



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Hassocks to Burgess Hill Cycle Link

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Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION 3

2.0 METHODOLOGY 5

3.0 RESULTS 6

4.0 DISCUSSION 20

5.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT..... 28

6.0 CONCLUSIONS..... 29

7.0 REFERENCES..... 30

APPENDIX 1: HABITAT MAP 32

APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHS 33

APPENDIX 3: SPECIES LIST 37

APPENDIX 4: CONDITION ASSESSMENT 39

LIABILITIES:

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living animals and plants are capable of migration/establishing. Whilst such species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date. This report provides a snapshot of the species that were present at the time of the survey only and does not consider seasonal variation. Furthermore, where access is limited, or the site supports habitats which are densely vegetated, only dominant species may be recorded.

The recommendations contained within this document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to or during works.

1.0 Introduction

Background

1.1 The Ecology Partnership was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for the Land north of Hassocks, the proposed Hassocks to Burgess Hill Cycle Link, hereafter referred to as 'site'.

1.2 The Key objectives of a PEA (CIEEM 2017) are to:

- Identify the likely ecological constraints associated with a project;
- Identify any mitigation measures likely to be required, following the 'Mitigation Hierarchy' (CIEEM 2016; BSI 2013, Clause 5.2);
- Identify any additional surveys that may be required to inform and Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA); and
- Identify opportunities offered by a project to deliver ecological enhancement.

1.3 This report comprises:

- The legislative and planning context (Section 1);
- Assessment methodologies (Section 2);
- Results (Section 3);
- Implication for development (Section 4);
- An impact assessment (Section 5);
- Conclusions (Section 6).

Site Context

1.4 The site is characterised by majority other neutral grassland, with areas of scrub, and scattered trees, the site totals c. 0.71ha. The site is situated to the north of Hassocks, and south of Burgess Hill (central grid reference: TQ 31217 17561). The immediate surrounding area consists of grassland fields and residential dwellings, with Batchelors Farm Nature Reserve to the east, and railway adjacent to site to the west. The red line boundary of the site and the immediate surroundings are shown in Figure 1.

Proposed development

1.5 The current proposals for the site include the creation of a cycle path from Hassocks to Burgess Hill, the exact plans for the route are currently unknown.



*Figure 1: The site red line boundary and immediate surroundings.
Captured on Google Satellite (Imagery from September 2023)*

Relevant Planning Policies and Legislation

- 1.6 The site was surveyed to assess its ecological value and to ensure the proposals were compliant with relevant planning policy and legislation. Policy guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) as well as the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031. These policies included the following which are considered relevant to ecology, biodiversity and nature conservation:
- DP17: Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
 - DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows; and
 - DP38: Biodiversity.
- 1.7 The Environment Bill received Royal Assent on 9th November 2021 and is now enacted as the Environment Act 2021. Part 6 (Nature and Biodiversity) and Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 insert a new section 90A and Schedule 7A into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA), which contain the provisions requiring mandatory biodiversity net gain for development granted planning permission pursuant to the TCPA. These provisions require developments to provide a biodiversity value post-development that exceeds the predevelopment biodiversity value of the onsite habitats by at least 10%. This was adopted in

February 2024 although there are a number of exemptions which may mean that biodiversity net gain is not required. These are listed under government guidance and are as follows:

- Development below a de minimis threshold;
- Householder applications;
- Small scale self-build and custom house/building;
- HS2; and
- Biodiversity net gain sites.

1.8 The site has therefore been surveyed to assess its ecological value and to ensure compliance with national and local plan policies and other relevant nature conservation legislation including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, and the Conservation of Habitats and Species (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

1.9 The report has been produced with reference to current guidelines for PEA (CIEEM 2017) and in accordance with BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

2.0 Methodology

Desktop Study

2.1 A desktop study search was completed using an internet-based mapping service (magic.defra.gov.uk) for statutory designated sites and an internet-based aerial mapping service (maps.google.co.uk) was used to understand the habitats present in and around the survey area, including identifying habitat linkages and features (ponds, woodlands, etc.) within the wider landscape. In addition to this, biological records were requested from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) with a search radius of 2km around the site. This includes protected species and non-statutory designated sites and habitats.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

2.2 A preliminary ecological appraisal was undertaken on the 4th February 2025 by Chris Jennings BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM, and Sophie Baker BSc (Hons) MSc. The surveyors identified the habitats present, following the UKHab classification system. The site was surveyed on foot and the existing habitats and land uses were recorded on an appropriately scaled map. The potential for the site to support protected species was also assessed (CIEEM 2017).

- 2.3 In addition, the abundance of plant species in each habitat were also recorded using the DAFOR scale. This assigns species abundance to one of the following categories: Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional, or Rare.

Protected Species Assessments

- 2.4 Any evidence of protected species was recorded. Standard methods of search and measures of presence, or likely presence based on habitat suitability, were used for: bats in trees and buildings (Collins 2016), breeding birds (BTO 2020), dormice (Bright *et al.* 2006), great crested newt (ARG 2010), reptiles (Froglife 2015), badgers (Creswell *et al.* 1990) and water voles (Strachan *et al.* 2011).

Limitations

- 2.5 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no single investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. The site was visited over the period of one site visit, as such seasonal variations cannot be observed and potentially only a selection of all species that potentially occur within the site have been recorded. Therefore, the survey provides a general assessment of potential nature conservation value of the site and does not include a definitive plant species list.
- 2.6 The protected species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on site, based on the suitability of the habitat and any direct evidence on site. It should not be taken as providing a full and definitive summary of any protected species group. The assessment is only valid for the time when the survey was carried out. Additional surveys may be recommended if, on the basis of this assessment, it is considered reasonably likely that protected species may be present.

3.0 Results

Desktop Study

- 3.1 There are two internationally designated sites located within a 15km radius of the site red line boundary (Figure 2). These include:
- Castle Hill SAC located c. 11.6km south-east of site, designated for the semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates. This site hosts the priority habitat 'orchid rich sites', including species such as early spider-orchid *Ophrys sphegodes* and burnt orchid *Orchis ustulata*.

- Lewes Downs SAC located c. 12.7km south-east of site, designated for the semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates. This site hosts the priority habitat 'orchid rich sites', including species such as early spider-orchid *Ophrys sphegodes*, burnt orchid *Orchis ustulata*, and musk orchid *Herminium monorchis*.



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Figure 2: Designated sites within 15km of the approximate red line boundary

- 3.2 There are no nationally designated sites within a 2km radius of the red line boundary. The closest nationally designated site includes Ditchling Common SSSI c. 2.1km east of site; Bedelands Farm LNR c. 2.7km north of site; and Wolstonbury Hill SSSI c. 3.9km south-west of site. The site does not lie within any SSSI Impact Risk Zones.
- 3.3 A total of three non-statutory designated sites are located within a 2km radius of the red line boundary:
- Burgess Hill Railway Lands LWS located c. 1.7km north of site, designated for the mosaic of semi-natural habitats, including lowland mixed deciduous woodland, open grassland, and scrub.

- Keymer Tile Works LWS located c. 1.7km north of site, designated for the matrix of successional habitats ranging from temporary pools and bare clay through unimproved grassland to dense scrub, deciduous woodland and willow carr.
- Brambleside Meadow Local Wildlife Site (LWS) located c. 1.9km east of site, designated for the grassland and scrub habitats.

