

COYNE ENVIRONMENTAL LTD.

**Old Foxes
North End
Kelshall
SG8 9SE**



ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

January 2026

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INTRODUCTION

Coyne Environmental Ltd. has been instructed to undertake an ecological study of Old Foxes, North End, Kelshall, Royston, SG8 9SE, for a planning application to develop part of the site. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken of the proposed area, to ascertain if it has any ecology of importance. This can then be submitted to North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC), for consideration of the proposed new dwelling.



The completed PEA will enable the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to consider the impact of the proposal on wildlife. The Authority can then discharge its legal obligations under the 'Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations' (2018) and any 'Outline Mitigation and Compensation Strategy' if required.

I am a qualified Ecologist, with over 40 years' experience in the environmental field. This includes being a license bat worker (Bat License 2015-15943-CLS-CLS). The PEA survey was carried out in 2024 in lines with CIEEM guidelines for planning applications.

SITE

The site is situated along North End Road, Kelshall and part of a rural hamlet of farm buildings around Fox Hall. It is proposed to construct a new single storey dwelling, opposite Old Foxes, in an area of former horse grazed paddock (Area B), now rough grassland. Within the site are scattered trees along the west and south boundaries with native hedges.

The habitats were recorded on site as follows

Built Linear Features (UKHab -code: u1e)

Surrounding part of the site is a newly built, close-boarded wooden fence, with no climbers on it such as ivy (*Hedera helix*) or bindweed (*Calystgia sepium*). Just outside the fence to the south and west are a few trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*, *Salix fragilis*) which

overhang the fence. Access to area is from the driveway to the north, where a gap in the fence is present.

Modified Grassland (UKHab code; g4)

Most of the site is short, frequently mown, amenity grass (*Poa spp*, *Festuca spp*) where only a few other species were noted including dock (*Rumex patientia*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and clover (*Trifolium*



Figure 1. Three photos showing the site, area A, on the left and centre, and area B on the right. Taken by Luke Davenport on the 21st of November 2024.

spp). Along the east boundary of area B is a small area of bare ground. This is situated between the amenity grass within the site and the native hedgerow (*Crataegus monogyna* with *Acer campestre*) along the east boundary.

Sparsely Vegetated Urban Land – Bare Ground (UKHab code; u1f – 510)

In the north of the site is a manure pile with debris and digger tracks producing disturbed ground, with sparse vegetation. A few emergent species such as stinging nettles (*Urtica dioica*) and common bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) can be seen growing around the manure heap. There is also a small area of bare ground, on the eastern boundary. This is situated between the amenity grass and the native hedgerow along the east boundary.

Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface (UKHab code; u1c)

Adjacent to the north boundary of the site is a gravel driveway, which runs from east to west. This is the access point, for the field connecting to area A and running adjacent to area B (development site).

Native Hedgerow (UKHab code; h2a)

Along the east boundaries is a native hedge of mostly common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), with field maple (*Acer campestre*) and hazel (*Corylus avellana*). The hedgerow along the south side is mostly field elm (*Ulmus procera*) with common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) present.

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Bats. As there are no buildings on site, a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was not required. However, the trees on the boundaries and within the site, were inspected, using binoculars, for any signs of bats. Holes (woodpecker), fissures, urine stains,



Figure 2. Three photos showing more of Area A. Taken by Luke Davenport on the 21st of October 2024.

signs of faeces, entry scratches etc were not found. Therefore, in accordance with Bat Conservation Trust 4th Ed (2023) guidelines and having regards to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, I conclude that the site does not contain evidence of bat roosts

Birds

The trees were inspected for bird nests, using binoculars. No current nest or nest building was observed. Several birds including Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*), Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), and Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) were noted on the survey. Any proposed clearance of existing vegetation should not be carried out in the breeding season (March-August). If emergency operations are necessary, they must not be undertaken until an ecologist has undertaken a bird nest transit inspection. Any active nest that are found must be zoned off by protective fencing and can only be continue when fledglings have departed from the nest, confirmed by the appointed ecologist.

Reptiles /Amphibians

There were no ponds on the site therefore the potential habitats for Amphibian species and protected Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*) (GCNs) is negative. Using the GCN Suitability Index was therefore not required. No evidence of reptiles such as slow worms or grass snakes was found and therefore no further surveys are required.

Insects

As the site is mainly an area of rough pasture the opportunity for invertebrates is limited. Several insects were observed on the survey including butterflies Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*) and Large White (*Pieris brassicae*) were noted on the

shrubs with Common Field Grasshoppers (*Chorthippus brunneus*) in the longer grass.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)

The Environment Act 2021 has a mandatory require for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on most new development, of a minimum of 10%. As this scheme is for a self-build project, it will be exempt from the requirement for a BNG metric. However suitable mitigation enhancement will be needed which may include bird and bat boxes and native planting (trees, wildflower seeding) as part of any Reserved Matters in the Approval

CONCLUSION

Coyne Environmental Ltd. has been instructed to carry out an ecological study of Old Foxes, North End, Kelshall, Royston, SG8 9SE, and a PEA survey has been carried out. There are few ecological features on site, with no signs of European Protected Species (EPS). The survey and subsequent desk top study indicates that this is not in an area of high risk for any specific species or sensitive habitats, including for bats (EPS).

Therefore, in my professional opinion I assess that the proposed Application for a new dwelling ,will have minimal impact on the overall ecology of the area. I conclude that no further ecological or environmental studies are necessary to satisfy the requirement for ecological and biodiversity enhancements. On this basis the proposal can be determined by North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC).

REFERENCES

Baseline Habitat Map

Proposal Map

Environment Act 2021

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981



Key:

Old Foxes, Kelshall

Site Boundary

Proposal Boundary

Amenity Grass - g4

Native Hedgerow - h2a

Tree

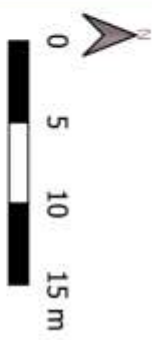
Manure and debris

Bare Ground - 510

Driveway - u1c

Sparsely vegetated - u1f

Wooden Fence - u1e



Coyne
ENVIRONMENTAL

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Old Foxes, Kelshall, Royston

Habitat Plan

24216

21/11/2024

TITLE	DRAWN	PROJECT
DATE	REVISION	

