



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

The Red House,
78 High Street, Codicote,
SG4 8XD

Client:	bchitecture		
Planning Application No.:			
Date:	April 2026		
Revision:	Author:	Proof:	Approved:
00	Kenneth Coyne CMLI		Kenneth Coyne CMLI

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Coyne Environmental Ltd has been instructed to undertake an ecological study of The Red House, 78 High Street, Codicote, SG4 8XD to find if there is any ecology of importance for a planning application to be submitted. The proposal is for an outdoor terrace, as part of the renovation of this existing historic café.
- 1.2 To assess the ecology of the site it is proposed that a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) assessment be prepared. This will assist the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on what environmental studies may be required when determining the application or which may be appropriately dealt with by a suitably worded planning condition.
- 1.3 From the survey and analysis, it will be possible to review the proposals to ascertain what ecological measures are needed to achieve a satisfactory result for the Site. The PEA will enable the LPA to consider the impact of the proposal on the environment. It can then discharge its legal obligations under the “Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2018) and any” Outline Mitigation and Compensation Strategy” if required.
- 1.4 I am a qualified Ecologist, with over 40 years’ experience in the environmental field. The site survey was carried out on the 31.03.26. This was conducted in the daytime, in good weather (12C), calm, cloudy conditions.



2 LOCATION

- 2.1 The site is in the centre of the village, in north Hertfordshire ,11 km south of Hitchin,. Codicote (pop.3586-2011) was a small market town between the C13-C16 centuries. First recoded in 1002 it was recorded in Domesday, with two mills. The parish church of St Giles was built in the C12. Affected badly by the Black Death with the market dissolved in 1539. In 1726 the Welwyn Turnpike Trust improved Codicote High Street as part of the link to the Great North Road.
- 2.2 Codicote lies on a Chalk ridge on the dip slope of the Chiltern Hills (AONB). The highest parts of the parish lie in the north and east, most of which is over 120m above sea level. The River Mimram (chalk stream) flows to the south-west of the village; with this part of its valley is known as Codicote Bottom.

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- 3.3 The Red House is a café, currently closed for refurbishment. It is proposed to convert the rear garden into an outdoor extension of the catering. This is a two-storey extended, brick building with pan tiled roofs and is on the edge of the Conservation Area (CA). In the garden is a single storey brick shed and tiled roof.
- 3.3 This is a Listed Building (LB), NGR:TL2154818263, formerly a house, shop and office, with C17 timber framed core, early C18 red brick exterior, plain tiled roof, floor band. Two storeys with hipped roof and original oak crossbar windows with square leaded lights, on the first floor. Ridge chimney stack with joined square shafts. C18 brick and timber frame lean-to at rear forming catslide roof.
- 3.4 A full Phase 1 Habitat Survey was not deemed necessary as the Site appeared to be one with average habitats for the area or ecology of importance. A Walkover Ecological Survey has therefore been undertaken using the methodology set out in UK Habitat Classification User Manual. However, if the survey identifies any wildlife of significance, measures will be taken as set out in the UK Habitat Classification User Manual (2018) and CIEEM Guidelines (2017). Images taken on the site visit have been included within the appendices section of this report.

4 AREA DESIGNATION

- 4.1 Management and protection of biodiversity within the UK planning system is set out through European and UK legislation. The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) is the main protection for wildlife. There is also legislation for specific species, Protection of Badgers Act 1992, EU Habitats and Birds Directive and more general guidance, EU Biodiversity Strategy 2011-2020. This study and report have also considered BS 42020 (2013) Biodiversity -Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

5 ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 As the proposal does not affect the buildings, an internal inspection of the structure was not required. External areas were inspected, with no signs of bat droppings or scratchings, urine stains, on possible entry points. Therefore, in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trusts Bat Surveys, Good Practice Guidelines, the site is assessed as **negligible** as a bat roost and no further surveys will be needed.

5.2 Although no evidence of nesting birds was identified on the boundary hedge, during the site visit, nesting birds may utilise the vegetation during the breeding season. Therefore, if any works are proposed for any vegetation, it should be carried out outside of the nesting season (March to August inclusive).

5.3 There is no water on site, so amphibians including Great Crested Newts (GCN) will not be encountered. The site could support hedgehogs (Priority Species) so permeable fencing, as an ecological enhancement, to improve connectivity is recommended. The Site was deemed unlikely to support wildlife generally. Subsequently, no further ecological surveys are required.

5.4 Developed land; sealed surface [u1b]:

Present on the proposed development Site is a historic detached, two-storey commercial building (B1). This featured a hipped roof structure laid with clay roof and ridge tiles. A chimney stack present at the centre of the structure's elevation. There are two large windows on the front elevation and a small extension. Most of the windows and doors are still wooden. A small shed is situated at the rear of the property (B2)

4.5 The small garage (B3), at the end of the garden, is a modern, single storey brick structure with tiled roof and wooded windows and door. All appear in reason condition. This is not being affected by the proposal. However, openings and windowsills were inspected for any evidence of bats. Nothing was found.