3.4 There are a number of priority habitats within 2km of the red line boundary (Figure 3), the closest of each include:

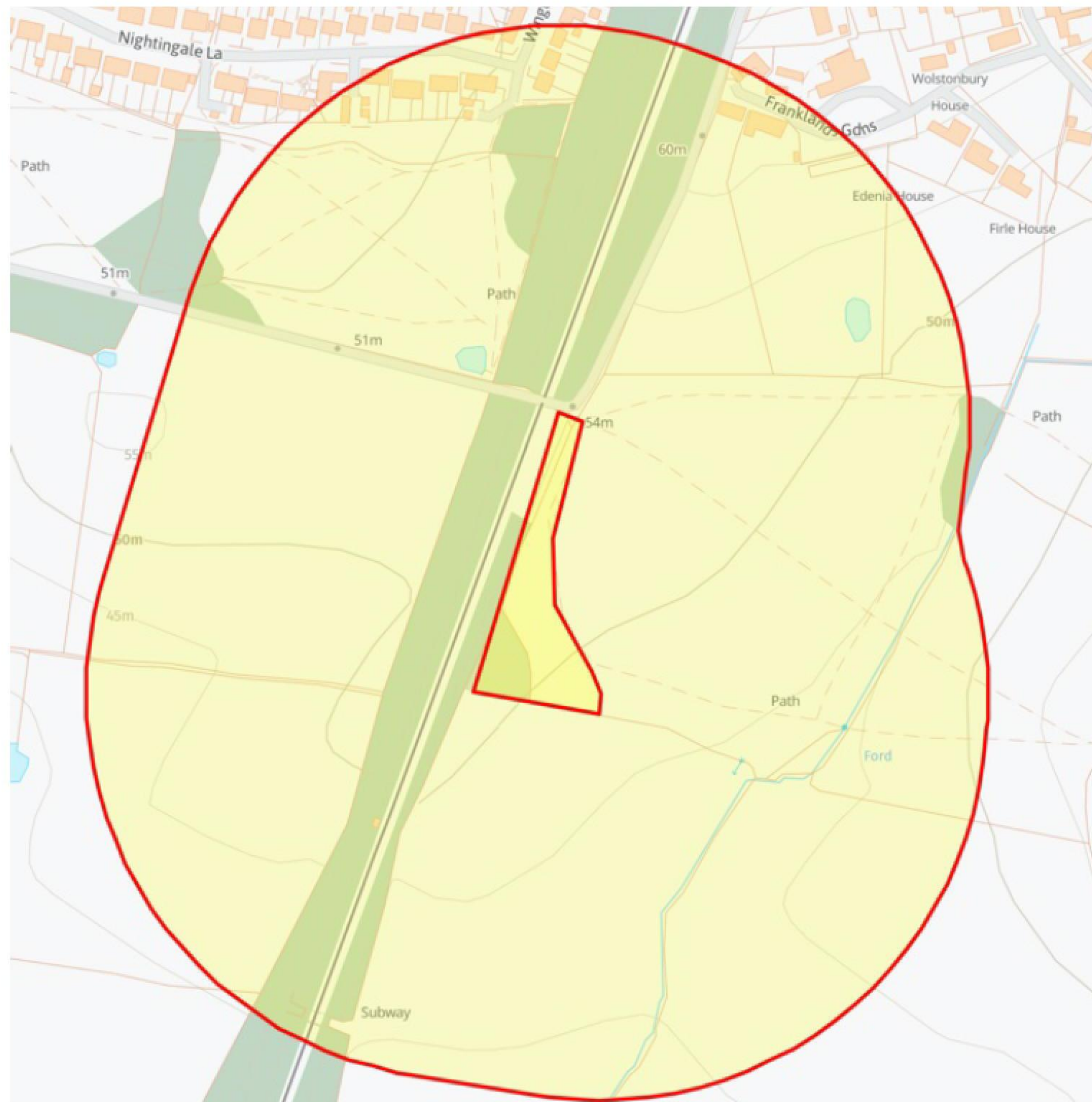
- Deciduous woodland c. 10m north;
- Traditional orchard c. 320m east;
- Ancient woodland c. 550m west;
- Wood pasture & parkland c. 1.9km east.



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Figure 3: Priority habitats within 2km of the approximate red line boundary: ancient semi-natural woodland (vertical hatching), ancient, replanted woodland (horizontal hatching), woodpasture & parkland (shrub symbol), traditional orchard (lime green), and deciduous woodland (green)

- 3.5 OS colour mapping identified two ponds and what appears to be a ditch located within 250m of site (Figure 4). The ponds are located c. 50m north-west of site, and c. 180m north-east of site. The closest point of the ditch is located c. 110m east of site.



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Figure 4: Ponds located within 250m of the site red line boundary

- 3.6 A search via MAGIC maps found a number of granted EPS licences and GCN survey licence returns within 2km of the red line boundary (Figure 5), these are detailed in Table 1.

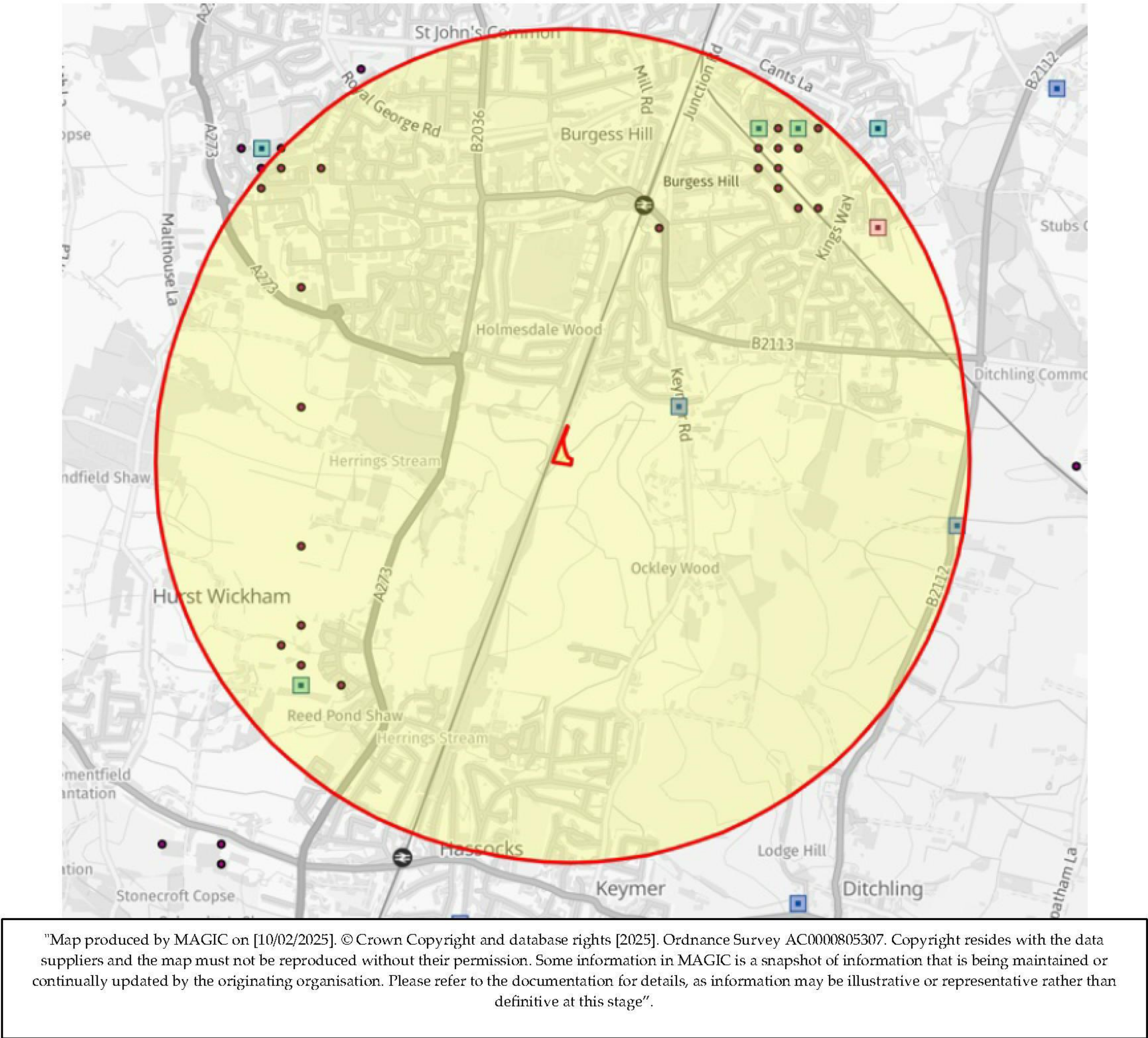


Figure 5: EPS licence returns and GCN survey licence returns within 2km of the approximate red line boundary. GCN (green squares), bats (blue square), hazel dormouse (pink square), GCN survey licence returns (pink circle)

Table 1: EPS licence returns and GCN survey licence returns within 2km of site

Granted EPS Licences			
Species	Licence cover	Distance from site	Date of record
GCN	Damage of a resting site, destruction of a resting site.	c. 570m east of site	2017 - 2022
Soprano pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting site.	c. 570m north-east of site	2017
GCN	Damage of a resting site, destruction of a breeding site, destruction of a resting site.	c. 1.6km south-west of site	2019 - 2030
GCN	Damage of a resting site, destruction of a resting site.	c. 1.8km north-east of site	2017 - 2024
Hazel dormouse	Destruction of a resting site.	c. 1.8km north-east of site	2017 - 2023
GCN	Damage of a resting site, destruction of a breeding site, destruction of a resting site.	c. 1.8km north-east of site	2014 - 2027

