

**Hollyrood
Ardingly Road
Lindfield
Haywards Heath
RH16 2QY**

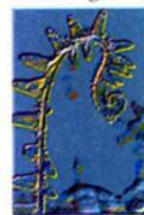
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

November 2024

FINAL

Produced by
*Ecology and Land
Management*
For and on behalf of
St Marks Properties Ltd.

Henriette
Westergaard



Ecology & Land
Management

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Summary

Background

At the time of the survey the site comprises several large buildings associated with the former care home Hollyrood House now closed down. There are also several outbuildings and woodland and mature parkland trees within the grounds.

There are no known sites of archaeological importance within the site.

Listed Buildings

A listed building is located immediately north of the site (magiv.gov.uk).

Designations

A biological records search was acquired from Sussex Biological Records Centre. There are no sites with European or National statutory designation within 2km.

The nearest Local Nature Reserve is Eastern Road Nature Reserve. The nearest non-statutory designated site is c. 1.8km northwest. Other designations include High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which covers the area of the site. Ancient semi-natural woodland is adjacent to the site to the east.

Priority Habitats

The nearest priority habitats include Ancient semi-natural woodland adjacent to the southerneastern boundary.

Protected Species

Biological records provides details of protected/scarce and notable species within 2km of the site.

Birds

Biological records list notable/protected species of birds recorded within 2km of the site. Further survey work is not considered necessary. However, **there should be no vegetation clearance during the bird breeding season.**

Bats

There are records of 10 species of bat within 2km. Several buildings have bat roosting features. **Additional survey work is recommended.**

Reptiles

There are records of 3 species of reptiles within 2km of the site. Available habitat within the main site offers limited sheltering opportunities for reptiles. Habitat on the southern side within woodland edges offers suitability for reptiles. Additional survey work is not considered necessary where there is no impact on adjacent woodland and woodland edges. **Precautionary mitigation is recommended.**

Amphibians

No ponds were observed within the site. There appears to be 8 ponds within 500m. There are records of great crested within 2km from 2017. The site is within an area controlled by NatureSpace. It appears it is within an orange zone. Further information will be required. **Additional survey work is considered necessary.**

Badgers

There are no records of badger within 2km as these are confidential. There were no obvious signs of badger setts within the proposed site. Additional survey work is not considered necessary.

Dormice

There are records of dormice within 2km of the site from 2019. The habitat within the redline is considered suboptimal for dormouse. Additional survey work for dormice is not considered necessary unless disturbance to the adjacent woodland is proposed.

Water vole

There are records of water vole within 2km of the site. There are no watercourses present on site. Additional survey work for dormice is not considered necessary.

Invertebrates

Available habitat within the redline site offers limited habitat for notable and scarce invertebrate species. Additional survey work is not considered necessary. **However, where grubbing out of tree stumps is required, an investigation for stag beetle should be undertaken.**

Other Considerations

There are records of hedgehog within 2km of the site. Hedgehogs are likely to be present in the local area. ***Consideration should be given to hedgehogs and where they are found during works they should be moved to a secure site nearby.*** It is advised that the proposed landscape design should ensure that hedgehogs can move within the site and into surrounding areas without physical barriers.

On the basis of the site assessment it is not expected that other protected species will be present on the site. Should new evidence be found this assessment would require updating.

Outline biodiversity enhancement has been proposed for the site to include habitat for birds, bats and invertebrates.

This report has been prepared for the titled project and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without written consent by the author.

This report is considered valid for a period of 12 months from the date of the survey (22nd October 2024) unless there are significant changes to habitats on site.

Site Name: Hollyrood, Ardingly Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, Sussex RH16 2QY - the site; Fig. 1

Grid Reference: TQ35432669

County: Mid Sussex

Planning Authority: Mid-Sussex District Council

Natural Character Area: High Weald

Client: St Marks Properties Ltd.

Proposed Disturbance: Residential development

Survey Request: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Surveyor: Henriette Westergaard, MSc, BSc (Hons), MCIEEM, CMLI, CEnv

For and on behalf of Ecology & Land Management

Assessment Period: October/November 2024

Limitations

Protected species surveys were not part of this assessment. Instead a preliminary assessment of likely presence of species on the proposed site have been made. Previous bat assessment has been taken into account.

Where relevant information may require updating where new information becomes available (such as ponds not previously known to be present or records of protected species nearby).

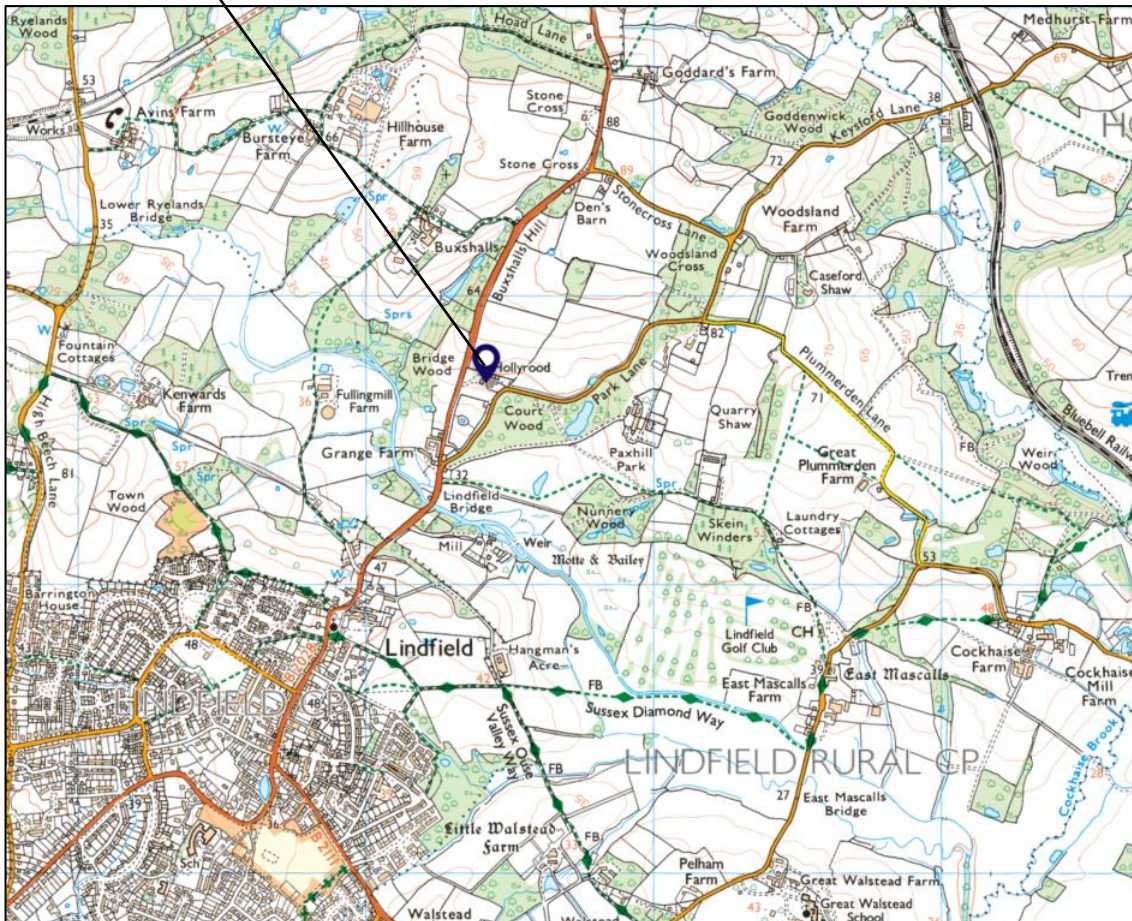
Information within this report is valid for a maximum period of one year from the date of the report.

Section 1 - Introduction

- 1.1 Ecology and Land Management were commissioned by St Marks Properties Ltd. to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of land associated with the site at Hollyrood, Ardingly Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath RH16 2QY.
- 1.2 This report is required in response to guidance notes set out by the local council to ensure that adequate ecological information accompanies any planning application for proposed redevelopment. The findings of this study will inform, where necessary the design and layout of any proposed development.
- 1.3 The aims of the preliminary ecological appraisal are:
 - to identify the ecological habitats at the study site, and potential for protected species,
 - to provide recommendations for further protected and notable species surveys as necessary,
 - to identify significant features for retention and protection, where possible or appropriate,
 - to identify features for enhancement, and where possible
 - to provide outline recommendations for mitigation and/or compensation where relevant.
- 1.4 The appraisal included undertaking a desk study and preliminary ecological appraisal. The findings have been reviewed in light of relevant legislation, planning policy and biodiversity contextual information. The key findings and recommendations are set out in Section 6.
- 1.5 Assessment of biological records data is recommended as part of the overall assessment of protected species and habitats within close vicinity to the site. Biological records have been obtained from the local records centre. In addition, biological data has been assessed from National Biodiversity Atlas and the Multi-Agency Government Information Centre (MAGIC).

