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Report prepared for: Robin Blake

For the Site of: Land At the Corner Of Protea Way And, Pixmore Avenue, Letchworth
Garde SG6 1JT

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Cherryfield Ecology has prepared this report for the named clients' use only.

Ecological reports are limited in shelf life, Natural England usually expect reports for licences to be from the most recent or current season, e.g. May 2024 to May 2025 for bats. Therefore, should the project not proceed within 12 months of this report an updated survey should be undertaken in order to check for changes that may have occurred on site. Information is believed to be accurate at the time of the survey; recommendations are made without bias based on good practice guidelines within the industry. However, species presence and ecological parameters can change over time.

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Ecological Appraisal (EA)

0.0 Non-Technical Summary

0.1 Background

This report follows national guidelines JNCC (2010) and UKHab's (2023) allowing for a daytime inspection and recommends for further surveys if considered necessary. If a deviation from the guidelines has been made, this will be detailed in the Method Section.

The following report details the findings and recommendations for the site of land At the Corner Of Protea Way And, Pixmore Avenue, Letchworth Garde SG6 1JT .

The client commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake an EA as the proposals include for the construction of commercial units and associated features.

Plans have been provided (Appendix I)

0.2 Results and Findings

The site consists of other neutral grassland, tall forbs, bramble scrubs, hardstanding and urban trees. No protected species or evidence of protected species were found on site at the time of the survey.

The site provides **low** potential for badgers due to the mounds within the tall forbs that cover the site, which may provide suitable sett building habitat, but limited suitable habitat in the surrounding area.

The site provides **low** potential for Great Crested Newt (GCN) due to the site being located within a green zone according to Natural England and the nearest waterbody being located ~575m east on the other side of an industrial estate, but the site provides suitable terrestrial habitat in the form of tall forbs and bramble scrub.

The site provides **moderate** potential for reptiles due to the suitable habitats found on site in the form of bramble scrub and tall forbs.

The site provides **negligible** potential for roosting bats due to the lack of potential roosting features on the trees.

The introduced shrub and hedgerow habitats provide **moderate** potential for breeding birds.

The site provides **negligible** potential for other protected species due to the lack of suitable habitat onsite.

0.3 Impact Assessment and Recommendations

Badger - No further surveys are necessary; however, if any badger setts are found throughout works, all works must stop, and advice sought.

Bats - No further surveys are necessary; however, if bats are found throughout works, all works must stop, and advice sought.

Breeding Birds - No further surveys are recommended; however, the development should take place outside the nesting season (March to August). If this is not possible, it is recommended that a qualified ecologist is on-site to ensure the building/vegetation is not occupied by breeding birds, prior to demolition/clearance. Should an occupied nest be found, a buffer zone would need to be created until the nest is no longer in use.

Great Crested Newt (GCN) - **Unlicensed Method Statement**

Habitat that is being affected is not suitable for GCN, although habitat in the surrounding area is, therefore an unlicensed method statement will be required, please refer to section 4.

Reptiles - **Presence/ likely absence surveys** for reptiles are required to establish if any reptile species are using the site. These will be undertaken between the months of March and October. Bitumen tiles will be placed across the site in week one and will then be checked once a week over a seven-week period, in suitable weather (9°C to 18°C, no rain, little winds and sunny).

Other protected species - No further survey is necessary; however, if any other protected species are found on site, all works must stop, and advice sought.

Habitats - All habitats found are common and widespread, no impacts are foreseen.

The findings outlined in this report are valid for one year, after which updated surveys will be required.

Enhancements and mitigation are recommended (please see Section 4.4 for further details).

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Aim

The aim of this report is to inform of ecological constraints that may affect the development proposals and recommend to the client if further surveys are required for protected species. An impact assessment is undertaken at this stage; however, if further surveys are required, additional and unexpected impacts may result. The information within this report can be used as the baseline for any Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) metric requirements, however, the calculations are not included within this report.

1.2 Background Information

The client, Robin Blake, has commissioned Cherryfield Ecology to undertake an EA for the site of Land At the Corner Of Protea Way And, Pixmore Avenue, Letchworth Garde SG6 1JT . Planning permission is being sought for the construction of commercial units and associated features.

This survey has checked all habitats, buildings, trees (from ground level only) or structures due to be affected by the proposals on site; it includes checking for protected species, signs of protected species or habitat value e.g. crevices, badger setts, ponds etc. as well as mapping the habitats on site.

The inspection was conducted on 30/07/2024.

The survey can only ever provide a ‘snapshot’ of the site at the time of the survey and circumstances may change following this report. Health and Safety restrictions or obstructions may limit the ability to find evidence.

Biological records have been requested to give the report context and allow a study of the surrounding area. The information is often sensitive and therefore a synopsis is provided.

The survey can be conducted year-round with the optimal period between mid-March and mid-October (south)/1st April and 30th September (north). However, it can be limited due to bad weather and in the winter, when some species are not as active,

thus evidence and species are often not found. During these periods, habitat value (likely presence) becomes more important to the assessment of the site.

Summary of legislation and National Planning Policy that protects wildlife in England:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as amended.
- Countrywide and Rights of Way Act 2000.
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
- National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”).
- Circular 06/05.

This legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture a protected species.
- Deliberately disturb a protected species, whether at rest or not.
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to a resting place.
- Possess or transport a protected species or any part of that species, unless acquired legally.
- Sell, barter or exchange a protected species, or any part of a species.

1.3 Species Specific Information

All UK-protected species have the same protection and the detail under Bats also applies to GCN, Dormouse, Otters and the two UK-protected reptiles.

