

Mr & Mrs G Beale

**1 The Drive
Blackmore End
St Albans**

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

**Job No: 253041
March 2025**



Environmental Consultants

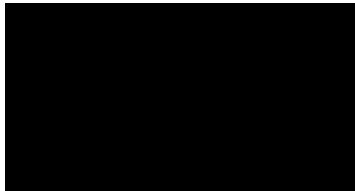
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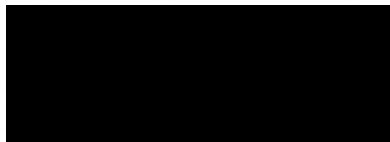
**1 The Drive
Blackmore End**

Issued by



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Overview

- 1.1 AA Environmental Limited (AAE) has been commissioned by Mr & Mrs Beale to carry out an ecological survey of the development proposals at 1 The Drive, Blackmore End. The aims of the survey were to:
- provide a description of the existing habitat types;
 - determine the existence and location of any ecologically valuable areas; and
 - identify the presence of any protected species.
- 1.2 This information will serve to assess the ecological impact of the proposals and identify any ecological constraints and/or mitigation measures required and also identify any enhancement measures that may be available.
- 1.3 The development proposals are to construct a single residential dwelling within the garden of the existing property (1 The Drive), with associated hard and soft landscaping, following the clearance of some garden vegetation. It is anticipated that the majority of the existing boundary vegetation and trees will be retained and protected during the works¹.

Site Description

- 1.4 The site is located off The Drive in Blackmore End, St Albans, centred at National Grid Reference: TL 170170 and covers approximately 0.1 of a hectare. The site comprised the existing garden area of '1 The Drive'. The site is bordered by The Drive to the north, Kimpton Road to the east with residential dwellings and associated gardens to all other sides (Figure 1).

2.0 METHODOLOGY

General

- 2.1 The study comprised two key phases: a desk-top study; and a walk-over field survey. The study was undertaken with reference to the Institute of Environmental Assessment's '*Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment*' (1995), Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) '*Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal*' (2017) and BS 42020: 2013 '*Biodiversity - Code of practice for planning and development*'.

Desk-top Study

- 2.2 Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre (HERC) was consulted in order to obtain baseline data held for the site and the surrounding 2 km area.
- 2.3 In addition, as certain baseline data is now readily available on the internet, the Multi-agency website (<http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>) was consulted to determine whether any part of the site or nearby habitats have been statutorily or otherwise designated, or whether any European Protected Species Class Survey Licence Returns are within the surrounding study area, with a review of Google Earth's satellite imagery (http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/index.html) also completed to determine past land uses of the site and surrounding land.

Field Survey

- 2.4 It was necessary to supplement the information obtained from the desk-top study with a walk-over field survey, in order to:

¹ Please note, the proposals are for a single self-build/custom build dwelling, with the site area less than 0.1 of a hectare. Therefore, the site meets all criteria to be eligible for the 'Self Build/Custom Build' Biodiversity Net Gain exemption, in accordance with current guidance.

- ascertain whether, while the site itself or nearby habitats might not be covered by any ecological designations, they could be of ecological interest and/or contain protected species; and
- establish the ecological value of the site in order for the overall disturbance to ecosystems within the area to be fully evaluated.

2.5 An ecological walk-over survey of the site was carried out on Tuesday 28 January 2025. The dominant plant species were recorded, and habitats classified according to their vegetation types and presented in the standard UK Habitat Classification System (*UK Hab Ltd, 2023*). The weather conditions at the time of the survey were: 70% cloud cover; wind speed 2 (Beaufort scale); temperature 9°C; and no precipitation.

Habitat Evaluation

2.6 By applying recognised criteria produced by Ratcliffe (1977), the following seven-point scale was used to rank the importance of the habitat types and species they support. The value of each habitat was ranked according to its importance in a local context (a summary of the Ratcliffe criteria is attached at Appendix A):

- low value;
- low to intermediate value;
- intermediate value;
- intermediate to high value;
- high value (Local/District importance);
- very high value (County importance e.g. Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), County Wildlife Site); and
- exceptional value (National importance e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).

Fauna

2.7 Particular attention was paid to record the presence of/ or suitable habitat for badgers, bats and herpetofauna (amphibians and reptiles) that may be present on the site or within adjacent habitats, in accordance with the following survey methodologies:

Badgers

2.8 Badgers (*Meles meles*) and their setts are protected by *The Protection of Badgers Act 1992*, under which it is an offence to harm badgers or their setts. A sett is defined as “any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger”. Natural England has provided the following guidance on the interpretation of current use:

A sett is defined as such (and thus protected) as long as signs indicative of ‘current use’ are present. Thus, a sett remains protected by the Act until such times as the signs (i.e. ‘field signs’) have deteriorated or decayed to such an extent that they indicate that the sett is no longer in ‘current use’.

2.9 A thorough survey of the whole site and adjacent habitats, where access was available, was carried out. Particular attention was paid to dense areas of vegetation to check for any evidence of badger activity, which is usually detected by any one or more of the following signs:

- presence of holes with evidence of badger such as footprints, discarded hair, etc.;
- presence of dung pits and latrines;
- presence of well used runs with subsidiary evidence of badger activity; and
- presence of other indications of badger activity, such as signs of foraging and footprints.

Bats

2.10 Currently there are 17 species of bat known to breed in the UK. All species and their roosts are protected under Regulation 41 of *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010*

(as amended). As a signatory to the *Bonn Convention* (Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe) the UK is also required to protect their habitats. This legislation makes it illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats or to obstruct access to, damage or destroy bat roosts. Under the law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

2.11 A visual survey of the site was completed to record any evidence of bats or features that could provide potential roosting opportunities. The survey was carried out following the guidelines provided by the Bat Conservation Trust² and by an experienced and licensed ecologist³. A thorough internal and external examination of the existing structures was carried out, with any potential access points inspected for evidence of bats. All internal roof voids/spaces, where present, were accessed to check for any evidence of bats, with the structures assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- **None** – No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
- **Negligible** – No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
- **Low** - A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
- **Moderate** - A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
- **High** - A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

2.12 In addition, a careful inspection of each tree within the vicinity of the works was carried out to identify those features that are important for roosting bats. Surveying trees presents particular problems at any time of the year as bats will use a wide variety of roost sites in cavities, splits, cracks, knotholes and under loose bark, many of which are not easily detected from the ground. Each tree was assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

- **NONE** – Either no PRF's in the tree or highly unlikely to be any.
- **FAR** – Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree.
- **PRF** – A tree with at least one PRF present.

