



**Preliminary Ecological Appraisal &
Preliminary Bat Roosting Assessment**

**134, High Street
Kimpton
SG4 8QP**

Updated June 2026

For and on behalf of:
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Harlington
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Date of Report

Updated June 2026

Declaration

This report has been produced endeavouring to follow the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct and ecological information has been provided in accordance with British Standards BS 42020 2013-Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development.

Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure this report accurately identifies potential ecological constraints to development or the likely presence or absence of species and the spatial and temporal use of the site by such species, it must only be viewed as a snap shot in time and reflects the ecological status of the site at the time of survey.

No liability can be assumed for ecological changes that may or may not occur on the surveyed site after the production of this report. The author of this report must be consulted as to the current applicability of the report if there are any seasonal delays in the use of this report.

This report can only be used for the purposes for which it was instructed and agreed at the time of commission.

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to detail the findings of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), a Preliminary Bat Roosting Assessment (PRA) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report, in support of a planning application to redevelop a site at 134, High Street, in Kimpton, Hertfordshire. Whilst detailed proposals are not currently available, provisional plans include demolishing the two existing buildings (a residential dwelling and a detached garage), to make way for the construction of two new residential dwellings.

The PEA concluded that the application site is comprised of just three common vegetative UKHab habitats: 828 Vegetated garden, h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow and 200 Individual Tree. These habitats are common locally and were found to be of, at most, Site value geographically and none were considered to be protected or Priority Habitats. As such, the predicted loss of the habitats within the application site are considered highly unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on important habitats.

The individual trees, hedgerows and shrubs of the vegetated garden were considered likely to have some limited potential ecological value to common species of nesting bird. Any tree/hedgerow/shrub removal will need to take place outside the bird nesting season or, if this is not practical, then mitigation measures will need to be implemented, to ensure nests that are occupied or being built are not damaged or destroyed. Additionally, the shrubs and hedgerow bases are also considered to potentially be of value to hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and so any redevelopment and/or removal of suitable habitat must consider their possible presence within the application site and appropriate care taken.

With regard to roosting bats, the main house within the application site is considered to be of high bat roosting potential. As such, further dusk roost emergence surveys are required to establish the building's potential use by bats. The main house is also considered to offer moderate winter non-classic hibernation potential and, as such, any demolition will need to follow certain mitigation measures to avoid harming any potentially over-wintering bats.

Using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, the proposals have been calculated to provide a biodiversity net gain of 14.80% in Habitat Units and 37.48% in Hedgerow Units. Trading Rules have been satisfied.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 A planning application is being prepared for the demolition of an existing single residential dwelling and a detached garage, followed by the construction of two new residential dwellings at a site known as 134, High Street, Kimpton, in Hertfordshire. At the time of writing this report, there are no detailed proposal plans available.
- 1.1.2 In support of this application, an ecological study of the site, hereafter referred to as the application site, has been carried out by ELMAW Consulting Ecological Consultants & Wildlife Managers and takes the form of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and a Preliminary Bat Roosting Assessment (PRA). Primarily both the PEA and PRA endeavour to identify whether the site supports or has the potential to support protected and Priority Species and Habitats. Where the potential has been identified, this report recommends further studies to ensure the status of the application site is established with confidence and that potential redevelopment constraints pertaining to important ecology are identified and assessed. Specifically, these constraints typically involve the provision of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and the protection and enhancement of protected and Priority Species and Habitats.
- 1.1.3 This ecological study has been commissioned by Architecture Studio 5, of Harlington in Bedfordshire, on behalf of the applicant. The site with which this study is concerned is referred to throughout this report as the application site.
- 1.1.4 The aerial photograph below indicates the indicative extent of the application site and show it in its geographical context.



1.1.5

Plate 1: Aerial photo with indicative application site boundary

1.1.6

The report's author is Ecologist Ms Jasmine Stephenson, who holds an Honours Bachelor of Science Degree and a Master of Science Degree in Animal Science, Wildlife Biology and Conservation and is an Accredited Agent on Mr Keith Seaman's Natural England Level 2 Bat Class Licence. Her professional qualifications include Associate Membership of The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM). Jasmine Stephenson also holds a Natural England Level 1 Class licence for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*).

2.0 Planning Policy and Legislation

2.1 Relevant National and Local Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) superseded Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9) in March 2012. The NPPF 2024 states that 'planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by', in part;

- Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

It also states that 'when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles';

- 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
- 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;
- 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
- 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.'

