



Project: 24_PEA_BNG_04_70
Site: Ludham Farm, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH177EG
Client: Mary-Pat Sheridan



Project Number:	24_PEA_BNG_04_70
Report Type:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR)
Site Address:	Ludham Farm, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7EG

Role:	Name:	Position:	Date:
Surveyor	Connor Harmsworth	Field Surveyor	14/05/2024
Author	Max Shaw	Ecological Consultant	01/05/2024

Revision History		
Date:	Version number:	Summary of changes:
7/6/2024	1.0	First Draft
7/6/2024	1.0	First Issue
06/03/2025	1.1	BNG amendments (offsite addition)

Summary:	
Site Surveyed	Land at Ludham Farm, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7EG National Grid Reference: TQ 3761 2928
Purpose & Brief	Preliminary ecological appraisal commissioned by Mary-Pat Sheridan
Development Proposals	The proposed development is the construction of a sand school and associated hard and soft landscaping.
Methods	Desk Study UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey of the site. Assessment of likely significant effects as far as can be reasonably and proportionally known
Confirmed Ecological Constraints	None
Potential Ecological Constraints	Hedgehog Terrestrial Mammal
Recommendations For Further Survey Works	Production of wildlife sensitive lighting scheme
Opportunities For Ecological Enhancements	Bird boxes Native species planting

With the assumption that the existing conditions on-site remain unchanged. The results of this report are likely to remain valid for 12-months inline with the guidance published by CIEEM and the Bat Conservation Trust.

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Appendix 1: Site Location and Assessment Boundary

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Acknowledgements:

Data referred to within this report was sourced from Natural England Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (DEFRA MAGIC) database and through direct consultation with LERC.

Client Documents:

This report has been completed on assumption that the plans provided by the client at the time of issue of this report remain the same. A list of the documents provided by the client can be found in the table below.

Table: Documents provided by the client as of April 2024.

Plans provided by client as of April 2024
Screenshot 2024-03-19 at 10.23.22 copy

1 Introduction

- 1.1 ROAVR Group were commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) at Ludham Farm, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7EG.
- 1.2 The survey was comprised of a desktop study, which was undertaken in April 2024 and a site survey, which was carried out by Connor Harmsworth on 14/05/2024.
- 1.3 The methodology and results are outlined within the report. Where applicable, recommendations for suitable mitigation and ecological enhancements are provided.
- 1.4 The report is to be submitted to support a planning application. Full details of the proposals can be found on the planning portal.
- 1.5 The information and recommendations within this report have been prepared and provided in accordance with CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct (CIEEM, 2022).

SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.6 The survey site covers an area of approximately 2,959.0 sq metres and is centred on grid reference 'TQ 3761 2928'.
- 1.7 The site is situated in a rural area in the Mid Sussex District Council control area. The site is located to the north of the village Horsted Keynes and is accessed via a private gravel driveway to the west of Cinder Hill Lane.
- 1.8 The site is currently an empty plot of grassland.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 1.9 The site is to be redeveloped with the construction of a sand school and associated hard and soft landscaping.

SCOPE OF WORKS

- 1.10 The aims of this assessment were to:
 - identify the likely ecological constraints associated with the proposed development;
 - identify suitable mitigation measures (if required);
 - determine whether further surveys are necessary;
 - identify opportunities for ecological enhancement;

2 Methodology

DESKTOP STUDY

- 2.1 Site-specific information in relation to land designations, protected species and protected habitats within a 2km search area was sourced from DEFRA MAGIC.
- 2.2 In order to ensure that ecological data searches were up to date, species data was screened and all data records pre-2012 was omitted from the results.
- 2.3 Results of the desktop study should be considered to be indicative only.

UKHAB SURVEY

- 2.4 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, comprised of a site walkover and mapping was undertaken by Connor Harmsworth on the 14/05/2024. The PEA was undertaken in line with CIEEM's 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017). Connor has been completing preliminary ecological appraisals for over four years and regularly undertakes surveys of this scale. He has received professional training in all aspects covered in this report.
- 2.5 The survey was conducted from the ground. Habitats and features of importance were mapped using a GPS enabled handset.
- 2.6 A Site Habitat Map was produced in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification Manual (Butcher et al., 2020). (Appendix 3).

PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

- 2.7 A Preliminary Roost Assessment, comprised of a preliminary ground level roost assessment was undertaken during the site survey on 14/05/2024. The PRA was undertaken in line with the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023).
- 2.8 The survey included an active search for evidence of bats (such as droppings, feeding remains, urine splatters, oil staining, bat fur and/or scratch marks) and potential roosting features (PRFs). PRFs of trees are listed in Table 2.8.2. PRFs of built structures are listed in Table 2.8.1. The lists are not exhaustive but show examples of the most commonly used roosting features of built structures and trees.

Table 2.8.1: Potential roosting features (PRFs) in built structures listed in Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023).

Potential roosting features (PRFs) in built structures	
External	Internal
- Access/egress through windowsills, window panes and walls; - Behind peeling paintwork or lifted rendering; - Behind hanging tiles; - Weatherboarding; - Eaves; - Soffit boxes; - Fascias; - Lead flashing; - Gaps under felt (even including those of flats roofs); - Under tiles/slates; - Existing bat boxes; - Gaps in brickwork or stonework which provide access/egress to cavity or rubble-filled walls	- Behind wooden panelling; - In lintels above doors and windows; - Behind window shutters and curtains; - Behind pictures, posters, furniture, peeling paintwork, peeling wallpaper, lifted plaster and boarded windows; - Inside cupboards and in chimneys accessible from fireplaces; - Within attic roof voids; - The top of gable end or dividing walls; - The top of chimney breasts; - Ridge and hip beams and other roof beams; - Mortise and tenon joints; - All beams; - The junction of roof timbers, especially where ridge and hip beams meet; - Behind purlins; - Between tiles and the roof lining; - Under flat felt roofs

GROUND LEVEL TREE ASSESSMENT (GLTA)

2.9 A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment, comprised of a preliminary ground level roost assessment was undertaken by Connor Harmsworth during the site survey on 14/05/2024. The GLTA was undertaken in line with the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023).

