



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL REPORT:

Land to the North of
Wishing Wells Farm
Old London Road
Hickstead
West Sussex
RH17 5LZ

Type text here

For: **KLA Architects**

Issued by: **Wychwood Environmental Ltd**

www.wychwoodenvironmental.com

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Proposed development

- Development proposals involve a new building designed to accommodate luxury horse lorries, associated offices and a valeting facility for high-end vehicles. In addition, the proposal includes the creation of a new retail premises with dedicated customer parking. The scheme also addresses access improvements, including the removal of the existing gates and installation of a new set positioned 12.5 metres back from the highway to safely accommodate a 12-metre lorry. The access point from the highway will be widened to enhance manoeuvrability and improve overall site safety. The development will further incorporate renewable energy services, with proposed measures such as roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels, electric-vehicle charging infrastructure to support both commercial operations and customer use. These features are intended to reduce the site's carbon footprint, improve energy performance and contribute to long-term sustainability goals.

Impacts

- The proposed development has no potential to impact roosting bats, although foraging and commuting bats may be impacted if mitigation is not put in place.
- The proposed development has the potential to impact foraging and commuting local mammals including foxes if suitable mitigation is not put in place.
- There are no existing ponds on site; however, there is a wet ditch running parallel to part of the northern boundary which connects to a pond off-site approximately 5m to the west. Ten waterbodies are located within 500m of the site. As such, the proposed development has the potential to impact amphibians i.e. great crested newts.
- The proposed development has the potential to impact common reptile species.
- The site supports a mixture of urban habitats, including developed land sealed surface and artificial unvegetated unsealed surface, and ruderal/ephemeral habitat due to the vegetation within the site being left unmanaged and overgrowing. Numerous containers were previously recorded within the site and shown on the site location plan, but these were removed prior to the walkover survey. Several scattered individual trees are present within the site boundary, as well as a native hedgerow along the eastern boundary and a ditch running parallel to part of the northern boundary.
- The habitats contained within the site proposed to be impacted by works are of low ecological value. The artificial unvegetated unsealed surface and ruderal/ephemeral will be removed to facilitate the development of the new dwelling, but the boundary native hedgerow will be retained. Three individual trees are present on-site which will be retained. Best practice should be followed (i.e. S5837:2012 Trees in Relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations). The ditch within the site will be removed to facilitate the development which holds significant ecological value.
- There are no statutory sites within 2km of the site. The closest statutory designated site to the site is Bedelands Farm LNR which is located approximately 4.8km east of the site. Due to the distance from any designated sites, the development is not anticipated to have any adverse impact on any designated sites or their qualifying features; therefore, no further action is required.

Further recommended surveys

- It is recommended that a great crested newt presence/likely absence survey is undertaken on the neighbouring pond and on suitable habitat on site.

Proposed mitigation

- Mitigation to reduce the impacts of artificial lighting upon foraging bats is detailed.
- Mitigation to reduce impacts upon commuting and foraging mammals e.g. hedgehogs; a priority/BAP species has been provided.

Enhancements

- It is recommended that the integration of bat roosting features, e.g. an integrated bat box, is incorporated into the newly constructed dwelling.
- It is recommended that the integration of a bird box is incorporated into the newly constructed dwelling.
- Native species planting is recommended.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Wychwood Environmental Ltd was instructed by KLA Architects to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) to highlight the possible presence of protected species (e.g. bats, badgers, great crested newts, reptiles, and breeding birds) and/or habitat(s) of ecological/conservation value at the proposed development site at: Wishing Wells Farm, Old London Road, Hickstead, West Sussex, RH17 5LZ.
- 1.2 Surveys are necessary to collect information on habitats/protected species to provide necessary guidance and mitigation advice, to ensure that no valuable habitats/protected species are adversely affected by the proposed development.
- 1.3 Best practice guidelines require that this report be completed by a suitably qualified ecologist as defined in BS42020:2013. The author of this report meets that definition.
- 1.4 The survey was completed to inform the client and Local Planning Authority (LPA) of any material impacts resulting from the proposed development and to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) (Section 40) and the Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory obligations and their Impact within the Planning System (ODPM 06/2005, Defra 01/2005). The legislation relating to protected species is detailed in Appendix 1.
- 1.5 Development proposals involve a new building designed to accommodate luxury horse lorries, associated offices and a valeting facility for high-end vehicles. In addition, the proposal includes the creation of a new retail premises with dedicated customer parking. The scheme also addresses access improvements, including the removal of the existing gates and installation of a new set positioned 12.5 metres back from the highway to safely accommodate a 12-metre lorry. The access point from the highway will be widened to enhance manoeuvrability and improve overall site safety. The development will further incorporate renewable energy services, with proposed measures such as roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels, electric-vehicle charging infrastructure to support both commercial operations and customer use. These features are intended to reduce the site's carbon footprint, improve energy performance and contribute to long-term sustainability goals.