2.13 Where possible, any tree categorised as **FAR** or **PRF** was then subject to a more detailed assessment to either confirm PRFs are present and/or fully inspect any PRFs to accurately subcategorise each tree into:

- **PRF-I** – PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitat.
- **PRF-M** – PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

² Collins, J. (ed) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

³ Lead surveyor was Harry Simpson, BSc (Hons), MSc. Class Licence: 2023-11139-CL18-BAT.

- 2.14 The surrounding habitat was also surveyed to identify any important features such as mature trees with suitable features for roosting bats and any established lines of vegetation that might provide important flightlines.
- 2.15 Evidence of bats is usually detected by any one or more of the following signs:
- the presence of bat droppings, which tend to accumulate under established roost sites or at roost entrances;
 - the accumulation of large numbers of moth wings, which have been discarded by feeding bats;
 - areas of staining by urine or from fur rubbing; and
 - the presence of bats themselves or their corpses.
- 2.16 The visual survey was facilitated by the use of binoculars, ladders, powerful torches (1M candlepower) and a Ridgid Micro CA-350 Inspection Camera endoscope.

Herpetofauna

Amphibians

- 2.17 All amphibian species have some level of protection under *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) are protected under *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. The intentional or reckless killing, injury or taking, and intentional or reckless disturbance of great crested newts whilst occupying a 'place used for shelter or protection', is prohibited, as is the destruction of these places.

Reptiles

- 2.18 All reptile species are protected at some level under Schedule 5 of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* and *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended)*. The more common species of reptiles, which include slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*), common or viviparous lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), adder (*Vipera berus*) and grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) are protected by the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* by part of Section 9(1) and all of Section 9(5). This means that they are protected against intentional or reckless killing and injuring (but not 'taking') and against sale and transporting for sale.
- 2.19 An assessment of the site was carried out to determine its suitability for herpetofauna by recording the habitats present. In addition, any natural/artificial refugia present on the site was lifted to check for any sheltering animals or evidence of animals, such as sloughs (shed skins)⁴.
- 2.20 A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) score for the on-site pond was calculated. HSI scores, developed by Oldham *et al.* (2000), are used to assess the potential for a waterbody to contain great crested newts and Natural England provides a working template on document WML-A14-2. A HSI score defines a pond's suitability GCNs on a categorical scale where:
- <0.5 = poor;
 - 0.5 – 0.59 = below average;
 - 0.6 – 0.69 = average;
 - 0.7 – 0.79 = good; and
 - >0.8 = excellent.

Other Species

- 2.21 In accordance with good practice, the site was checked for any evidence of other protected species or species of particular note.

⁴ Although considered 'out of season' when herpetofauna will not be active, certain species can still be found hibernating under refugia.

3.0 RESULTS

Desk-top Study

- 3.1 A summary of the baseline data obtained from HERC has been provided and detailed in Table 1; please note, due to sensitivity/copyright, a copy of the report cannot be reproduced but can be requested by the Local Planning Authority⁵.
- 3.2 There are no statutory designated ecological sites located on or adjacent to the site and no Great Crested Newt (GCN) Class Licence Returns noted within the surrounding 2 km study area. The nearest statutory designated site is Marshalls Heath Local Nature Reserve (LNR), located approximately 1.64 km to the south-west of the site. The nearest non-statutory designated site is Hall Wood (Blackmore End) Local Wildlife Site (LWS), located approximately 0.26 km to the east of the site. The nearest GCN Class Licence Return is located over 5.6 km to the south-east of the site. Full details of the designated sites located within the 2 km search area are provided in Table 1.
- 3.3 There were no records of protected species located on or adjacent to the site. There are a number of records of protected species within the 2 km study area, the majority of which were supplied with specific 6-figure grid references allowing a high-resolution indication of their locations. Further details of protected species recorded within 2 km of the site are provided in Table 1.
- 3.4 According to the Multi-agency Website, there are no Habitats of Principal Importance (HPIs) located on or adjacent to the site, with the nearest HPI being an area of Deciduous Woodland, also noted in the National Forest Inventory as Broadleaved Woodland, located approximately 0.07 km to the north-north-west of the site.
- 3.5 Google Earth Imagery shows that the site has remained largely unchanged since 2000, being dominated by the existing well-maintained residential garden area.

Table 1: Summary of Data Search Results (HERC)

Statutory Designated Sites		
Description	Protection/designation	Distance/direction
Marshalls Heath	LNR	1.64 km to the SW
Non-Statutory Designated Sites		
Description	Protection/designation	Distance/direction
Hall Wood (Blackmore End)	LWS	0.26 km to the E
Gustardwood Common	LWS	0.49 km to the SSE
Lamer Wood and Hillgate Spring	LWS	0.85 km to the SE
Cottage Farm Meadows, Kimpton Bottom	LWS	0.94 km to the NW
Pasture by Cottage Farm, Kimpton Bottom	LWS	1.04 km to the NW
Kimpton Bottom Field	LWS	1.15 km to the NW
Priors Wood Chalk Bank	LWS	1.43 km to the ENE
Prior's Wood and Claggbottom Wood	LWS	1.43 km to the E
Meadow S. of Park Farm	LWS	1.54 km to the NNE
Marshallsheath Wood	LWS	1.63 km to the SW
Park Wood and Dovehouse Wood	LWS	1.70 km to the NNE
Bishey Wood	LWS	1.74 km to the WNW
Bishley Wood Green Lane	LWS	1.85 km to the WNW
Grassland near Mackeyre End	LWS	1.86 km to the SW
Holcroft's Springs	LWS	1.93 km to the WSW
Round Spring (Lamer Park)	LWS	1.94 km to the SE
Marshalls Heath LNR	LWS	1.94 km to the SW

⁵ HERC data cannot be passed on to any third parties (excluding local authorities), without express written permission.

