

Royston Evangelical Church, Royston

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

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Site Details

Report	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Site Address	Royston Evangelical Church, York Way, Royston, SG8 5HJ
Central OS Grid Reference	TL 35238 41835
Client	Mayway Construction Limited

Document Control

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Disclosure:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Croft Ecology was commissioned by Mayway Construction Limited to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Land at Royston Evangelical Church, in relation to a proposed development for creation of a new church, with associated access, parking and soft landscaping.
- The survey involved identifying habitats and features of ecological interest within the Site, including the potential for supporting protected or notable species, to determine the key ecological constraints and opportunities associated with the proposed development. Any additional survey work and any possible mitigation requirements were also identified.
- The survey was undertaken by appropriately qualified and experienced personnel on 16 July 2025.
- The majority of the Site consisted of urban areas such as buildings and developed land in the form of an access road, paths and car park area. Areas of modified grassland are scattered around the building and car park, with a small patch of scrub present towards the north of the Site. Five small trees were present, three towards the southwest and two in the east of the Site.
- No evidence of protected species was recorded during the survey. The Site has potential for notable species including nesting birds, foraging/commuting bats, hedgehog, and badger to use/pass through the Site.
- No further ecological surveys of the Site are required; although avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures have been recommended in Section 4. These measures include sensitive methods and timing of works to ensure that no protected or notable species will be harmed during works and can continue to make use of the Site post-development.
- Proportionate enhancement measures are also included in Section 4, which would include provision of bat and bird boxes to provide enhanced opportunities for roosting bats and nesting birds.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Croft Ecology was commissioned by Mayway Construction Limited to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of Land at Royston Evangelical Church, York Way, Royston, SG8 5HJ (central grid reference: TL 35238 41835) in relation to a proposed development for creation of a new church, with associated access, parking and soft landscaping.

1.1 Aims

The aims of this report are to:

- identify key ecological features (habitats, species, ecosystems) within the Site;
- identify any further surveys that may be required to fully understand the likely impact on a given ecological feature;
- identify any mitigation measures likely required; and
- identify any opportunities for biodiversity enhancements.

1.2 Site Location

The land within the red line boundary of Figure 1 below is hereafter referred to as the 'Site'.

The Site was located at the northern edge of Royston, which is approximately 20km southwest of Cambridge and 300m south of the A505. The Site is the current evangelical church and its grounds, consisting of a building, car park and access areas, and some patches of amenity grassland. The wider habitat is mostly urban; although to the north of the A505 the landscape becomes more rural with agricultural fields widespread across the area.



Figure 1. Site boundary (basemap source – Bing Maps Satellite Imagery)

1.3 Planning and Legislative Context

Both UK legislation together with national and local planning policies provide varying levels of protection to sites of ecological interest and species of conservation concern. Where relevant, this report takes into account the afforded protection for specific habitats and species likely to be found on the Site.

Further information on wildlife legislation and planning policy is provided in Appendix A.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Personnel

The survey, assessment and reporting were undertaken Dom Riley ACIEEM, Consultant Ecologist at Croft Ecology. Dom has worked in ecological consultancy for over 3 years, has undertaken numerous PEAs, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments, and protected species surveys and has prepared many reports detailing the results of the survey work. Reports include protected species survey reports, method statements, BNG, and PEAs.

The technical review was undertaken by Jeff Grant CEnv MCIEEM, Principal Ecologist at Croft ecology. Jeff has over 12 years of experience working in ecology and has undertaken and reviewed dozens of Preliminary Roost Assessments, Preliminary Ecological Appraisals and Preliminary Ecological Appraisals and Ecological Impact Assessments for projects of a range of scales. Jeff holds a protected species survey licence for bats (2022-10527-CLS-CLS), and a level 2 GCN licence (2015-18770-CLS-CLS).

2.2 Data Search

The Government's website MAGIC (www.magic.gov.uk) was accessed on 21 July 2025 to conduct an initial search for the presence of designated sites, priority habitats, protected species mitigation licences issued within 1km of the Site, and to assess whether the Site was located within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impact risk zone. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Environmental Records Centre in coalition with Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre were also contacted for details on statutory and non-statutory sites as well as protected, notable and invasive species records within a 1km radius of the Site boundary. Additionally, aerial photography was viewed to assess habitat connectivity around the Sites' locale, which may be important to ecological features present on Site and for the consideration of suitable ecological enhancements.