2.2 Local Plan Policies

2.2.1 The North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in November 2022 and is the current local level policy affecting the area in which the application site is located. The following policies may, in part, be of relevance to this study;

Policy SP12: Green infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity

'We will accommodate significant growth during the plan period whilst ensuring the natural environment is protected and enhanced. We will:

a) Protect, identify, manage and where possible enhance a strategic multi-functional network of green infrastructure;

b) Consider and respect landscape character, scenic beauty and locally sensitive features, particularly in relation to the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;

c) Protect, enhance and manage designated sites in accordance with the following hierarchy of designations and features:

- Internationally designated sites*
- Nationally designated sites*
- Locally designated sites;*
- Non-designated sites that include important habitats and species*

d) Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity networks including wildlife corridors, ancient woodlands and hedgerows, wetland and riverine habitats, Local Geological Sites, protected species, priority species and habitats, and non-designated sites of ecological value and ensure measurable net gains for biodiversity; and

e) Protect other open spaces and support provision of new and improved open space.'

2.3 *Legislation*

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

- 2.3.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 implement the EC Habitats Directive in the UK. These regulations mainly deal with the protection of sites that are important for nature conservation in a European context (eg Special Areas of Protection [SACs] and Special Protection Areas [SPAs]). The legislation also gives protection to certain species of flora and fauna.
- 2.3.2 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 make it an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb wild animals under Schedule 2 of the Regulations. It is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal (even if the animal is not present at the time).

Wildlife & Countryside Act (WCA)

- 2.3.3 The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, consolidates and amends existing national legislation to implement the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive).

Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act (NERC)

- 2.3.4 The NERC Act of 2006 places a duty on authorities to have due regard for biodiversity and nature conservation during the course of their operations. Section 41 of the Act identifies species and habitats considered Priority for conservation.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)

- 3.1.1 The PEA has been produced following the *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* 2017 (Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management). Habitats have been described, based on the UKHab classification methodology. In some circumstances habitat descriptions and mapping have been adapted to suit non-standard, site-specific conditions.
- 3.1.2 This PEA was carried out by the author's report Ms Jasmine Stephenson, Ecologist with ELMAW Consulting which included a walk-over survey on the 27th of February 2026, in suitable weather conditions. There were no restrictions over access for the habitat assessments over the entire application site.

3.2 Scoping for Protected & Priority Species

- 3.2.1 The habitat survey has been extended to include a scope of the application site's habitats as to their likely importance or potential to support protected or Priority Species and Habitats, as identified under the following legislation; the Habitats Regulations 2017, the Wildlife & Countryside Act (as amended) 1981, the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) Red and Amber Lists and the Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
- 3.2.2 Some species and species groups have been scoped out of this PEA because of the lack of biological records, limitations in geographical distribution and the absence of species-specific suitable habitat and connectivity within or adjacent to the application site. Only those protected and Priority Species and species groups deemed likely to be present on site or affected by the proposals have been included in this PEA.

3.3 Limitations for PEA

- 3.3.1 As to the reliability of the assessment for protected and Priority Species, it must be acknowledged that this PEA is based on the presence of suitable habitat, local biological records, geographical distribution and habitat connectivity to support protected and Priority Species and not on any qualitative species-specific surveys. Where the potential for protected and/or Priority Species has

been identified, further species-specific surveys are considered necessary to be confident of either a positive or negative conclusion as to the presence of protected species on site. Where a European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence is likely to be required, species survey data of the current season and year of the application are required by Natural England.

- 3.3.2 It is possible that certain flowering herbs and/or ephemerals may not have been recorded during the initial survey because of the limitations of the season (winter) and an extensive species list was not obtained however it is considered that the species characteristic to the habitats on site were recorded. The survey provides a snapshot of the application site and does not show seasonal differences. Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect the presence of plants and animals such as activity levels at times of year, weather, migration patterns, and behaviour. This report is not designed, nor is it required to, present a complete inventory of flora/fauna.
- 3.3.3 The study specifically addresses the issues of potential redevelopment constraints affecting protected and Priority Species and Habitats. This report provides generic, not project-specific recommendations, in the absence of any detailed redevelopment plans for the site.
- 3.3.4 Recommendations for mitigation and compensation of impacts on important ecology may need to be re-addressed and/or re-assessed once detailed site redevelopment plans are available.

3.4 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric

- 3.4.1 To calculate a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (November 2023) uses habitat as a proxy for wider biodiversity with different habitat types scored according to their relative biodiversity value. This value is then adjusted, depending on the condition and location of the habitat, to calculate 'biodiversity units' for the specific project or development. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric incorporates separate calculations for linear habitats that require a different method of measurement such as hedgerows and lines of trees, rivers and streams.