Protected/notable Species (Specific Grid References)		
Species	Protection/designation	Distance/direction
Brambling (<i>Fringilla montifringilla</i>)	Protected Species	0.30 km to the S
Fieldfare (<i>Turdus pilaris</i>)	Protected Species	0.30 km to the S
Grey Partridge (<i>Perdix perdix</i>)	Priority Species	0.30 km to the S
Hawfinch (<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>)	Priority Species	0.30 km to the S
Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>)	Priority Species	0.30 km to the S
Lesser Redpoll (<i>Acanthis cabaret</i>)	Priority Species	0.30 km to the S
Peregrine (<i>Falco peregrinus</i>)	Protected Species	0.30 km to the S
Red Kite (<i>Milvus milvus</i>)	Protected Species	0.30 km to the S
Redwing (<i>Turdus iliacus</i>)	Protected Species	0.30 km to the S
Skylark (<i>Alauda arvensis</i>)	Priority Species	0.30 km to the S
Spotted Flycatcher (<i>Muscicapa striata</i>)	Priority Species	0.30 km to the S
Badger (<i>Meles meles</i>)	Badgers Act (1992)	0.40 km to the SSE
Common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	0.42 km to the SW
Bat (<i>Chiroptera sp.</i>)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	0.50 km to the S
Yellow Wagtail (<i>Motacilla flava</i>)	Priority Species	0.63 km to the ENE
Harvest Mouse (<i>Micromys minutus</i>)	Priority Species	0.67 km to the SSW
Small Heath (<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>)	Priority Species	0.72 km to the SSW
Juniper (<i>Juniperus communis</i>)	Priority Species	0.76 km to the SE
Purple Emperor (<i>Apatura iris</i>)	Protected Species	0.76 km to the SSW
Brown Hare (<i>Lepus europaeus</i>)	Protected Species, Priority Species	0.82 km to the N
White-letter Hairstreak (<i>Satyrion w-album</i>)	Protected Species & Priority Species	0.85 km to the SW
Brown Long-eared (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	1.03 km to the NW
Serotine (<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	1.03 km to the NW
Bluebell (<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>)	Protected Species	1.08 km to the ESE
Bullfinch (<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>)	Priority Species	1.08 km to the SSE
Dunnock (<i>Prunella modularis</i>)	Priority Species	1.08 km to the SSE
Herring Gull (<i>Larus argentatus</i>)	Priority Species	1.08 km to the SSE
Song Thrush (<i>Turdus philomelos</i>)	Priority Species	1.08 km to the SSE
Starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>)	Priority Species	1.08 km to the SSE
Yellowhammer (<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>)	Priority Species	1.08 km to the SSE
House Sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	Priority Species	1.10 km to the E
Noctule (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	1.10 km to the E
Soprano Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	1.10 km to the E
Natterer's (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	1.20 km to the SE
Slow-worm (<i>Anguis fragilis</i>)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1.24 km to the E
Hedgehog (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>)	Priority Species	1.27 km to the N
Wall (<i>Lasiommata megera</i>)	Priority Species	1.39 km to the N
Beaded Chestnut (<i>Agrochola lychnidis</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Blood-vein (<i>Timandra comae</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Cinnabar (<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Dot Moth (<i>Melanchra persicariae</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Ear Moth (<i>Amphipoea oculea</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Feathered Gothic (<i>Tholera decimalis</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Grass Rivulet (<i>Perizoma albulata</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Green-brindled Crescent (<i>Allophyas oxyacanthae</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Large Nutmeg (<i>Apamea anceps</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Mottled Rustic (<i>Caradrina morpheus</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Mouse Moth (<i>Amphipyra tragopoginis</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N

Pretty Chalk Carpet (<i>Melanthia procellata</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Rustic (<i>Hoplodrina blanda</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Shaded Broad-bar (<i>Scotopteryx chenopodiata</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Small Emerald (<i>Hemistola chrysoprasaria</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Small Square-spot (<i>Diarsia rubi</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Sprawler (<i>Asteroscopus sphinx</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
White Ermine (<i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>)	Priority Species	1.41 km to the N
Fly Orchid (<i>Ophrys insectifera</i>)	Priority Species	1.43 km to the ENE
Wild Candytuft (<i>Iberis amara</i>)	Priority Species	1.43 km to the ENE
Barn Owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>)	Protected Species	1.49 km to the N
Corn Bunting (<i>Emberiza calandra</i>)	Priority Species	1.49 km to the N
Cuckoo (<i>Cuculus canorus</i>)	Priority Species	1.57 km to the ESE
Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus sp.</i>)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	1.57 km to the SE
Hobby (<i>Falco subbuteo</i>)	Protected Species	1.58 km to the SSE
Linnet (<i>Linaria cannabina</i>)	Priority Species	1.70 km to the SW
Roman Snail (<i>Helix (Helix) pomatia</i>)	Protected Species	1.73 km to the ENE
Leisler's (<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	1.75 km to the SSE
Long-eared species (<i>Plecotus sp.</i>)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	1.75 km to the SSE
Myotis species (<i>Myotis sp.</i>)	European Protected Species, Protected Species	1.75 km to the SSE
Basil Thyme (<i>Clinopodium acinos</i>)	Priority Species	1.77 km to the ENE
White Helleborine (<i>Cephalanthera damasonium</i>)	Priority Species	1.82 km to the ENE
Common Toad (<i>Bufo bufo</i>)	Protected Species (against sale) & Priority Species	1.84 km to the E
Polecat (<i>Mustela putorius</i>)	Priority Species	1.92 km to the E
Brindled Beauty (<i>Lycia hirtaria</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Centre-barred Sallow (<i>Atethmia centrago</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Dark Spinach (<i>Pelurga comitata</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Deep-brown Dart (<i>Aporophyla lutulenta</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Dusky Brocade (<i>Apamea remissa</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Dusky Thorn (<i>Ennomos fuscantaria</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Ghost Moth (<i>Hepialus humuli</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Grey Dagger (<i>Acronicta psi</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Hedge Rustic (<i>Tholera cespitis</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Knot Grass (<i>Acronicta rumicis</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Large Wainscot (<i>Rhizedra lutosa</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Latticed Heath (<i>Chiasmia clathrata</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Oak Hook-tip (<i>Watsonalla binaria</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Rosy Rustic (<i>Hydraecia micacea</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
September Thorn (<i>Ennomos erosaria</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Small Phoenix (<i>Ecliptopera silaceata</i>)	Priority Species	2.01 km to the SSW
Kingfisher (<i>Alcedo atthis</i>)	Protected Species	2.12 km to the SW
Red Hemp-nettle (<i>Galeopsis angustifolia</i>)	Priority Species	2.15 km to the S
Willow Tit (<i>Poecile montanus</i>)	Priority Species	2.15 km to the S
Protected/notable Species (Coarse Resolution Records)		
Description	Protection/designation	Record Accuracy
Black Redstart (<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>)	Protected Species	1 km
Cetti's Warbler (<i>Cettia cetti</i>)	Protected Species	1 km
Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet (<i>Xanthorhoe ferrugata</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Figure of Eight (<i>Diloba caeruleocephala</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Garden Dart (<i>Euxoa nigricans</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Garden Tiger (<i>Arctia caja</i>)	Priority Species	1 km