2.3 Survey Date and Conditions

The Site was visited on 16 July 2025 and included all land within the red line boundary (see Figure 1) together with a brief assessment of those habitats bordering the Site. Weather conditions at the time of survey were 70% cloud cover, no rain, a gentle breeze and a temperature of 23°C.

2.4 UK Hab Field Survey

A UK Hab¹ Field Survey was undertaken in accordance with the methodology described within v2.0 documentation (2023) and was used as the basis for subsequent assessment in line with the standards and methods described within the Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018) and Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (CIEEM, 2017).

A fine-scale minimum mapping unit (of 25m² or 5m) was deemed appropriate for use at the Site given its relatively small scale, consequently only habitats with an area of 25m² or greater, or linear features 5m in length or greater, were mapped.

The UK Hab uses primary codes whereby habitats are categorised by an increasingly detailed hierarchy until a match is discovered. Secondary codes describe environmental factors that provide additional information such as management regime, hydrology or similar. In this case, each habitat was assigned a Primary Code¹ at the Level 4 hierarchy and secondary codes were applied where these could provide greater context.

During the field survey, all habitats within the Site were thoroughly observed, described, and mapped. A DAFOR abundance (D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional, R = rare) was assigned to each botanical species identified in each habitat and nomenclature followed Stace (Stace, 2019).

The UK Hab field survey was extended to identify any protected or priority species per CIEEM's Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017). A thorough search was conducted to detect the presence, or potential presence, of notable and protected species, including breeding birds, badger *Meles meles*, bats, reptiles and amphibians, notable mammals, invertebrates and any invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Water vole, otter and dormice were not considered further due to a lack of suitable habitat on Site.

¹ UKHab Ltd (2023) <https://www.ukhab.org/>

2.5 Survey Limitations

All areas of the Site were accessible at the time of survey, with no limitations to the survey effort.

2.6 Evaluation of Constraints and Opportunities

All potential ecological constraints to the development were identified. In the context of the Mitigation Hierarchy², consideration was then given as to how any significant effects could be avoided, minimised or mitigated. Following this, appropriate compensation and enhancement measures were outlined. Where additional surveys are required to better understand the likely presence of, and hence impact of the proposed development on, a given ecological feature, these are detailed in Section 4. Lastly, opportunities for enhancements and biodiversity net gain have been provided.

² *"The overarching aims of ecological work used to inform the planning process are to minimize harm and to maximize benefits for biodiversity resulting from development. The generally accepted way of doing this, now embedded within the planning system, is to follow the "mitigation hierarchy". This seeks as a preference to avoid impacts then to mitigate unavoidable impacts, and, as a last resort, to compensate for unavoidable residual impacts that remain after avoidance and mitigation measures."* Biodiversity: Code of practice for planning and development (BS 42020:2013)

3 RESULTS

3.1 Designated Sites

The data search revealed no statutory designated sites within a 1 km radius of the Site.

The Site boundary was within the SSSI impact risk zone for Therfield Heath SSSI, which is situated 1.3km southwest of the Site. Therfield Heath is designated primarily but not limited to its nationally important chalk grassland, and associated species including rare butterflies and invertebrate assemblages. However, the nature of the proposals did not meet any of the criteria that would warrant any further investigation.

The data search also revealed no non-statutory sites within 1 km of the Site.

3.2 Habitats

The majority of the Site consisted of urban areas such as buildings or developed land in the form of an access road, paths and a car park area. Areas of modified grassland were scattered around the building and car park, with some scrub present towards the north of the Site. Five small trees were recorded, with three towards the south west of the Site and two in the east of the Site.

A UK Hab Habitat Baseline map of the Site can be found in Appendix B.