- 3.4.2 The Statutory Biodiversity Metric can be used to measure both on-site and off-site biodiversity changes for development and can be used to measure the change in biodiversity achieved by different land management interventions.
- 3.4.3 The Metric also accounts for some of the risks associated whenever new habitat is created or existing habitat is enhanced. The Metric calculates the change in biodiversity resulting from a development by subtracting the number of pre-intervention or 'baseline' biodiversity units (ie those originally existing on-site) from the number of post-intervention units (ie those projected to be provided after the development or change in land management).
- 3.4.4 In line with local and national planning policies, in order for the development to minimise impacts on biodiversity and to provide a biodiversity net gain, the quantifiable biodiversity value of habitats within the site have been measured, the site boundaries are defined and then divided into appropriate parcels, to establish the on-site habitat baseline. The habitat type and size of these parcels and the condition of the habitat the parcels contain are recorded. The metric uses industry standard methodologies for categorising habitats, carried out alongside routine ecological surveying. The biodiversity unit value of each habitat parcel is calculated. To determine the unit value of a habitat parcel, the metric assesses its 'quality'. The assessment of quality comprises four components: distinctiveness, condition, strategic significance and connectivity.

3.5 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA)

- 3.5.1 The specified and adopted methodology for this aspect of the application site's survey have been carried out following the guidelines published by The Bat Conservation Trust (Ref. 1).
- 3.5.2 It must be acknowledged however, that whilst we endeavour to follow these guidelines, we reserve the right to adapt the survey methodology where appropriate as the aforementioned guidelines state that they do not aim to override expert knowledge and experience and indicate that departure from or adaptation of their guidance based on site specific conditions and professional judgement is often appropriate.

- 3.5.3 In carrying out the PRA, equipment used included:
- Leica 10x42 BA Binoculars
 - Collapsible ladder
 - LEDLENSER P7R LED Torch
 - Clulite Dust Lamp SLA 12v
- 3.5.4 The buildings and trees within the application site have been assessed for bat roosting potential based, in part, on the following factors which potentially increase the likelihood of roosting bats; more favourable roosting conditions may include features such as:
- Records of bats in the locality
 - Surrounding bat feeding and foraging habitat
 - The presence of architectural features within the building such as roof voids, lofts/attics, bargeboards, soffits, lead-flashing, hanging tiles, cavity walls, weather boarding, mortice and tenon jointed roof timbers and ridge tiles and beams which may offer Potential Roosting Features (PRFs)
 - Lined clay tile or slate roofs
 - The presence of potential access points such as cracks, voids, crevices and flight openings
 - Complex roofs, orientations and wall elevations
 - Favourable internal environmental conditions and temperatures
- 3.5.5 The PRA (building inspection) was carried out on the 27th of February 2026, followed by an internal inspection of the loft space on the 9th of March 2026. They were carried out by Mr Keith Seaman who holds both a Natural England Level 2 bat Class Licence and a Bat Mitigation Class Licence and Ms Jasmine Stephenson, who is an Accredited Agent under Mr Keith Seaman's Level 2 Licence. (Licence numbers are available on request).
- 3.5.6 The potential for a building, tree or landscape to support roosting or commuting and foraging bats is based on a number of factors which, when taken accumulatively, will result in a subjectively low, moderate or high bat roosting potential valuation.

Bat Roosting Potential Table

Suitability Potential	Features considered important in the bat roosting assessment
Negligible or very low	No obvious PRFs, often found in areas of negligible or very low bat feeding, foraging and roosting habitat
Low	One or more PRFs which are more likely to be used by single or low numbers of opportunist or transient bats at any time of the year due to lack of space, shelter or appropriate conditions. Highly unlikely to be suitable for breeding or classic hibernation but may be used by non-classic hibernating individual bats
Moderate	Numerous PRFs that could be used by bats due to the size, space, shelter and conditions but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status such as maternity and classic hibernation
High	Numerous PRFs that support conditions that obviously favour higher numbers of bats, habitual roosting, breeding or classic hibernation of high conservation status, often found in association with high quality surrounding habitat.

3.6 *Limitations of PRA Survey*

- 3.6.1 It should be acknowledged that the results of the PRA of the buildings and trees are based on the presence of features, both physical and environmental, generally considered to increase the likelihood of roosting bats and not necessarily on the finding of roosting bats or direct indicative evidence such as bat droppings.
- 3.6.2 Whilst, in some circumstances, the bat roosting assessment can result in a positive conclusion as to the presence of roosting bats, further observational activity surveys may be considered necessary, to confirm any presence of roosting bats and to enable roost characterisation with any certainty. These surveys are carried out in accordance with industry standards and endeavour to establish the presence of bat roosts appropriate to the time of year when the surveys have been carried out. Surveys completed within the optimum period, as required by Natural England, endeavour to establish the presence of non-breeding summer roosts or important summer maternity roosts. Surveys carried out at this time of the year cannot, with any certainty, establish the

presence of spring/autumn transitory or winter roosts or seasonally occupied opportunist roosts by single or low numbers of bats.