Great Crested Newt (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>)	European Protected Species, Protected Species & Priority Species	1 km
Lackey (<i>Malacosoma neustria</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Lesser Redpoll (<i>Carduelis cabaret</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Lunar Yellow Underwing (<i>Noctua orbona</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Minor Shoulder-knot (<i>Brachylomia viminalis</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Mullein Wave (<i>Scopula marginepunctata</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Oblique Carpet (<i>Orthonama vittata</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Pale Shining Brown (<i>Polia bombycina</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Powdered Quaker (<i>Orthosia gracilis</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Red-shanked Carder Bee (<i>Bombus ruderarius</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Reed Bunting (<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Ring Ouzel (<i>Turdus torquatus</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Streak (<i>Chesias legatella</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Turtle Dove (<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
White-line Dart (<i>Euxoa tritici</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Wood Warbler (<i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>)	Priority Species	1 km
Wryneck (<i>Jynx torquilla</i>)	Protected Species & Priority Species	1 km
Common Lizard (<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>)	Protected Species & Priority Species	2 km
Cornflower (<i>Centaurea cyanus</i>)	Priority Species	2 km
Daubenton's (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>)	European Protected Species & Protected Species	2 km
Deptford Pink (<i>Dianthus armeria</i>)	Protected Species & Priority Species	2 km
Firecrest (<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>)	Protected Species	2 km
Grass Snake (<i>Natrix helvetica</i>)	Protected Species & Priority Species	2 km
Green Sandpiper (<i>Tringa ochropus</i>)	Protected Species	2 km
Grizzled Skipper (<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>)	Priority Species	2 km
Marsh Tit (<i>Poecile palustris</i>)	Priority Species	2 km
Nightjar (<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>)	Priority Species	2 km
Water Vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>)	Protected Species & Priority Species	2 km
White Admiral (<i>Limenitis camilla</i>)	Priority Species	2 km
August Thorn (<i>Ennomos quercinaria</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
Brook Lamprey (<i>Lampetra planeri</i>)	European Protected Species	10 km
Common Fan-foot (<i>Pechipogo strigilata</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
Double Dart (<i>Graphiphora augur</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
Fairy Shrimp (<i>Chirocephalus diaphanus</i>)	Protected Species	10 km
Four-spotted (<i>Tyta luctuosa</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
Grasshopper Warbler (<i>Locustella naevia</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
Greylag Goose (<i>Anser anser</i>)	Protected Species	10 km
Heart Moth (<i>Dicycla oo</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
Orange-Fruited Elm-Lichen (<i>Caloplaca luteoalba</i>)	Protected Species & Priority Species	10 km
Pale Eggar (<i>Trichiura crataegi</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
Spinach (<i>Eulithis mellinata</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
Tree Pipit (<i>Anthus trivialis</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
V-moth (<i>Macaria wauaria</i>)	Priority Species	10 km
White-spotted Pinion (<i>Cosmia diffinis</i>)	Priority Species	10 km

NB: All distances are calculated from the centre of the site, National Grid Reference: TL 170170.

LNR = Local Nature Reserve; LWS = Local Wildlife Site.

European Protected Species = species listed under *The Habitats Directive* Annexes II and IV.

Protected Species = species listed under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)* Schedules 1, 5 and 8.

Priority Species = species listed under the *Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006* Section 41.

Field Survey

Introduction

- 3.6 The results of the survey are presented as a series of habitat descriptions for each of the areas on the site. The Existing Habitats Plan is shown on Figure 2 and the habitat descriptions should be read in conjunction with this Plan. An indicative plant species list is attached at Appendix B (nomenclature follows Stace, 2019) and a series of site photographs attached at Appendix C.

Habitat Types and Evaluation

Developed Land/Sealed Surface

- 3.7 Three structures were recorded on site, including a garden shed, summerhouse and green house. The garden shed (B1) was timber framed, with single-skinned, tongue and groove timber cladding and a single pitched bitumen-felt roof. The summerhouse (B2) was timber constructed, with tongue and groove timber cladding and a pitched, engineered tiled roof. Internally, B2 was well-lit, with windows and French doors at the front elevation. The green house (B3) was metal framed, with glass panes. No separate roof spaces were recorded within any of the structures present on the site.

- 3.8 The buildings and associated hardstanding areas provided limited value for any wildlife.