3.2.1 Modified grassland

Modified grassland was present throughout the Site. The main extent was to the east of the Site. Smaller strips and sections were present surrounding the building and car park area within the Site boundary. The sward of the vegetation was not varied in most parts with regular mowing and maintenance evident. The following species were supported within the site; frequent yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, occasional ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, wild mignonette *Reseda lutea*, autumn hawkbit *Scorzoneroidea autumnalis*, rare creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, common mallow *Malva sylvestris*, and false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*. A flower bed was also present to the south of the main grassland extent, species dominated by lavender *Lavandula sp.*



Photo 1 and 2: Modified grassland to the east (left) and south (right) of the Site.

3.2.2 Mixed scrub

A small area of mixed scrub was present on the northern strip of grassland, north of the car park, estimated to be approximately 12 metres squared. The area comprised of dominant wild privet *Ligstrum vulgare*, and abundant blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*.



Photo 3: Mixed scrub at the northern extent of the Site.

3.2.3 Developed land, sealed surface

An area of developed land, sealed surface, was located to the west of the Site, comprising of an asphalt car park and access road. Small footpaths were also present around the surrounding edge of the buildings and towards the car park area. No vegetation was seen growing in or amongst the sealed surface.



Photo 4: Developed land, sealed surface car park area to the west of the Site.

3.2.4 Buildings

A building was present in the northeast of the Site. The current church building comprised most of the area with a smaller outbuilding located in the northeast corner of the Site beyond the church. The building is single-story with brick cavity walls. It has a multi-faceted slate-tiled roof fitted with several skylights.



Photo 5 and 6: Main church building (left) and outbuilding (right) to the northeast of the Site.

3.2.5 Other native hedgerow

A native hedgerow was present in the northwest corner of the Site. The hedgerow was dominated by dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* with frequent hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*.



Photo 7: Native hedgerow located in the northeast corner of the Site.

3.2.6 Individual trees

Five small individual trees were present within the Site. Two were to the east of the Site within the grassland extent. Both species were bay laurel *Laurus nobilis* and were supported by wooden stakes. The remaining three trees were silver birch *Betula pendula* at the south of the Site to the west, with canopies overlapping with no clear gaps.



Photo 8 and 9: Individual trees in the eastern grassland area(left) and southwest (right).

3.3 Species

3.3.1 Badger

The desk study returned 1 record for badger within 1km of the Site. The record was from 2019 for a location 220m to the north of the Site. It is not known whether this record is related to a sighting, road casualty, or sett.

No badger setts or field signs, such as mammal paths, tracks, hairs or latrines were recorded during the survey. The hedgerows, grassland, and scrub were considered to provide some suitable foraging opportunities. The small, isolated habitat to the west of the Site consisting of a dense wooded area provided suitable foraging and shelter opportunities for badgers, though was considered too small to support a badger sett. Overall, the Site is considered to have **low** potential for badgers.

3.3.2 Bats

The desk study returned no records for bats within a 1km radius of the Site. There were no European Protected Species licences for bats on the MAGIC website within 1km of the Site.

There were two buildings on Site, along with the line of trees and two small individual trees. No potential roosting features (such as lifted and missing tiles, gaps at the eaves or under the soffit of the buildings; or splits and holes in the trees) for bats were identified at the time of the survey on any of the trees or buildings within the Site boundary.

The hedgerows, scrub, line of trees, and the off-site adjacent wooded area to the west offered some value for foraging and commuting opportunities for bats, though these were isolated from other parcels in the wider landscape and offered little connectivity to the wider landscape. Overall, the Site is considered to have **low** potential for foraging and commuting bats.

3.3.3 Birds

The desk study returned numerous records of a number of Schedule 1 species and birds of conservation concern (BoCC) within 1km of the Site. Records indicate the following species were present and could potentially utilise the Site for nesting or foraging. Red-listed species include, starling *Sturnus vulgaris*, , yellow wagtail *Motacilla flava*, and house sparrow *Passer domesticus*. Amber-listed species include black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*,

woodpigeon *Columba palumbus*, rook *Corvus frugilegus*, dunnoek *Prunella modularis*, grey wagtail *Motacilla cinerea*, and lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus*.