GCN	Damage of a resting site, destruction of a breeding site, destruction of a resting site.	c. 1.9km north- east of site	2014 - 2021
Brown long-eared, Serotine, Whiskered Bat	Destruction of a resting site.	c. 1.9km east of site	2020
GCN Class Survey Licence Returns			
Distance from site		Date(s) of positive return	
c. 1.1km north		30/09/2017	
c. 1.3km west		07/04/2016	
c. 1.3km west		14/04/2015	
c. 1.5km west		10/06/2014	
		17/06/2014	
		27/05/2014	
		08/05/2014	
c. 1.5km south-west		14/04/2015	
c. 1.5km south-west		14/04/2015	
c. 1.6km south-west		14/04/2015	
c. 1.6km south-west		01/03/2015	
c. 1.6km north-east		12/05/2017	
		09/06/2017	
		13/06/2017	
		19/06/2017	
c. 1.6km north-east		16/04/2015	
		13/06/2017	
c. 1.6km north-east		13/06/2017	
c. 1.7km north-east		22/04/2015	
		08/06/2015	
c. 1.7km north-east		22/04/2015	
c. 1.7km north-east		08/06/2015	
c. 1.7km north-east		13/06/2017	
c. 1.8km north-east		02/06/2015	
c. 1.8km north-east		22/04/2015	
		08/06/2015	
c. 1.8km north-west		01/02/2015	
		26/05/2015	
c.1.9km north-west		13/06/2017	
c.1.9km north-west		13/04/2016	
c.1.9km north-east		01/06/2016	
		15/06/2016	
c.1.9km north-east		02/06/2015	
		08/06/2015	

3.7 A 2km biological records search was requested from Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC). The records closest to site, recorded within the last 10 years, and relevant to the habitats on site, have been included in Table 2.

Table 2: Notable species records within 2km of the site in the last 10 years

Species	Status	Distance from site	Date of record
Common Toad <i>Bufo bufo</i> (3 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC S41	c. 650m east	13/06/2023
Palmate Newt <i>Lissotriton helveticus</i> (11 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5	c. 630m east	27/06/2023
Smooth Newt <i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i> (64 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5	c. 630m east	27/06/2023
Great Crested Newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i> (78 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; Habitats Directive Annex 2 & 4; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 630m east	14/06/2023
Slow worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i> (28 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 450m east	April 2018
Grass Snake <i>Natrix helvetica</i> (21 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 450m east	April 2018
Common Lizard <i>Zootoca vivipara</i> (3 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 450m east	April 2018
Stag Beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i>	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; Habitats Directive Annex 2; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 1.8km south-west	10/07/2023
Brown Hairstreak <i>Thecla betulae</i> (22 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 30m west	02/09/2015
Cinnabar Moth <i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 1.8km east	01/06/2021
White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>	Birds Directive Annex 1; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1; Amber List BoCC	Within 1km	23/06/2020
Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> (21 records)	Birds Directive Annex 1; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1; Convention on Migratory Species Appendix 2	Within 1km	14/04/2015
Herring Gull <i>Larus argentatus</i> (12 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	c. 1.4km west	01/06/2020
Kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i> (4 records)	Birds Directive Annex 1; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	c. 1.1km west	01/06/2018
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i> (9 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	c. 1.3km west	01/06/2021
Hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i> (4 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	c. 1.5km west	09/06/2016

Skylark <i>Alauda arvensis</i> (27 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	c. 1km south	30/05/2017
Corn Bunting <i>Emberiza calandra</i> (2 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	Within 2km	01/06/2022
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citronella</i> (14 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	Within 2km	01/06/2023
Hawfinch <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i> (6 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	Within 2km	02/04/2018
Linnet <i>Linaria cannabina</i> (3 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	Within 2km	27/04/2019
Bullfinch <i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i> (9 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Amber List BoCC	Within 2km	19/05/2023
Marsh Tit <i>Poecile palustris</i>	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	Within 2km	29/05/2016
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i> (25 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	c. 1.4km north-west	29/05/2023
Dunnock <i>Prunella modularis</i> (16 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Amber List BoCC	Within 2km	19/05/2023
Starling <i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> (15 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	Within 2km	19/05/2023
Song Thrush <i>Turdus philomelos</i> (32 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Amber List BoCC	Within 1km	04/06/2020
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker <i>Dryobates minor</i>	NERC Act (2006) Section 41; Red List BoCC	c. 450m west	03/05/2018
Tawny Owl <i>Strix aluco</i> (24 records)	Amber List BoCC	c. 1km south	13/06/2016
Barn Owl <i>Tyto alba</i> (21 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 1	c. 1.2km south	29/06/2020
Serotine <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> (6 records)	Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 Schedule 2; Habitat and Species Directive (1992) Annex 4; Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5	c. 450m east	June 2018
Daubenton's Bat <i>Myotis daubentonii</i> (2 records)	As above	c. 620m north	10/02/2023
Natterer's Bat <i>Myotis nattereri</i> (13 records)	As above	c. 620m north	10/02/2023
Common Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	As above	c. 450m east	June 2018

(16 records)			
Soprano Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i> (10 records)	As above	c. 450m east	June 2018
Nathusius' Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i> (3 records)	As above	c. 820 east	May 2020
Noctule <i>Nyctalus noctule</i> (8 records)	As above	c. 450m east	June 2018
Brown Long-eared Bat <i>Plecotus auritus</i> (2 records)	As above	c. 450m east	June 2018
Hazel Dormouse <i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i> (8 records)	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 Schedule 2; Habitats and Species Directive (1992) Annex 4; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 10m south	20/11/2019
European Water Vole <i>Arvicola amphibius</i>	Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) Schedule 5; NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 1.4km south	18/03/2015
West European Hedgehog <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i> (43 records)	NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 340m north- west	02/02/2021
Polecat <i>Mustela putorius</i>	NERC Act (2006) Section 41	c. 850m east	18/06/2022

3.8 The site was comprised of other neutral grassland, scrub bordering the west and southern boundaries, and a scattering of individual trees.

3.9 A detailed habitat map is attached in Appendix 1, site photos in Appendix 2, and full species list in Appendix 3.

Other Neutral Grassland

3.10 Other neutral grassland onsite was separated in two sections divided by a small fenced off area in the south-western corner of the site, displayed in Figure 6. Within the fenced area (G1) the moderate other neutral grassland was dominated by black knapweed, cocksfoot, false oat grass, and Yorkshire fog.



Figure 6: Other neutral grassland identified onsite (sections labelled G1 and G2). Individual trees located onsite labelled T1 – T4, dead tree (DT).

- 3.11 The remaining grassland on site (G2) was in a 'poor' condition, as the site lies within Batchelors Farm Nature Reserve recreational activity and regular management has resulted in short sward length in the majority of the site. The other neutral grassland present within G2 is characterised by occasional common sorrel, creeping bent, perennial ryegrass, white clover, and Yorkshire fog.

Blackthorn Scrub

- 3.12 Blackthorn scrub was present along the western boundary of site, bordering the railway line. The species composition varied slightly within the fenced area and outside, with both characterised by blackthorn, hawthorn, hazel, bramble, and oak. The scrub outside of the fence had additional presence of sweet / horse chestnut.

Mixed Scrub

- 3.13 Mixed scrub was present along the southern boundary of site, this was dominated by bramble, with occasional hawthorn, and rare elder and holly present.

Individual Trees

- 3.14 There were four individual trees found on or adjacent to site: three oaks *Quercus robur* and an individual hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, displayed in Figure 6. Two of the oak trees were a 'moderate' condition (T1 and T2) whereas one was 'good' condition (T4). The hawthorn (T3) was considered to also be 'good' condition. It is of note that T1 and T2 are not located within the red line boundary however, considering proposed works, the trees were surveyed.

Protected Species

Bats

Bat roost potential

- 3.15 The trees onsite were inspected for their bat roosting potential, Potential Roosting Features (PRF) include features such as cavities, split limbs, or woodpecker holes. One dead tree to the south-west of site, displayed in Figure 6, displayed some bat roosting potential due to the cavities present, however the tree was thin and breaking apart, closer examination deemed that it had '**low**' roosting bat potential. It was considered that this tree had a potential to be a PRF-I, suitable for individual bats.
- 3.16 The oak tree to the centre of site (T4) displayed some bat roosting potential due to holes present on limbs, however due to the size of the tree, ground level assessment could not determine whether this tree had the potential to support individual or multiple roosting bats. The tree was considered to have '**low**' roosting bat potential.