Habitat value: Low

Vegetated Garden

- 3.9 A lawn dominated the garden area, with ornamental planting also recorded. Species recorded within the lawn were typical of amenity grassland and included perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and geranium (*Geranium sp.*). Ornamental planting recorded included primrose (*Primula sp.*), wild strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*), daffodil (*Narcissus sp.*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), Portugal laurel (*Prunus lusitanica*), yew (*Taxus baccata*) and honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*).

- 3.10 The garden area, due to its intensive management and dominance of non-native species, provided only limited foraging and sheltering opportunities for wildlife.

Habitat value: Low

Pond (Non-priority)

- 3.11 A small, ornamental pond was recorded on site, lined by a plastic membrane and bordered by timber decking and well-maintained lawn areas. Plant species recorded within the pond included iris (*Iris spp.*), duckweed (*Lemna sp.*), water-lily (*Nymphaeaceae sp.*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*), hard rush (*Juncus inflexus*) and marsh-marigold (*Caltha palustris*).

- 3.12 The pond, due to its restricted size and periodic management, provided only limited foraging opportunities for wildlife, although does provide some breeding opportunities for common amphibians.

Habitat value: Low to Intermediate

Hedgerows

- 3.13 A manicured holly hedgerow was recorded on the northern site boundary.

- 3.14 The hedgerow provided some sheltering and foraging opportunities for a range of wildlife and some bird nesting habitat, although its regular management reduced its overall value.

Habitat value: Intermediate

Rural Trees

- 3.15 A number of trees were recorded on the site. Semi-mature and mature species recorded included yew, beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), lime (*Tilia x europaea*), cypress tree (*Xanthocyparis sp.*) and oak (*Quercus sp.*), with a number of immature lime and sycamore trees also present. Several trees recorded on the eastern site boundary were partially covered by common ivy (*Hedera helix*).
- 3.16 The trees provided some sheltering and foraging opportunities for a range of wildlife and some bird nesting habitat.

Habitat value: Intermediate to high

Fauna

Badgers

- 3.17 No evidence of badgers or their setts was recorded on or adjacent to the site, with the nearest badger record returned by HERC located over 0.40 km away.

Bats

- 3.18 No evidence of bats was recorded during the thorough internal and external check of the structures, which due to their construction type and condition, were each assessed to provide **negligible** roosting opportunities for bats.
- 3.19 The site, being a well-maintained residential garden plot, provided only limited foraging opportunities for bats. The majority of trees were assessed to be under category **NONE**, due to a lack of obvious PRF's, albeit with a mature oak and a mature giant sequoia assessed to be under category **FAR**, due to the presence of dead wood in the crown of the oak and woodpecker/rot holes on the trunk of the cedar. In addition, three semi-mature sycamore trees and two immature lime trees, were assessed as category **PRF**, due to the presence of hollow trucks within the sycamores and partial ivy covering on the lime trees.

Herpetofauna

- 3.20 A single ornamental pond was recorded on site. The pond was lined by a plastic membrane and bordered by timber decking and amenity lawn areas. The pond, being of restricted size and lacking connectivity to any other nearby ponds was assessed to provide **below average** suitability to support great crested newts, with an HSI score of 0.59 (full details provided in Table 2).

Table 2: HSI score for the on-site pond.

Factor	Score
SI1 - Location	1.00
SI2 - Pond area	0.05
SI3 - Pond drying	0.90
SI4 - Water quality	0.67
SI4 - Shade	1.00
SI6 - Fowl	1.00
SI7 - Fish	0.67
SI8 - Ponds	0.59
SI9 - Terrestrial habitat	0.67
SI10 - Macrophytes	0.60
HSI	0.59

- 3.21 The site, comprising a well-maintained residential garden plot, provided no suitable terrestrial habitat for any species of herpetofauna. In addition, despite a careful search of the site, no species of herpetofauna was recorded sheltering under any refugia lifted. The nearest reptile record returned by HERC was for slow worm, located 1.24 km to the east, with intervening barriers to movement including roads and arable fields, with the only record of great crested newt returned being a coarse resolution record, located within the same 1 km grid square as the site. In addition, according to the DEFRA Multi-agency website, no GCN Class Survey

Licence Returns are noted within the surrounding 2 km study area. However, it should be noted that the site is located within a 'Green Zone'⁶ for great crested newts, as stated on the Natural England Great Crested Newt Risk Zone Map⁷.

Other Wildlife

- 3.22 Apart from a few common species of birds, either recorded on the site or flying overhead, no other species of any note were recorded.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The development proposals are to construct a single residential dwelling within the garden of the existing property (1 The Drive), with associated hard and soft landscaping, following the clearance of some garden vegetation. It is anticipated that the majority of the existing boundary vegetation and trees will be retained and protected during the works.
- 4.2 There are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals. The site is of overall limited ecological value, with the species recorded described as common or abundant and are found in similar places across much of Britain, with no evidence of protected species recorded.
- 4.3 Although it is understood that the majority of the existing boundary vegetation is to be retained and protected as part of the scheme, in the event that any trees assessed under the categories **FAR** or **PRF** require felling to facilitate the proposals, then further surveys (such as a tree climbing inspection, or similar) will be required prior to permit the works and advise on any restrictions that may apply⁸.
- 4.4 In addition to the specific mitigation above, a series of generic mitigation measures, as detailed below, could be implemented to reduce any impact the development proposals may have on local wildlife. There is also an opportunity to implement some enhancement measures to increase the nature conservation value of the site in the long term in accordance with Government guidance as set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024⁹.
- 4.5 Although no evidence of bats was recorded, with the structures each assessed to provide **negligible** roosting opportunities for bats and no further surveys considered necessary at this time, in accordance with best practice all site operatives should be made aware of current legislation protecting bats and their roosts. In the unlikely event of any bats being encountered on the site, then works should stop immediately and Natural England or AAe contacted so that appropriate advice can be provided.
- 4.6 Although the site is located within an 'Green Zone' for great crested newts, no evidence of any species of herpetofauna were recorded on the site during the site walkover, with intervening barriers to movement recorded between the site and nearest records returned by HERC. It is also important to note that the site is a residential garden plot and well-maintained. Therefore, the likelihood of the site supporting any species of herpetofauna is considered to be low, with the site assessed to provide no suitable terrestrial habitat for any species of herpetofauna (amphibians and reptiles) and the pond assessed to be of **below average** suitability for great crested newts. However, in accordance with best practice, all site operatives should be given an induction/toolbox talk on great crested newts so that they are aware of the possibility of encountering them and of the current legislation protecting them (a generic toolbox talk has been attached at Appendix E for reference). In the unlikely event of any species being found,

⁶ Green zones contain sparsely distributed GCN and are less likely to contain important pathways of connecting habitat for this species.