1.3.1 Breeding Birds

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) 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. Furthermore, a number of birds enjoy further protection under that Act and are listed on Schedule 1 of the Act. These further protected birds are also protected from disturbance and it may be necessary to operate a “no-go” buffer zone around such nests - typically out to 5m.

1.3.2 Bats

All 18 species of bat common in the UK (17 known to be breeding) are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) 1981 through inclusion in Schedule V of the Act. All bat species in the UK are also included in Schedule II of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, which transpose Annex II of the Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (“Habitats Directive”) which defines United Kingdom protected species of animals.

Bats species are afforded further protection by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

This combined legislation makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats.
- Deliberately disturb bats, whether at roost or not.
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts.
- Possess or transport bats, unless acquired legally.
- Sell, barter or exchange bats.

1.3.3 Reptiles

There are six species of reptiles in Great Britain (Edgar *et al.*, 2010) and four of these are commonly found; the Barred Grass Snake *Natrix helvetica*, Adder *Vipera berus*, Common Lizard *Zootoca vivipara* and Slow Worm *Anguis fragilis*.

All native British species of reptiles are legally protected through their inclusion in Schedule V of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. As such, all species are protected from deliberate killing or injury. Therefore, where development is permitted, and there will be a significant change in land use, a reasonable effort must be undertaken to avoid committing an offence. The same act makes the trading of native reptile species a criminal offence without appropriate licensing.

Two species of reptile; the Smooth Snake *Coronella austriaca* and Sand Lizard *Lacerta agilis* are further protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species

(Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, which defines UK protected species of animals (“rare reptiles”).

1.3.4 Badgers

Badger *Meles meles* and its habitat are protected under The Protection of Badgers Act 1992, Schedule V of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and Appendix III of the Bern Convention 1979.

This legislation makes it an offence to:

- Kill, injure, take or possess a badger.
- Interfere with, damage or destroy a badger sett including e.g. obstructing access to a badger sett.
- Cruelly treat or harm a badger.
- Disturb a badger in a sett.

1.3.5 Great Crested Newts

Great Crested Newts (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* are listed in both The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and in Schedule V of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

GCN are afforded further protection by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

1.3.6 Otter

The Eurasian Otter *Lutra lutra* is the only Otter species native to the UK. The Eurasian Otter is fully protected under Schedule V of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (as amended) 1981 and in Schedule II of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, which transpose Annex II of the Directive 92/43/EEC 1992 on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (“Habitats Directive”) which defines United Kingdom protected species of animals. This legislation makes it illegal to:

- capture, kill, disturb or injure otters (on purpose or by not taking enough care).
- damage or destroy a breeding or resting place (deliberately or by not taking enough care).
- obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places (deliberately or by not taking enough care).
- possess, sell, control or transport live or dead otters, or parts of otters.

1.3.7 Water Vole

The Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius* is protected under Schedule V of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and is a priority conservation species. This legislation makes it illegal to:

- intentionally capture, kill or injure water voles.
- damage, destroy or block access to their places of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care).
- disturb them in a place of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care).
- possess, sell, control or transport live or dead water voles or parts of them (not water voles bred in captivity).

1.4 Protected Sites and Priority Habitats

Some areas with distinctive plants, animals, habitats, geology or landforms are protected at the international, European, national and local-level under statutory and non-statutory sites. Some habitats have been identified as needing priority conservation action; UK BAP Priority Habitats are a range of semi-natural habitat types that are identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action.

2.0 Methods

The survey follows the national guidelines JNCC (2010) and UKHabs (2023), and the following equipment is available for the inspection:

- Torches (e.g. LED Lensar type).
- Ladders (Standard 4m telescopic surveying ladder).
- Endoscope where holes, cracks and crevices are accessible.
- Mirrors (extendable and movable mirror face).
- Binoculars (Pentax close focus).
- Thermometer/hygrometer.
- Camera.
- Sample bags for collecting dropping and feeding evidence.
- Quadrat for vegetation sampling.

The survey can be conducted year-round with the optimal period between mid-March and mid-October (south)/1st April and 30th September (north). However, it can be limited due to bad weather and in the winter, when some species are not as active, thus evidence and species are often not found. During these periods, habitat value (likely presence) becomes more important to the assessment of the site.

Trees and building exteriors are checked from ground level only. Buildings are checked internally where access is available.

Ponds are checked in person where access is available. If access is not available, for example the pond is situated on private land, ponds are assessed as far as is possible from satellite imagery.

Target notes are made when appropriate to highlight, for example, protected species evidence or other feature(s) of ecological note.

A summary of the condition assessments for BNG are included (where required) within Table 7 of Section 3.2.1. The excel sheets for these are released separately.

If a deviation from the guidelines has been made the reason and justification will be explained below:

Great Crested Newt District Level License Zones explained, these criteria are from the two schemes -

Natural England Scheme -

- Red zones contain key populations of GCN, which are important on a regional, national or international scale and include designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest for GCN. *If in a red zone traditional surveys methods will have to be used going forward.*
- Amber zones contain main population centres for GCN and comprise important connecting habitat that aids natural dispersal.
- Green zones contain sparsely distributed GCN and are less likely to contain important pathways of connecting habitat for this species.
- White zones contain no GCN. However, as most of England forms the natural range of GCN, white zones are rare and will only be used when it is certain that there are no GCN.

Nature Space Scheme-

- **Black** - nationally or regionally important site for great crested newt - excluded from development impacts under the District Licence Scheme.
- **Red** - highly suitable habitat - the most important areas for great crested newts.
- **Amber** - suitable habitat - great crested newts are likely to be present.
- **Green** - moderate habitat suitability - great crested newts may be present.