2.10 The survey included an active search for evidence of bats (such as droppings, feeding remains, urine splatters, oil staining, bat fur and/or scratch marks) and potential roosting features (PRFs). PRFs of trees are listed in Table 2.10.1. The lists are not exhaustive but show examples of the most commonly used roosting features of trees.

Table 2.10.1: Potential roosting features (PRFs) in trees listed in Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023) Table 6.6.

Table 2.10.1. PRF types that can be exploited by bats and how they form (adapted from Bat Roosts in Trees, BTHK, 2018) reproduced from Table 6.6. (Collins, 2023.)		
PRFs formed by disease and decay	PRFs formed by damage	PRFs formed by association
• Woodpecker holes • Squirrel holes • Knot holes • Pruning cuts • Tear outs • Wounds • Cankers • Compression forks • Butt rots	• Lighting strikes • Hazard beams • Subsidence • Cracks • Shearing cracks • Transverse snaps • Welds • Lifting bark • Desiccation • Fissures • Frost cracks	• Fluting • Ivy

Table 2.10.2. Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees on proposed development sites for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.reproduced from Table 6.6. (Collins, 2023.)	
Suitability	Description
NONE	Either no PRFs 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

2.11 A Site PRF Map was produced to show the location of built structures, trees and potential roosting features (PRFs). Habitats and features of importance were mapped using a GPS enabled handset.

SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

2.12 The likelihood of occurrence of protected ecological features and species was ranked in accordance with the criteria listed in Tables 2.10.1 and 2.10.2. Likelihood of occurrence was assessed using data collected during the desk study and after evaluation of the habitats on-site (during the site survey) as to their likelihood to provide suitability for protected species (i.e. presence of breeding, nesting, roosting, foraging, commuting and/or refuge habitat for example).

Table 2.12.1: Criteria used to assess the likelihood of occurrence for protected ecological features and species on-site (excl. bats).

Likelihood of occurrence	Criteria
Present	Confirmed as present during the site survey or by confirmed historical records.
High	Species are known to be present within close proximity to the site (records present). Habitats on-site are of high quality for the species and/or likely to support a large population. The site is well connected to good quality habitat within the local area.
Moderate	Species are known to be present within the local area (records present). Habitats on-site are of moderate quality for the species and/or likely to support a moderate population. The site and connected habitats provide all of the ecological requirements of the species. Suitability of habitats on-site may be limited due to disconnectivity to the wider landscape, poor to moderate habitat available within the wider locality, and/or due to the presence of only a small area of suitable habitat.
Low	Few or no records of the species within the local area. Habitats on-site are of poor quality for the species and/or likely to support just a few individuals. The suitability of habitats may be limited due to disturbance, isolation and/or poor quality habitat available within the wider locality. However, species presence cannot be discounted due to the national distribution of the species or the nature of on-site and surrounding habitats (if all required ecological requirements for the species are present).
Negligible	While presence cannot be absolutely discounted, the site includes very limited or poor quality habitat for a particular species. Connected habitats do not fulfil the ecological requirements of the species. There are no local records and/or the site is outside the known national range of the species.

Table 2.12.2: Criteria used to assess the likelihood of occurrence (site's suitability) for bats,

from Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023) (Table 4.1.)

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting bats	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
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).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available for foraging bats).
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.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. 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 or hibernation). A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats but isolated (i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat). Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats for foraging such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only - with respect to roost type only).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used for bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure or tree 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 habitats. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation sites.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATION

- 2.13 An evaluation of the potential ecological constraints to the proposed development and appropriate mitigation strategies was made following CIEEM's 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018).

LIMITATIONS

- 2.14 Only one site visit was undertaken, therefore, a full evaluation of species present throughout the year could not be made. Therefore, there were seasonal constraints to species identification. However, the data collected during the site survey was sufficient to make an appropriate assessment of the site.
- 2.15 The site maps shown in Appendix 3 were produced from an Ordnance Survey Tile purchased from our mapping supplier. A site walkover with a GPS enabled handset was used to inform the location and extent of existing habitats shown on the appended mapping and is as accurate as possible but some error must be allowed for without a full topographical survey.

3 Policy and Legislative Context

- 3.1 This section includes the legislative context of those protected species or other notable species that are recorded on-site, or have the potential to be present on-site. Details on specific legislation for other protected or notable species that have not been identified as being present, or having the potential to be present, are not included below.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 3.2 The introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied in the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system, only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so and is a material consideration for local planning authorities in determining applications.
- 3.3 Planning Practise Guidance is relevant covering the Natural Environment alongside the NPPF. Therefore features of ecological value should be considered in the context of conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 3.4 The Government's objectives for planning are to promote sustainable development, to conserve, enhance and restore the diversity of England's wildlife and geology and to contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- 3.5 This report has been commissioned in order to comply with policies upheld in the Mid Sussex District Plan 2021 - 2039, especially the following:
- DPN1: Biodiversity, Geodiversity and Nature Recovery
 - DPN2: Biodiversity Net Gain
 - DPN4: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

<https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/media/kx0dce50/district-plan-2021-2039-regulation-19.pdf>

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION

- 3.6 Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1982)
- 3.7 Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1983)
- 3.8 Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)
- 3.9 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949)
- 3.10 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- 3.11 Protection of Badgers Act (1992)
- 3.12 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)
- 3.13 The Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1975)
- 3.14 The Hedgerows Regulations (1997)
- 3.15 UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1994)
- 3.16 Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)
- 3.17 Wild Mammals (Protection) Act (1996)

4 Desktop Study

SITE DESIGNATIONS

4.1 There is one designated site within the 2km search area.

Table 4.1.1: Designated sites recorded within a 2km radius of the survey site.