Foraging and commuting habitat

- 3.17 It was considered that the grassland habitats onsite offered low potential for foraging and commuting bats. It was considered that the majority of potential for bat activity was located around linear boundary features to the south and west of the site. The scrub habitats had the most potential for foraging and commuting bats, the majority of which are to be retained within current plans, with a small section to the south of the site proposed to be removed for the creation of a cycle path.

Badgers

- 3.18 No evidence of badgers, such as setts, latrines, mammal trails, or snuffle holes were identified anywhere on site. However, due to the open nature of the site, use of the site by foraging and commuting badgers cannot be ruled out.

Reptiles

- 3.19 Reptile surveys undertaken in 2021 adjacent to the south identified common lizard, slow worm and grass snake present in the landscape. The locations of these species is shown below in Figure 7.

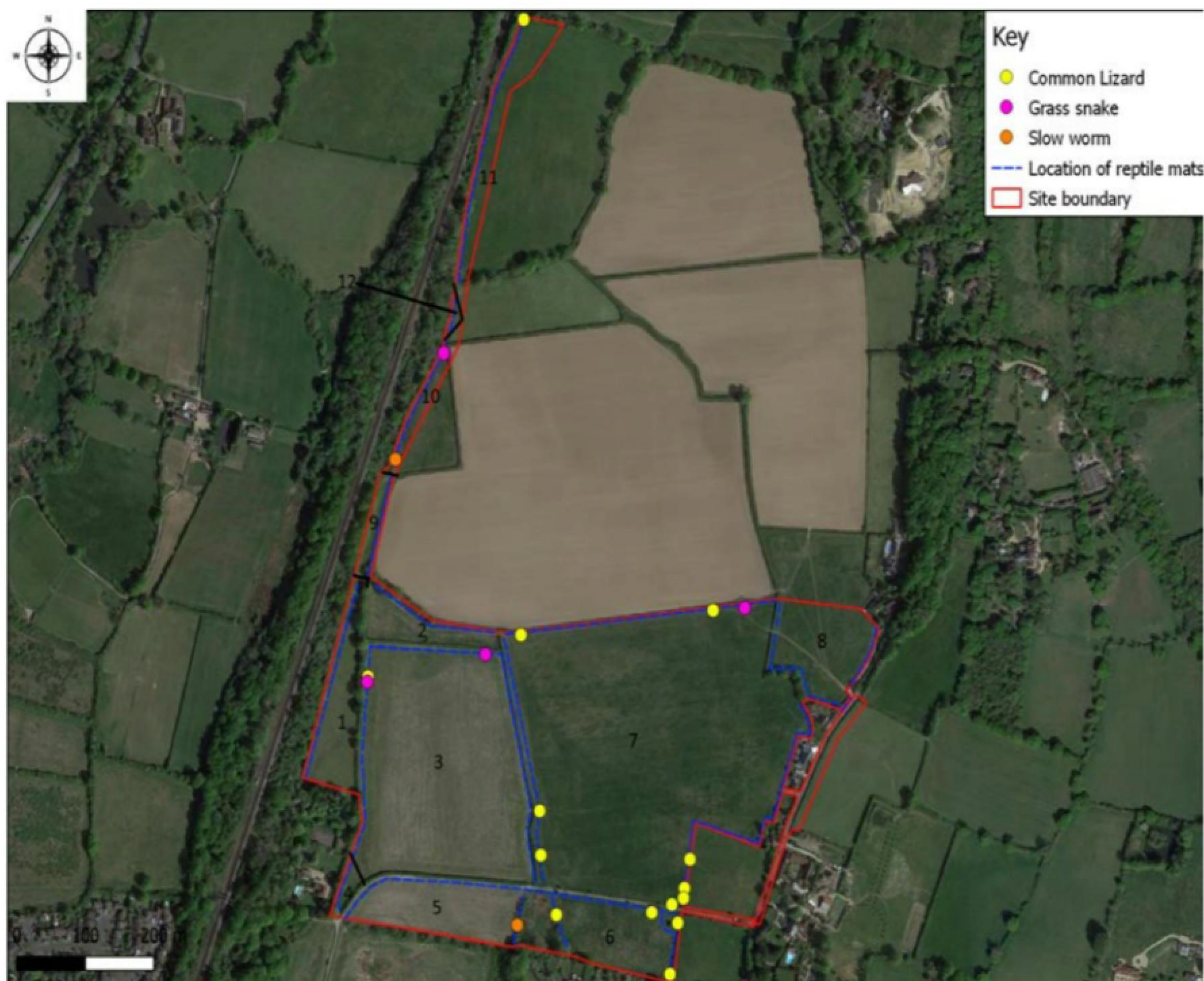


Figure 7: Location of reptile surveys across the site

- 3.20 The majority of grassland onsite was of short sward and therefore unsuitable for foraging and commuting reptiles due to the lack of cover. Some areas of overgrown grassland and scrub located towards the south-west of site may provide suitable habitat for reptiles. The most suitability for reptiles were in the southern and south-western boundary features characterised by scrub, considered suitable to provide cover from predators as well as foraging habitat for reptiles. Therefore, the site was considered to have 'low' suitability to support reptiles.

Great crested newts (GCN)

- 3.21 There were two ponds present within 250m of the site red line boundary. Located c. 50m north-west of site, and c. 180m north-east of site. The desk study identified 5 EPS licences for GCN and 34 positive survey records within 2km from the site boundary. Therefore, GCN are present in the surrounding wider environment.
- 3.22 In regard to onsite habitats, the majority of the grassland onsite was considered unsuitable for GCN due to the short sward vegetation. The only GCN suitability was considered within the southern and western scrub habitats for foraging, commuting, and resting GCN in their terrestrial phase. Although there are no waterbodies on site, the closest pond located 50m north has a bridge over the railway line therefore providing some means of connectivity.

Hazel dormice

- 3.23 Dormice have been recorded using the south and western aspect of the site, with dormouse surveys extending across the wider landscape in support of the application DM/18/497 and the subsequent dormouse licence. The location of the dormice identified during the survey, and the extent of the survey boundary is shown in Figure 8 below. It can be seen that the survey including the scrub along the southern aspect of the new survey boundary.
- 3.24 The central areas of the site were not considered suitable for dormice given the dominance of other neutral grassland. However, the western and southern boundaries are considered suitable as they were characterised by scrub habitat with scattered trees and linked to off site habitats that are known to support dormice.