- **White** - low habitat suitability - low probability of great crested newt presence.

No deviation from the standard guidelines has been made for this survey.

Table 1: Habitat value (likelihood) of protected species presence assessed against Collins (2023), Edgar *et al.* (2010) and Natural England (2007) etc.

Likelihood of species presence (Habitat Value)	Features that species can use, regardless of evidence being present.
Confirmed Presence	Species are found to be present during the survey. Evidence of species is found to be present during the survey.
Higher likelihood of presence	Buildings, trees or other structures or habitat features of particular significance for use by protected species e.g. nesting habitat, roosting opportunities, and ponds. Habitat of high quality for foraging e.g. broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is connected with the wider landscape by strong linear features that would be used by commuting species e.g. river and or stream valleys and hedgerows. Site is close to known locations of records for protected species.
Moderate and Lower likelihood of species presence	Several potential habitat opportunities in buildings, trees or other habitats. Habitat could be used for foraging e.g. trees, shrub, grassland or water. Site is connected with the wider landscape by linear features that could be used by commuting species e.g. lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. A small number of less significant habitat opportunities. Isolated habitat for foraging e.g. a lone tree or patch of scrub. An isolated site not connected by prominent linear landscape features.
Negligible likelihood of species presence	No features suitable for roosting, minor foraging or commuting.

2.1 Limitations

This survey provides a snapshot of the site at the time of the survey only. Species are highly mobile and can turn up from time to time unexpectedly. All care has been taken to ensure the results and recommendations are suitable to the context of the development and the information gathered on surveys.

3.0 Results

The following section details the results of the desk study, inspection and survey; it includes MAGIC information, biological records data and map/aerial photo information. The results detail the building, structure or tree (numbered for reference) description of any evidence found and habitat value if no evidence has been located.

3.1 Desk Study

The desk study is centred on Grid Reference -TL 22678 32870 and Postcode - SG6 1JT.

3.1.1 MAGIC

The following statutory sites and Natural England Protected Species (NEPS) have been located within the 2km search area (Figure 1).

Table 2: Magic search results

Receptor	Distance and Direction to Nearest (m/km)	Description
Statutory sites	N/A	
Granted protected species licenses	~1.7km to the northeast.	EPSM2011-3393 Plecotus auratus (Brown Long Eared), Pipistrellus pipistrellus (Common Pip)
Priority habitat	~1.3km to the north.	Areas of good quality semi improved grassland.
	~1km to the northwest.	Areas of deciduous woodland within the 2km radius.
	~550m to the southwest.	Areas of wood pasture and parkland.

MAGiC

Magic Map

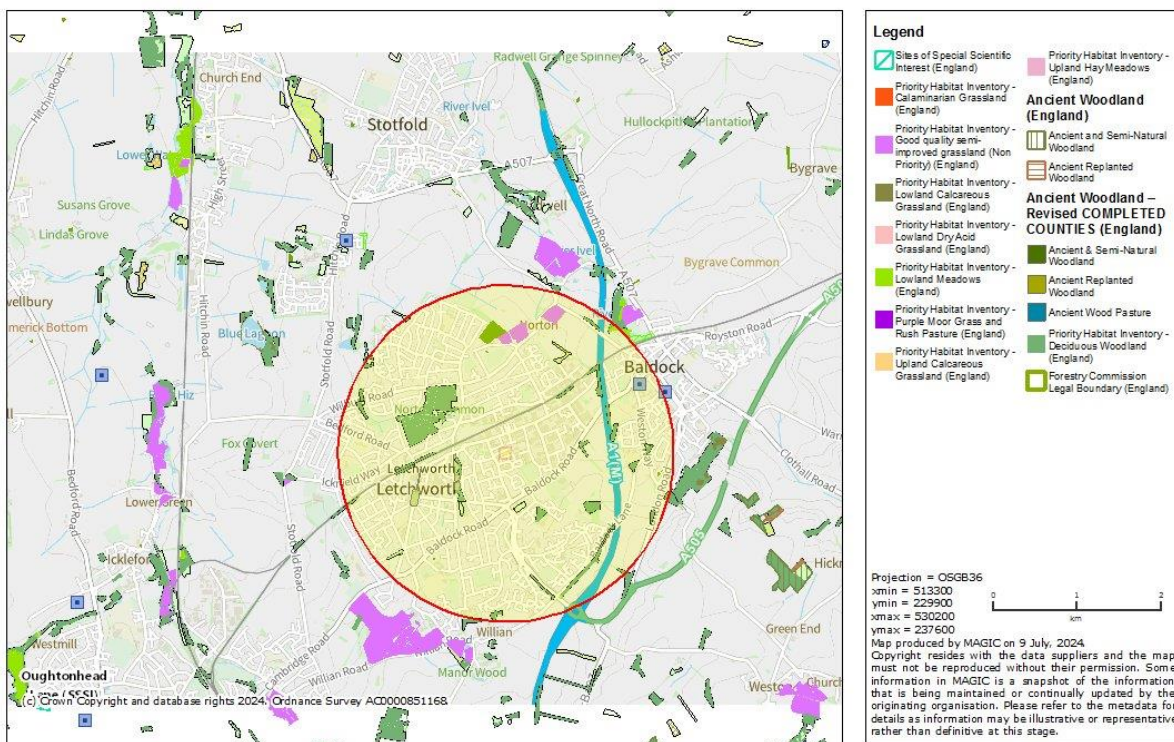


Figure 1: Magic Map Search

3.1.2 GCN DLL Zone

Natural England - The site sits in a GREEN zone.



