

COYNE ENVIRONMENTAL LTD

1 Caldecote Road

Newnham

SG7 5JZ



Ecological Assessment

November 2025

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Colin Eades and Amy Moss have instructed Coyne Environmental Ltd to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of 1 Caldecote Road, Newnham, SG7 5JZ, Grid Reference: TL243374, Latitude, Longitude: [52.021514, -0.18849358](#) (Figure 1). This is to establish the potential presence or absence of protected features of ecological significance. The client is planning to construct a new residential property on the land. A planning application is being prepared for North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC). It is proposed to undertake a PEA of the site.

1.2 From the survey and analysis of the ecological assessment, it will be possible to review the proposals, to ascertain what measures are needed to achieve a satisfactory result for the environment. The PEA will enable the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to consider the impact of the proposal on any sensitive ecology. 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.

1.3 Kenneth Coyne is a qualified Ecologist with over 40 years' experience in the environmental field. This includes being a licenced bat worker (Bat Licence 2015-15943-CLS-CLS). The PEA survey was undertaken on the 4th of September 2025 at approximately 10:30 am by Assistant Ecologist Dean Cornish 16°C, 100% cloud cover in light rain.



Figure 1: A map depicting the site and general area of Newnham. The boundary is indicative only. Map created on 04/09/2025 by Coyne Environmental Ltd. Basemap is Bing Aerial Imagery.

LOCATION

2.1 Newnham (pop. 88 in 2021) is small village in North Hertfordshire close to the border with Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. The village lies just east of the A1 and

north of the A505 between the small villages of Bygrave and Caldecote and close to the larger village of Ashwell and town of Baldock.

2.2 Newnham is home to the Church of St Vincent, a 12th Century Grade 2 listed building which is famous for the 12th – 15th Century Christian murals carved into the interior of the church, discovered in the 1960s.

2.3 Newnham Hall is where the famous historian Reginald Hine was born who later wrote the History of Hitchin.

SITE

3.1 The surveyed site is a residential garden which backs onto Number 1 Caldecote Road, Newnham.

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) (WCA) is the main protection for wildlife. There is also legislation for specific species, Protection of Badgers Act 1992, EU Habitats and Birds Strategy 2011-2020. Bats are protected under Schedule 5 of WCA. However, since 2007 the effective protection for bats now comes under Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994, which defines "European Protected Species " (EPS).

4.2 The Hertfordshire Biodiversity Partnership has developed the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for the county as A 50-year Vision for wildlife and natural habitats of Hertfordshire along with the Hertfordshire Strategic Green Infrastructure Plan 2010.

4.3 The site is not in the Green Belt (GB), and the nearest water is Cat's Ditch north of the site. Cat's Ditch has been earmarked in the Hertfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) draft as a potential area for restoring Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*) populations.

4.4 There are no National Nature Reserves (NNR), RAMSAR sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs) close by. The nearest Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is Stotfold Mill Meadows, and the nearest Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) reserve is Ashwell Quarry and Quarry Springs which is also a Local Wildlife Site (LWS). Park Wood, Bygrave is the nearest Ancient Woodland (AW).

CONDITION

5.1 A full Phase 1 Habitat Survey was not deemed necessary as this is a site which would appear to have only limited natural features. So, this study is an Ecological Note Assessment as a Walkover Survey of the ecology of the site. However, if the survey identifies any wildlife of significance, measures will be taken as set out in the JNCC guidance Handbook of Phase 1 Habitat Surveys (2010) and CIEEM Guidelines (2017).

5.2 The surveyed site is primarily residential garden UKHabs v2.01 code: **g4 – Modified grassland**. Surrounding the garden are short mostly native hedgerows **h2a – Native hedgerow**.

ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

Desk Study

6.1 A search of available records on the NBN Atlas in a two-kilometre circular radius around the site highlights 1144 species, 575 plants, 15 mammals, 99 birds, 442 insects and the rest belonging to other clades. Five protected species have been recorded in the search area, see Table 1, with a large percentage of bat records.

6.2 According to RSPB Swift Mapper, Swifts (*Apus apus*) (red-listed) nest in good numbers in nearby Ashwell with at least six nests located in 2025. House Martins (*Delichon urbicum*) (red-listed) also nest in Newnham with six nests located in 2025 per House Martin Mapper including on the newly constructed houses next to the proposed development.