- 3.6.3 The Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM) advises that where mobile species such as bats are concerned, this PRA is likely to be out of date within 12 - 18 months of reporting and will need updating.

3.7 Desk Study

- 3.7.1 Available biological records of protected and Priority Species and Habitats from a radius of 2km, henceforth known as the Zone of Influence (Zol), around the application site have been sourced from the Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre (HERC), on the 6th of February 2026. The results of the data search request were received on the 9th of February 2026. In addition, all international sites of nature conservation importance within a 10km Zol, nationally important sites within a 5km Zol and local sites within 2km Zol of the application site have been sourced.
- 3.7.2 Only species records from the last ten years have been included as it is considered that records older than this are not sufficiently recent to be relevant to this study.
- 3.7.3 Google earth aerial photographs and DEFRA's Magic Map Application images have been examined of the application site and surrounding landscape as have the relevant Ordnance Survey Explorer Maps at a 1:25,000 scale.

3.8 Determining Biodiversity Significance

- 3.8.1 The Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management in 2016 identified various ecological features and resources which are likely to be important in terms of biodiversity. These are likely to include habitats, species and species groups and ecological communities and are determined on the basis of a number of factors which include size, rarity, conservation status and geographical distribution. Assigning a biodiversity value on a geographical scale is based on the above principles and geographical value is assigned to

international, national/regional, county, district, parish/neighbourhood and site level only.

3.8.2 Geographical Range of Reference

Value Category	Site or Ecological Feature
International	All internationally important Sites or candidate/proposed Sites. Regularly occurring, nationally significant population of protected or internationally important species. A viable area of habitat type listed in Annex 1 of The Habitats Directive or smaller areas of such habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole
National/ Regional	SSSIs and other nationally designated Sites. A viable area of a priority habitat identified in the UKBAP or an area of such habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger area Regularly occurring, regionally or nationally significant population of European Protected Species or habitats Regularly occurring, locally significant population of a regionally or nationally important species.
County	County designated Sites (CWS) Other Sites with BAP priority habitats or species of appreciable value not included in the above. Regularly occurring, locally significant population of a County important species. Local Nature Reserves and other viable areas of key habitat identified in the County or LBAP.
District	Area of habitat identified in a District/Borough BAP and other natural or semi-natural Sites of significant biodiversity. Regularly occurring, locally significant population of a District/Borough important species during a critical stage of its life cycle.
Parish/Neighbourhood	Areas of habitat considered to appreciably enrich the local habitat resource within approximately 2km of the application site, parish or neighbourhood.
Site level only	Sites with limited biodiversity, providing some biodiversity enrichment at project site only.

3.8.3 The valuation, levels of geographical importance and significance have been determined following the guidance of the CIEEM in the *Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK 2018* (updated 2019) and the *Handbook of Biodiversity Methods. Survey, Evaluation and Monitoring 2005* and have been tabulated and appended to this report.

3.8.4 The baseline conditions of the application site have been determined for the year 2026.

4.0 Resulting Baseline Ecological Conditions

4.1 Designated Sites

- 4.1.1 There are no statutory international or national sites of nature conservation importance within their respective Zol's of the application site.
- 4.1.2 There are 15 non-statutory local sites, all designated Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs), within a 2km Zol of the application site. The closest of these is Meadow South of Park Farm (ref. 42/040), located approximately 630m north-east of the application site, which is designated for its species-rich unimproved grassland. None of these local sites are considered to have any habitat connectivity to the application site at this time.

4.2 Habitats

- 4.2.1 The application site, situated in the large village of Kimpton, is surrounded by arable farmland, roads and neighbouring residences. It is comprised of areas of u1b Developed land; sealed surface, two u1b5 Buildings and three vegetated UKHab habitats:
- 828 Vegetated garden
 - 200 Individual tree
 - h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- 4.2.2 The vegetated garden is comprised primarily of unmanaged front and rear lawned areas, with several introduced shrubs within and along the borders of the garden areas with a few small trees planted throughout. The vegetated garden is considered to offer limited value to wildlife due to its restricted extent, limited species diversity and lack of wider habitat connectivity. However, it may potentially offer some value to low numbers of common nesting birds and small mammals such as hedgehogs, within or under the garden shrubs. In its current state, the vegetated garden habitat is considered to be of Site level value only. (Vegetated garden is not condition-assessed for BNG under the Statutory Biodiversity Metric).