Figure 2: Nature Space Plan

3.1.3 Biological Records Data

A standard data search of existing records for protected species and nature reserves has been commissioned, below details the results and site context. *Data older than 10 years old will not be included.*

Biological records were obtained from Herts Environmental Records Centre (2024).

Table 3: Biological Records

Species	Number of Records	Closest Record (accuracy)	Most Recent Record (year)
Amphibians			
Common Frog <i>Rana temporaria</i>	-	-	-
Common Toad <i>Bufo bufo</i>	2	~600m (1m)	2015
Great Crested Newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	1	~700m (1km)	2016

Palmate newt <i>Lissotriton helveticus</i>	-	-	-
Smooth newt <i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>	-	-	-
Bats			
Barbastelle <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>	-	-	-
Brown Long-Eared <i>Plecotus auritus</i>	1	~700m (1km)	2015
Common Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	3	~700m (1km)	2015
Daubenton's <i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	-	-	-
Leisler's <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>	-	-	-
Nathusius' Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	-	-	-
Natterer's <i>Myotis nattereri</i>	-	-	-
Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	1	~700m (1km)	2015
Serotine <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	-	-	-
Soprano Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	1	~700m (1km)	2015
Unidentified Bat <i>Chiroptera sp.</i>	-	-	-
Unidentified Long-Eared <i>Plecotus sp.</i>	-	-	-
Unidentified Myotis <i>Myotis sp.</i>	-	-	-
Unidentified Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus sp.</i>	-	-	-
Unidentified Vesper <i>Vespertilionidae</i>	-	-	-
Whiskered <i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	-	-	-
Mammals (exc. Bats)			
Badger <i>Meles meles</i>	4	4 fig grid ref	2016
Hazel Dormouse <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>	-	-	-
Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i>	-	-	-
Water Vole <i>Arvicola amphibius</i>	-	-	-
West European Hedgehog <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	3	~450m (1m)	2015
Reptiles			
Adder <i>Vipera berus</i>	-	-	-
Common Lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i>	-	-	-
Grass Snake <i>Natrix helvetica</i>	-	-	-
Slow-Worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i>	-	-	-
Other			
Birds, Invertebrates, Plants etc.			

3.1.4 Site Location and Surrounds

The site is located in SG6 1JT, Hertfordshire and is surrounded by industrial estate and residential housing in the immediate locale. Table 4 details the commuting, feeding and habitat features in a 1km radius of the site.

Table 4: Habitat features suitable for use by protected species.

Feature	Description
Watercourses	There are no significant watercourses within the search area.
Waterbodies	Two small lakes are found ~575m east and ~600m to the west.
Woodland	Large area of woodland ~850m to the northwest.
Linear e.g. hedgerows	Dominated by garden hedges and a railway line ~400m to the north.
Pasture/arable/grassland	Community greens and arable fields ~300m to the southeast.
Other	Golf course ~2km to the southwest.

3.2 Habitat, Building, Tree or Other Structure

This section details the structures/habitat reference and descriptions (see Figure 10 for Site Plan).

Table 5: Weather Records

Parameter	Unit/value
Temperature	23°C
Cloud cover	10%
Precipitation	None
Wind	1/12

3.2.1 Habitats

Habitats found on site are mapped using UK Habs (UK Habs, 2023).

Table 6: Habitat features found on site.

Habitat Features		
UKHab Habitat Type (to the appropriate level)	UK Hab Essential Secondary Codes & Additional Secondary Codes (where relevant)	Description
Developed Land; Sealed Surface	32 - Scattered Trees	Hardstanding is found across the south of the site, under some of the trees.  Figure 3: Hardstanding to the southern border of the site
Other Neutral Grassland	16 - Tall Forb 32 - Scattered Trees	The site is dominated by other neutral grassland, with the majority being made up of tall forbs, and scattered trees are found around the boundaries of the site.