The hedgerows, scrub, and individual trees were considered to offer suitable nesting and foraging opportunities for birds and the neutral grassland offered foraging opportunities. Overall, the Site is considered to have **moderate** potential for nesting and foraging birds.

3.3.4 Amphibians

The data search revealed no records for amphibians within 1 km of the Site. No records were provided for great crested newt and the MAGIC website search revealed one great crested newt records licence within 1 km of the Site. The license record was from 2014-2021 and located approximately 700m east of the Site.

There were no ponds within the Site, nor any ponds within a 250m radius of the Site.

A search of the GCN Risk Zones map for Hertfordshire³ indicates that the Site is within a green zone where impacts to GCN are not considered likely.

Sheltering opportunities for great crested newts and other amphibians were present within the scrub, under roots of the individual trees and at the base of the hedgerow on Site.

Given the limited records for great crested newts within 1km of the Site and the Site's poor connectivity, it is considered unlikely that they would be present on Site. Other amphibian species are also unlikely to be present due to their absence in the local area.

Overall, the Site is considered to have **negligible** value for great crested newts and **negligible** value to other amphibians.

³ <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::gcn-risk-zones-hertfordshire/explore?location=52.039398%2C-0.021764%2C13.77> . A 'green zone' typically contains only sparsely distributed GCN and these areas are less likely to contain important pathways of connecting habitat.

3.3.5 Reptiles

The data search revealed 80 records for common lizard *Zootoca vivipara* within 1km of the Site. The closest record was from 2010 for 26 records with a location 650m to the northeast of the Site.

The habitats on Site were not considered to be suitable for reptiles due to the lack of habitat mosaic at the Site. The majority of the Site was urban or regularly managed low sward grassland, and the hedgerow and scrub are dense, reducing opportunities for basking and foraging. There is little ecotone between the scrub, hedgerows and the grassland edges providing only limited basking opportunities and no egg-laying opportunities, although the hedgerow, and scrub could provide some sheltering opportunities. Connectivity to, and around the Site is fairly poor with lots of fragmentation of habitats present.

Overall, the Site is considered to have **negligible** value for reptiles.

3.3.6 Invertebrates

The desk study revealed records for seven notable butterfly species within 1km of the Site, with six of the records being historic from 1998. The latest record was from 201 for chalk hill blue *Polyommatus coridon* located 970m southwest of the Site.

The Site could provide opportunities for common and a small number of notable invertebrate species, due to the grassland, scrub, trees, and hedgerow; however, it is considered unlikely to support a significant population of any notable invertebrate assemblage due to the nature of the habitats and the regular management of the Site.

3.3.7 Other mammals

The data search revealed 16 records for hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*, and one record for stoat *Mustela erminea* within 1 km of the Site. The closest record was for hedgehog from 2013 for a location 40m to the southwest of the Site.

The grassland, scrub and hedgerows offered suitable commuting, foraging, and sheltering habitat for hedgehogs and it is considered likely that they could be present on Site.

It is considered that hedgehog could potentially be present on Site due to its suitability, wider habitat and nearby records.

3.3.8 *Invasive species*

The data search revealed records for the following invasive non-native animal species: American mink *Neovison vison*, and grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*. Additionally, records for the following invasive non-native plant species were returned: hollyberry cotoneaster *Cotoneaster bullatus*, wall cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis*, himilayan contoneaster *Cotoneaster simonsii*, Canadian waterweed *Elodea canadensis*, and false-acacia *Robinia pseudoacacia*.

No evidence of invasive species was recorded on Site during the survey.

4 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Proposed Development

The proposed development involves the creation of a new church, with associated access, parking and soft landscaping. For the basis of the recommendations of this report 241573-PL03 - Site Plan as Proposed produced by Axon Architects and dated 28/07/2025 has been used (see Figure 2 below).



Figure 2. Proposed Development Plan (Drawing 241573-SK10 by Axon Architects dated 28/07/2025)

4.2 Assessment of Ecological Impacts

4.2.1 Designated Sites

No statutory or non-statutory designated nature conservation sites, or Priority Habitats were found within 1km of the Site. As a result, no specific mitigation is required.