Site Name	Grid Reference	Area (ha)	Approx. Closest Distance from Site (km)	Notes
High Weald AONB	TQ 3761 2928	146172	0 km	A mediaeval landscape of wooded, rolling hills studded with sandstone outcrops; small, irregular-shaped fields; scattered farmsteads; and ancient routeways. The 1461km ² area covers parts of Kent, Sussex and Surrey at the heart of South East England.
SSSI Impact Risk Zone	TQ 3761 2928	NA	0 km	The site falls within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone.

*Data from DEFRA MAGIC

LOCAL HABITAT

4.2 There were more than 20 priority habitats that were formerly mapped within the 2km search area.

Table 4.2.1: Priority habitats formerly mapped within a 2km radius of the survey site.

Habitat	Approx. Closest Distance from Site (km)
Good quality semi-improved grassland	0.4 km
Deciduous Woodland	0.01 km
Traditional Orchards	0.4 km

*Data from DEFRA MAGIC

- 4.3 There was one standing water bodies situated within a 500m radius of the survey site. The first (WB1) is a small pond 59 metres north of the site area, separated from the site by an ecologically valuable line of mature trees; it showed good connectivity to the site. The second (WB2) is another stagnant water body 99 metres south east of the site, situated in the garden of Unit 2 Cinder Hill Lane, the waterbody is separated from the site by Cinder Hill Lane and the associated property. The third (WB3) is another standing waterbody located 168 metres north west of the site, which is surrounded by deciduous woodland. WB4, WB5 and WB6 all sit between 240-260 metres southwest of the survey area, located on the southern side of Leamland Wood, which is show adequate connectivity to the site. WB7, a stagnant pond, is situated 269 metres north of the site and is separated by a linear feature of trees surrounding the waterbody, and agricultural land. WB8 is located 474 metres east of the site location and consists of a number of ponds, connected by streams, called the Fish Ponds, This site is separated from the survey area by Cinder Hill Lane, Pains Wood and areas of agricultural land.

HISTORICAL SPECIES RECORDS

- 4.4 Protected species records relating to the site and 2km search area were obtained from the LERC as part of the desktop study. The data search contains confidential information that is not suitable for public release. Therefore, the data has not been included in the report.
- 4.5 A full list of identified species recorded within the 2km search area can be requested from LERC.
- 4.6 The absence of identified records does not discount the presence of a species. An absence of identified records is primarily a result of a lack of survey or the non-submission of records. Furthermore, historical records of species do not confirm their current presence within an area.
- 4.7 A data search of NBN Atlas and DEFRA on the 04/06/2024, found the following species within 2 km of the site area: Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), West European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), European Mole (*Talpa europaea*), Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*), Brown Hare (*Lepus europaeus*), Eurasian Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Eurasian Badger (*Meles meles*), Stoat (*Mustela erminea subsp. erminea*), Daubenton's Bat (*Myotis daubentonii*), Noctule Bat (*Nyctalus noctula*), Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Soprano Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) and Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*).

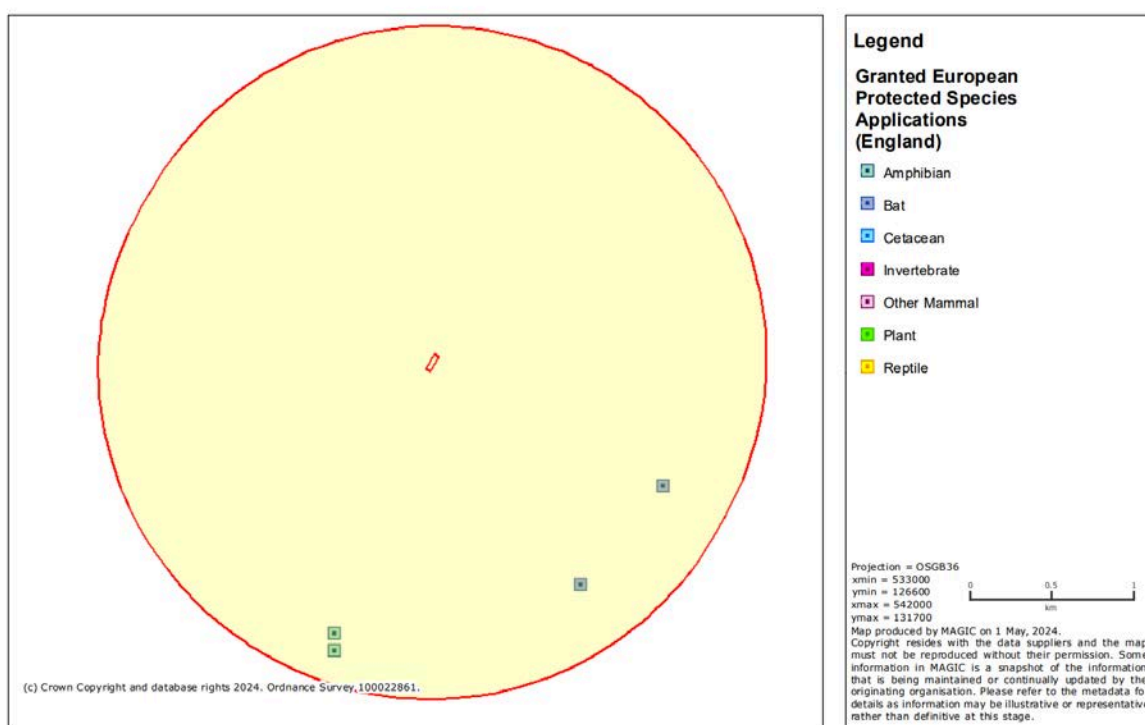
Table 4.8.1: Previous protected species licences for bats mapped within a 2km radius of the survey site