⁷ Available at: <https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/Defra::gcn-risk-zones-hertfordshire/about>

⁸ Subsequent to the site visit carried out by AAe (28.01.25), relandscaping of the existing garden area was completed by the occupants, including removal of a number of trees. It is understood that these works were undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced specialist contractor.

⁹ Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (2024). *National Planning Policy Framework*. London.

then works should stop and the Council or AAe contacted so that appropriate advice can be provided.

- 4.7 It should be noted that all species of wild bird and their nests are protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*. Therefore, site clearance should be timed to avoid the main bird nesting season, which, in general, runs from March to August inclusive. If this is not possible, a check should be carried out prior to any clearance works to ensure there are no active nests present.
- 4.8 In order to protect any vegetation to be retained, suitable fencing may be required at certain locations to reduce the possibility of any damage that could be caused during the works. To minimise accidental damage, any overhanging branches should be pruned back to suitable live growth points. All works should be undertaken by a suitably qualified and experienced specialist contractor and should conform to current industry best practice, i.e. BS 3998: 2010 '*Tree Work - Recommendations*'. The retention of these features will maintain existing commuting/foraging routes currently utilised by local wildlife.
- 4.9 Where possible, any new boundary treatment should be designed to promote permeability of the site to minimise fragmentation and allow free movement of wildlife throughout the site, for example by strengthening/enhancing any existing boundary vegetation, planting up a series of new hedgerows and/or installing post and rail fences. If close boarded fences are required for security reasons, these should be minimised, with strategically placed gaps left to allow animals to pass underneath.
- 4.10 As part of the proposals, soft landscaping will be carried out. Where any new planting is proposed it should aim to use native species, but where this is not practicable then species of known value for wildlife can be used. In particular, flowering plants will be of benefit to invertebrate species and shrubs and trees may provide nesting opportunities for birds once they become established.
- 4.11 The site could be further enhanced by providing roosting, nesting and sheltering opportunities for a range of species and the creation of new wildlife habitats, such as some of those recommended by the Chartered Institute of Ecology Environment and Management's published Biodiversity Net Gain Good Practice Guidance, and listed below:
- Nest boxes
 - Bat boxes
 - Hedgehog boxes
 - Pollinator nest sites
 - Planting wildflowers
- 4.12 The effects of lighting on plants and animals are difficult to assess, but it is thought that lighting can adversely affect invertebrates, birds and bats. As the site is currently unlit, albeit with some light spillage from adjacent sources including neighbouring properties and roads, in accordance with good practice, any new lighting to be introduced should be designed to minimise light spillage and pollution and not directed onto any wildlife boxes installed.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The development proposals are to construct a single residential dwelling within the garden of the existing property (1 The Drive), with associated hard and soft landscaping, following the clearance of some garden vegetation. It is anticipated that the majority of the existing boundary vegetation and trees will be retained and protected during the works.
- 5.2 An ecological survey has been carried out, supplemented by obtaining available baseline data from Herts Environmental Records Centre. The findings from the survey and review of baseline data have provided information to assess the impact of the proposals on species and/or features of ecological/biodiversity value.

- 5.3 There are no habitats of international, national, county or local importance that would be directly affected by the proposals. The site is of overall limited ecological value, with the species recorded described as common or abundant and are found in similar places across much of Britain, with no evidence of protected species recorded.
- 5.4 Overall the findings of this ecological appraisal would indicate that there are no over-riding ecological constraints to the redevelopment proposals that would preclude planning permission being granted, subject to appropriately worded conditions. A range of standard controls are available and deliverable to ensure that there would be no adverse impact on local wildlife that are using the site with a series of controls to be implemented to avoid contravention of current legislation.