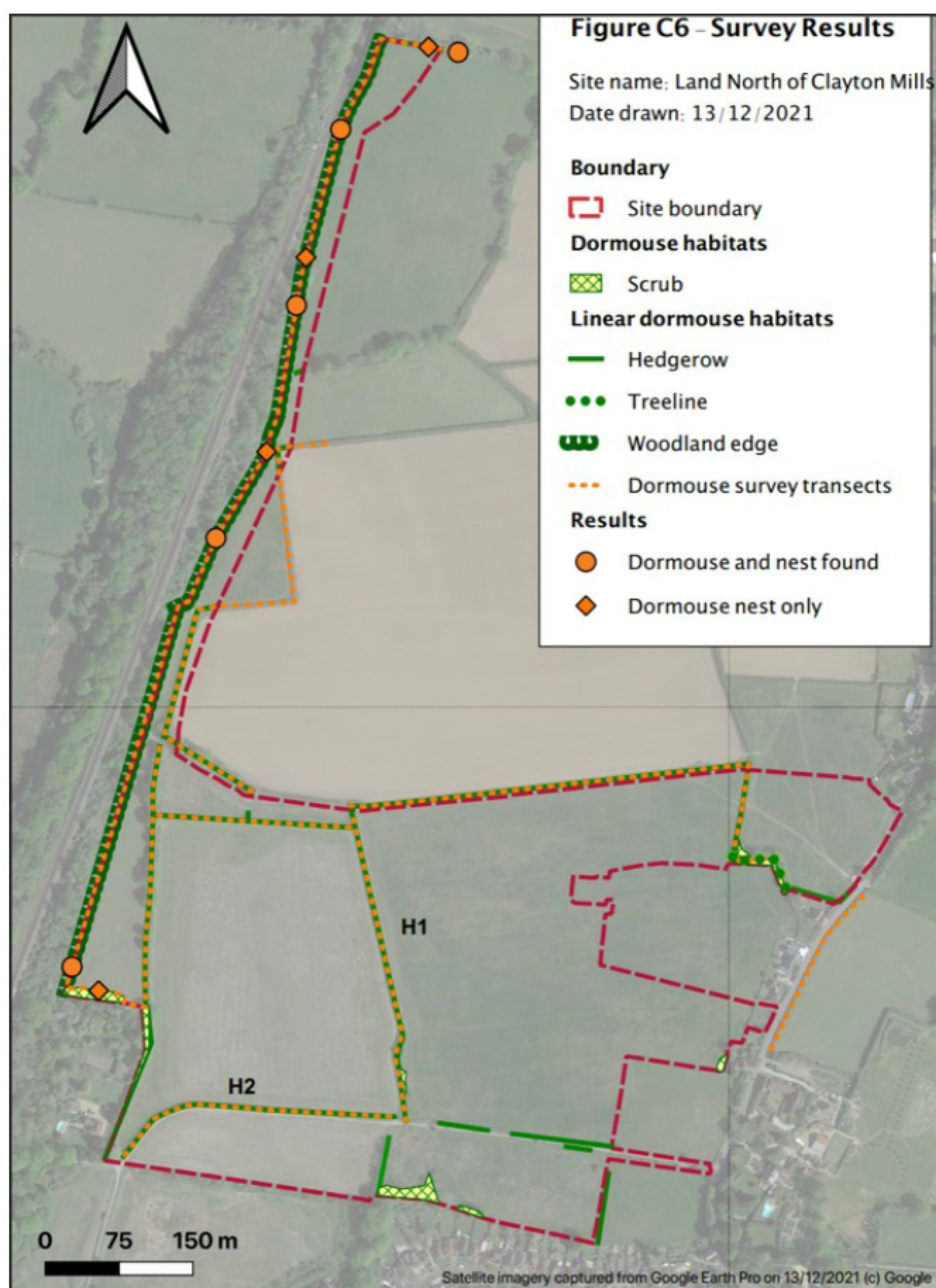


Figure 8: Dormouse survey area and results (2021)

Nesting birds

- 3.25 The scrub and trees onsite provide potential for birds to nest within. Although no old bird nests were found during the survey, the presence of bird species cannot be ruled out due to the dense nature of the habitats.

Other species

- 3.26 No mammal holes were identified during the survey however, an individual fox was observed amongst the south-western scrub. Additionally, given the open nature of the site, and presence of local records for hedgehogs, closest record located c. 340m north-west of the red line boundary, they are considered likely to use the site for foraging and commuting purposes.

- 3.27 Water voles are also present within the local landscape, records are present c. 1.4km south of site, however, due to lack of suitable habitat onsite and distance of the record it is unlikely this species will be a constraint to proposed works.

4.0 Discussion

- 4.1 The following paragraphs consider the effects of the development on designated sites, priority habitats and protected and priority species. Where the desk study and UKHab survey provide sufficient evidence for an assessment of effects on any of these groups to be taken through planning, these are detailed below, the need for additional surveys and when and how these should be completed are summarised, if required.

Effects on designated sites

- 4.2 The site does not fall within or adjacent to any statutory designated sites. The closest international designated site is Castle Hill SAC located c. 11.6km south-east of site. Additionally, the site is outside of any SSSI impact zones. Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC has a 7km zone of influence within the Mid Sussex District Plan (2014 – 2031), as the site is outside of this zone of influence, no mitigation is required.
- 4.3 Given the distance of the site from any designated sites and small-scale proposals involving the development of a cycle path, it is considered the proposed development will have no direct or indirect impact on the integrity of any designated sites. Impacts on such designations are therefore scoped out of the assessment.

Effects on priority habitats

- 4.4 The closest priority habitat is deciduous woodland c. 10m north, traditional orchard c. 320m east, and ancient woodland c. 550m west of site. Current proposals include the removal of sections of the scrub to the south-west of the site for a cycle path, therefore, small areas of scrub are proposed to be lost.
- 4.5 The deciduous woodland and ancient woodland located along the railway line have some connectivity through hedgerows, treelines, and scrub along the field boundaries. Although the removal of some scrub may fragment this, it is not considered to cause any significant adverse impacts on priority habitats within the local area as connectivity is largely being retained through the retained scrub and tree habitats onsite.

Effects on on-site habitats

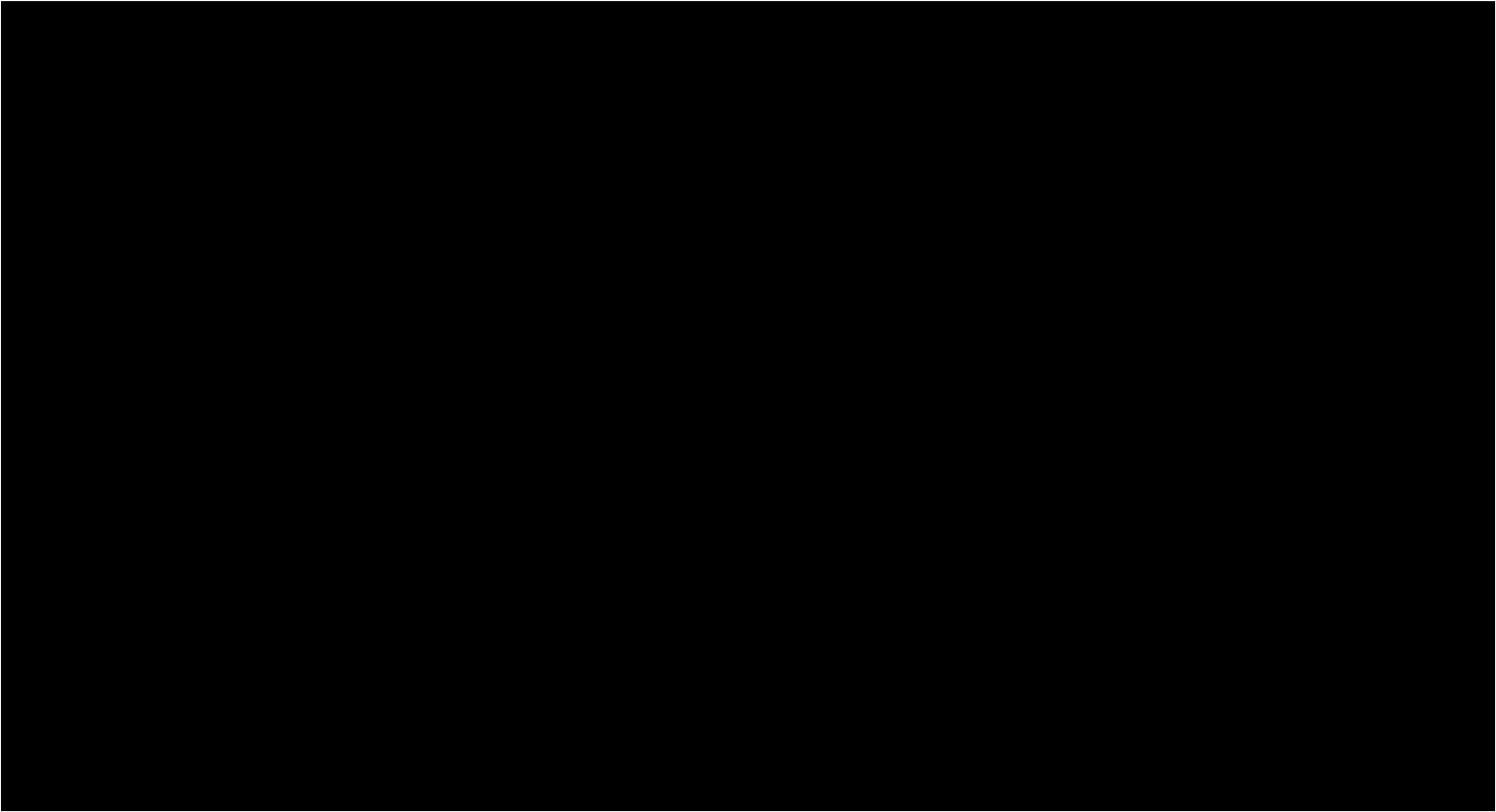
- 4.6 The habitats identified onsite include other neutral grassland, mixed scrub, blackthorn scrub, and four individual trees. Current proposals include the creation of a cycle path, as such, the removal of small sections of scrub is expected. The loss of which is suggested to be suitably offset through native species planting. It is recommended that the cycle path be directed away from the trees onsite.