Reference, Date and Species	Approx. Distance from Site (km)
2019-43243-EPS-MIT - 01/11/2019 - Brown Long-Eared Bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>), Common Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>) and Soprano Pipistrelle (<i>Pygmaeus pipistrellus</i>).	1700m SE
2019-43243-EPS-MIT-1 - 04/06/2020 - Brown Long-Eared Bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>), Common Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>) and Soprano Pipistrelle (<i>Pygmaeus pipistrellus</i>).	1700m SE
EPSM2013-6809 - 31/08/2016 - Common Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>).	1600m SSE

*Data from DEFRA MAGIC

MAGiC

EPSL



*Data from DEFRA MAGIC

5 Site Survey

5.1 The site survey was undertaken on 14/05/2024. The weather conditions were considered to be appropriate to survey (Table 5.1.1).

Table 5.1.1: Weather conditions at the time of survey.

Date of site survey: 14/05/2024	
Temperature	10 c
Wind	Gentle breeze
Precipitation	Light rain and overcast

*Data from BBC Weather.

UK HABS HABITAT SURVEY

5.2 The habitats presented consist of the following UKHAB Phase 1 Habitat categories:

- G3c - Semi Improved Neutral Grassland
- Target Notes

5.3 A description of habitat present along with target notes is shown in Table 5.3.1. The location of habitats is shown in the Site Habitat Map, Appendix 3.

Table 5.3.1: Description of habitats present on-site (please also see the Site Habitat Map, Appendix 3).

Habitats and Target Notes	Description	Supporting Photo
G3c - Semi Improved Neutral Grassland	G3c - Semi Improved Neutral Grassland The existing area that is going to be altered by the proposed development is an area of semi improved grassland, which is currently being used for grazing horses. There is already existing access to the plot, with a track running up to an access gate. The area is dominated by perennial grass species with a sward height of 15 - 20 cm. The Grassland was in poor condition.	Aerial shot showing the proposed plot (approximately).  Image 1



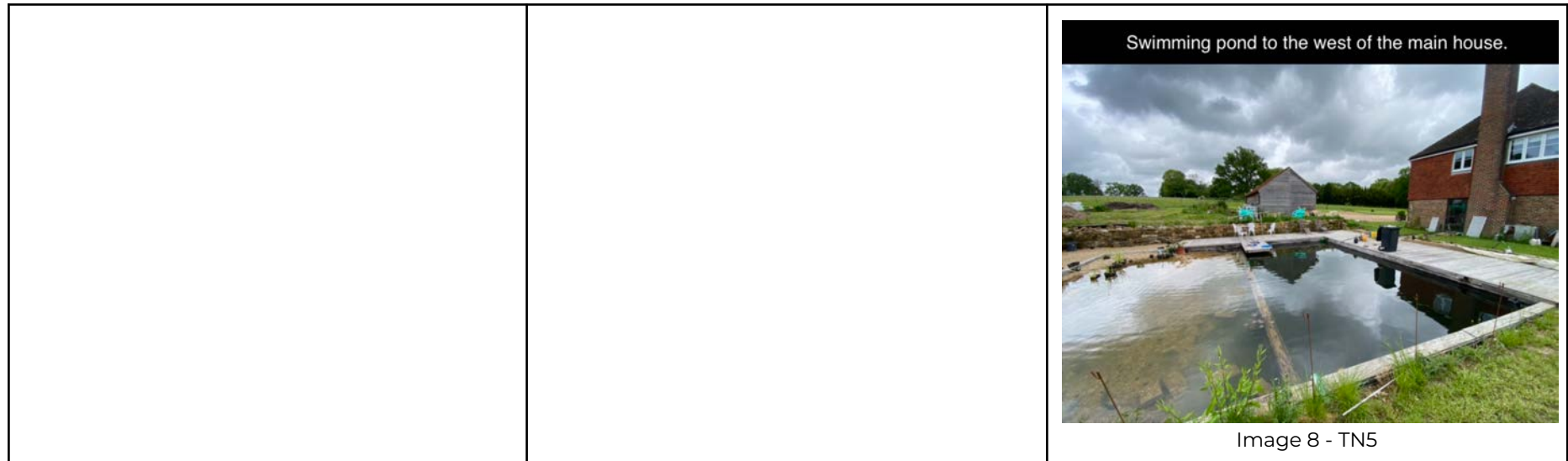
Image 2



Image 3

Target Notes	TN1 - C31 Tall Ruderal - Dry ditch filled with tall ruderal species including Common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>). TN2 - A small pond located to the north of the plot and situated offsite, unaffected by works. TN3 - A woodland area located to the south of the proposed development area. It is off site and unaffected. TN4 - The existing access gate and track into the site area. TN5 - Swimming pond located to the west of the main house.	Dry ditch running the northern boundary of the plot.  Image 4 - TN1 Pond located to the north of the plot.  Image 5 - TN2
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		Off site woodland to the south.  Image 6 - TN3 Existing gate and track into the plot.  Image 7 - TN4
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PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

- 5.4 There were **no built structures on site capable of supporting roosting bats**.
- 5.5 There were no trees within the redline boundary. Trees adjacent to the site may support features suitable for roosting bats and nesting birds.