Plates 2 & 3: The front and rear garden areas, with introduced shrub

- 4.2.3 There are three trees within the garden (classified separately from vegetated garden due to their diameter at breast height [DBH] measuring >30cm) – a single *leylandii*-type tree and two beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) trees. None of these trees were found to contain any potential bat roosting features (PRFs) and are considered to only offer limited potential value to low numbers of nesting birds. They are collectively considered to be of Site level value only at this time. Their BNG condition-assessment scores are tabulated below:

Tree no.	Species	Size	Condition	Criteria passed
T1	Beech	Medium	Moderate	A, B, F
T2	Beech	Medium	Moderate	A, B, E, F
T3	Conifer	Medium	Moderate	B, C, F



Plate 4: One of the trees within the application site

- 4.2.4 There are two hedgerows within the application site – hedgerow H1 along the entire western boundary of the site and hedgerow H2, along part of the eastern application site boundary. Both hedgerows are considered to be ornamental hedgerows due to their species composition (dominated by ornamental native species) and artificial origins; whilst these hedgerows are considered to offer some potential value to species such as nesting birds and sheltering hedgehogs, their value is limited by their short extent. As such, these

ornamental hedgerows are considered to be of Site level value only. This hedgerow type is automatically condition-assessed as poor under BNG.

4.3 **Species and Species Groups**

Plants

- 4.3.1 There is a single protected species of plant recorded within a 2km Zol of the application site – the bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*). Bluebells, which are typically found in shaded ancient woodlands and along assart hedgerows, would not be considered likely to be found within the garden habitat of the site. Due to the typical artificial planting of residential gardens, it is considered highly unlikely that the application site would support any protected and/or Priority Species of plant at this time.

Invertebrates

- 4.3.2 There are three species of butterfly, nine species of moth and a single species of beetle – the stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*) – recorded within the 2km Zol of the application site. The application site supports very little suitable habitat for invertebrates and is not considered to be important to large assemblages of important invertebrate species at this time.

Herpetofauna (Amphibians & Reptiles)

- 4.3.3 Whilst there are no records of any reptile species within the 2km Zol within the last ten years, there is a single record of a single species of protected amphibian recorded within 2km Zol of the application site – the great crested newt. This record is over 1km from the site, far beyond the typical dispersal distance of this species. Additionally, there are no waterbodies that could support breeding amphibians within the application site, with the closest pond located approximately 250m to the south-west.
- 4.3.4 Whilst the application site is considered to be on the edge of the typical 250m dispersal distance, the very limited terrestrial habitat connecting this pond to the site would require great crested newts (GCNs) to travel at least 370m to reach the application site were they found to be present within the pond. As this is considered far beyond a typical range of distance for this species, along with the site supporting a very limited extent of potential terrestrial habitat, the

application site is considered highly unlikely to support GCNs or any other important amphibian or reptile species, at this time.

Birds

- 4.3.5 There are 60 specially protected and/or Priority Species of bird recorded within the 2km Zol, within the last ten years. Of these, only a low number would be considered likely to be using the habitats and buildings within the application site, including house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*), dunnoek (*Prunella modularis*) and starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*).
- 4.3.6 Whilst the vegetative habitats are only considered likely to be suitable for low numbers of common nesting birds, within the introduced shrub, hedgerows and trees, the main house is considered to have some potential for supporting Priority Species of bird that typically nest in buildings – starlings and house sparrows. Whilst no evidence of nesting birds was observed during the PRA of the residential building, the building survey was carried out before the nesting bird season had started and, as such, the building's potential for supporting these species cannot be precluded at this time.

Other Important Mammals

- 4.3.7 There are records of badger, brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*) and hedgehog from within the 2km Zol. Of these, the application site is only considered to potentially support hedgehogs, which have been recorded within the village of Kimpton and are known to exploit vegetative features within residential gardens. As such, the presence of hedgehogs cannot be precluded, and they should be assumed likely to be present within the garden area of the application site, unless proved otherwise.

Bats

- 4.3.8 There are four species of bat recorded within the 2km Zol, within the last ten years: common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*P. pygmaeus*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) and Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*).
- 4.3.9 The habitats surrounding the application site do provide some potential foraging and feeding habitat, primarily those found to the north. The hedgerows bordering the western and northern boundaries of the site provide

some connectivity to areas of mature trees and connects to hedgerows, albeit quite heavily managed in areas, around parts of the neighbouring arable field, providing some potential commuting habitat to the wider landscape.

- 4.3.10 There are two buildings within the application site – the main house and a detached garage in the rear garden – which have both been assessed as to their potential to support roosting bats.