Figure 1 – Site Location
NTS

Site location



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Section 2 - Methodology

Desk Study

- 2.1 This section summarises the methodology used in undertaking the appraisal, which included a desk study and Extended Phase 1 Survey (based on JNCC, 2010 guidance) with reference to the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal guidance (CIEEM, 2017).
- 2.2 The desk study is an important element of undertaking an initial ecological appraisal of a site proposed for development, since it enables the initial collation and review of contextual information such as designated sites together with known records of protected and priority species.
- 2.3 In order to compile information on the site and immediate surroundings a search for relevant background information such as: biological records, history, planning designations, current and past management was undertaken.
- 2.4 The desk study involved collating relevant information from organisations, websites and documents including:-
- i) Multi-Agency Government Information Centre (MAGIC).
 - ii) National Biodiversity Network Atlas.
 - iii) Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan.
 - iv) Mid-Sussex District Plan and Lindfield and Linfield Neighbourhood Plan 2014-2031.
- 2.5 A search of the Multi-Agency Government Information Centre (MAGIC) website was undertaken to identify statutory designations within 5km for European sites and 2km for UK sites. The nbn (National Biodiversity Network) Gateway website was searched for information on protected species in the Ordnance Survey 10km Grid Square TQ32. Pond presence has been assessed using OS base map 1:25,000 as well as Google Earth.
- 2.6 Sussex and UK Biodiversity Action Plans were consulted and their relevance to the site outlined, where relevant.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- 2.7 The survey technique adopted for the habitat assessment is at a level intermediate between the standard Phase 1 Survey technique, based on habitat mapping and description, and a Phase 2 survey, based on detailed habitat and species surveys. The survey technique is commonly known as an extended Phase 1 Survey.
- 2.8 The survey is adapted from the guidelines referenced in the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey - A Technique for Environmental Audit (JNCC. 2016). The site is walked initially to assess the overall habitat types. The extent of each habitat is then recorded and compared to the surrounding area to demonstrate the status of each habitat type. Subsequently, a preliminary assessment is made of the floristic composition of each habitat indicating rarity, where appropriate. Overall, the survey provides an evaluation of wildlife interest and conservation priority. It should be noted that the survey is based principally on vegetation, although habitats on site are searched for obvious signs of faunal

activity and an assessment is made of their potential to support protected species.

- 2.9 The survey has also been compared to the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab P) v. 2 (2023), where applicable (See Appendix II). This assessment method allows categorization of habitats at different levels using primary and secondary codes. Each area is assigned a UKHab at appropriate level. The evaluation allows certain comparisons to UK priority habitat and/or Annex I habitat types.

Walkover bat roost assessment

- 2.10 The assessment was carried on using standard guidance and best practice methodology outlined in the Bat Workers Manual (Mitchell-Jones & McLeish, 2004), the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (English Nature, 2004) and Bat Surveys Guidelines for Professional Ecologists – Good Practice Guidelines (BCT 2023). Table 1 below details the specific categories for bat potential against the features within buildings and trees in addition to habitat features that signify a specific quality for foraging bats. The assessment classifications within this report have been made in accordance to these criteria. Table 1- Criteria for the Classification of Buildings, Trees and Habitat for Bats (BCT 2016). Further assessment may be required by licenced bat surveyor.

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

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting habitats in structures	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 to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	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 at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ^c).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, 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 foraging bats 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, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.
a Negligible is defined as ‘so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant’. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute). b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance. c Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten <i>et al.</i>, 2016 and Jansen <i>et al.</i>, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.		

Evaluation

- 2.11 The evaluation process used in this report follows broadly the guidance on Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal developed by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM guidelines, December 2017). Habitats present within the site have been assigned ecological values on a scale between international and local (immediate zone of influence). Values do not take account of economic values or ecological resources; they are based entirely on the innate value of the flora, fauna and habitats in terms of the conservation of the genetic resource. See Appendix I.
- 2.12 The value of areas of habitats and species has been measured against published selection criteria where possible. A level of importance has been assigned to the key ecological features, which occur at the site. In those instances where the potential presence of scheduled or protected species has been identified, a preliminary value is attributed based on a prediction of population size.

Section 3 - Legislation, Planning Policy

Legislation and Policy

- 3.1 This section sets out the relevant legal, planning policy and biodiversity context of the Site and proposed development, where available. The occurrence of species, which are specifically protected by law or otherwise listed as threatened, although not necessarily strictly rare, can also be helpful in establishing the conservation value of sites. A number of habitats and species in the UK receive varying levels of statutory protection under several elements of legislation. The principle mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Britain is shown in Table 1.

Legislation	Species and Habitats
<i>International</i>	
Bern Convention 1979	Protects important populations of listed species and their habitats. Aims to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats.
IUCN (Red List)	The world conservation unit assesses the conservation status of species, sub-species and varieties.
<i>European</i>	
Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitat, Wild Fauna and Flora	This is enacted in the UK by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations or Habitat Regulations, 2019.
Birds Directive 1979	This provides a framework for the conservation and management of, and human interactions with, wild birds in Europe. In England the Birds Directive is implemented through the WCA, 1981 and the Habitat Regulations, 2010.
<i>UK</i>	
Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981 (Schedules 1, 5, and 8) and amendments	Protection of wild plants, animals and habitats in the UK.

Legislation	Species and Habitats
Government Circular 06/05	Protected species are also covered by the requirements of the Government Circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System
NERC Act 2006	Section 41 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitat and species, which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. This list has been drawn up in consultation with Natural England and forms the basis of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.
The CroW Act, 2000	This piece of legislation provides for public access on foot to certain types of land, amends the law relating to public rights of way, increases measures for the management and protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and strengthens wildlife enforcement legislation, and provides for better management of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
The Hedgerow Regulations, 1997	Under the Hedgerows Regulations 1997 it is against the law to remove or destroy certain hedgerows without permission from the local planning authority. The local planning authority is also the enforcement body for offences created by the Regulations. Local planning authority permission is normally required before removing hedges that are at least 20 meters (66 feet) in length, more than 30 years old and contain certain plant species. The authority will assess the importance of the hedgerow using criteria set out in the regulations.
NPPF	See paragraph 3.2
Biodiversity Net Gain	See paragraph 3.3

Table 1 – Principle legislative mechanism for wildlife protection in the UK.

Below is a table illustrating how particular biological groups are protected by legislation.

Biological Groups	Relevant Legislation
Flora	A number of plant species are protected under Section 13 of the amended 1998 Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981. It is an offence to intentionally pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant listed in Schedule 8 of the Act. The list includes both higher plants such as rare orchids and lower plants such as lichens and mosses.
Bats	All species of bat in Britain and their breeding sites or resting places are protected under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010 and under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (WCA). It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or handle a bat, to possess a bat (whether live or dead), deliberately disturb a roosting bat, or sell or offer a bat for sale, without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by "s for shelter, whether they are present or not. All bat species in Britain are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 through inclusion on Schedule 5. They are also protected under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (which were issued under the European Communities Act 1972), through inclusion on Schedule 2. On 1 st April 2010, these Regulations, together with subsequent amendments, were consolidated into the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. European protected animal species and their breeding sites or resting places are protected under Regulation 39. Since August 2007, building development that affects bats or their roosts needs a Protected Species Licence under The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 administered in England by Natural England.
Birds	All wild birds (birds in a wild state resident or visiting Great Britain) and their nests and eggs are protected under the WCA, 1981. Particular emphasis is given to the protection of breeding birds. With certain exceptions, it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take wild birds, take, damage or destroy the nest of wild birds while in use or being built, take or destroy the eggs of wild birds, disturb wild birds listed in Schedule 1 when nest building or at a nest containing eggs or young or disturb dependent young of wild birds.
Badgers	Badgers and their setts are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992. It makes it illegal to kill, injure or take badgers or to interfere with a badger sett or any part of a sett. The term 'badger sett' is normally understood to mean the system of tunnels and chambers in which badgers live and their entrances and immediate surrounds. The 1992 Act specifically defines a sett as "any structure or place, which displays signs indicating current use by badger."

Biological Groups	Relevant Legislation
Hazel Dormouse	Individual animals, their breeding sites or nesting places (nests) are protected under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010 and under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (WCA). It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or handle a dormouse, to possess a dormouse (whether live or dead), deliberately disturb a dormouse, or sell or offer a dormouse for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct any place used by dormice for shelter, whether present or not.
Hedgehog	Hedgehogs receive partial protection on Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, which stipulates that animals may not be killed or taken by certain methods. In addition, the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats also lists hedgehog prohibiting the use of all indiscriminate means of capture and killing.
Water Vole	Water vole and their breeding/resting places are fully protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended in 2008). It is an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill a water vole or to damage, destroy or obstruct their breeding or resting places. It is also an offence to disturb them in their breeding or resting places.
Reptiles	All native reptiles are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill or injure a 'widespread' reptile species (viviparous lizard, grass snake, adder or slow worm), or sell or offer for sale without a licence. The sand lizard and smooth snake, their breeding sites or resting places (any structure that may offer refuge), are protected under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010. It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or handle either of these two species, to possess an animal (whether live or dead), deliberately disturb a sheltering animal, or sell or offer an animal for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by sand lizards and smooth snakes for shelter, whether they are present or not.