6 Evaluation and Assessment

- 6.1 Results from the desktop study and site survey were evaluated to assess the likelihood of occurrence for protected ecological features and species potential (as per Table 2.10.1). An evaluation of the potential impacts due to the proposed development and recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures are provided in Table 6.1.1.

Table 6.1.1: Likelihood of occurrence of protected ecological features and species on-site, potential impacts due to the proposed development and recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
Protected sites	Present.	The site is situated within the High Weald AONB, however, due to the extent of the proposal it is unlikely to affect neighbouring habitats.	None.	Protective barriers (in the form of HERAS fencing) must be placed around the construction zone and any access/egress in order to minimise the area of disturbance. The fencing must be signed appropriately and outlined within the tool box talk. A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment and mitigations are to be put in place to offset the loss of natural habitats.
Protected habitats	Negligible.	There was woodland habitat mapped to the south of the site area, however the proposals do not affect this area. Habitats on-site were not considered to be unique or of high quality within the wider locality.	None.	Protective barriers (in the form of HERAS fencing) must be placed around the construction zone and any access/egress in order to minimise the area of disturbance. The fencing must be signed appropriately and outlined within the tool box talk.
Protected plant species	Low.	There are no known records of protected plant species within 2km of the site. No protected plant species were observed during the site survey. Habitats on-site are not considered to be unique or of high quality to support	The site does not appear to support protected plant species, thus, the proposed development is unlikely to impact upon protected plant species.	None required.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
		protected plant species. However, their presence cannot be entirely discounted.		
Amphibians (incl. Great Crested Newts)	Low.	There are records of Great Crested Newt (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>) within 2km of the site. WBI was situated within 50 metres of the site and is unaffected by development, and was considered to be well connected, however due to the Koi (<i>Cyprinus rubrofuscus</i>) the presence of Great Crested Newt can be discounted. The second water body is a swimming pond which was unaffected by development, was assessed as holding negligible potential to hold protected amphibians.	None.	The grassland should continue to be maintained and kept short through mowing and management up until the point of any construction works commencing on-site to prevent the habitat from becoming more favourable to amphibians.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
Bats (Chiroptera)	Roosting bats			
	Negligible.	There were records of Bats within 2km of the site. However, there were no built structures of trees affected by the development proposal. The site has been assessed as holding negligible potential for roosting bats.	The proposed development will not result in any disturbance to suitable roosting habitats.	Construction works should be limited to daylight hours (excl. dawn and dusk) in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity. Post-construction, the use of artificial lighting should be limited where possible. Motion sensors on outside lighting will prevent prolonged disturbance. It is recommended that outside lighting be set on short-timers (1 minute) and that the sensitivity is set to large moving objects only.
	Foraging/Commuting bats			
	Moderate.	Amenity grassland habitats on-site were considered to be suitable for foraging/commuting bats. Furthermore, the site has good connectivity to high quality habitats within the wider locality, including deciduous woodlands, ponds and agricultural land.	Mitigation measures must be put in place to ensure that disturbance does not increase during and/or post-development. The proposed development will not result in any substantial habitat loss that will impact upon local populations long-term.	Construction works should be limited to daylight hours (excl. dawn and dusk) in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity. Post-construction, the use of artificial lighting should be limited where possible. Motion sensors on outside lighting will prevent prolonged disturbance. It is recommended that outside lighting be set on short-timers (1 minute) and that the sensitivity is set to large moving objects only.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
Birds	Negligible.	Breeding birds were not identified on-site. No bird nests were noted in the area of woodland to the south, which is also unaffected by proposed development.	The proposed development will not result in any loss to suitable habitat for breeding birds. The proposed development required the removal of several trees, which have potential to support breeding birds.	The trees should be protected from site with HERAS fencing before any works commence on-site. The fencing must be signed appropriately.
Invertebrates	Low.	There were no known records of protected invertebrate species within the 2km search radius. No protected invertebrate species were identified during the site survey. Habitats on-site are not considered to be unique or of high quality to support protected invertebrate species. However, they are likely to support a range of common and widespread species associated with grassland, brush and woodland.	The site does not appear to support protected invertebrate species, thus, the proposed development is unlikely to impact upon protected invertebrate species. The proposed development will not result in any substantial habitat loss that will impact upon local populations long-term.	None required.
Reptiles	Low.	There are no known records of reptiles within 2km of the site. No reptiles, or evidence of reptiles, was found during the site survey. The site was well connected to suitable habitats within the wider locality, including open	The proposed development requires the removal of a small area of ground-level vegetation on-site. Vegetation removals have the potential to disturb, injure and/or kill reptiles (if present). Thus, a precautionary approach is	The grassland should continue to be maintained and kept short through mowing and management up until the point of any construction works commencing on-site to prevent the habitat from becoming more favourable to reptiles.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
		grassland, hedgerows, ponds and woodland. Grassland habitats on-site were considered to be suitable to support a small population of common and widespread reptile species (such as Slow Worm) within the margins.	required.	Vegetation removal must be undertaken using hand tools.
Other terrestrial mammals (excl. bats).	Badgers (<i>Meles meles</i>)			
	Low.	There are known records of Badgers within 2km of the site. No Badger setts were identified during the site visit and no evidence of Badgers was found. However, amenity grassland habitat is considered to be somewhat suitable for sett building and foraging/commuting.	If a Badger sett was present at the time of construction, the construction works could disturb, injure and/or kill Badgers. As Badgers are highly mobile and often seek new opportunities for sett building further checks will be required immediately prior to any construction works taking place on-site. The proposed development will not result in any substantial habitat loss to impact upon local populations long-term.	Construction works should be limited to daylight hours in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity. Any trenches or other excavations left open overnight should be well covered to deter Badgers from entering.
	Dormice (<i>Gliridae</i>)			
	Negligible.	There are known records of Dormice within 2km of the site. But there was no sign of Hazel Dormouse during the site survey.	None.	None required.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
	Hedgehogs (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>)			
	Moderate.	There are records of Hedgehogs within 2km of the site. However, amenity grassland, debris, and hedgerow habitats on-site were considered to be suitable for the species. The site was well connected to suitable suburban habitats and there were ample access/egress points to adjacent gardens making it easily commutable.	Mitigation measures must be put in place to ensure that disturbance does not increase during and/or post-development. The proposed development will not result in any substantial habitat loss that will impact upon local populations long-term.	Construction works should be limited to daylight hours (excl. dawn and dusk) in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity. During hibernation season (October to March), piles of leaf litter and logs should be retained to ensure hibernating hedgehogs are not harmed. If removal is unavoidable, the piles must be carefully checked before burning. Any trenches or other excavations left open overnight should either be well covered or provided with an escape ramp (comprised of a sloped side or wooden plank reaching up to ground level or slightly above), to allow any Hedgehogs that fall into escape.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
	Common and widespread mammals			
	High/Present	There was evidence of Deer just off site to the south running the southern boundary of the area of semi improved grassland.	The proposed development will not result in a substantial loss that will impact upon local populations long-term. Mitigation measures must be put in place to minimise disturbance during the construction phase.	Any necessary excavation of animal burrows should be done carefully to avoid unnecessary suffering (such as crushing or asphyxiation). Construction works should be limited to daylight hours in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity. Any trenches or other excavations left open overnight should either be well covered or provided with an escape ramp (comprised of a sloped side or wooden plank reaching up to ground level or slightly above), to allow any wildlife that falls to escape. Any newly built boundary features should incorporate 'wildlife gaps' (comprising a 13x13cm gap at the base of the feature), to allow wildlife to pass through.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
Invasive plant species	Low.	No invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were found during the survey. As there were seasonal constraints to plant identification, it is possible that invasive plant species are present and have yet to be identified.	Invasive plant species have the potential to impact protected species and habitats	If invasive plant species are found, it is recommended to consider appropriate methods of removal.