4.4 Preliminary Bat Roosting Assessment

Building No.	Building Description	Exterior Potential Roosting Features (PRFs)	Interior Potential Roosting Features	Indicative Roosting Evidence
B1 – Detached Garage	Single-storey detached garage Exterior - Unlined concrete walls (paneled) - Pitched area at top of gable - unlined weatherboarding - Pitched unlined corrugated composite cement roof - Timber-framed windows and doors with hinged garage doors on south-eastern elevation - Barge boarding on gables - Composite cement ridge tiles Interior - Steel frame - No ridge beam	None		None observed
			None	None observed

B1 ROOSTING POTENTIAL: Negligible

B1 Photographs:



Plates 5 & 6: Photographs of the exterior & interior of the detached garage

B2 – Main House	Two-storey residential dwelling, currently unoccupied Exterior - Brick-built walls – upper half rendered - Pitched roof with clay tiles and hipped gables - Box soffits - Clay ridge and hip tiles - Lead flashing around chimneys - Single-storey catslide on northern elevation	Gaps and crevices in brickwork Few gaps under hip tiles Gaps leading into voids above window lintels/under box soffits (both northern and southern elevations)	None	None observed
	Interior – roof space - Unlined roof - Modern timber framing			None observed
B2 ROOSTING POTENTIAL: High				
B2 Photographs:				
				
				
Plates 7 - 10: Photographs of the exterior and interior of the main house, including one of the PRFs identified above the window lintel.				

Non-Classic Hibernation Roosting Potential

- 4.4.1 The main house, found to be of potentially high value for summer bat roosting, is also considered to be of moderate winter hibernation potential, with winter use by low numbers of bats considered possible. Though the PRA found no evidence of roosting bats at the time of survey, the building was found to support features which may potentially lead into the cavity walls (identified above the window lintels on both the northern and southern elevations), which may provide environmental conditions suitable for use as a 'non-classic' hibernation site for over-wintering bats.

4.1 Results of Biodiversity Metric Calculations

On-Site Habitats Baseline:

Habitat	Area (ha)	Condition	Habitat Units
Vegetated garden	0.06	Condition Assessment N/A	0.12
Developed land, sealed surface	0.03	N/A - Other	0.00
Individual trees	0.0489	Moderate	0.39
Total Baseline Habitat Units			0.51

Site Habitat Retained

Habitat type	Area (ha) retained	Habitat Condition
Individual trees	0.0489	Moderate

Site Hedge Baseline

Hedgerow No.	Hedgerow Type	Length (km)	Habitat Condition	Habitat Units
1	Hedge - ornamental non-native	0.078	Automatically poor	0.08
2	Hedge – ornamental non-native	0.025	Automatically poor	0.03
Total Baseline Hedgerow Units				0.10

Site Hedgerows Retained

Hedgerow No.	Hedgerow Type	Length (km) retained	Habitat Condition	Habitat Units Retained
1	Hedge - ornamental non-native	0.078	Automatically poor	0.08
2	Hedge – ornamental non-native	0.025	Automatically poor	0.03

5.0 Ecological Evaluation, Redevelopment Constraints and Conclusion

- 5.1.1 The application site is not a designated site of nature conservation importance nor is it considered to have any habitat connectivity to any important sites of this designation. Therefore, whilst there are no detailed proposals at this current time, the proposed redevelopment is deemed highly unlikely to have a significant adverse impact upon important sites at this time.
- 5.1.2 The application site, which consists of areas of hardstanding, two buildings, and three vegetative habitats, does not contain any habitats that would be considered to be of significant ecological value, with the vegetated garden, ornamental hedgerow and individual trees considered to be of Site level value only. As such, their potential loss through redevelopment is not considered to have a significant adverse impact upon important habitats at this time.
- 5.1.3 With regard to protected and/or Priority Species, redevelopment is considered to potentially impact upon low numbers of nesting birds, possibly roosting bats and/or sheltering hedgehogs. For the predicted loss of bird nesting habitat, its removal must consider the presence of these species and be done at the appropriate time of year and/or with the proper mitigation measures in place to prevent unlawful disturbance.
- 5.1.4 In addition, the vegetated gardens should be assumed, based on local records, to be used by hedgehogs – a Priority Species. Measures will be taken during construction to avoid the risk of injury to hedgehogs travelling through the site. This will be achieved by ensuring all open trenches and/or pits are either covered at night or a mammal ladder provided and installed each night, to allow mammal species to escape, should they fall in. Post-development features for this species will be incorporated into the proposed landscape design. This is likely to include ecological enhancements such as a hedgehog 'pop-holes' in the fences of the gardens, to allow hedgehogs free movement around the site and its environs, post-development.
- 5.1.5 It is reported that both the buildings are likely to be demolished to make way for the proposed redevelopment. Based on the results of the PRA, the main house was found to have a high bat roosting potential. As such, further bat roost emergence surveys are required, prior to the determination of planning,

to establish the bat roosting status of the main house. The main house is also considered to be of moderate wintering bat roosting potential; as such, any demolition will need to adhere to certain mitigation measures, including only working above certain temperatures and in good environmental conditions.

5.2 Biodiversity Net Gain

5.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 requires local planning authorities, when determining planning applications, to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by; (among other things); “minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity....”