Figure 4: Example of the other neutral grassland

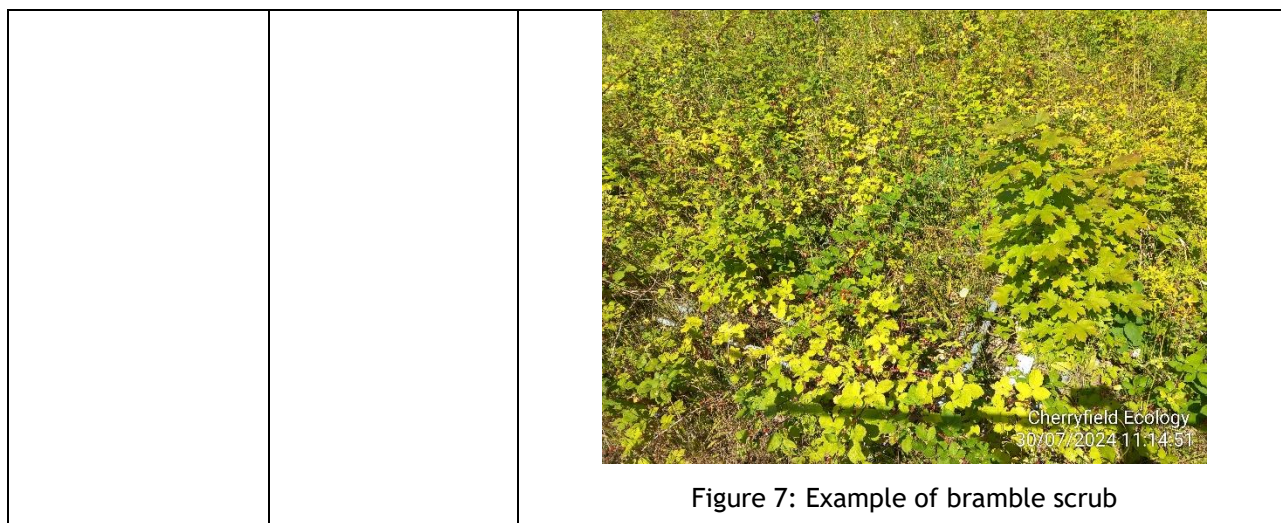


Figure 5: Example of the tall forbs



Figure 6: Example of scattered trees along the border

Bramble Scrub		Small patches of bramble scrub are found throughout the search area.
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The following table provides a summary of the condition assessments for all sites meeting the Statutory Metric criteria. Please see the separate excel sheets for full details. If the site meets the small-scale metric criteria condition assessments are not required.

Table 7: Biodiversity Net Gain Condition Assessments/Scores

Habitat	Condition Score
Developed Land Sealed Surface	Set score
Bramble Scrub	Set score
Other Neutral Grassland	Poor - Fails essential criteria, and only passes the varied sward height criterion.
Urban Tree	Moderate - Trees aren't mature and have no ecological niches. Or trees that don't have ecological niches and has less than 20% of the canopy oversailing vegetation. Good - Trees that either pass all criteria, or passes all but aren't mature.

Table 8: Target Notes

Target Note	Description
TN1	A large mound, covered by tall forbs.



Figure 8: Example of the large mound

TN2

Equipment is found across the site.



Figure 9: Example of the equipment found on the site

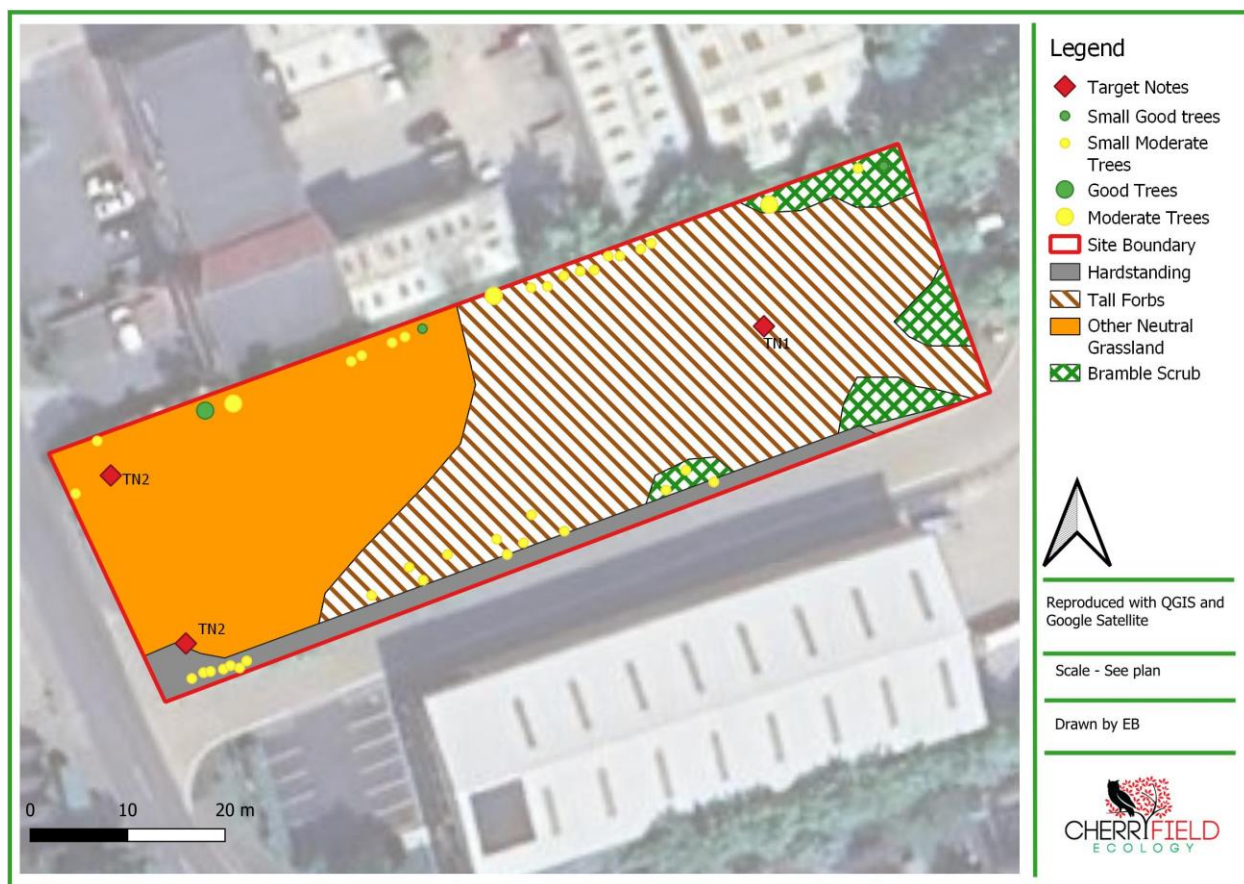


Figure 10: Site Plan

3.2.2 Species List

Table 9: Species found on site with relevant *DAFOR abundance.