7 Biodiversity Enhancements

- 7.1 The development should be used as an opportunity for biodiversity net gain, by creating new opportunities for wildlife. A full assessment will be carried out once plans become available.

BIRDS

- 7.2 It is recommended to place one new bird box on-site.
- 7.3 A traditional nest box should be placed 3 metres above ground level in an area of low disturbance. The box should be sheltered away from prevalent weather conditions, commonly associated within the UK, such as strong sunlight, prevailing winds and rain.

INVERTEBRATES

- 7.4 It is recommended to install invertebrate boxes on-site. The boxes should be suitable for solitary bees.
- 7.5 Nectar-rich wildflowers should be planted within close proximity to the bee bricks/invertebrates boxes to create new opportunities for pollinators.

TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS

- 7.6 It is recommended to plant native species-rich hedgerows on-site, which will enhance connectivity and provide refuge for small mammals. Suitable species would include Common Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Common Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*) for example.

TREES

- 7.7 New tree planting would be a welcomed addition to development. New tree planting should be considered carefully, with consideration to species, location and future management. New trees should be robust and of high quality. Where possible, native species should be used. However, considerations should be given to climate change and potential pathogens.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The site at Ludham Farm, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 7EG is to be redeveloped with the construction of a sand school and associated hard and soft landscaping.
- 8.2 The development will likely result in the loss of modified grassland.

ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS

- 8.3 Development proposals must have regard for protected species identified as potentially occurring on, or near to, the site (e.g., amphibians, birds, terrestrial mammals, and reptiles). Mitigation measures to protect these species have been produced within this report to ensure that the proposed works comply with relevant UK legislation.
- 8.4 Further mitigation measures have been outlined within the report to ensure that protected species are not impacted by the development.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- 8.5 A tool box talk should be given to all relevant personal by a suitable qualified ecologist before any works commence on-site to outline ecological constraints and the required mitigation measures.
- 8.6 The existing amenity grassland should be retained at a short sward prior to any demolition/construction works commencing on-site in order to ensure that the habitat does not become more favourable to amphibians and/or reptiles.
- 8.7 Construction works should be limited to daylight hours (excl. dawn and dusk) in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity.
- 8.8 Vegetation removal must be undertaken using hand tools. Cut vegetative materials should be checked and removed from site immediately.
- 8.9 Any trenches or other excavations left open overnight should be well covered to deter Badgers from entering. If this is not possible, any trenches or other excavations left open overnight should either be provided with an escape ramp (comprised of a sloped side or wooden plank reaching up to ground level or slightly above), to allow any wildlife that falls in to escape.
- 8.10 Any necessary excavation of animal burrows should be done carefully to avoid unnecessary suffering (such as crushing or asphyxiation).
- 8.11 During hibernation season (October to March), piles of leaf litter and logs should be retained to ensure hibernating hedgehogs are not harmed. If removal is unavoidable, the piles must be carefully checked before burning.
- 8.12 Post-construction, the use of artificial lighting should be limited where possible. Motion sensors on outside lighting will prevent prolonged disturbance. It is recommended that outside lighting be set on short-timers (1 minute) and that the sensitivity is set to large moving objects only.

- 8.13 Any newly built boundary features should incorporate 'wildlife gaps' (comprising a 13x13cm gap at the base of the feature), to allow wildlife to pass through.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

- 8.14 The project is to be used as an opportunity for biodiversity net gain by creating new opportunities for wildlife. New habitat creation is to be implemented on-site and should be included within the final project design.