Biological Groups	Relevant Legislation
Amphibians	All native amphibians are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. It is an offence to sell or offer for sale any native amphibian species. The great crested newt and natterjack toad, their breeding sites (typically ponds) and nesting places (typically terrestrial that offers refuge) are protected under Regulation 41 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010. It is an offence for anyone to intentionally kill, injure or handle either of these two species, to possess an animal (whether live or dead), deliberately disturb a sheltering animal, or sell or offer for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy and obstruct access to any place used by great crested newts and natterjack toads whether they are present or not.
Invertebrates	A small number of invertebrates including beetles, crickets, butterflies and moths are protected under Section 9, Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 against deliberately killing, injuring or taking. Other species receive partial protection under the same act. For example it is an offence for anyone to sell or offer for sale a stag beetle without a licence. Others are highlighted for conservation concern through IUCNs red list data and UK and local biodiversity action plans. In addition, a number of invertebrates are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. These species are regarded as of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

Table 2 – Legislative protection for particular biological groups.

Planning Policy Context

National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF)

- 3.2 The NPPF (2012, as amended) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Policies set out in NPPF are taken into account by local planning authorities in the preparation of local development documents. They may also be material to decisions on individual planning applications. Amendments in 2021 requires details on impact and biodiversity net gain.

Biodiversity Net Gain

- 3.3 National policy sets out that planning should provide biodiversity net gains where possible. National Planning Policy Framework Paragraphs 170(d), 174(b) and 175(d) refer to this policy requirement and the Natural Environment Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further explanation on how this should be done. Delivering net gain is also referred to in the National Infrastructure Commission's Design Principles, National Policy Statements and the National design guide. Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is a strategy to develop land and contribute to the recovery of nature. It is a way of making sure the habitat for wildlife is in a better state than it was before development. The Environment Act sets out the following key components of mandatory biodiversity gain:
- Amends Town & Country Planning Act (TCPA);
 - Minimum 10% gain required calculated using the Biodiversity Metric & approval of a biodiversity gain plan;
 - Habitat secured for at least 30 years via planning obligations or conservation covenants;
 - Delivered on-site, off-site or via a new statutory biodiversity credits scheme;
 - National register for net gain delivery sites. Developers are required to leave major development sites 10% better off for biodiversity than when the development is completed. The UK government is proposing to sell biodiversity credits to developers if the required biodiversity net gains cannot be achieved on-site or through the off-site market. Private landowners can help deliver these gains for both biodiversity and sometimes other ecosystem services. For more information see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-net-gain>
- 3.4 The threshold for developments that must implement BNG include those that will affect priority habitats and/or projects that will affect an area greater than 25m² of non-priority habitat and/or 5 or more meters of linear habitat (e.g. hedgerow). Developments exempt from BNG include the following:
- Developments below the threshold;
 - Householder applications;
 - Self-build and custom build applications;
 - Biodiversity gain sites;
 - High speed rail transport network.

- 3.5 For more information that includes detailed definitions of exempt activities see:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>
Mid Sussex District Council
- 3.3 The site is within Mid-Sussex District Council planning authority. The development plan for the site is Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan (2014-2031) and Mid-Sussex District Plan 2014-2031. A full understanding of the extent of the biodiversity present on site or within the site's zone of influence and the measures needed to overcome any potential detrimental impact during construction and operation is likely to be essential. Relevant policies in the Local Plan are set out below.
- 3.4 Table 3 lists a number of policies considered relevant to the site. Biodiversity enhancement has been proposed to fulfil policy requirements, where possible. The site is within an area listed as 'Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside.'

Local Plan Policies	Relevance to Site
Policy DP12 Protection and Enhancement of Countryside	
The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and: • it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or • it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan. Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality. The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character. Built-up area boundaries are subject to review by Neighbourhood Plans or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council. Economically viable mineral reserves within the district will be safeguarded.	The site is within an area listed for protection and enhancement of countryside. There are opportunities to enhance the site to link with the wider landscape.
Policy DP16 High Weald AONB	

The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and: • it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or • it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan. Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality. The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character. Built-up area boundaries are subject to review by Neighbourhood Plans or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council. Economically viable mineral reserves within the district will be safeguarded.	The site is within the High Weald AONB. There are opportunities to enhance the site for biodiversity and link to aim and objectives within the AONB.
Policy DP17 Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC	
In order to prevent adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, new development likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other development, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects. Within a 400 metres buffer zone around Ashdown Forest, mitigation measures are unlikely to be capable of protecting the integrity of the SPA and, therefore, residential development will not be permitted. Within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA, residential development leading to a net increase in dwellings will be required to contribute to mitigation through: 1) The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to the minimum level of 8Ha per 1,000 net increase in population; or a financial contribution to SANGs elsewhere; or the provision of bespoke mitigation; and 2) A financial contribution to the Ashdown Forest Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Strategy. Large schemes proposed adjacent or close to the boundary of the 7km zone of influence may require mitigation for the SPA. Such proposals for development will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Where bespoke mitigation is provided, these measures will need to be in place before occupation of development and must be managed and maintained in perpetuity. The effectiveness of such mitigation will need to be demonstrated prior to approval of the development. Bespoke mitigation will need to be discussed and agreed by the District Council as the competent authority following advice from Natural England.	The site is c. 10km from Ashdown Forest and therefore significantly outside the buffer zone.
Policy DP37 Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows	

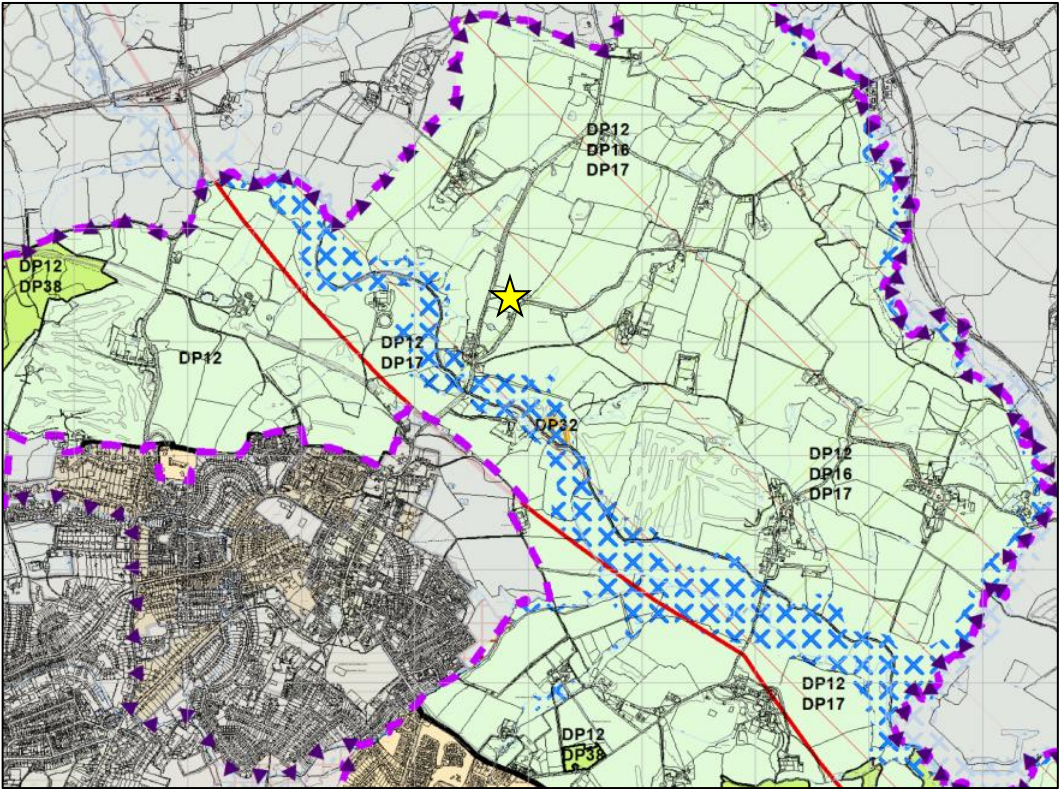
The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected. Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of an area, and/ or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted. Proposals for new trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of suitable species, usually native, and where required for visual, noise or light screening purposes, trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of a size and species that will achieve this purpose. Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development: • incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme; and • prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth; and • where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management; and • has appropriate protection measures throughout the development process; and • takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change; and • does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets. Proposals for works to trees will be considered taking into account: • the condition and health of the trees; and • the contribution of the trees to the character and visual amenity of the local area; and • the amenity and nature conservation value of the trees; and • the extent and impact of the works; and • any replanting proposals. The felling of protected trees will only be permitted if there is no appropriate alternative. Where a protected tree or group of trees is felled, a replacement tree or group of trees, on a minimum of a 1:1 basis and of an appropriate size and type, will normally be required. The replanting should take place as close to the felled tree or trees as possible having regard to the proximity of adjacent properties. Development should be positioned as far as possible from ancient woodland with a minimum buffer of 15 metres maintained between ancient woodland and the development boundary.	The site comprises many mature native and non-native trees. The site is also adjacent to ancient semi-natural woodland. There is opportunity to maintain and enhance tree and adjacent woodland cover.
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Policy DP38 Biodiversity	
Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development: • Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and • Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances); and • Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and • Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the District; and • Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas. Designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks. Valued soils will be protected and enhanced, including the best and most versatile agricultural land, and development should not contribute to unacceptable levels of soil pollution. Geodiversity will be protected by ensuring development prevents harm to geological conservation interests, and where possible, enhances such interests. Geological conservation interests include Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites.	There are opportunities to enhance the site for biodiversity.