5.2.2 The proposed plans for the application have been received and areas provided for habitats and lengths of new hedgerow planting provided.

Site Habitat Creation	Area (ha)	Habitat Condition	Habitat Units
Developed land, sealed surface	0.03	N/A - Other	0.00
Vegetated garden	0.06	Condition Assessment N/A	0.12
Urban trees	0.0285	Poor	0.08
Total	0.09ha		0.20

Site Hedge Creation

Site Hedge Creation	Length (km)	Habitat Condition	Habitat Units
Native hedgerow	0.02	Poor	0.04
Total	0.02		0.04

5.2.3 Using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric, the proposals have been calculated to provide a biodiversity net gain of 14.80% in Habitat Units and 37.48% in Hedgerow Units and Trading Rules have been satisfied.

5.2.1 The proposed biodiversity net gain measures are specific to this particular project and will form part of the design scheme for the application site. Their inclusion will ensure compliance with the NPPF and local planning policies. Should the design of the scheme change before being finalised, these measures may need to be reviewed.

5.3 Further Surveys

Roosting Bats

- 5.3.1 Following Natural England's guidelines (Ref. 5), buildings considered to have a high bat roosting potential should have a minimum of three evening emergence activity surveys at the appropriate time of year - between May and September, with at least two of these surveys conducted between May and August. As the main house is considered to have high roosting potential, further surveys are required to establish the presence of roosting bats within the entirety of the building, at the appropriate time of year. Should roosting bats be confirmed as present within the building, a Mitigation Strategy will be required and a Natural England mitigation licence obtained, before its demolition.

Nesting Birds

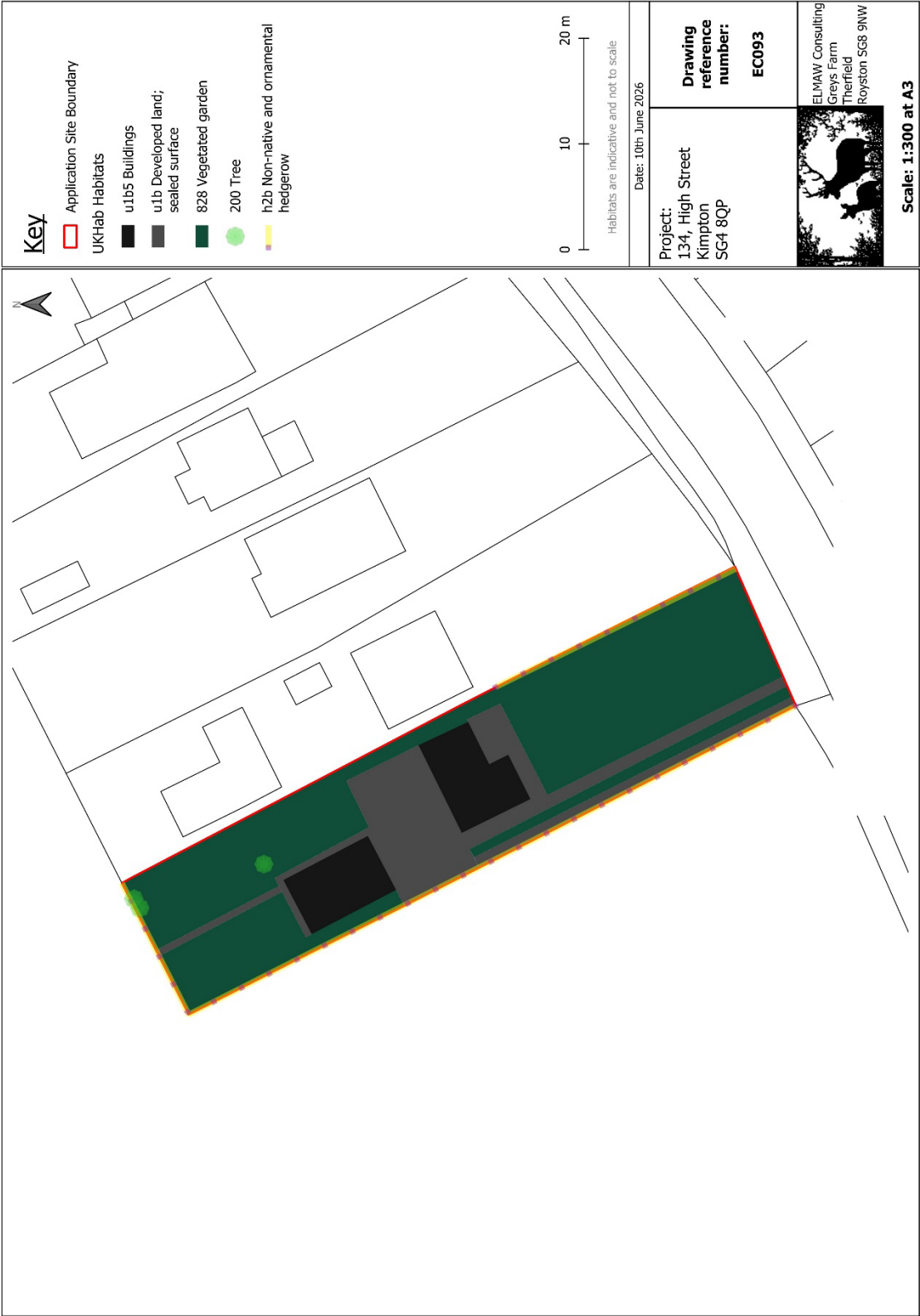
- 5.3.2 In the UK, all wild birds, their nests, and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, making it illegal to intentionally take, damage, or destroy a nest while it is in use or being built, or to harm or kill wild birds or their eggs. Additionally, in the case of specially protected bird species, it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed under Schedule 1 while it is building a nest, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.
- 5.3.3 If carried out during the bird nesting season (between the months of March and August inclusive), any tree, hedgerow or shrub removal/works will only proceed once a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist has checked the affected trees, hedgerows and shrubs and deemed them free of an occupied nest or a nest being built. Should the ecologist confirm either a nest being built, or a nest which is occupied, within the affected area or within a close enough distance to likely be affected by the removal work, works will not be carried out on the affected areas until the ecologist has confirmed that the nest has been vacated naturally, following checks.
- 5.3.4 If work is being carried out outside the bird nesting season, these mitigation measures do not apply.