Protected Species***Bats******Bat roost potential***

- 4.7 One dead tree was considered to have ‘**low**’ potential for roosting bats, with the suitability to house individual bats (PRF-I). Therefore, an endoscope survey is recommended to examine this tree further, if not possible then minimum of two bat surveys are recommended with an to determine if the tree is being used by roosting bats.
- 4.8 The oak tree T4 was also considered to have ‘**low**’ potential for roosting bats, if this tree is to be felled within proposals, then it is recommended that surveys be undertaken to determine whether identified features may support individual or multiple roosting bats. Including an endoscope survey and possible emergence surveys.

Foraging and commuting habitats

- 4.9 Due to the nature of the site, it was considered to have moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats, with most suitability located in the linear scrub and tree features bordering the south and west of the site.
- 4.10 According to Bat Conservation Trust guidelines, it is important that proportionality is employed when recommending further survey work for bat species on a proposed development site. As stated within section 2.2.19 of the latest survey guidelines (2023), the following points need to be taken into account with regard to planning bat surveys:
- Likelihood of bats being present;
 - Type of proposed activities;
 - Scale of proposed activities ;
 - Size, nature and complexity of the site;
 - Species concerned;
 - Number of individuals.

- 4.11 Considering the above, the small scale of the proposals, and if the proposed development implements a sensitive lighting strategy, it is considered that the development of the site would not impact the ecological functionality of the local landscape.
- 4.12 All bat species are nocturnal, resting in dark conditions in the day and emerging at night to feed. Bats are known to be affected by light levels which can affect both their roosting behaviour as well as their foraging behaviour. This needs to be taken into account, with a sympathetic lighting scheme for the development. Recommendations include:
- Lighting should only be installed if there is a significant need;
 - Lighting should be avoided along all linear features such as treelines, hedgerows, and scrub which bats use to commute across the landscape to forage;
 - Lights should have focussed luminance on their target area, preventing light spill and pollution into other areas of the site and local area.
 - Dark buffer zones can be used as a good way to separate habitats or features from lighting by forming a dark perimeter around them. Buffer zones rely on ensuring light levels within a certain distance of a feature do not exceed certain defined limits; and
 - Light levels should be kept low. All luminaires should lack UV elements when manufactured and metal halide, fluorescent sources should not be used. LED luminaires should be used where possible due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability.
- 

Reptiles

- 4.14 The field margins are considered suitable to support reptiles, especially the south-west of the site in which scrub and grassland located within the fenced area may provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for reptiles. Additionally, with the presence of slow worm, grass snake, and common lizard c. 450m east of site in local records and the known presence of reptiles adjacent to the south of the site, it is considered the species are likely present in suitable on site habitat.
- 4.15 Due to the small-scale of the proposed works, it is considered that reptiles onsite can be suitably protected from injury or mortality during works, by the enactment and following of a suitable system of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs). This system of measures should include the following:
- A toolbox talk should be given on site during the first day of vegetation clearance, regarding the legality surrounding reptiles, habitat requirement, basic identifying features and procedure if they are found.
 - All suitable refugia piles i.e., aggregate logs, building materials, etc existing onsite must be gently dismantled onsite under the direct supervision of an ecologist, any reptiles found must be gently caught and removed to an undisturbed area onsite.
 - All vegetation clearance should be conducted moving towards the north to allow reptiles to move towards suitable retained habitat offsite.
 - Any suitable reptile habitat should be cleared in a staged cut, in suitable conditions (dry and above 8°C), across five days:
 - Day 1: Strim to 200mm
 - Day 2: No works to vegetation to allow for reptiles or other small animals to vacate site.
 - Day 3: Strim to ground.
 - Day 4: No works to vegetation to allow for reptiles or other small animals to vacate site.
 - Day 5: End of sensitive vegetation clearance process.
 - All significant materials generated by vegetation clearance should not be left on the ground. They should ideally be removed from site within 24 hours, but if this is not possible, then they should be stored within a skip or similar.
 - All building materials brought on to site should be stored, raised off the ground, to limit their availability as refugia piles.

- All excavations should either be covered overnight or have an egress ramp placed within them, to prevent any reptiles or other small mammals from becoming trapped. Likewise, all fitted pipes should be blocked until the plumbing/drainage system is complete, to prevent any reptiles or small mammals/amphibians from becoming trapped.

Great crested newts (GCN)

- 4.16 The site contains some suitable terrestrial habitat for GCN predominantly the scrub habitat, with two ponds within the local landscape for breeding GCN. The closest GCN presence is confirmed 630m east of the site, additionally, there are two ponds present within 250m of the site c. 50m north-west and c. 180m north-east of site. As such, it is considered the species may be present, using the site in their terrestrial phase.
- 4.17 Due to the small-scale of the proposed works, with only small sections of scrub to be removed for a cycle path, it is considered that GCN onsite can be suitably protected from injury or mortality during works by the enactment of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) outlined above. Additionally, as the majority of grassland is unsuitable for GCN, it is recommended that this area continue maintenance to maintain low suitability for GCN.

Hazel dormice

- 4.18 It was considered there is suitable dormouse habitat onsite in the form of scrub and scattered trees with further connectivity with optimal habitats in the local landscape. Additionally, as the closest record of the species is located along the southern aspect of the site, it is likely that the species is present in the scrub to the south and west of the site due to connectivity of these habitats.
- 4.19 The Ecology Partnership has previously completed surveys on the land south of the site, with a dormouse licence granted. Within current proposals, a small section of suitable dormouse habitat is to be removed, therefore, the dormouse licence should be extended to include this area and a licence modification will be sought. Compensation measures, including new scrub planting and use of additional dormouse boxes and mitigation measures including sensitive clearance works, in line with licence requirements and under ecological supervision, will be required.

Nesting birds

- 4.20 Removal of scrub, tree, or area of dense vegetation should be implemented outside the breeding bird season (March-September inclusive) or immediately after a nesting bird check

by a suitably qualified ecologist. If an active nest is identified, works in the vicinity of the nest must cease until the birds have fledged the nest.

Other species

- 4.21 Although no mammal holes were identified during the survey, the scrub habitats onsite limited accessibility to assess the whole area. A fox was observed onsite during the survey amongst the scrub habitat in the south-west of the site. As such, if any mammal holes are discovered during the works and will be affected by the proposals, these should be assessed by a suitably qualified ecologist to determine the species of their inhabitant and whether any further survey measures and mitigation are required. Holes not inhabited by badgers can be excavated sensitively by hand rather than using mechanical equipment. This is because the Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996 states that it is an offence to crush or cause asphyxiation to mammals.
- 4.22 Hedgehogs were identified c. 340m north-west of the site and therefore best practice guidelines are recommended, outlined above.

General Ecological Enhancements

- 4.23 A number of enhancements can be incorporated within the development scheme to help reduce potential ecological impacts to provide net gains to biodiversity in line with NPPF (2023) and the proposed Environment Bill. It is important to utilise native species of local provenance in landscaping schemes to enhance the ecological value of a development.
- 4.24 New tree and shrub planting may be incorporated into any scheme to offset scrub lost. These should be native species of value to wildlife and can include oak (*Quercus* sp), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), cherry (*Prunus* sp), hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), rowan (*Sorbus* sp), spindle (*Eunonymas europaea*), privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), box (*Buxus sempervirens*), wayfaring tree (*Viburnum lantana*), bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) and yew (*Taxus baccata*).
- 4.25 The retained grassland in Batchelors Farm Nature Reserve, both within the red line boundary and outside may be seeded with Emorsgate standard purpose meadow mixture EM2, or similar. It is recommended that areas of the grassland be allowed to grow longer post-development to provide refuge for wildlife. A diverse native mix will attract a range of wildlife,

such as mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and bumblebees, and butterflies. Species within the mix include:

- Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*);
- Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*);
- Wild Carrot (*Daucus carota*);
- Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*);
- Meadow Crane's-bill (*Geranium pratense*);
- Field Scabious (*Knautia arvensis*);
- Oxeye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*);
- Birdsfoot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*);
- Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*);
- Salad Burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*);
- Cowslip (*Primula veris*);
- Selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*);
- Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*);
- Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*);
- Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*);
- Crested Dogtail (*Cynosurus cristatus*);
- Red-fescue (*Festuca rubra*);
- Smaller Cat's-tail (*Phleum bertolonii*);
- Smooth-stalked Meadow-grass (*Poa pratensis*).