Table 3 – Local Plan Policies and their relevance to the site.

Figure 2 – Local Plan Proposals Map (online, October 2024). Copyright Mid-Sussex District Council

Site Location:



Copyright: Local Plan, online November 2024.

 District Boundary	 Ashdown Forest 7km zone of influence	 Informal Recreation
 Neighbourhood Plan Areas	 High Weald AONB	 Built Up Area Boundary
 Parish Boundary	 Protection and Enhancement of Countryside	 Ancient Monuments
 FloodZones	 Local Wildlife Sites	DISTRICT PLAN POLICY NUMBERS

Section 4 - Biodiversity Context

Natural Areas

- 4.1 Natural Areas are a subdivision of England each with a characteristic association of wildlife and natural features. They provide a way of interpreting the ecological variations of the country in terms of natural features, illustrating the distinctions between one area and another. Each Natural Area has a unique identity resulting from the interaction of wildlife, landforms, geology, land use and human impact. Natural Areas have been formally defined as bio geographic zones which reflect the geological foundation, the natural systems and processes and the wildlife in different parts of England, and provide a framework for setting objectives for nature conservation (Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report, HMSO 1995).
- 4.2 The Site lies within the High Weald Natural Character Area. “The High Weald National Character Area (NCA) encompasses the ridged and faulted sandstone core of the Kent and Sussex Weald. It is an area of ancient countryside and one of the best surviving medieval landscapes in northern Europe. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) covers 78 per cent of the NCA. The High Weald consists of a mixture of fields, small woodlands and farmsteads connected by historic routeways, tracks and paths. The small scale and historical patterning of the landscape, interwoven woodland, wetland and open habitats, with many hedgerows and historic routeways supporting semi-natural vegetation, provide a flourishing, accessible landscape for wildlife.”

Table 4 - Natural Character Area Profile.

- 4.3 Statements of Environmental Opportunities relevant to the proposed site include: “SEO 1: Maintain and enhance the existing woodland and pasture components of the landscape, including the historic field pattern bounded by shaws, hedgerows and farm woods, to improve ecological function at a landscape scale for the benefit of biodiversity, soils and water, sense of place and climate regulation, safeguard ancient woodlands and encourage sustainably produced timber to support local markets and contribute to biomass production.”

Biodiversity Action Plans

- 4.4 The UK post 2010 Biodiversity Framework covers the period 2011 – 2020 and replaces the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Its aim is to address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss and improve and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services. The UKBAP biodiversity habitats and species background information is still widely used at a county level. UKBAP biodiversity habitats and species have been considered within this report and enhancement measures have been suggested within the recommendations sections. The UKBAP sets out targets for a number of Priority Species and Habitats as well as for broad habitat types.

Priority species listed in the UKBAP include several species of bat, water vole and great crested newt.

- 4.5 The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000) provides legislation to promote the further conservation of habitat types and species considered of principle importance for biodiversity. In the NPPF it is stated that local plans should “promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan.” The lists of habitats and species of principle importance comprise those identified as priorities under the UKBAP. This list forms Annex C of Government Circular 06/057.
- 4.6 UK Biodiversity Action Plan and Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan include a number of habitats and species identified with the intention of promoting conservation and enhancement of specific habitats across the county.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan and Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan	Description	Relevance
Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity	Design for Biodiversity	Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement exist within the site.
House Sparrow	UK BAP. “Raise awareness of the need for biodiversity conservation by focusing attention on the decline in the house sparrow and its importance as a cultural emblem. Establish the cause(s) of decline in the population of house sparrows and, if possible, undertake measures to reverse the decline.”	There is opportunity for this species to forage on the site. New design could provide artificial nesting boxes.
Song thrush	UK BAP. The overall aim of this action plan is to prevent further decline of the song thrush in Lambeth Borough and to contribute to an overall strengthening of the population of song thrush throughout London.	There is opportunity for this species to forage on the site.
Common Starling	UK BAP species.	There is opportunity for this species to forage on the site.
Bat	EU protected species. To maintain, enhance and extend suitable roosting, breeding and hibernation habitat for all species of bats. To increase public awareness and appreciation of bats and their ecology.	There is roosting potential at the site. There is potential for enhancing the site for bat roosting.
Stag beetle	UK BAP. To protect, conserve and enhance populations of stag beetle in London Borough of Lambeth. To ascertain the reasons for uneven distribution of stag beetle populations across the borough. Increase public awareness of the importance of stag beetle and that of the dead wood habitat.	There is potential for the site to support this species.

Table 5 – Relevant Biodiversity Action Plans.

Section 5 - Site Location and Proposed Development

- 5.1 This section sets out the findings of the desk study and extended Phase 1 survey and should be read in conjunction with Indicative Habitat Plan (Appendix III).

Context

- 5.2 The site is associated the Hollyrood, Ardingly Road, Lindfield as shown in Figure 1 (OSGR: TQ35432669). The existing site comprises Hollyrood House a former care home and other buildings as well as several outbuildings with vegetated grounds of mature trees and amenity grassland with woodland to the west and south. The site is approximately 6306.7m² (0.63067ha) in extent. The land slopes gently from north to south at approximately 50m AOD down to 45m AOD. The soils are described in Soilscape (Cranfield University) as slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage.
- 5.3 Development and landscape proposals are shown on the Design Proposals Site Layout (Sherwood Architects, August 2024), see Appendix IV.
- 5.4 The site is located on the eastern side of the B2028 Ardingly Road, c. 1 mile north of Lindfield village centre. The wider landscape is characterised by the rural landscape of woodlands, ghylls and grazing fields.

Protected Species and Designated Sites

- 5.5 The online national database search (magic.gov.uk) and Sussex Biological Records Centre confirms that the site is not designated for its nature conservation value. There are designated sites, protected species and priority habitats with 2km the site. See also Appendices VI, VII and VIII. Designated sites are listed below. See Table 6 below.

Online Data Research Results	Number of Sites	Relevance to Site
AONB	1	High Weald (within site)
European Statutory Designated Site	1 within 10km	Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC c. 10km SE
National Statutory Designated Site	None within 2km	-
Local Nature Reserve	1 within 2km	Eastern Road Nature Reserve
Non Statutory Designated Site – Local Wildlife Sites	3 within 2km	M18 - Walstead Cemetery M36 - Burstye Farm Meadow M49 - Wickham Woods
Designated Road Verge	1 within 2km	College Road
Priority Habitats	4 within 2km	Traditional orchard Deciduous woodland Ancient woodland Ghyll woodland

Ancient Woodland	1 within 2km	Ancient woodland adjacent to southeast
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Table 6 – Designations. Source: SxBRC, November 2024.

- 5.6 The records of protected species have been obtained from Sussex Biological Records Centre and are summarised in the tables below.

	Number of Protected Species and Species of Conservation Concern within 2km	Likely presence on site
Higher Plants	55	Negligible
Lower plants	4	Negligible
Fungi	16	Negligible
Birds	149	Foraging and nesting opportunities in trees. Nest box on outbuilding.
Mammals (excl bats)	5	Potential for hedgehog. Potential for dormice in adjacent woodland.
Bats	10	Roost potential buildings and mature trees
Fish	7	None
Amphibians	5	Negligible
Reptiles	3	Negligible
Invertebrates	124	Potential for inverts including stag beetle

Table 7 – Protected Species and Species of Conservation Concern within 2km SxBRC, November 2024).

- 5.7 A tool has been created by Natural England accessed via Magic to determine the risk of development impact on designated areas such as SSSI's, SAC, SPAs and Ramsar sites. Available information indicates that the site is located within a SSSI risk zone. Natural England will provide advice on any potential impacts and how these might be avoided or mitigated. Table 8 below shows when to consult Natural England.

• Infrastructure: Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals. • Air Pollution: Livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 750m² & manure stores > 3500 tonnes. • Combustion: General combustion processes >50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.
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Table 8 – SSSI Risk Zone (Source: Magic.defra.gov.uk, online November 2024).