- 8.14 The baseline habitat units on site are 0.84 consisting primarily of other neutral grassland, secondary to this is both sealed and unsealed urban habitats.

Following the proposed development the post-development habitat units would be 0 (a 100% loss), this is due to the grassland being converted across to an artificial unsealed surface along with some hardstanding.

Based on the area on-site proposal and area availability, Biodiversity net gain could not be achieved on-site. However, provided there are suitable locations to do so, off-site enhancement outside of the development but within the land owners boundary is recommended.

To address this 0.29 hectares of good condition modified grassland will be enhanced to traditional orchard offsite. This produces 0.92 high distinctiveness habitat that offsets the development and achieves a 10.55% net gain. The offsite figures are found in Appendix 3

SUMMARY

- 8.15 Subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant ecological impact.

9 References and Bibliography

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Max Shaw
Ecological Consultant

Max Shaw



Prepared by: Max Shaw BSc QCIEEM
Checked by: Matt Harmsworth BSc

Appendix 1: Site Location and Assessment Boundary



Figure A1.1: Extract from Google Maps showing the site location (Google, 2024).

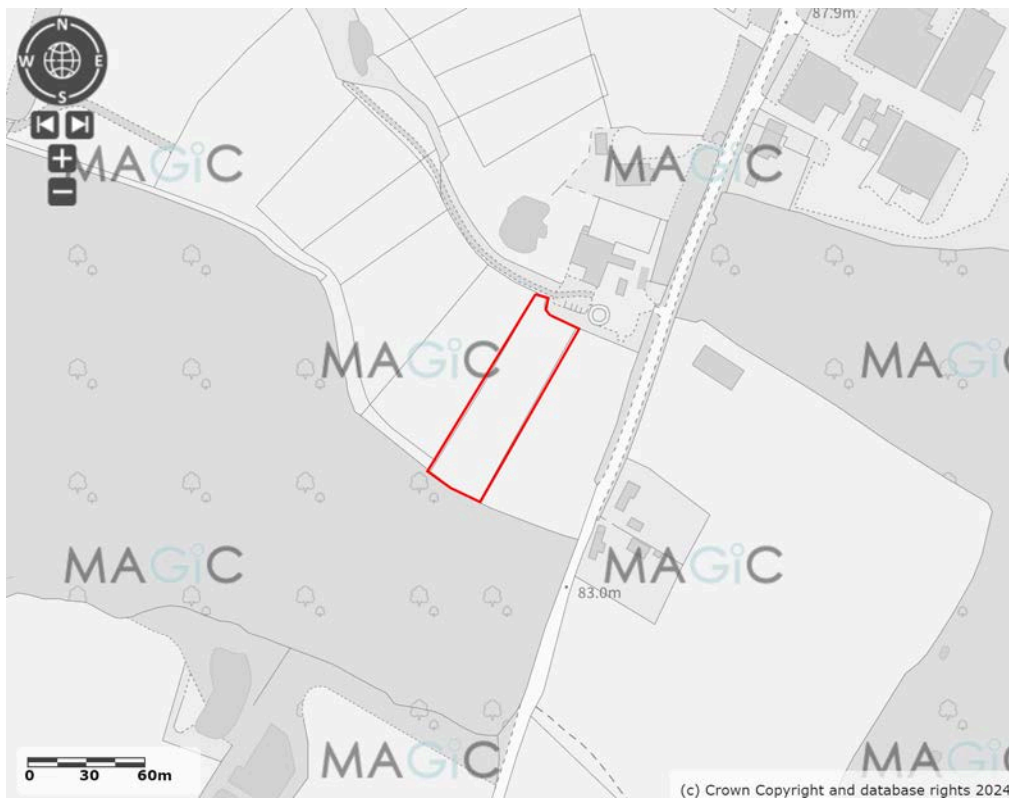


Figure A1.2: Extract from DEFRA MAGIC showing the assessment boundary (MAGIC, 2024).

Appendix 2: Desktop Study

*Data from DEFRA.

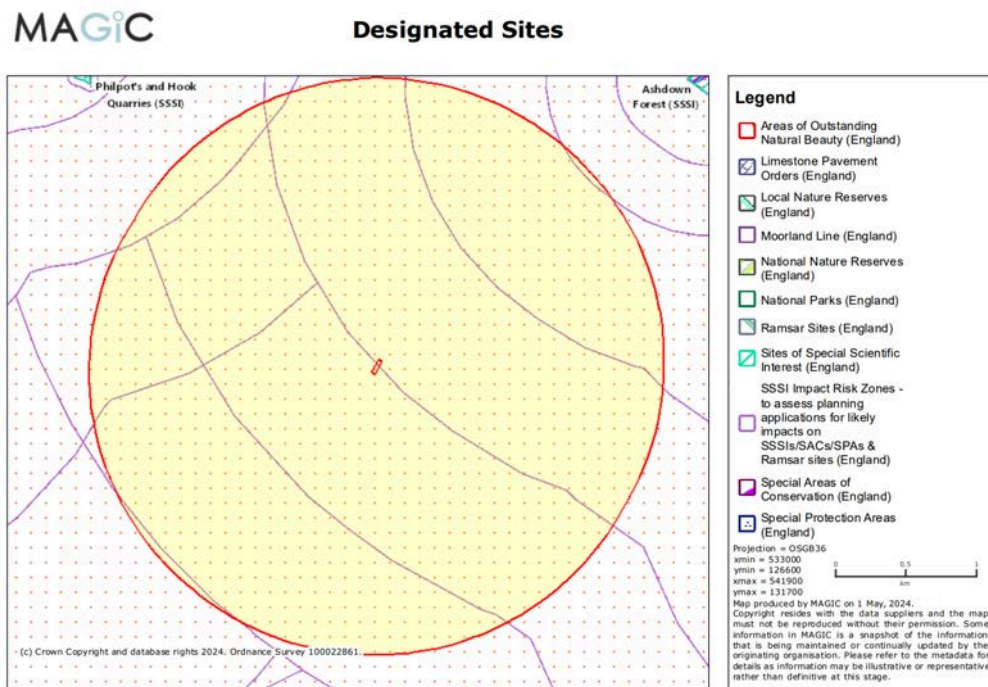


Figure A2.1: Location of Designated Sites situated within a 2km search radius of the site.