253041/HRS

AA Environmental Limited

March 2025

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Figures



KEY	
Site Boundary:	
2 km Study Area:	
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Rev.	Details	Drawn Chkd.	Date
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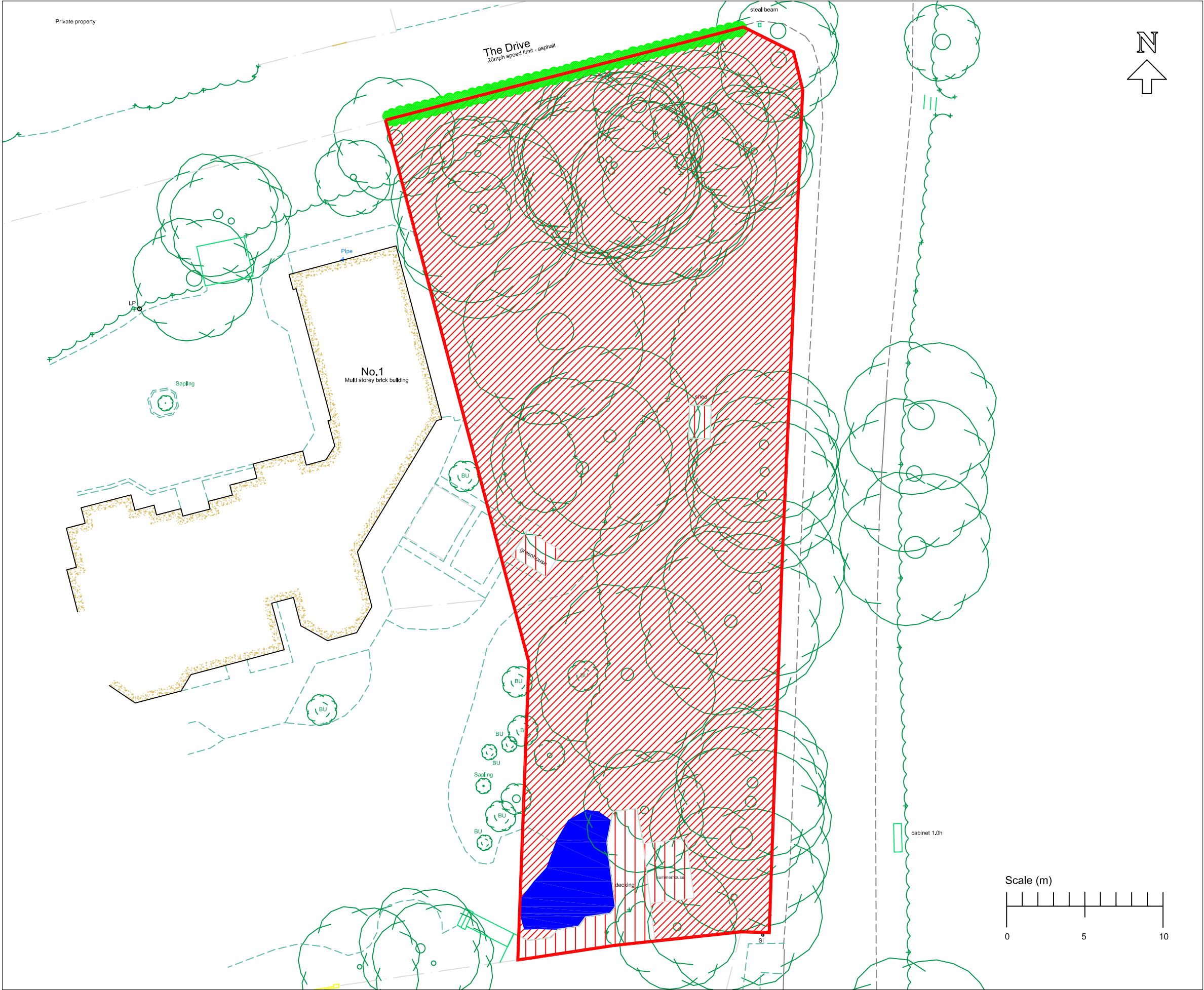
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Project
253041
1 The Drive
Blackmore End

Title
Site Location Plan

Scale As shown	Date 19.03.25	Drawn NAB	Chkd. HRS	Drg. No. Figure 1	Rev.
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UK HABS KEY

- Site Boundary *
- Vegetated Garden *
- Developed Land/Sealed Surface *
- Ponds (Non-Priority) *
- Hedgerow *
- Individual Tree *

* Indicative Location

Rev.	Details	Drawn Chkd.	Date
Project 253041 1 The Drive Blackmore End			
Title Existing Habitats Plan			
		AA Environmental Ltd Units 4-8 Cholswell Court Shippon Abingdon Oxon OX13 6HX T: (01235) 536042 F: (01235) 523849 info@aae-ltd.co.uk www.aae-ltd.co.uk	
Scale As shown	Date 19.03.25	Drg. No. Figure 2	Rev.

Appendix A

Summary of Ratcliffe Criteria

Fragility – some habitats, communities and species are particularly sensitive to environmental change and as such tend to be rare.

Rarity – the threat of loss of a particular habitat or species lends value to the organism and the site it occupies. Whether a species has rarity value is largely dependent upon the context, as a species or habitat can be internationally rare, but relatively common locally or nationally. Likewise, a nationally rare species can in some circumstances be more common at internationally level.

Size (area or extent) – size does play an important part in determining the ecological interest of an area, but is also a relative concept. For example, a 30 acre woodland or a one acre meadow could have a similar degree of nature conservation importance.

Diversity – the diversity of a site can be expressed in a number of ways and both low and high diversity can have a high nature conservation value under different circumstances.

Potential value – some sites have the potential to provide greater nature conservation interest than presently exists.

Position within the Ecological/Geographical Unit – a site which is near or adjacent to other similar habitats may have a higher nature conservation value than an isolated one because the range of fauna can be greater.

Typicalness – certain habitats have become important as they are good examples of what is, or has historically been, typical of the area. Efforts have been made to safeguard representative areas to prevent what was once common becoming fragmented or rare.

Recorded history – a well-documented site with detailed biological and/or natural history records presents a valuable insight into the ecology of a site. Such information is important for current and future management.

Naturalness – this is a measure of the degree to which an area has been modified by human activity. In England unmodified habitats are extremely rare being restricted to remote, inaccessible areas such as cliffs, and some saltmarshes. The bulk is either semi-improved, improved or artificial.

Intrinsic Appeal – this refers to value in a popular rather than ecological sense, and highlights the fact that value is also derived from society's preferences for landscape and other aesthetic features and is not just based on ecological considerations.

Appendix B

PLANT SPECIES LIST

<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
<i>Caltha palustris</i>	Marsh-marigold
<i>Carex pendula</i>	Pendulous sedge
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel
<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	Beech
<i>Fragaria vesca</i>	Wild strawberry
<i>Geranium sp.</i>	Geranium
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Common ivy
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire-fog
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly
<i>Iris sp.</i>	Iris
<i>Juncus inflexus</i>	Hard rush
<i>Lemna sp.</i>	Duckweed
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial rye-grass
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Honeysuckle
<i>Narcissus sp.</i>	Daffodil
<i>Nymphaeaceae sp.</i>	Water-lily
<i>Primula sp.</i>	Primrose
<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>	Cherry laurel
<i>Prunus lusitanica</i>	Portugal laurel
<i>Quercus sp.</i>	Oak
<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i>	Giant sequoia
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Yew
<i>Tilia x europaea</i>	Lime
<i>Xanthocyparis sp.</i>	Cypress tree

Appendix C



Photograph 1: Showing B1 and adjacent ornamental planting.