SPA/RAMSAR/SAC

- 5.8 Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC is located c. 10km northeast of the site.
- 5.9 The qualifying features for Ashdown Forest SPA/SAC include Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*. Ashdown Forest contains one of the largest single continuous blocks of lowland heath in south-east England, with both European dry heaths and, in a larger proportion, wet heath. The M16 *Erica tetralix* – *Sphagnum compactum* wet heath element provides suitable conditions for several species of bog-mosses *Sphagnum* spp., bog asphodel *Narthecium*

ossifragum, deergrass *Trichophorum cespitosum*, common cotton-grass *Eriophorum angustifolium*, marsh gentian *Gentiana pneumonanthe* and marsh clubmoss *Lycopodiella inundata*. The site supports important assemblages of beetles, dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies, including the nationally rare silver-studded blue *Plebejus argus*, and birds of European importance, such as European nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*, Dartford warbler *Sylvia undata* and Eurasian hobby *Falco subbuteo*. European dry heaths: The dry heath in Ashdown Forest is an extensive example of the south-eastern H2 *Calluna vulgaris* – *Ulex minor* community. This vegetation type is dominated by heather *Calluna vulgaris*, bell heather *Erica cinerea* and dwarf gorse *Ulex minor*, with transitions to other habitats. It supports important lichen assemblages, including species such as *Pycnothelia papillaria*. This site supports the most inland remaining population of hairy greenweed *Genista pilosa* in Britain.

- 5.10 The decision as to whether an Appropriate Assessment is required or not is based upon an assessment of 'Likely Significant Effect' (LSE), which is recognised as being a statement that the anticipated effects of the proposal will be more than trivial. That is, the anticipated changes resulting from the proposal have the potential to impact on a designated, or proposed to be designated, European/Ramsar site. It does not automatically follow that an impact will occur, or that the impact would be significant, with a decision of LSE being purely an indication of the need for an Appropriate Assessment.
- 5.11 Where a proposed development has the potential to impact on the European site listed above the local authority can request an HRA is carried out. Although carrying out the HRA is the responsibility of the local authority as the competent authority they can request a screening for relevant information to be provided by the developer.

Section 6 - Potential Ecological Interest and Recommendations

Habitats

- 6.1 The site was surveyed on 22nd October 2024 on a sunny day (ca. 14°C). The site was surveyed by a qualified ecologist. The aim was to identify the main habitat types within the site including the general species composition and structure of the vegetation as well as areas of potential ecological interest. Habitats types and landscape features adjacent to the site were also noted. In addition, notes were made with regard to biodiversity enhancement potential within the site with a view to informing the overall assessment.
- 6.2 The habitats identified are listed below. Habitats were searched for obvious signs of faunal activity or potential to support particular biological groups.

Key to Site and Habitat Descriptions

Woodland
Trees
Modified grassland
Hedges/Lines of trees
Buildings and Hard Surfaces

Trees

- 6.3 An Arboricultural Report is available for the site (Argricultural Consultants, June 2024). This shows there is a total of 55 trees and 8 groups of trees. 51 trees and 1 group of trees including 22 category A, 18 category B, 11 category C and 2 category U. All trees are described as mature or early mature. Trees include oak (*Quercus robur*), Lawson Cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*), yew (*Taxus baccata*), Locust Tree (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*), Sweet Gum (*Liquidambar styraciflua*), Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*), Damson (*Prunus Domestica*), Goat Willow (*Salix caprea*), Pear (*Pyrus sp.*), Fig (*Ficus carica*), Cherry Laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Serbian Spruce (*Picea omorika*), Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*), Copper Beech (*Fagus sylvatica 'Purpurea'*), Wellingtonia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*), Austrian Pine (*Pinus nigra*), Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Rhododendron spp. Trees can be of importance to nesting birds, small mammals including bats and invertebrates. Trees proposed for removal should be assessed for bat roost potential using a ground level tree assessment is recommended as described under the chapter on fauna.
- 6.4 Currently, the proposals include the removal of 7 trees and 4 groups of trees (T8, T12, T20, T25, T26, T27, G28, G41, T46, G46 and G47) of which 7 are category C and 3 are U and 1 is category B. G32 has already been removed. The retained trees should be protected. All tree protection, work to trees and any work in the vicinity of trees is to accord with the relevant sections of the following standards:
- BS 3998 - Recommendations for Tree Work.
BS 4428 - Code of practice for general landscape operations.
BS 5837 - Guide for Trees in Relation to Construction.
BS 1722 - Fences.

Modified grassland

- 6.5 Large areas of modified grassland is present within the grounds. The grassland is maintained as short sward and species diversity was limited. Species observed

include perenneial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) and dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*). Modified grassland is not listed in the UK BAP or local BAP although it can be seen as part of the built environment, which comprises green infrastructure of many different mosaic habitats supporting a variety of wildlife. Amenity grassland is usually considered to be of limited botanical interest and is likely to support a low diversity of insect life. However, expanses of modified grassland can have high biomass of soil fauna (e.g. earthworms and leatherjackets) and thereby provide feeding opportunities for birds such as gulls or lapwings as well as small mammals and if left to grow tall, can support some invertebrate life.

Hedges/Lines of trees

- 6.6 There are two lines of trees and two hedges within the site. The tree lines include a row of yew (*Taxus baccata*) (G32), which was recently cut down and a row of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) (G31). A line of cherry laurel (G47) forms a hedge along building B3 and a short length of mature yew hedge is present within the southeast corner of the grounds. Tree lines are native and hedges are non-native. Non-native trees and single species hedges are not listed in the UK or local BAP although they provide cover and a green corridor for birds and small mammals.

Buildings and Hard Surfaces

- 6.7 There are 14 buildings on site:

B1 – Main house, brick and sandstone construction, pitched roof. Roof converted to living space. Wooden ornate barge board/coving. Gap between building and soffits. uPVC windows. Broken and lifted clay tiles. Hanging tiles. Boarded windows. High.

B2 – One storey brick building, uPVC windows/soffits, wooden barge boards. Disrepair but no obvious gaps or features on clay tiles. One bird box on northern elevation. Negligible.

B3 – Brick outbuilding sloping flat felted roof. Boarded windows. Negligible.

B4 – L shaped brick building with pitched roof and clay tiles. Hanging tiles on gables. Missing mortar on ridge tiles. Adjacent to hedgerow. Moderate.

B5 – Brick built detached house with pitched roof. Hanging tiles all the way round. Missing and lifted roof tiles. Adjacent to hedgerow. High

B6 – Long wooden outbuilding with flat felted roof. In disrepair with wood panels loose and missing below roof. One birds box on southern elevation. Negligible

B7 – Greenhouse. Negligible.

B8 – Wooden shed in disrepair. Negligible.

B9 – Wooden shed. Negligible.

B10 – Extension to B1. Brick 2 storey building, with flat roof and uPVC windows and soffits. Lifted felt on southeast elevation . Low potential

B11 – Wooden shed in disrepair. Negligible.

B12/13 – Small wooden sheds. Negligible.

B14 – Wooden shed north of B5. Low potential.

B15 – Wooden shed between B6 and B7. Negligible.

Buildings can be of value for roosting bats and nesting birds. Details relating to fauna is described in table 9.

Invasive Non-native Species

- 6.8 A number of plants are listed as invasive non-native species. These must not be planted in the wild, or be caused to grow in the wild. This can include moving contaminated soil or plant cuttings. If invasive non-native plants are present they must be stopped from spreading and causing a nuisance or damage to other land or property. These plants are also listed in Schedule 9 Part II of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and must not be released or allowed to escape into the wild. The most common are Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantagazzianum*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera* Royle) and rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*). Guidelines issued by Natural England (formerly Defra) should be used for its disposal. Rhododendron and cherry laurel were observed on site.

Summary

- 6.9 This survey has assessed the site's importance for floral and faunal communities and provides information on habitat features of particular value to different biological groups, including features of conservation interest. Table 9 provides a summary of the potential presence of protected species. Detailed Impact Assessment and mitigation proposals would be required where protected species are found. This assessment is based on available information. Where new evidence becomes available this assessment may need to be updated.