*Data from DEFRA.

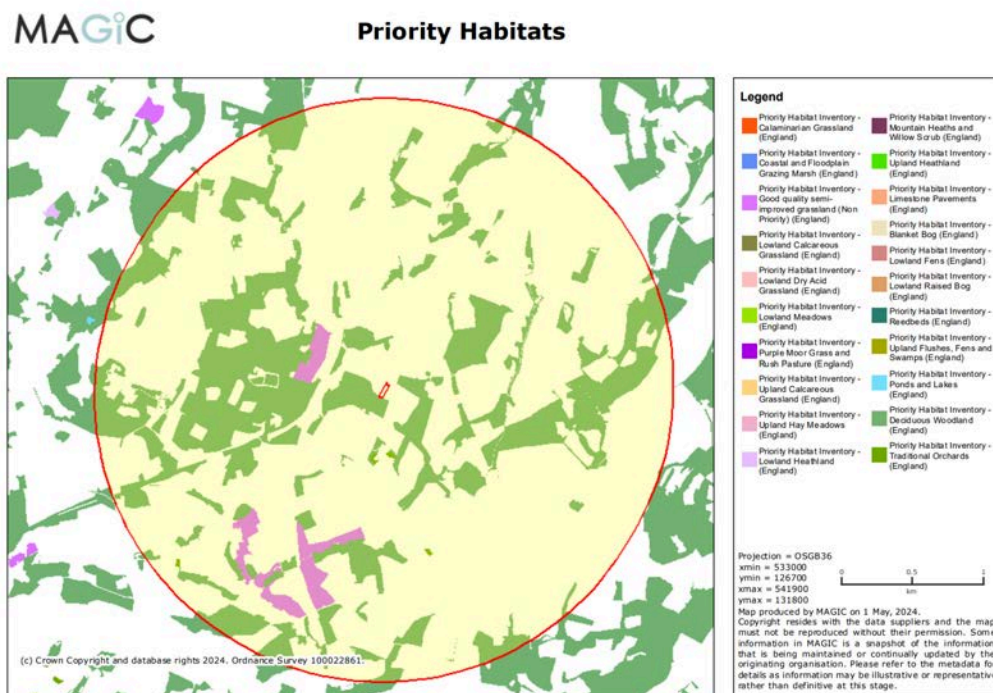


Figure A2.2: Priority habitats formerly mapped within a 2km search radius of the site.

*Data from Bing Maps

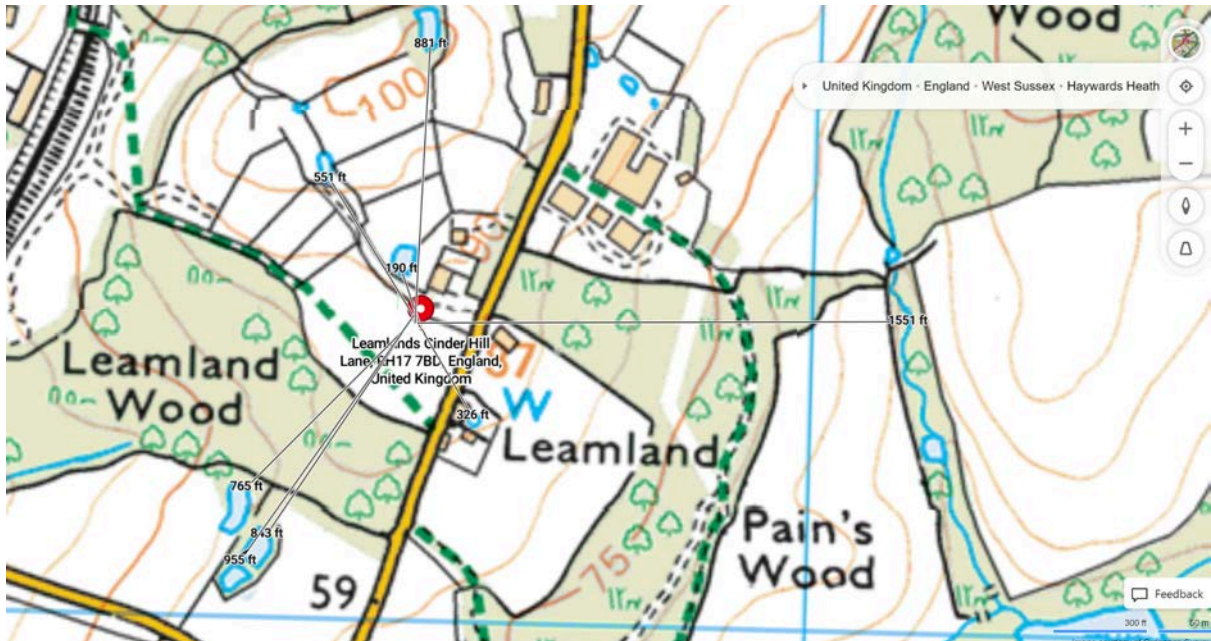


Figure A2.3: Standing water bodies formerly mapped within a 500m search radius of the site.

Appendix 3: Site Maps

A3.1 The Site Habitat Map was produced in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification Manual (Butcher et al., 2020).