Common Name	Scientific Name	*DAFOR Scale	Habitat
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	O	Trees
Barren Brome	<i>Bromus sterilis</i>	F	Tall forbs
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg</i>	D, O	Bramble Scrub, Grassland
Bristly Oxtongue	<i>Picris echioides</i>	O	Grassland, Tall forbs
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	O	Grassland, Tall forbs
Canadian Goldenrod	<i>Solidago canadensis</i>	R	Tall forbs
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	F	Grassland
Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster sp.</i>	R	Tall forbs
Creeping Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	O	Tall forbs
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale agg.</i>	O	Tall forbs

False Oat-Grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	F	Grassland
Fleabane	<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	R	Grassland
Goat Willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>	R	Trees
Norway Maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	O	Trees
Perforate St John's-Wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	R	Grassland
Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	R	Grassland
Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	O	Trees
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	F	Trees
Traveller's-Joy	<i>Clematis vitalba</i>	O	Tall forbs
White Melilot	<i>Melilotus albus</i>	O	Tall forbs
Willowherb	<i>Epilobium</i> sp.	A	Tall forbs
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	O	Grassland
Yorkshire Fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	A	Grassland

*DAFOR - Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional and Rare

3.3 Evidence or Likelihood of Species Presence

This section details the evidence located and likelihood of species presence.

3.3.1 Bats

Table 10: Bats, evidence or the potential for the species.

Bats found	No bats were found at the time of the survey.
Evidence of bat use	No evidence of bats was found at the time of the survey.
Potential for bat use	Level of likelihood of presence - Negligible The trees on site provide negligible potential for bats due to a lack of potential roosting features.

3.3.2 Badgers

Table 11: Badgers, evidence or the potential for the species

Badgers found	No badgers were found at the time of the survey.
Evidence of badger use	No evidence of badger use was found at the time of the survey.
Potential for badger use	Level of likelihood of presence - low The site provides low potential for badgers due to the presence of mounds and tall forbs across the site, which could provide suitable sett building habitat, but limited suitable habitat is found in the surrounding area.

3.3.3 Breeding Birds

Table 12: Breeding birds, evidence or potential for the species

Breeding birds found	No breeding birds were found at the time of the survey.
Evidence of breeding bird use	No evidence of breeding birds was found at the time of the survey.
Potential for breeding bird use	Level of likelihood of presence - Moderate The site provides moderate potential for breeding birds due to the presence urban trees on site.

3.3.4 Amphibian

Table 13: Amphibians, evidence or potential for species use.

Amphibians found	No Great Crested Newt (GCN) were found at the time of the survey.
Evidence of amphibian use	No evidence of GCN was found at the time of the survey.
Potential for amphibian use	Level of likelihood of presence - Low The site provides low potential for Great Crested Newt (GCN) due to the site being located within a green zone according to Natural England and the nearest waterbody being located ~575m east on the other side of an industrial estate, but the site provides some suitable terrestrial habitat in the form of tall forbs and bramble scrub.

3.3.5 Reptile

Table 14: Reptiles, evidence or potential for species use.

Reptiles found	No reptiles were found at the time of the survey.
Evidence of reptile use	No evidence of reptiles was found at the time of the survey.
Potential for reptile use	Level of likelihood of presence - Moderate The site provides moderate potential for reptiles due to the presence of tall forbs and bramble scrub which can be used for foraging and refuge habitats, as well as the shorter grassland which can be used for basking.

3.3.6 Other Species e.g. Hazel Dormouse / Otter / Water Vole

Table 15: Other protected species, evidence or potential for species use.

Species found	No other protected species were found at the time of the survey.
Evidence of species use	No evidence of other protected species was found at the time of the survey.
Potential for species use	Level of likelihood of presence - Negligible There is no suitable habitat on site for any other protected species.

3.3.7 Invasive Non-Native (Schedule 9 Species)

Species found	Cottoneaster, a Schedule 9 species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (amended), was found onsite.
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4.0 Conclusions, Discussion, Impacts and Recommendations

The following section details the conclusions, discussion, impacts and recommendations in the context of the proposed works.

4.1 Conclusion and Discussion

The proposals include for the construction of commercial units and associated features. The site consists of other neutral grassland, tall forbs, bramble scrubs, hardstanding and urban trees. No protected species or evidence of protected species were found on site at the time of the survey.

The site provides **low** potential for badgers due to the mounds within the tall forbs that cover the site, which may provide suitable sett building habitat, but limited suitable habitat in the surrounding area.

The site provides **low** potential for Great Crested Newt (GCN) due to the site being located within a green zone according to Natural England and the nearest waterbody being located ~575m east on the other side of an industrial estate, but the site provides suitable terrestrial habitat in the form of tall forbs and bramble scrub.

The site provides **moderate** potential for reptiles due to the suitable habitats found on site in the form of bramble scrub and tall forbs.

The site provides **negligible** potential for roosting bats due to the lack of potential roosting features on the trees.

The introduced shrub and hedgerow habitats provide **moderate** potential for breeding birds.

The site provides **negligible** potential for other protected species due to the lack of suitable habitat onsite.

Recommended surveys are found in section 4.3.

4.2 Potential Impacts

Impact assessments must be proportionate to the scale of the development (CIEEM, 2018) and Table 16 details a proportionate impact assessment based on current information.