Fauna

Species	Relevance to Site	Recommendations
Badger	There are no records of badger from within 2km of the site. However, records are kept confidential. There were no obvious signs of badger within the site. Badgers and their setts are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992.	Further survey work is not considered necessary
Bat	There are records of 10 species of bat within 2km of the site. There are known bat mitigation licences within 1km of the site (magic.gov.uk). Several building and trees have bat roosting potential. Bat are also likely to forage along tree lines and buildings. Buildings on site were assessed externally as follows: There are known granted bat disturbance licence applications within 1km (Magic.gov.uk). The main habitat feature for bats is mature trees and woodland to the south and east. The wider landscape supports good habitat for foraging bats. B1 – Main house, brick and sandstone construction, pitched roof. Roof converted to living space. Wooden ornate barge board/coving. Gap between building and soffits. uPVC windows. Broken and lifted clay tiles. Hanging tiles. Boarded windows. High potential. B2 – One storey brick building, uPVC windows/soffits, wooden barge boards. Disrepair but no obvious gaps or features on clay tiles. One bird box on northern elevation. Negligible potential. B3 – Brick outbuilding sloping flat felted roof. Boarded windows. Negligible potential.	i) <u>Further survey work is recommended.</u> ii) <u>Ground level tree assessments (GLTA)</u> should be carried out on trees to be felled. This can be undertaken any time of year and should be carried out by a licenced bat surveyor. Where roost features are confirmed further work will be required during the active season May to August/September. Number of survey visits will depend on features found. iii) <u>Further survey work is considered necessary where works to B1, B4, B5, B10 and B14 is required.</u> Surveys can only be undertaken during the active season between May and September with optimal time being June to August inclusive. Survey numbers for each building will depend on bat roost potential. Surveys would be required between June and August inclusive. The number of surveys required may be revised once surveys have commenced, depending on findings. iv) An internal inspection of loft space is required prior to any evening surveys. Where evidence of roosting bats is found, additional evening surveys will be required. v) Enhancement for roosting bats should be considered such as bat friendly planting and installation of bat boxes on buildings and on trees.

Species	Relevance to Site	Recommendations
	B4 – L shaped brick building with pitched roof and clay tiles. Hanging tiles on gables. Missing mortar on ridge tiles. Adjacent to hedgerow. Moderate potential. B5 – Brick built detached house with pitched roof. Hanging tiles all the way round. Missing and lifted roof tiles. Adjacent to hedgerow. High potential. B6 – Long wooden outbuilding with flat felted roof. In disrepair with wood panels loose and missing below roof. One birds box on southern elevation. Negligible B7 – Greenhouse. Negligible. B8 – Wooden shed in disrepair. Negligible. B9 – Wooden shed. Negligible. B10 – Extension to B1. Brick 2 storey building, with flat roof and uPVC windows and soffits. Lifted felt on southeast elevation . Low potential B11 – Wooden shed in disrepair. Negligible. B12/13 – Small wooden sheds. Negligible. B14 – Wooden shed north of B5. Low potential. B15 – Wooden shed between B6 and B7. Negligible.	vi) Any proposals should incorporate a sensitive lighting scheme to facilitate foraging in the vicinity of the site. The lighting strategy should include dark buffers, illuminance limits and zonation, appropriate luminaire specifications, screening, dimming and part night lighting. Ideally design should include LED lighting <2700 Kelvin such as warm e.g. lighting, directional and time, where possible.
Hazel Dormouse	There are no records of hazel dormouse within 2km. There are records of a Dormouse mitigation licence from 2010 c. 1.1km south of site. The site within the redline offers sub-optimum opportunities for dormice.	Additional survey work for dormice is not considered necessary unless disturbance to the adjacent woodland is proposed.

Birds	There are numerous records of birds within 2km. The site is c. 2km northeast of an area known to support turtle dove. The site presents opportunities for birds. Birds may nest in mature trees, tree lines and dense shrubs. Birds are likely to forage and disperse across the ground. A rookery was observed in the canopy of the Monterey pine. All bird species are protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981 (and amendments).	No further survey work is considered necessary. <u>Vegetation clearance should not be undertaken during the bird-breeding season from March to September inclusive.</u> Where this is not possible, great care should be taken to avoid damage to nesting birds. In addition, should there be any signs of nesting birds at the time of building/clearance works advice should be sought from a qualified ecologist. It is recommended that nesting boxes for song birds are installed within the site and where possible integrated into the buildings. <u>Future enhancement and long-term management should ensure that habitats provide a varied food source and nesting opportunities for a range of birds.</u>
Reptiles	There are records of 3 species of reptiles within 2km of the site. Available habitat within the main site offers limited sheltering opportunities for reptiles. Habitat on the southern side within woodland edges offers suitability for reptiles.	Additional survey work is not considered necessary where there is no impact on adjacent woodland and woodland edges. <u>Precautionary mitigation is recommended along proposed access road.</u>
European Water vole	There are records of water vole from 1991 within 2km of the site. There are no water courses within the site or within close proximity.	Further survey work is not considered necessary.
Eurasian Otter	There are no records of Eurasian otter within 2km of the site. There are no water courses within the site or within close proximity.	Further survey work is not considered necessary.

Species	Relevance to Site	Recommendations
Amphibians	There are records of 5 species of amphibians within 2km including records of great crested newt from 2017 c. 1.5km northeast of the site. There are records of a GCN mitigation licence from 2017 to allow damage to breeding place, c. 1.5km northeast of site. No ponds were observed within the site. There appears to be 8 ponds within 500m. There are records of great crested within 2km from 2014. The site is within an area controlled by NatureSpace. It appears it is within an orange zone. Further information will be required. The foot print of the proposed site is unlikely to support terrestrial GCN as the site is managed formally as ornamental garden providing suboptimal habitat. However, the adjacent woodland and grassland habitat provides opportunities as terrestrial habitat. Based on available information, the proposed works are not considered likely to significantly impact on the local conservation status of great crested newt that may breed in the local area: • No direct impact on breeding ponds. If additional ponds are subsequently identified within 250 m of the site, the great crested newt risk assessment may need to be updated. The preliminary assessment found that the site is likely inside an area controlled by NatureSpace (see Appendix IX for map). The exact requirements will depend on whether the site is within a green, amber or red zone. From the preliminary maps it appears the site is within a NatureSpace orange zone.	<u>A great crested newt risk assessment is recommended</u> to ascertain risk to potential terrestrial habitat. It is also possible NatureSpace will require a great crested newt risk assessment.

Species	Relevance to Site	Recommendations
Invertebrates	Available habitat within the site offers potential habitat for notable and scarce invertebrate species within mature trees. Tree stumps and deadwood may also provide opportunities for saproxylic invertebrates.	Further survey work is not considered necessary. <u>Where trees or tree stumps are removed these should be investigated for stag beetle.</u> Future enhancement and long-term management should ensure that proposed habitats provide a varied food source including pollinators for a range of invertebrates species
White clawed crayfish	There are no records of this species within 1km of the site. There are no watercourses within the site.	Further survey work is not considered necessary.
Fish	There are records of fish within 2km. There are no watercourses within the site.	Further survey work is not considered necessary.

Table 9 – Potential presence of protected species of fauna.

Section 7 - Outline Biodiversity Enhancement

- 7.1 This chapter provides outline biodiversity enhancement recommendations. Where protected species are confirmed on site, specific mitigation and enhancement may be required and this should be outlined in connection with mitigation reports.
- 7.2 It is recommended that management should enhance the biodiversity of the site and link it with national and regional objectives on habitat creation. In particular, the objectives within UK and Sussex Biodiversity action plans should be promoted. In addition, initiative such as Living Landscapes and Accessible Greenspace should be used to safeguard wildlife and promote connectivity in the landscape.
- 7.3 General biodiversity enhancement recommendations prior to protected species surveys include the following:
- i) Ensure the aims and objectives of Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan are promoted through positive management.
 - ii) Retain trees, where possible.
 - iii) Where planting of ornamental shrubs is deemed appropriate these should be based on plants suitable for pollinators and non-invasive species.
 - iv) Installation of green roofs, where possible.
 - v) Installation of wildlife shelters for birds to include flagship species such as chaffinch, greenfinch, blue tit, coal tit, pied flycatcher, great tit, nuthatch and tree sparrow.
 - vi) Installation of integrated swift boxes.
 - vii) Installation of integrated roosting boxes for bats in buildings.
 - viii) Installation of wildlife shelters for invertebrates.
 - ix) Omit the use of pesticides and herbicides within the proposed external landscape.
 - x) Ensure sensitive lighting is implemented to minimise disturbance to foraging bats.