Table 1: Validated and publicly accessible protected species records within two kilometres of 1 Caldecote Road, Newnham. Bat records from TL2336 near Radwell Lake and Campsite. WCA = Wildlife and Countryside Act. CHS = Conservation of Habitats and Species.

Common Name	Scientific Name	Record Year	Legal Protection
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	2020	WCA 1981 Schedule 1
Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	2018	WCA 1981 Schedule 5, CHS 2017 Schedule 2
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	2017	WCA 1981 Schedule 5, CHS 2017 Schedule 2
Soprano Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	2017	WCA 1981 Schedule 5, CHS 2017 Schedule 2
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	2016	WCA 1981 Schedule 5, CHS 2017 Schedule 2

6.3 This preliminary analysis **does not** mean other protected species are absent or that more recent records of the presented species exist since records under license **NC-CC-BY** cannot be presented herein. The presenting of these species does not negate the ecological value of undesignated wildlife on-site.

Plants

6.4 The site is predominantly made up of lawn grassland containing a flowerbed with a few trees, bushes and short hedgerows bounding the east and west extents.

6.5 The western hedge consists of a variety of plants including Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), Nettles (*Urtica dioica*), Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Privet (*Ligustrum ssp.*), Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*), Horse Chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), Elm (*Ulmus procera*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Brambles (*Rubus fruticosus*). The eastern hedge consisted primarily of Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) which becomes less dense at the southeastern end of the site.

6.6 There is a large Cherry tree (*Prunus avium*) on site with a Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*) just beyond the boundary to the north. Again, just outside the site is a large Buddleja/Butterfly Bush. Present in the garden and around the Cherry tree were Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*), young Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Common Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*),

Burdock (*Arctium ssp.*), Common Comfrey (*Symphytum officinale*) and a Great Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*).

Mammals

6.7 No evidence of mammals was observed. Trees were inspected for any holes (woodpecker), fissures, urine stains, signs of faeces, entry scratches but none were observed.

6.8 Therefore, in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust 4th Ed. (2023) Guidelines and having regard to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, I conclude that the site does not contain evidence of bat roosts.

Birds

6.9 The most noticeable bird on this site were the House Martins with 10+ birds flying around the site and one nest on the south-facing wall of Number 1 Caldecote Road with young in the nest (see photograph gallery). Other birds included: Chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*), Robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), Red Kite (*Milvus milvus*), Blue Tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) and Goldfinch (*Carduelis carduelis*).

7.1 During construction of the new dwelling no obstructions should be installed which would prevent the House Martins on Number 1 Caldecote Road from accessing their nest site and dependant young.

7.2 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

7.3 There were no ponds on the site therefore the potential habitats for Amphibian species and protected Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*) (GCNs) is none. Using the GCN Suitability Index was therefore not required.

Insects

7.4 Several Red Admiral (*Vanessa atalanta*) Butterflies were noted on the Buddleja just outside the site. Common Field Grasshoppers (*Chorthippus brunneus*) were numerous in the longer grass.

ECOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

8.1 The ecological assessment has shown that the site has some environmental value. Where possible, as many of the trees and native hedges should be retained. Care should also be exercised when removing any garden waste which may harbour Hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) (Priority Species).

8.2 Given the proximity of the site to active House Martin nests the proposed plans could be augmented with the provision of House Martin cups, fixed to the new house in addition to the proposed bird boxes, bat boxes and bee bricks (Page 12).

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

9.1 The Environment Act 2021 has a mandatory require for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) on developments of a minimum of 10%. Within this scheme it is proposed that the BNG should be undertaken as part of this proposal. A separate BNG Metric will be undertaken from the assessment in this Report. The results from this exercise will provide suitable mitigation or enhancement required to meet the Statutory Net Gain in the Environment Act 2021.

CONCLUSION

10.1 Colin Eades and Amy Moss have instructed Coyne Environmental Ltd to carry out a PEA of 1 Caldecote Road, Newnham, SG7 5JZ to establish the potential presence or absence of protected ecology of significance. This is in preparation of a planning application to NHDC.