5.6 Modified grassland [g4]:

Most of the Site consisted of rough ground, no longer maintained. Sparce areas of perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) were the main grass species within this with a little creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), and ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*).

Several piles of brash, log and/or soil heaps was present amongst the rough grass, at the side boundary wall. These were inspected for any evidence of animals, using discarded materials, as refugia sites. Nothing was found

5.7 Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface [u1c].

There is a large concrete pad at the rear of the building, acting as an informal terrace. This leads out to a concrete path and a second out to the garage. Both are in poor condition.

5.8 Hedge [h2]:

There is an informal hedge on the roadside boundary near the garage. This is of privet and has not been managed for some time. No evidence of bird nesting or any being made. It is therefore of little ecological value.

6 ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION & RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 Two bird and two bat boxes should be erected in agreed locations. The bat boxes should be placed 3 – 5 metres high, bird boxes ideally approximately 3 metres high and small-hole boxes between 1 – 3 metres above ground. These should be placed with consideration to prevailing wind and strong sunlight and must provide clear access routes for bats and birds.
- 6.2 Gaps within any new proposed boundary fencing will also be of use to wildlife such as hedgehogs attempting to commute across the locale.
- 6.3 Any proposed planting should be of native trees, shrubs and hedgerows, especially fruit bearing trees, will be of great benefit to wildlife.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Coyne Environmental Ltd has been instructed to undertake an ecology study of The Red House, 78 High Street, Codicote, SG4 8XD to find if there is any ecology of to find if there are any potential for protected species or sensitive habitats on Site, prior to assessing the application for development.
- 7.2 There were no other major ecological concerns with the survey Site. Ecological enhancements have been recommended. These will increase the biodiversity of the site and area generally.
- 7.3 With these recommendations I consider this Report would satisfy North Herts District Council for information on ecology and biodiversity and the impact on wildlife, EPS in particular. On this basis the application can be submitted to the LPA for determination.