Land North of

- 1.6 Section two of this report describes the methodologies used for survey work. Section three provides the results of these surveys, sections four and five provide discussion and implications for development, with further surveys and mitigation covered in section six. Section seven of the report outlines the BNG assessment. Enhancement recommendations are made in section seven.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Habitat Survey

- 2.1 A Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) of the site was undertaken, following standard the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) System (UKHab Ltd, 2023), by Lia Hutchinson BA on 12th November 2025. This involved systematically walking over the site and classifying each parcel of land based on vegetation. UKHab is a comprehensive and hierarchical habitat classification system for the UK that has been developed to benefit from recent changes in habitat categorisation, recording and analysis, and is suitable for digitally recording in the field using GIS. It is fully compatible with other major existing classifications, including Priority Habitat types (UKHab Level 4).
- 2.2 A search for any invasive non-native species, as listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended,¹ such as Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) was also carried out.
- 2.3 Any habitats or features of interest and any sightings, signs or evidence of protected or notable fauna or any potential habitats suitable for such species, were assessed as detailed below:
- The suitability of habitats was assessed for amphibians (including great crested newts (GCN), *Triturus cristatus*)²;
 - The suitability of habitats was assessed³ for badgers (*Meles meles*) and any evidence including setts, dung pits/ latrines, badger paths, hairs, bedding, footprints and scratching of trees/ shrubs was noted;
 - The suitability of the habitats was assessed for dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*);
 - The suitability of habitats was assessed for hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*);
 - Trees with features potentially suitable for roosting bats were assessed following best practice guidelines as outlined by the survey techniques published by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT)⁴ and Mitchell-Jones and McLeish (2004)⁵;

¹ <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/wildlife/management/non-native/documents/schedule9-list.pdf>

² Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*). *Herpetological Journal* 10(4), 143-155.

³ Badger survey followed guidelines recommended in Harris *et al.* (1989).

⁴ Collins J (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edn) (published by Bat Conservation Trust, London).

⁵ Mitchell-Jones A J (2004). *Bat mitigation guidelines*. English Nature.

- Landscape features such as hedgerows, trees and shrubs were also assessed for their potential suitability for bat foraging and commuting;
- The suitability of habitats was assessed for nesting birds;
- The suitability of habitats was assessed for reptiles.
- The suitability of habitats was assessed for water vole (*Arvicola amphibious*) and otter (*Lutra lutra*) was not considered here due to the lack of suitable aquatic habitat.

Desk Study

- 2.4 The Internet database MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside) was searched for statutory designated areas within a 2km radius of the site.
- 2.5 MAGIC was also searched for European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licences that have recently been granted (e.g. for bats and great crested newts) and completed great crested newt surveys within 2km.
- 2.6 Noting the scope and scale of the proposed development, a detailed species-level desk study was not deemed necessary at this stage, due to the scale of likely impacts.

Survey Limitations

- 2.7 An initial site assessment such as this is only able to act like a 'snapshot' to record any flora or fauna that are present at the time of the survey. It is therefore possible that some species may not have been present during the survey but may be evident at other times of the year. For this reason, habitats were assessed for their potential to support some species, even where no direct evidence (such as droppings) has been found. The absence of biological records does not preclude the presence of a particular species, as record coverage is often patchy due to access restrictions placed on surveyors by private property and trespass laws.