Table 16: Impact Assessment

Impact	Breeding Birds - Active nests may be lost in the development. GCN - Loss of habitat. Reptiles - Loss of habitat.
Characterisation of unmitigated impact on the feature	Breeding Birds - A low-level loss/impact at a local level. GCN - A low-level loss/impact at a local level. Reptiles - A low-level loss/impact at a local level.
Effect without mitigation	Without mitigation, individual bats, birds, GCN and reptiles could be killed, injured or trapped during the works.
Mitigation and/or potential enhancement	See Table 17 and Table 18
Significance of effects of residual impacts (after mitigation)	Breeding Birds - If lost habitat is replaced by bird boxes and mitigation is followed, the effects would be negligible. GCN - If mitigation is followed, the effects would be negligible. Reptiles - If mitigation is followed, the effects would be negligible.

4.3 Recommendations

Badger - No further surveys are necessary; however, if any badger setts are found throughout works, all works must stop, and advice sought.

Bats - No further surveys are necessary; however, if bats are found throughout works, all works must stop, and advice sought.

Breeding Birds - No further surveys are recommended; however, the development should take place outside the nesting season (March to August). If this is not possible, it is recommended that a qualified ecologist is on-site to ensure the building/vegetation is not occupied by breeding birds, prior to demolition/clearance. Should an occupied nest be found, a buffer zone would need to be created until the nest is no longer in use.

Great Crested Newt (GCN) - Unlicensed Method Statement

Habitat that is being affected is not suitable for GCN, although habitat in the surrounding area is, therefore an unlicensed method statement will be required, please refer to section 4.

Reptiles - Presence/ likely absence surveys for reptiles are required to establish if any reptile species are using the site. These will be undertaken between the months of March and October. Bitumen tiles will be placed across the site in week one and will then be checked once a week over a seven-week period, in suitable weather (9°C to 18°C, no rain, little winds and sunny).

Other protected species - No further survey is necessary; however, if any other protected species are found on site, all works must stop, and advice sought.

Habitats - All habitats found are common and widespread, no impacts are foreseen.

The findings outlined in this report are valid for one year, after which updated surveys will be required.

Enhancements and mitigation are recommended (please see Section 4.4 for further details).

4.4 Additional Recommendations

Table 17: Additional Recommendations

Work	Specification
General information	The following must be undertaken: - All works must be undertaken within 12 months of this report, thereafter a material change check will be required to check for changes that could affect potential protected species habitat. - If any protected species are found at any point whatsoever during works, works will stop and further advice will be sought.

General Precautions	- Trenches and open holes - All trenches and open holes should be covered overnight, or if the hole or trench can't be covered it should be filled in or a rough sawn timber plank installed as an escape route for any species. - General maintenance - If grassland and vegetation is kept in a mown/cut state this should be maintained for the duration of the works. - Store all material on hardstanding or in buildings to prevent artificial refuges from being created.
Lighting	Any lighting near or shining onto any trees/buildings etc, will be designed to minimise the impact it has on potential species and commuting. Lighting will be in line with the BCT lighting guidelines (Bats and Lighting in the UK (Bat Conservation Trust, 2023) https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/ This lighting, where possible, will be of low level, be on downward deflectors and be on PIR sensors. Using LED directional lighting can also be a way of minimising the light spill affecting the habitat. No up-lighting should be used. Light spill must be minimised to as low as possible. This will ensure that the foraging and commuting resources that the protected species are likely to be using is maintained.

Table 18: The local authority has a duty to enhance biodiversity in its day-to-day duties; the following are suggested enhancements that are easily installed into a development and can be cost-effective whilst ensuring a gain for local wildlife.

Work	Specification
Bat, bird and insect box enhancement.	Bat tubes can be installed in the new dwellings (Figure 11). These require no maintenance, can be installed on a gable end/under an eave (no less than 3m above ground level), face south or north and can be faced in any material to provide an aesthetic matching the reminding building. 

Figure 11: Example of bat tube

Bird boxes for a variety of different species can also be installed.

A selection of open-fronted boxes and songbird boxes can be installed (Figure 12 and Figure 13); it is recommended that a minimum of two of each of the boxes are installed. These will be installed at a minimum of 2m high and ideally face north to east.



Figure 12: Robin box



Figure 13: Songbird box

A variety of insect boxes can be installed in the area; a minimum of one box is recommended (Figure 14 and Figure 15).



Figure 14: Urban bee nesting box, used for solitary bees and wasps.



Figure 15: Bug biome, ideal for ladybirds, lacewings and bees

Hedgehog
highways and
small mammal
connectivity.

Hedgehog highways can or will be installed in order to allow hedgehogs and other small mammals a continuous corridor across the site, thus linking the garden/site etc. and green spaces in the area.

- A 13cm-by-13cm is sufficient for any hedgehog to pass through. This will be too small for nearly all pets (Figure 16).
- Remove a brick from the bottom of the wall, creating a 13cm-by-13cm hole.
- Cut a small hole in your fence if there are no gaps.
- Dig a channel underneath your wall, fence or gate.
- Ideally, rather than walls or fences, a hedge will provide foraging, shelter and a route along as well as through the site.

	How to make a hedgehog highway  www.wildlifewatch.org.uk Figure 16: Hedgehog Highway, Source - Wildlife Trust - http://7474fab53f1b6ee92458-8f3ac932bad207a00c83e77eae8d15c.r12.cf1.rackcdn.com/Hedgehog%20Highway.jpg
Swifts <i>Apus apus</i>	Swift nest bricks are recommended due to the increased lack of nesting opportunities swifts are finding in modern-built dwelling homes. Information is adapted from the RSPB https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/rspb-news/news/stories/swift-advice-for-ecologists/ and http://actionforswifts.blogspot.com The following will be undertaken: - Wherever possible, swift bricks will be installed into new or restored buildings to increase the overall availability of nest sites for swifts and other species. Birds such as house sparrows can use swift bricks, but swifts cannot use house sparrow nest bricks. - Integral swift bricks are the preferred option for new housing developments. These should be fitted in clusters of 2 to 4 on gable ends and near the roofline where swifts would naturally look for a potential nest site. - Try to ensure swift bricks have a minimum of 5m clearance beneath and in front. Always avoid locating them above doors and windows to help prevent a disturbance issue to both the birds and human owners.