10.2 The site survey and desk top study of the surrounding areas has taken place. The application site is not in an area of high risk for sensitive species or habitats.

10.3 I conclude that this survey alone satisfies the requirement for environmental assessments and that the proposal can be submitted to NHDC.

REFERENCES

Photograph Gallery

Location Plan

Proposed Plans

BNG Habitat Map

Baseline Habitat Map

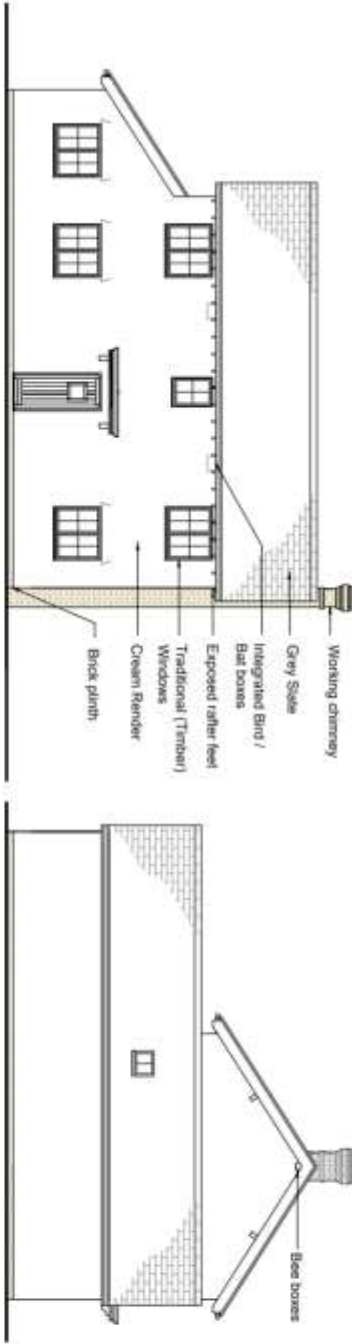
Post Habitat Map

Environment Act 2021

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981

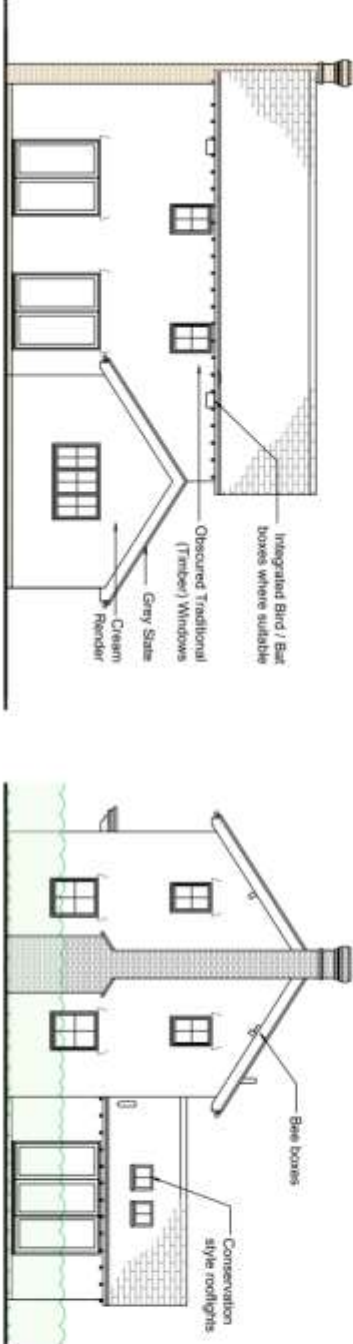


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Client	Mr Alex Farr
Project	L/A 1 Caldecote Road, Newnham, Herts
Drawing: Proposed Site / Block Plan	
Dwg no.	AF 03
Date	July 2025
Drawn	AM
Checked	CE
Scale: 1:200 @ A3	
Revisions:	
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North Elevation - Facing no. 1

East Elevation - Facing 'The Green' - No windows



South Elevation - Facing rear garden

West Elevation - Facing Caldecote Rd

**Colin Eades
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Proposed Elevations

Drawn: AF 05 Date: July 2025

Drawn: AM Checked: CE

Scale: 1:100 @ A3

Revisions:

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