed.

Image	Description
	Eastern aspect of B1, photo taken facing south.
	Southern aspect of B1, located close to W1.

Image	Description
	Lifted roofing felt located along southern aspect.

Image	Description
Wall 1	
	Image 2: approximately 1 cm gap present on the northern elevation of the southern boundary wall.
	Photo of the cracks across the wall.



Figure 9: Plan showing Potential Roost Suitability