- Alternatively, swift boxes can be placed on the external walls of a building where the installation of swift bricks is not possible.



Figure 17: Example of swift bricks, that can be built into a dwelling, Source: <https://www.birdbrickhouses.co.uk/brick-nesting-boxes/>

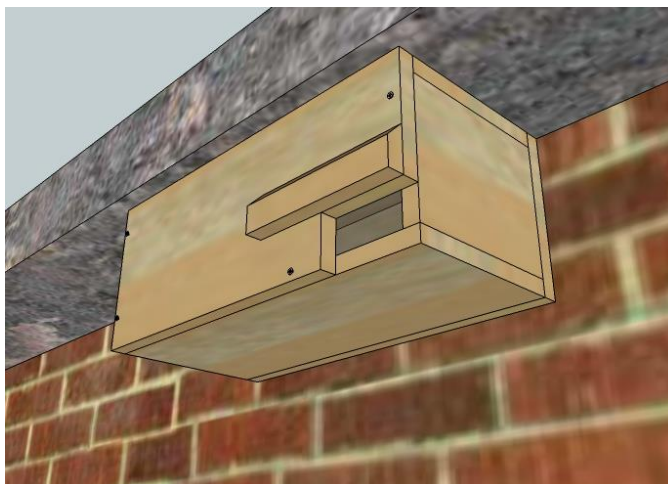


Figure 18: Swift box, source: <http://actionforswifts.blogspot.com/p/diy-swift-box-designs.html>

Hedgerows

Hedgerows provide excellent corridors for wildlife and are extremely important to many species of wildlife. A hedgerow could be included in development plans to assist a range of species (Figure 19).

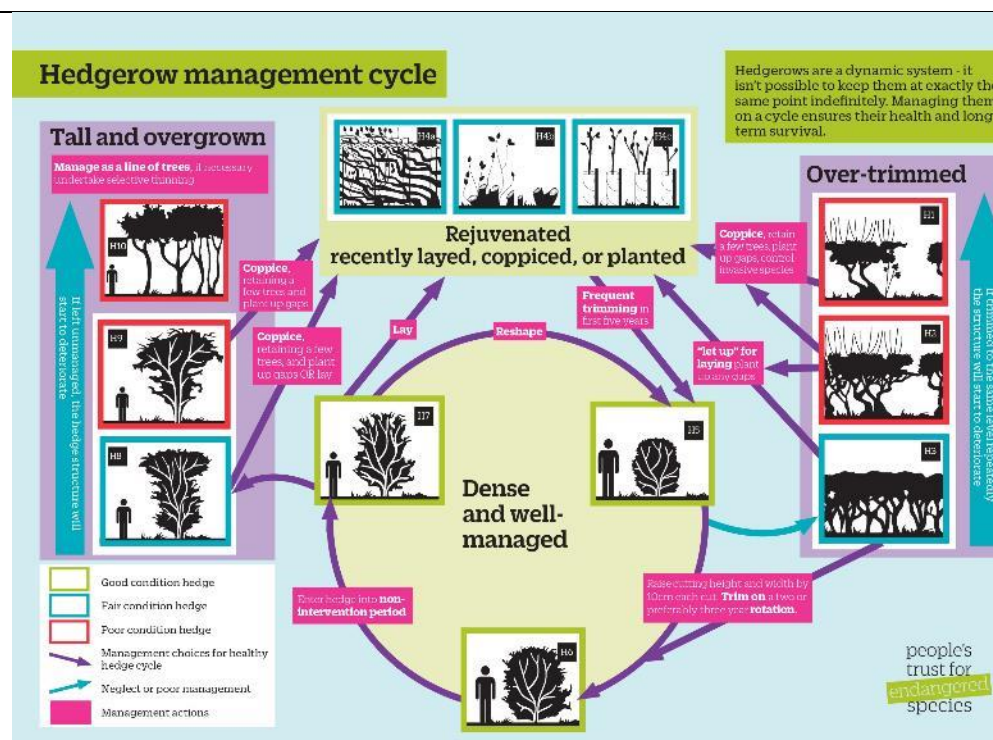


Figure 19: Hedgerow management cycle (<https://hedgerowsurvey.ptes.org/>)

It is recommended that a diversity of hedgerow species is included in the proposed hedgerows on site. Suitable hedgerow species include:

- Hawthorn (*Crateagus monogyna*)
- Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)
- Wild Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*)
- Field Maple (*Acer campestre*)
- Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
- Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*)
- Wayfaring Tree (*Viburnum lantana*)
- Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*)
- Spindle (*Euonymus europaea*)
- Holly (*Ilex europaeus*)

The hedgerow should include 5 or more woody species within a 30m length in order to be classified as species-rich.

Where possible, no cutting will take place during peak bird nesting season, which runs from March to September. Where possible, shrubs and hedgerows will not be cut back annually, as flower buds often form on second-year growth. Trimming

	hedges on a two-year or three-year rotation, targeting different sections each year, will make sure there are always flowers for pollinators in spring and berries for birds in autumn. Hedges cut every three years can produce two and a half times as many blossoms as those cut annually. Rotational cutting can also save time and money that would be invested in annual cutting.
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Proposed Site Plan (Wayman Architects, 2024)