REFERENCES

Site Plan

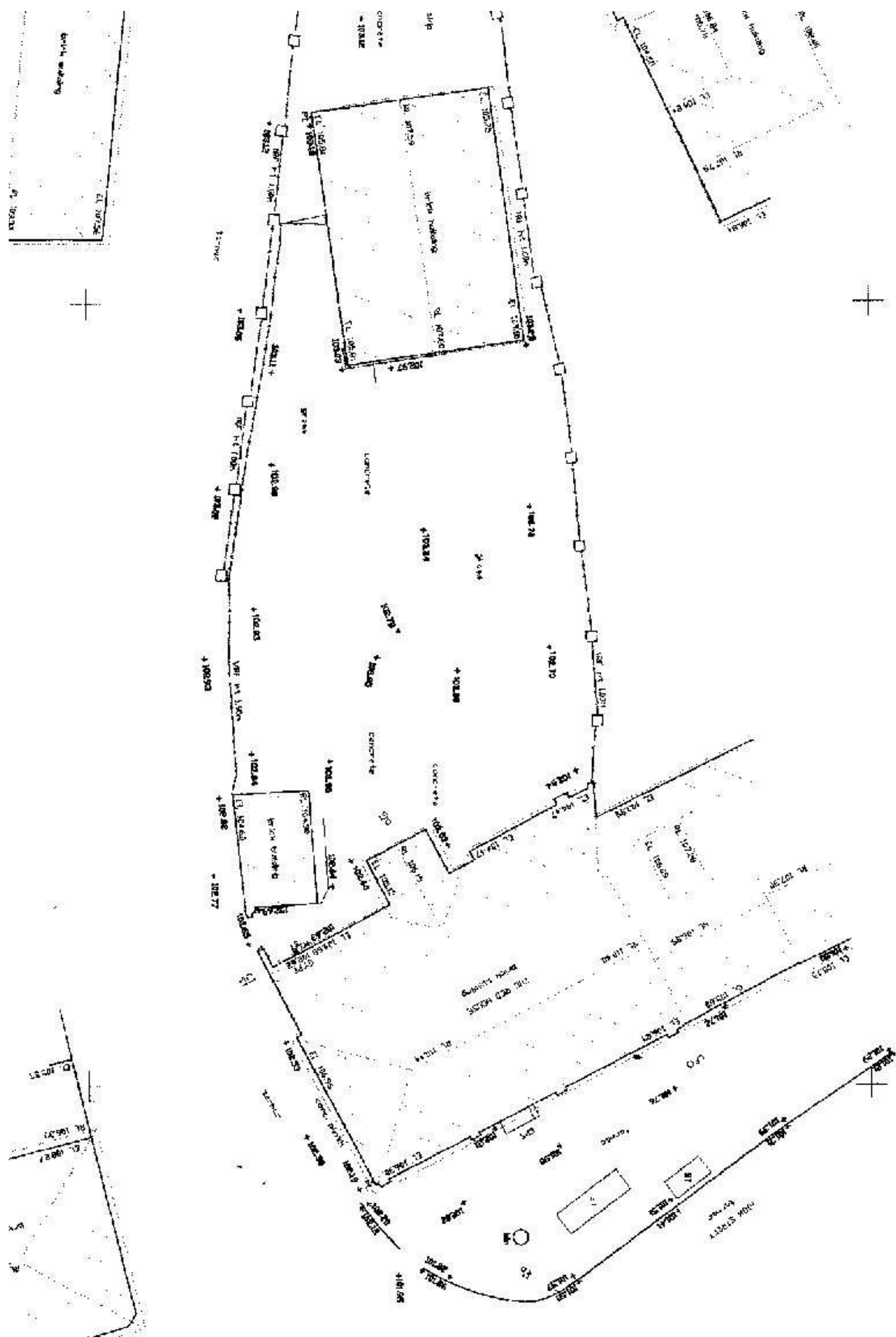
Proposal Plan

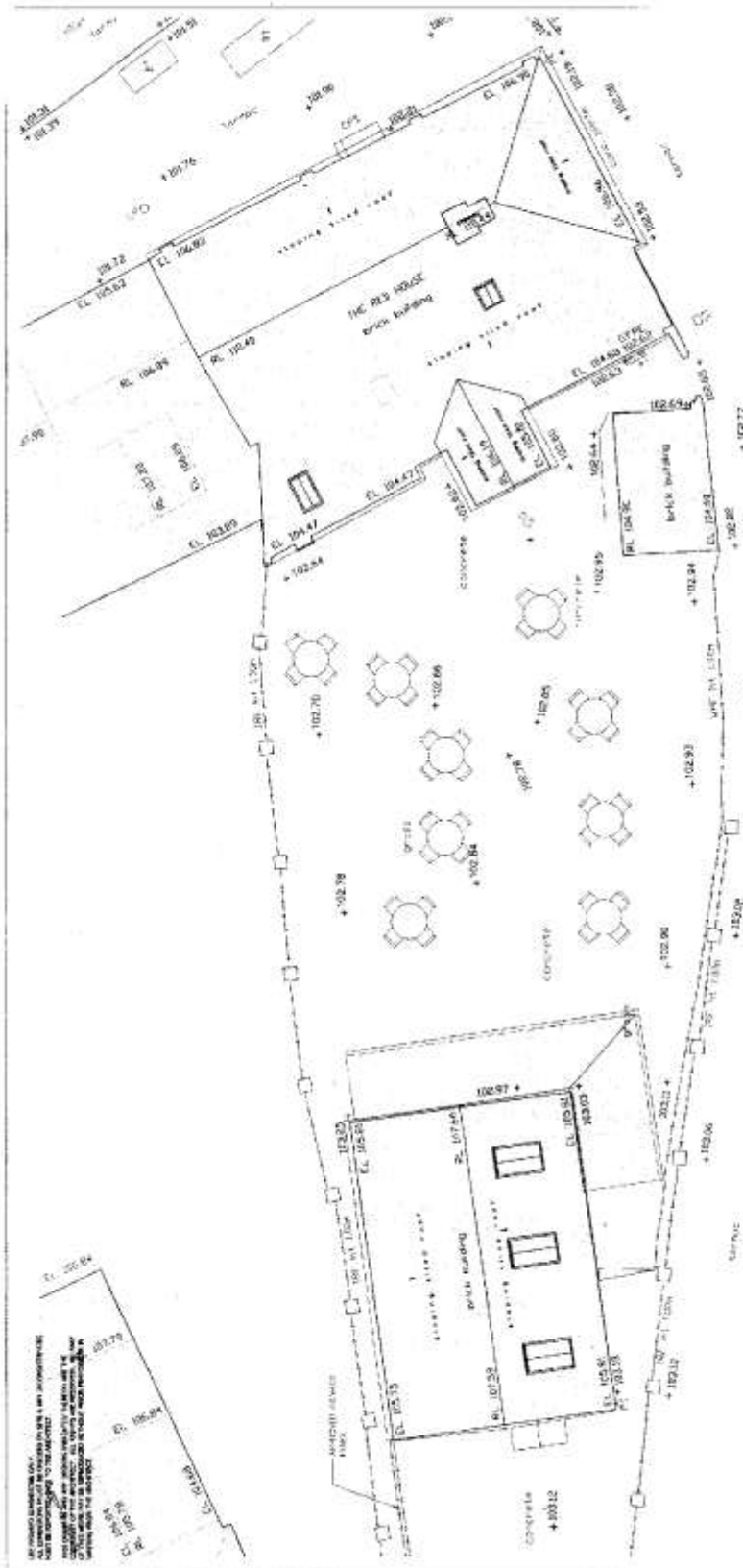
Base Habitat Plan

Photograph Gallery

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)

BS 42020 (2013) Biodiversity -Code of practice for planning and development.





PHOTOGRAPHIC GALLERY