4.26 Tree mounted bat boxes can be installed onto existing trees/ proposed buildings across the site. These should be placed where they will receive sunlight for most of the day, on south and west-facing aspects, as temperature is an important factor in the success of artificial bat roosts. They should not be placed closed to artificial light sources. Recommended boxes include:

- NHBS general purpose bat box – A general purpose bat box that supports a range of species (Figure 9). These can be hung on trees in a variety of heights and aspects in order to provide a variety of micro-climates.
- Large Multi Chamber WoodStone Bat Box – This is a multipurpose box designed for larger colonies and a range of bat species including pipistrelles, noctules and brown long-eared bats. These should be hung on mature trees around the site (Figure 9).



Figure 9: NHBS general purpose bat box (left). Large Multi-Chamber WoodStone Bat Box (right)

- 4.27 Additional bird nesting opportunity can also be installed on existing trees / proposed housing on site. Hardwearing woodcrete boxes, or similar, are recommended. Figure 10 gives examples of suitable bird boxes, of which these or similar, could be installed into the trees. The box should be positioned on a north or east facing aspect and at least 2m above the ground if possible. These would cater for species such as house sparrows and wagtails.



Figure 10: Examples of suitable bird boxes which could be installed on site –Vivara Pro Barcelona WoodStone Open Nest Box (left) and Vivara Pro Seville 32mm WoodStone Nest Box (right)

- 4.28 Log piles can be created using any woody material removed during works for use as refugia by reptiles, amphibians, small mammals and invertebrates (Figure 11). These can be located close to retained scrub and grassland. They can be situated in a variety of locations, such as damp places with some situated in sunnier locations. They can be placed, around the very edges of the site and positioned under mature trees. These should be stacked and perhaps some leaf litter added. Planting around log piles with species such as honeysuckle or clematis can also add value.



Figure 9: Log piles and hibernacula can be created within the edges of the site or in the retained habitats on site

- 4.29 To compensate for suitable dormouse habitat lost, dormouse nest boxes should also be installed within retained trees to compensate for the small area of habitat lost, examples are displayed in Figure 12. Nest boxes should be installed before April at least 10-20m apart, and at a height of 1.5m



Figure 12: Examples of suitable dormouse nest boxes which should be installed on site NHBS Standard Dormouse Nest Box (left), and CJ Wildlife Timber Dormouse Nesting Box (right)

5.0 Impact Assessment

- 5.1 This section of the report forms an EcIA (Ecological Impact Assessment) and is designed to quantify and evaluate the potential impacts of the development on habitats and species present on site, or within the local area.
- 5.2 The approach to this assessment accords with guidance presented within the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM 2018).
- 5.3 Table 3 summarises the impacts and required mitigation for each receptor as previously detailed in the discussion.

Table 3: Assessment of the effects from the proposal after mitigation and compensation

<i>Feature</i>	<i>Scale of Importance</i>	<i>Mitigation/Compensation</i>	<i>Residual Effect</i>
Designated Sites	International and National	None required.	Not significant
Commuting and foraging bats	Local	Sensitive lighting scheme. Installation of bat boxes.	Not significant
Reptiles	Local	Enactment of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) Creation of log piles using any woody material removed during works.	Not significant
Great crested newts	Local	Enactment of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs)	Not significant
Hazel dormouse	Local	Extension of dormouse license with Natural England. Installation of dormouse nest tubes.	Not significant
Breeding birds	Local	Scrub removal should be implemented outside the breeding bird season (March-September inclusive) or immediately after a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist. Installation of bird boxes.	Not significant
Hedgehogs	Local	Best practice guidelines to ensure no individuals are harmed during the construction phase of the project.	Not significant

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The site does not lie within or adjacent to any internationally, or nationally designated sites. The site is also outside of any SSSI impact zones, as such, it is considered there will be no direct or indirect impact on any designated sites.
- 6.2 The site consists primarily of other neutral grassland, with shrub located to the west and south of the site, with four individual trees present. Full proposals are currently unknown however are understood to involve the creation of a cycle path running from Hassocks to Burgess Hill. Removal of an area of scrub is to be expected however, if any trees onsite are to be removed then sufficient further offsetting will be required.
- 6.3 One dead tree located to the south-west of site was considered to have ‘**low**’ suitability for roosting bats, as such an endoscope survey is required to determine if the tree is being used by roosting bats, if inaccessible then a minimum of two bat emergence surveys are recommended.

Most potential for commuting and foraging bats is located along the scrub boundary features towards the west and south of the site. Due to the small scale of works, it is considered if a sensitive lighting scheme is implemented, the favourable conservation status of bats will not be impacted by the scheme.

- 6.4 Due to the presence of some suitable reptile and GCN habitat onsite, a system of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) has been outlined within this report.
- 6.5 Hazel dormice are considered to be likely present to the south of the site due to the presence of this species c. 10m south of site and connectivity of the boundary scrub to the wider habitat. The current dormouse licence previously applied for by the Ecology Partnership is to be extended to include the section of clearance required for proposed works.
- 6.6 The trees and shrub onsite have the potential to support nesting birds. The removal of any of these features should be done outside of the breeding bird season (March-September inclusive) or immediately after a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist. If active nests are identified, works in the vicinity of the nest must cease until the birds have fledged the nest.

- 6.8 Recommendations for enhancements have been made within this report, aimed at improving the ecological value of the site post-development.

7.0 References

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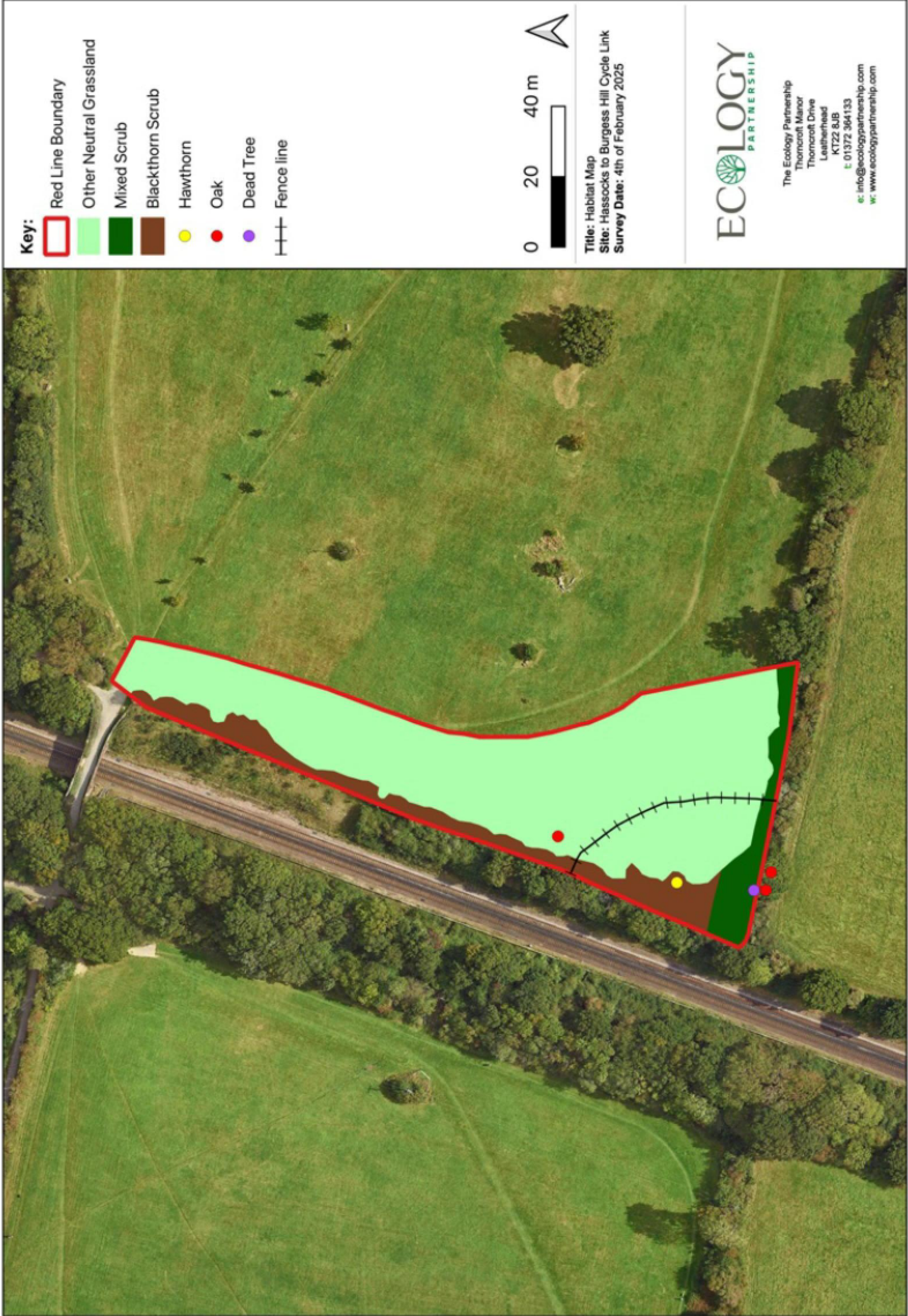
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Internet resources:

Google Maps: www.google.co.uk/maps

Magic Interactive Map: www.magic.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Habitat Map



Appendix 2: Photographs

Photograph 1: Other neutral grassland and scrub within fenced area	
Photograph 2: Scrub and trees (T1 and T2) towards the south of site	
Photograph 3: Scrub towards south of site	

Photograph 4: Dead tree (DT) located to the south- west of site	
Photograph 5: Grassland offsite to the south of site	

Photograph 6: Other neutral grassland within the fenced area	
Photograph 7: Fence separating the sections of other neutral grassland	
Photograph 8: Oak tree T4	

Photograph 9: Potential PRFs identified on T4	
Photograph 10: Other neutral grassland G2 outside of fence	
Photograph 11: Towards north of site, entry to path over railway line	

Appendix 3: Species List

Common name	Latin name	DAFOR score
Other Neutral Grassland (Inside fence)		
Bent sp.	<i>Agrostis sp.</i>	O
Black knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	A
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	F
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	O
Cocksfoot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	A
Common bittercress	<i>Cardamine hirsuta</i>	O
Common selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	R
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	F
Common St. John's wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	O
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	F
Creeping cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	O
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	R
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	R
Dogrose / Guelder rose	<i>Rosa canina / Viburnum opulus</i>	O
False oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	A
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	R
Oxeye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	R
Perennnial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	O
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	O
Soft rush	<i>Juncus effusus</i>	O
Willowherb sp.	<i>Epilobium sp.</i>	R
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	A
Other Neutral Grassland (Field)		
Cocksfoot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	F
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	O
Creeping bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	O
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	F
Meadowgrass sp.	<i>Poa sp.</i>	O
Perennnial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	O
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	O
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	F
Blackthorn Scrub - outside of fence, along western boundary		
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	D
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	O
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	O
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	O
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	O

Sweet / horse chestnut	<i>Castanea sativa</i> / <i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	R
Blackthorn scrub - inside fence, along western boundary		
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	F
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	O
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	O
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>	O
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	F
Mixed Scrub – inside fence, along the southern boundary		
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	A
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	R
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	O
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	R
Individual Trees		
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	-
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>	-

Appendix 4: Condition Assessment

Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high & very high distinctiveness)			
UKHab Habitat Type(s): All other grassland types and tall ruderal (ie. not amenity/modified)			
Condition Assessment Criteria		Fenced	Outside
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type (and relative to Footnote 3 suboptimal species which may be listed in the UKHab description).¹ Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Moderate or Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.	Y	N
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Y	N
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens ² .	Y	Y
D	Cover of bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) is less than 5%.	N	Y
E	Combined cover of species indicative of sub-optimal condition³ and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA⁵) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Y	N
Additional Criterion - must be assessed for all non-acid grassland types			
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m ² present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count).	N	N
Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.		Moderate	Poor
Condition			

Condition Assessment Result	
Good	Passes 5 of 6 criteria, including essential criterion A and F
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 of 6 criteria, including essential criterion A
Poor	Passes 0, 1, 2 criteria of 6 criteria; OR Passes 3 or 4 criteria excluding criterion A and F
Footnote 1 – Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.	
Footnote 2 – For example, this could include small, scattered areas of bare ground allowing for plant colonisation, or localised patches where not exceeding 5% cover.	
Footnote 3 – Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type include: creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , spear thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> , curled dock <i>Rumex crispus</i> , broad-leaved dock <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> , creeping buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , greater plantain <i>Plantago major</i> , white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> and cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> .	
Footnote 4 – Assess this for distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into the adjacent habitat, by applying professional judgement.	
Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)	

Condition Sheet: SCRUB Habitat Type				
UKHab Habitat Type(s): All forms of scrub				
Condition Assessment Criteria		Mixed Scrub	Blackthorn Scrub	Hawthorn Scrub
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type - the appearance and composition of the vegetation closely matches its UKHab description (where in its natural range). ¹ - At least 80% of scrub is native, - There are at least three native woody species ² , - No single species comprises more than 75% of the cover (except hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , common juniper <i>Juniperus communis</i> , sea buckthorn <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i> or box <i>Buxus sempervirens</i> , which can be up to 100% cover).	N	N	N
B	Seedlings, saplings, young shrubs and mature (or ancient or veteran ³) shrubs are all present.	N	Y	Y
C	There is an absence of invasive non-native plant species ⁴ (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA ⁵) and species indicative of sub-optimal condition ⁸ make up less than 5% of ground cover.	Y	Y	Y
D	The scrub has a well-developed edge with scattered scrub and tall grassland and or forbs present between the scrub and adjacent habitat.	Y	Y	Y
E	There are clearings, glades or rides present within the scrub, providing sheltered edges.	N	N	N
		Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Condition Assessment Result				
Good	Passes 5 of 5 criteria			
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 of 5 criteria			
Poor	Passes 2 or fewer criteria			
Footnote 1 – Professional judgement should be used alongside the UKHab description.				
Footnote 2 – Native woody species as defined and listed in the Hedgerow Survey Handbook: DEFRA (2007) <i>Hedgerow Survey Handbook: A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK</i> . 2nd ed. [online]. Defra, London. PB1195. Available from: Hedgerow Survey Handbook (publishing.service.gov.uk).				
Footnote 3 – See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran species. Available from: Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk) and Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)				

Footnote 4 – Assess this for each distinct habitat parcel. If the distribution of invasive non-native species varies across the habitat, split into parcels accordingly, applying a buffer zone around the invasive non-native species with a size relative to its risk of spread into adjacent habitat, using professional judgement. Footnote 5 – Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Footnote 6 – Species indicative of suboptimal condition for this habitat type may include: non-native conifers, tree-of-heaven <i>Alianthus altissima</i>, holm oak <i>Quercus ilex</i>, European turkey oak <i>Quercus cerris</i>, cherry laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>, snowberry <i>Symphoricarpos</i> spp., shallon <i>Gaultheria shallon</i>, American skunk cabbage <i>Lysichiton americanus</i>, buddleia <i>Buddleja</i> spp., cotoneaster <i>Cotoneaster</i> spp., Spanish bluebell <i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i> and hybrid bluebells <i>Hyacinthoides x massartiana</i>. There may be additional relevant species local to the region and or site.
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Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type
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UKHab Habitat Type(s): Urban tree: Covers the following topographical formations most commonly found in urban areas ¹ : Individual Trees (urban or rural): Young trees over 75mm in diameter at breast height whose canopies are not touching. Urban Perimeter / Linear Blocks and Groups (description applied to the urban environment only): Groups or stands of trees (size requirement as defined above) within and around the perimeter of urban land. This includes those along urban streets, highways, railways and canals, and also former field boundary trees incorporated into developments. Canopies must overlap continuously. Groups of urban trees that don't match the descriptions for woodland may be assessed within this category.						
Condition Assessment Criteria		T1 (Oak)	T2 (Oak)	T3 (Hawthorne)	T4 (Oak)	
A	The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).	Y	Y	Y	Y	
JB	The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).	Y	Y	Y	Y	
C	The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature) ¹ .	N	N	Y	Y	
D	There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain > 75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.	Y	Y	Y	Y	
E	Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.	N	N	N	Y	
F	More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.	Y	Y	Y	N	
		Moderate	Moderate	Good	Good	
Condition Assessment Result						
Good	Passes 5 or 6 criteria					
Moderate	Passes 3 or 4 criteria					
Poor	Passes 2 or fewer criteria					
Footnote 1 - See gov.uk standing advice on ancient and veteran trees. Available from:						
Keepers of time: ancient and native woodland and trees policy in England (publishing.service.gov.uk)						
and:						
Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)						

Footnote 2 - Enhancement of this habitat type is only possible by improving the habitat so that it meets all Criteria B, D and F. It is not possible or appropriate to enhance individual tree/s through meeting just one or two of those Criteria, nor by meeting Criteria A, C or E.

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