Photograph 2: Showing B2, associated decking and the adjacent ornamental pond.



Photograph 3: Showing B3 and well-maintained garden area.



Photograph 4: Showing part of the lawn and mature giant sequoia, facing south.

Rev.	Details	Drawn Chkd.	Date
PROJECT 253041 1 The Drive Blackmore End			
TITLE Photograph Record Sheet			
		AA Environmental Ltd Units 4-8 Cholswell Court Shippon Abingdon Oxon OX13 6HX T: 01235 536042 F: 01235 523849 info@aae-ltd.co.uk www.aae-ltd.co.uk	
Scale	Date	Drg No.	Rev.
NTS	19.03.25	Appendix C	
	Drawn NAB	Chkd. HRS	

Appendix D

TOOLBOX TALK:

BATS

Did you know?

- Bats are the world's only flying mammal.
- There are 17 species of bat known to be breeding in the UK, 6 of which are endangered or rare and 6 are classed as vulnerable.
- Bats can be found across the country in urban and rural locations.
- They are often sighted at dusk as they leave their roost, flying around hedgerows, woodland and waterbodies, feeding on insects.
- Throughout the year bats will often change their roost, depending upon the season.
- Usually a pregnant female will only have one baby a year, this makes colonies vulnerable to population decline.
- During the winter bats hibernate and may not wake up, even if disturbed. Therefore it's important not to work on sites with bats during these months.
- Bats may not use the same roost throughout the year, however they are legally protected with or without a bat occupying them.

Identification

- You may find bats in any number of places, they tend to prefer dark, quiet spots with good shelter, such as holes and cracks in trees, roofs and walls of buildings, under bridges, old tunnels and in caves.
- Signs of bat presence include discarded moth wings, staining around crevices and small mouse-like droppings which crumble easily.

Legislation

- All bats and their roosts are protected by UK and European Law. This makes it **illegal to kill, injure, capture or disturb bats** or obstruct access to, damage or destroy their roosts and protects important feeding areas from damage or disturbance.
- Under law, a roost is any structure or place used for shelter or protection.

Site Controls

- There is always a **risk** that bats, as they move between different roost sites and occupy new roosts, could be encountered during site works.
- **If any bats are encountered during works the following controls must be applied to avoid breaking the law:**
 1. If bats are discovered/suspected works must stop **immediately** with any bat left in-situ and AAe immediately contacted (contact details above).
 2. If any injured bats are found during the works AAe would care for them and where possible be released in the same location once recovered.
 3. During works staff must wear gloves in case of accidental contact with bats.
 4. Any roof tiles will be lifted straight up, rather than being rolled over, minimising the risk of harming bats which may be sheltering underneath.
 5. Areas must be fully checked for any bats or their evidence prior to filling any gaps and repointing any brickwork.
 6. Any lighting must be installed must avoid illuminating vegetation and or bat boxes/access points.

These controls have been put in place to protect all site operatives from breaking the law. You're not expected to be able to identify bats or their presence so remember, **if in doubt shout and contact the relevant person.**

Key Contacts

AA Environmental Ltd, Units 4-8 Cholswell Court, Shippon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6HX
Tel: 01235 536042



Brown long-eared bat.



Lesser horseshoe bat in rail tunnel.



Common pipistrelle bat.

Appendix E

TOOLBOX TALK: GREAT CRESTED NEWTS

Key Contact

AA Environmental Ltd, Units 4-8 Cholswell
Court, Shippon, Oxfordshire, OX13 6HX

Tel: 01235 536042

Did you know?

- Great crested newts or **GCNs** are the largest and rarest species of newt found in the UK.
- Significant population declines, mostly due to habitat loss, has seen European and UK law introduced to protect GCNs.
- The UK is one of the final strongholds of GCNs, with an estimated population of 400,000 across the country.
- GCNs are amphibians and so use ponds for breeding, but spend much of their lives on land.
- For their survival, a link between a suitable breeding pond and terrestrial habitat is essential.
- During winter, GCNs will hibernate on land and may not wake up if disturbed. This makes them vulnerable to site works, especially during winter months.
- GCNs can be found in a range of habitats, be it rural or urban.
- GCNs, like many amphibians, are nocturnal and are consequently rarely seen during the day time.
- The lifespan of a GCN can be up to 15 years.

Identification

- GCNs may be found in a number of places around a site. When on land they tend to favour log/wood, stone and rubble piles. Breeding ponds are mainly medium-sized ponds, however, ditches and even large puddles may be used.
- Mature GCNs may grow up to about 17 cm long.
- Most of their skin is dark brown or black and warty in texture/appearance with an orange/yellow and black pattern on their tummy.
- During the breeding season adult males have a jagged crest running along their back, which only becomes clearly visible when in the water.

Legislation

- All amphibian species have some level of protection under UK law.
- GCNs are protected by UK and European Law.** This makes it **illegal** to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take, intentionally or recklessly disturb whilst occupying a 'place used for shelter or protection' and protects these places against destruction.

Site Controls

- There is always a **risk** that as GCNs move within the terrestrial habitat or between breeding ponds that they could be encountered during site works.
- If any GCNs are encountered during works the following controls must be applied to avoid breaking the law:**
 - If GCNs are discovered/suspected works must stop **immediately**, with any GCNs left in-situ and AAe immediately contacted (contact details above).
 - Site operatives must not intentionally handle GCNs.
 - During works, operatives must wear gloves in case of accidental contact with GCNs.
 - Care must be taken when moving logs, stones or rubble, or when clearing areas near to ponds. These are favoured habitats for GCNs and they may be sheltering within them.
 - Stockpiling of materials is only permitted within designated areas.

These controls have been put in place to protect all site operatives from breaking the law. You are not expected to be able to identify GCNs or their presence so remember, **if in doubt shout and contact the relevant person.**