6.0 References

- Ref.1 Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management.
2017 Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Ref. 2 Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management.
2017 Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing
- Ref. 3 Joint Nature Conservation Committee. 2010. *Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey* Revised re-print
- Ref. 4 UK Habitat Working Group (2018). *UK Habitat Classification*
- Ref. 5 Bat Conservation Trust. *2023 Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines 4th Edition*, Bat Conservation Trust, London
- Ref. 6 Altringham, J.D. (2003). *British Bats*. HarperCollins Publishers. London.
- Ref. 7 Reason, PF and Wray, S. (2023), *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines*, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.
- Ref. 8 Joint Nature Conservation Committee. (2004), *Bat Workers' Manual*, JNCC, Peterborough.
- Ref. 9 Sewell D, Griffiths RA, Beebee TJC, Foster J and Wilkinson JW 2013 *Survey Protocols for the British Herpetofauna Version 1.0*
- Ref. 10 Rose F 2006 *The Wildflower Key* Fredrick Warne & Co.
- Ref. 11 Hubbard CE, 1992 *Grasses 3rd Edition* Penguin Books

7.0 Appendix 1

7.1 Habitat Map



8.0 Appendix 2

8.1 Botanical Species List

UKHab Habitat Type	Species Recorded
828 Vegetated garden	• Common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>) • Dandelion (<i>Taraxacum agg.</i>) • Perennial rye grass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>) • White clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>) • Yarrow (<i>Achillia millefolium</i>)
200 Tree	• Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>) • <i>Leylandii</i> sp.
h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	• Ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) • Beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>) • Hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) • Hazel (<i>Corylus sp.</i>) • Holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>) • Norway maple (<i>Acer platanooides</i>) • Privet (<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>)

9.0 Appendix 3 - Legislation

9.1 Birds

- 9.1.1 Legislation covering bird protection includes; The Birds Directive (1979), the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside & Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000.
- 9.1.2 A number of British birds are UK Priority Species for Conservation and Species of Principal Importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. The protection of UK BAP Priority Species and Species of Principal Importance is implemented through NPPF and Local Planning Policy.
- 9.1.3 All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law and it is thus an offence (with certain exceptions), to:
- intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird
 - intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built
 - intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird
 - intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

9.2 Bats

- 9.2.1 All bats and their roosts in the UK are protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- 9.2.2 In England the legislation makes it illegal to;
- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat,
 - Deliberately disturb a bat which is likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or reproduce, rear or nurture their young, hibernate, migrate or affect significantly their local distribution or abundance
 - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat
 - Possess, control, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale or exchange any live or dead bat or any part of a bat

9.2.3 Bats' roosts (including resting places) are protected whether or not bats are present at the time. The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) additionally makes it an offence to;

- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat at a roost
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a roost

9.2.4 Finally, under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, a duty is placed on all public bodies to promote and enhance biodiversity in all its functions. There is a general biodiversity duty in the NERC Act (Section 40) which requires every public body in the exercising of its functions to 'have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'. Section 41 draws up lists of species of principal importance to which special attention must be given and a number of bats are included in this list.