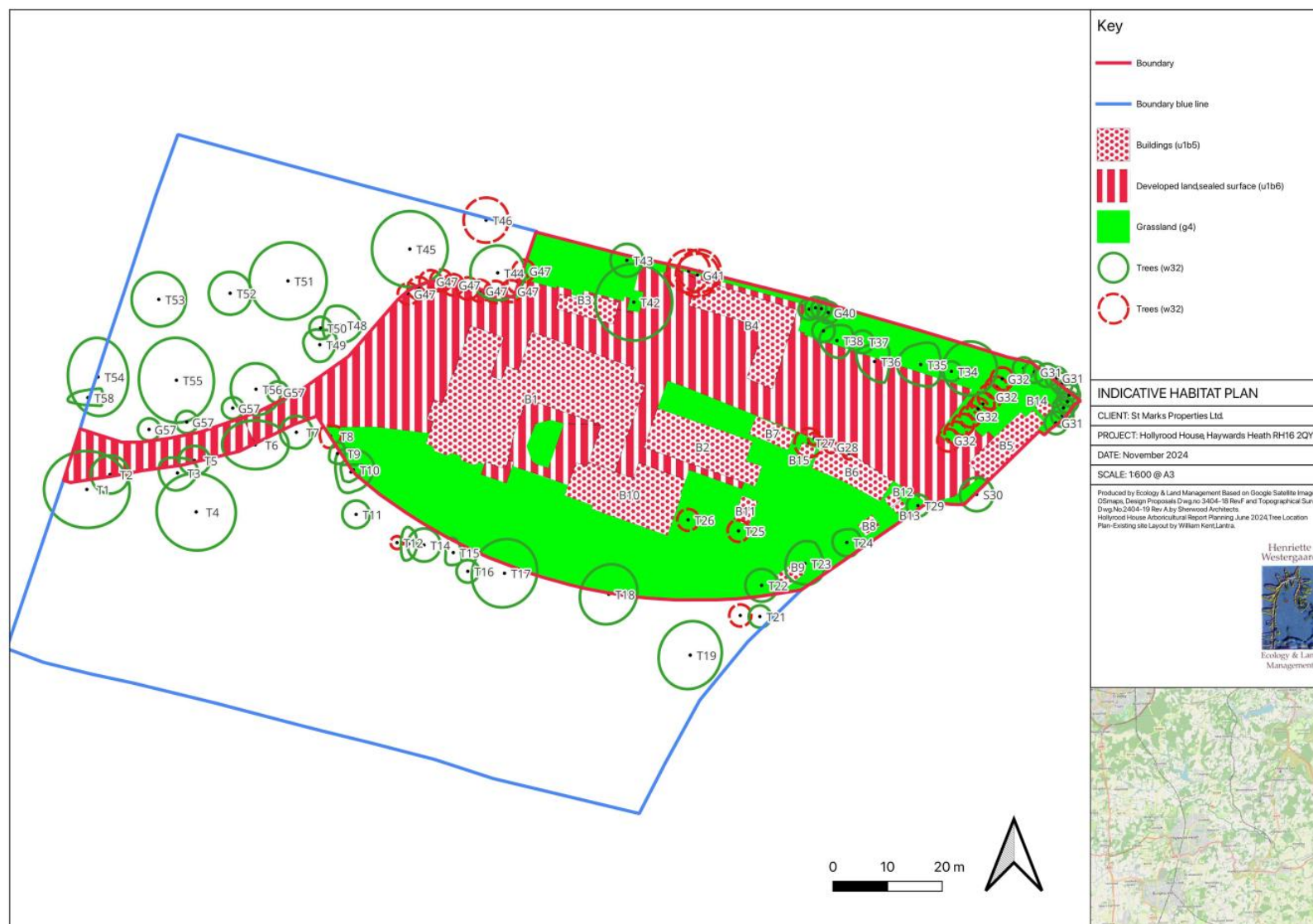
Appendix I – Guidance on Valuation of Ecological Importance

Level of Value	Examples
International	An internationally designated site or candidate site (SPA, pSPA, SAC, cSAC, pSAC, Ramsar site, Biogenetic Reserve) or an area which the country agency has determined meets the published selection criteria for such designation, irrespective of whether or not it has yet been notified. A viable area of a habitat type listed in Annex I of the Habitats Directive, or smaller areas of such habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole. Any regularly occurring population of an internationally important species, which is threatened or rare in the UK. i.e. it is a UK Red Data Book species or listed as occurring in 15 or fewer 10km squares in the UK (categories 1 and 2 in the UK BAP) or of uncertain conservation status or of global conservation concern in the UK BAP. A regularly occurring, nationally significant population/number of any internationally important species.
National	A nationally designated site (SSSI, ASSI, NNR, Marine Nature Reserve) or a discrete area, which the country conservation agency has determined meets the published selection criteria for national designation (e.g. SSSI selection guidelines) irrespective of whether or not it has yet been notified. A viable area of a priority habitat identified in the UK BAP, or of smaller areas of such habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole. Any regularly occurring population of a nationally important species, which is threatened or rare in the region or county (see local BAP). A regularly occurring, regionally or county significant population/number of any nationally important species. A feature identified as of critical importance in the UK BAP.
Regional	Viable areas of key habitat identified in the Regional BAP or smaller areas of such habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole; Viable areas of key habitat identified as being of Regional value in the appropriate Natural Area profile; Any regularly occurring, locally significant population of a species listed as being nationally scarce which occurs in 16-100 10km squares in the UK or in a Regional BAP or relevant Natural Area on account of its regional rarity or localisation; A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a regionally important species; Sites, which exceed the County-level designations but fall short of SSSI selection guidelines, where these occur.
County / Metropolitan	Semi-natural ancient woodland greater than 0.25 ha; County/Metropolitan sites and other sites which the designating authority has determined meet the published ecological selection criteria for designation, including Local Nature Reserves selected on County / metropolitan ecological criteria (County/Metropolitan sites will often have been identified in local plans); A viable area of habitat identified in County BAP; Any regularly occurring, locally significant population of a species which is listed in a County/Metropolitan “red data book” or BAP on account of its regional rarity or localisation; A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a County/Metropolitan important species.
District / Borough	Semi-natural ancient woodland smaller than 0.25 ha; Areas of habitat identified in a sub-County (District/Borough) BAP or in the relevant Natural Area profile; District sites that the designating authority has determined meet the published ecological selection criteria for designation, including Local Nature Reserves selected on District/ Borough ecological criteria (District sites, where they exist, will often have been identified in local plans) Sites/features that are scarce within the District/Borough or which appreciably enrich the District/Borough habitat resource; A diverse and/ or ecologically valuable hedgerow network; A population of a species that is listed in a District/Borough BAP because of its rarity in the locality or in the relevant Natural Area profile because of its regional rarity or localisation; A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a District / Borough important species during a critical phase of its life cycle.
Parish/ Neighbourhood	Areas of habitat considered to appreciably enrich the habitat resource within the context of the Parish or neighbourhood, e.g. species-rich hedgerows. Local Nature Reserves selected on Parish ecological criteria.

Appendix II – UKHab Comparative Table

UKHab	UKHab Code
Individual trees	w32
Lines of trees	w33
Grassland – modified grass	g4
Ornamental hedges	h2b
Urban – Developed sealed surface	u1b5/6