4.2.2 Habitats

The proposed development will involve the removal of some modified grassland, with the new building being slightly larger, along with a small increase in sealed surface for the car park and access. One of the small trees on the east of the Site will be lost as part of the proposed development.

None of the habitats recorded within the Site are irreplaceable habitats. The remaining four individual trees, hedgerow, scrub, and grassland will be retained. All retained trees and hedgerows should be protected in accordance with BS 5837:2012 throughout the construction phase to avoid inadvertent damage, particularly to root protection areas. Where habitat removal is necessary, appropriate mitigation and sensitive working practices should be implemented, as outlined in the Species section of this report.

4.2.3 Species

The Site provides some potential for foraging and commuting bats, particularly along the hedgerows, scrub, and the adjacent off-site woodland. No features suitable for roosting bats were identified on trees or buildings during the survey. A sensitive lighting strategy is recommended during and post-construction to avoid illumination of boundary features which may be used by bats.

Safe methods of working will ensure that potential impacts to badger or other mammals, such as hedgehog, passing through the Site, can be avoided during construction activities. Sensitive working practices will be required to ensure such animals don't get trapped in excavations during construction, via a rough plank or similar installed to allow egress from excavations which are not covered overnight. The proposals will not adversely impact opportunities for these species to pass through the Site post development.

The Sites hedgerows, scrub, trees, and grassland offer suitable habitat for nesting and foraging birds. To avoid potential impacts, vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside the bird nesting season (March–August inclusive) or be preceded by a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist.

Based on the lack of records, the nature of on site habitats and the proposed works, no impacts on other protected or notable species are anticipated from the work.

4.3 Summary of Further Surveys Required

No further surveys required.

4.4 Mitigation Requirements

- No night-time work is anticipated. Any lighting to be installed as part of the scheme should use warm white LEDs to reduce the blue light component and, where possible, use motion sensors to avoid the area being continuously lit. A 'dark corridor' along the boundary habitats should be retained such that animals commuting around the Site are not disturbed. Further advice concerning light-spill, column height and glare should be discussed and agreed with a lighting professional and an ecologist.
- Vegetation removal should be undertaken outside of nesting bird season (March to September). If this is not possible, such works must be preceded by a nesting bird check (within 24 hours) by a competent person to ensure no nesting is taking place. If there is evidence of nesting birds, work cannot proceed until nest-building and chick-rearing is complete or until an ecologist is able to advise on a suitable buffer distance to allow work in other areas of the Site.
- Retained trees and hedgerows must be protected from accidental damage and compaction within their root protection areas in accordance with BS 5837: 2012.
- Sensitive working methods, including the covering of excavations or provision of a ramp to provide a means of escape, will be adopted to avoid the potential for killing or injury of badgers or hedgehog, should they be present foraging or commuting.

4.5 Opportunities for Compensation and Enhancement

- Where soft landscaping is proposed it is encouraged that native trees, shrubs, climbing or herbaceous plants are used that are nectar-rich or fruit-bearing as this would benefit notable invertebrates, birds and mammals.
- The addition of integrated bat and bird boxes within the proposed church, could provide long-term roosting and nesting opportunities. Bat boxes should be installed between the southwest and southeast aspect, at least at eaves height or 4m off the ground and away from artificial light sources. The bird boxes

should be installed between the north and east aspect, at least at eaves height. Further details on box types and location should be discussed and agreed with the architect and ecologist.

- The loss of any habitats will need to be compensated for in an offsite location to enable the proposed development to achieve 10% biodiversity net gain (see accompanying Croft Ecology BNG documents, August 2025).

5 REFERENCES

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6 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – Legislation and Planning Policy

Summary

Habitats and species receive various levels of protection under UK legislation and national and local planning policies. Those that are potentially relevant to the Site are listed below Note: Although summaries are provided, it is recommended to seek the full legal or policy wording separately for more information.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- The Environment Act 2021
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) revised in 2024
- North Herts Council Local Plan 2025-2045

UK Legislation

In Britain, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981⁴ serves as the main tool for safeguarding wildlife. Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) deals with the protection of wildlife, including birds, animals, and plants. The Schedules that hold the most significance in terms of planning are Schedule 1, which protects bird species, Schedule 5, which protects other animal species, and Schedule 8, which protects plant species. Schedule 9 lists species of plants and animals that are not native to Great Britain but have established themselves in the wild, posing a threat to the natural fauna and flora.