Appendix III - Indicative Habitat Plan



Appendix IV – Proposed Site



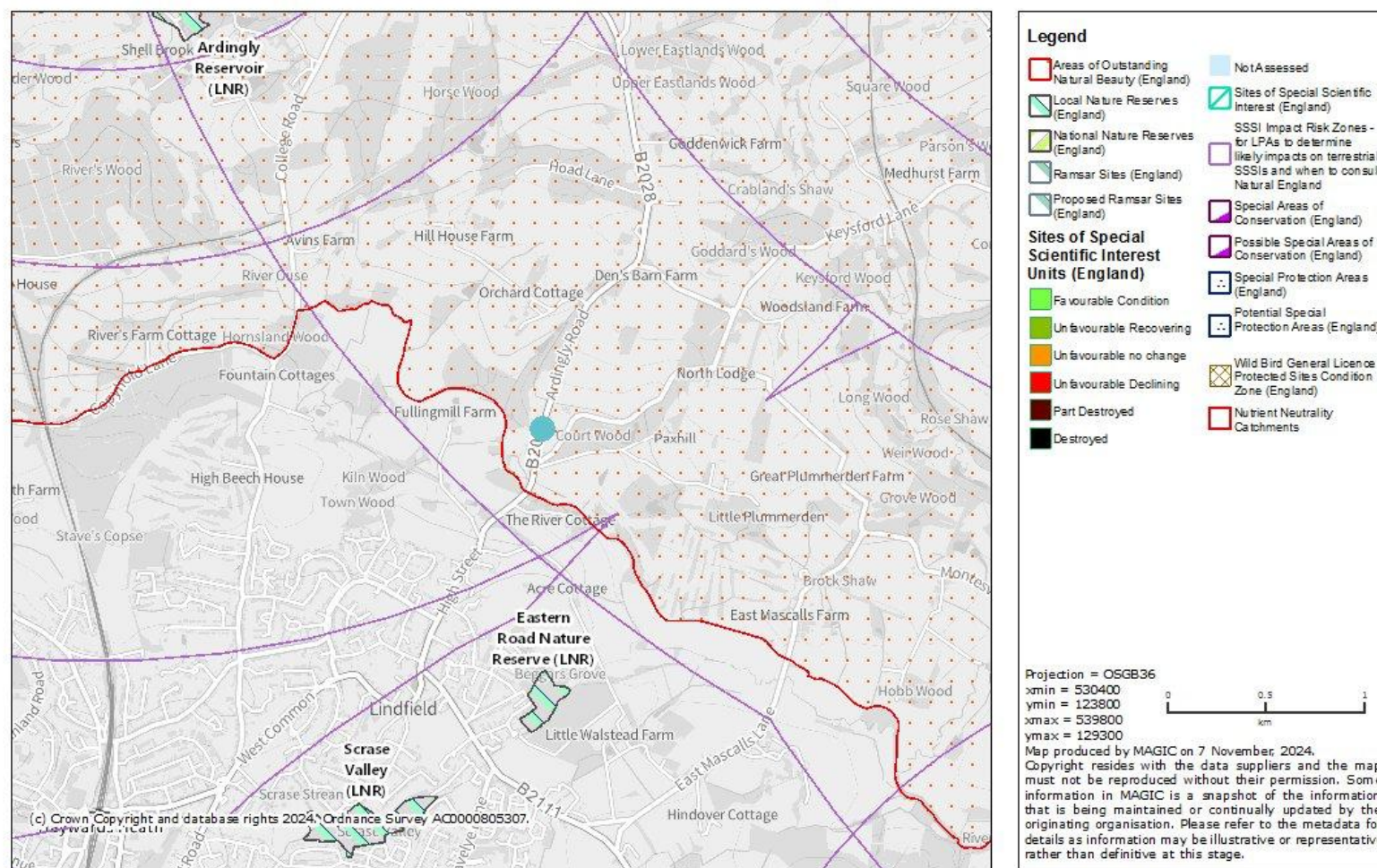
Appendix V - Photographic Evidence



Appendix VI - Statutory Designated Sites

MAGiC

Statutory designated sites

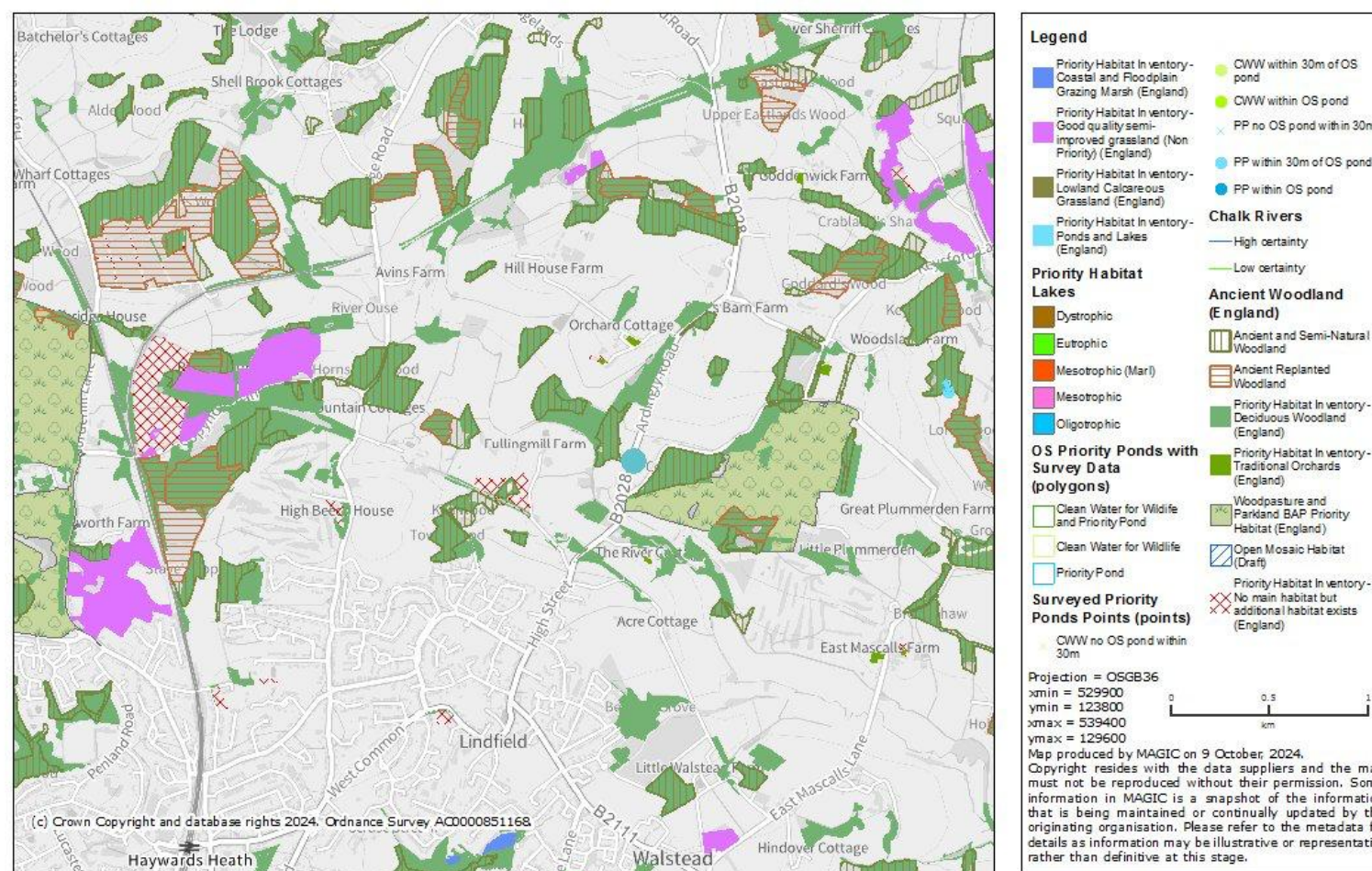


Source: Magic.defra.gov.uk, online November 2024

Appendix VII - Priority Habitats

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Priority habitats

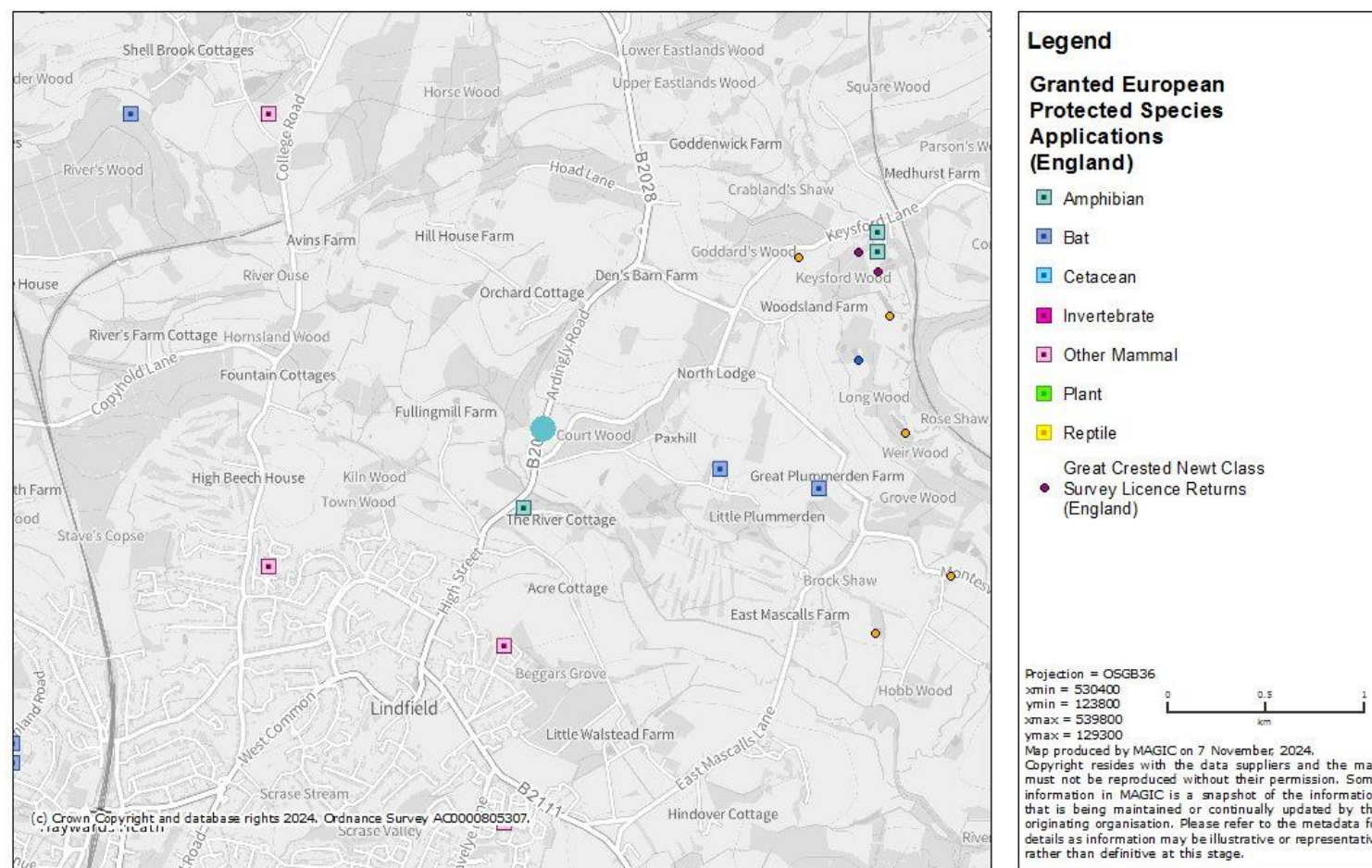


Source: Magic.defra.gov.uk, online November 2024

Appendix VIII - Protected Species

MAGiC

Protected species



Source: Magic.defra.gov.uk, online November 2024

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