⁴ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

Additionally, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017⁵ incorporates the EEC Council Directive 92/43/EEC, also known as the Habitats Directive, into UK legislation. This directive safeguards habitats and species of conservation concern throughout Europe, including those found in the UK.

Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the Government's planning policies for England and how local planning authorities should incorporate them into their own policies and plans. Chapter 15 of the NPPF contains several policies aimed at enhancing the natural environment. The updated NPPF 2024 has a policy on biodiversity net gain that mandates development to improve biodiversity by achieving measurable gains.

Under the Environment Act 2021, all planning permissions granted in England (with a few exemptions) have to deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain post-development.

Designated Sites

In the UK, there are different types of statutory sites which are classified under various categories. These categories include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (NNR) which are established under national legislation. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA) (for birds) are designated protected areas under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Ramsar sites should be treated within the planning system in the same way as SACs and SPAs. Meanwhile, Local Nature Reserves (LNR) are sites that are protected, and designated, only at the local level.

The NPPF refers to non-statutory sites as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). Although they do not have a formal level of protection, they are commonly included in local planning policies and therefore receive some level of protection at the local level.

Priority Habitats and Species

Section 41 (s41) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species of principal importance in England.

⁵ [The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017](#)

These are known as Section 41 priority habitats and species and are considered to be most under threat or declining in the UK. The list is reviewed every six years.

There are currently 56 habitats on the list and 943 species from plants and fungi to invertebrates and mammals.

Protected Species

Bats, Great Crested Newt

All British bat species (*Rhinolophidae* and *Vespertilionidae*), great crested newts *Triturus cristatus* are legally protected in the UK under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are fully protected under Schedule 2 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The latter piece of legislation resulted in them being known as “European protected species”. This means that it is illegal to deliberately take, injure, or kill the animal; to intentionally or recklessly disturb the animal whilst they are in a 'place used for shelter or protection' or damage or destroy a breeding or resting place (even when the animal is not present). It is also illegal to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a place of shelter or protection; or to possess, control, sell, or transport live or dead individuals or their body parts. If you cannot avoid disturbing these species or damaging their habitats, you may apply to Natural England for a licence to carry out such works under the close supervision of a licensed ecologist.

Common Amphibians

Common frog *Rana temporaria*, common toad *Bufo bufo*, smooth *Lissotriton vulgaris* and palmate newts *Lissotriton helveticus* are protected from sale only under Section 9(5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Common Reptiles

Grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, adder *Vipera berus* and slow-worm *Anguis fragilis* are listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) but only part of sub-section 9(1) and all of sub-section 9(5) apply. These species are protected against killing, injury and sale.

Birds

In the UK, the law protects all wild bird species, as well as their eggs and nests, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Intentionally harming or taking wild birds, damaging or destroying their nests while in use or under construction, taking or destroying their

eggs, or possessing, controlling, or transporting live or dead wild birds is considered an offence. Some birds (such as barn owl *Tyto alba*, kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*, and peregrine falcon *Falco peregrinus* amongst others) receive additional protection under Schedule 1, Part 1 of this Act and are protected by special penalties at all times. For these bird species, it is also an offence to disturb them while they are nesting, building a nest, near a nest with their young, or disturbing their dependent young.

Badger

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 safeguards badgers *Meles meles* and their setts. It is illegal to deliberately harm badgers by capturing, killing, or injuring them, or by damaging, destroying, or blocking access to their setts. Disturbing badgers in their setts, treating them cruelly, intentionally sending a dog into a sett, and baiting or digging for badgers are also prohibited.

Invasive Species

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Schedule 9 Part 2 provides controls on the release of non-native species into the environment, i.e., those considered to be invasive if they survive, thrive and spread rapidly within the environment. This prohibits the planting of such species or causing them to grow in the wild (plants), or the release/allowing to escape into the wild (animals).

APPENDIX B – UKHab Baseline Habitats Map