Baseline Evaluation Criteria

- 2.8 Based on the desk study and field survey results, an ecological evaluation of the site was undertaken using a combination of evaluation criteria for habitats and species, following the general framework provided by CIEEM⁶ (Table 1).

⁶ CIEEM (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA).

- 2.9 Where relevant the evaluation was made with reference to the statutory protection afforded to species and habitats. Legal protection does not always correspond to conservation value. Some species (e.g. badgers) are protected for reasons of animal welfare rather than conservation. Others are of national conservation value but are not protected by law (e.g. some Red Data Book species and UK BAP species).

Table 1. Ecological value criteria used in the ecological evaluation, as outlined by CIEEM.

Ecological Value	Description and Examples
High	Habitats or features that have high importance for nature conservation, such as statutory designated nature conservation sites of international or national importance or sites maintaining viable populations of species of international or national importance (e.g. Red Data Book species, European protected species).
Medium	Sites designated at a county or district level, e.g. Local Wildlife Site (LWS), ancient woodland site, ecologically 'important' hedgerows or ecological features that are notable within the context of a region, county or district (e.g. a viable area of a Priority Habitat on the county BAP or a site that supports a viable population of a county BAP species).
Low	Sites of nature conservation value within the context of a parish or neighbourhood, low-grade common habitats, such as arable fields and improved grasslands and sites supporting common, widespread species.

3.0 RESULTS

Site Location Description

- 3.1 The site is located north of Hickstead (Figures 1-2, Appendix 2). The site supports a mixture of urban habitats and ruderal/ephemeral habitat, with scattered individual trees, a boundary hedgerow and a ditch. The site is located to the west of the A23 and A2300, with a mixture of open fields and small commercial businesses in the wider surroundings.

Desk Study

Designated Sites

- 3.2 There are no statutory sites within 2km of the site. The closest statutory designated site to the site is Bedelands Farm LNR which is located approximately 4.8km east of the site. Due to the distance from any designated sites, the development is not anticipated to have any adverse impact on any designated sites or their qualifying features; therefore, no further action is required.
- 3.3 Based on known roosts from granted European Protected Species Mitigation licences, there are approximately two known registered licences for bats within 2km of the site (Figure 7, Appendix 2). The closest registered licence for bats is 1.5km northwest of the site for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), and Brandt's bat (*Myotis brandtii*) between 2020 and 2030 for the damage and destruction of a resting place.
- 3.4 There are three known registered licences for great crested newts (*triturus cristatus*) within 2km of the site (Figure 7, Appendix 2). The closest registered licence for great crested newts is 0.57km south of the site (Figure 7, Appendix 2) in 2017 for the damage and destruction of a resting place. There are seven great crested newt class survey licence returns within 2km of the site, with the closest located approximately 0.66km south of the site.

Habitat survey

- 3.5 The habitats recorded on the site are shown in Photographs 1-12, Appendix 2.
- 3.6 The site supports a mixture of urban habitats, including developed land sealed surface and artificial unvegetated unsealed surface, and ruderal/ephemeral habitat due to the vegetation within the site being left unmanaged and overgrowing. Numerous containers were previously

recorded within the site and shown on the site location plan, but these were removed prior to the walkover survey. Several scattered individual trees are present within the site boundary, as well as a native hedgerow along the eastern boundary and a ditch running parallel to part of the northern boundary.

- 3.7 There are no existing ponds on site; however, there is a wet ditch running parallel to part of the northern boundary which connects to a pond off-site approximately 5m to the west. Ten waterbodies are located within 500m of the site.

- 3.8 The footprint of the proposed development consists of artificial unvegetated unsealed surface and ruderal/ephemeral (Figure 6, Appendix 2). The site supports the following UKHab habitat classifications:

Ruderal/ephemeral (u,81)

- 3.9 The majority of the site is comprised of ruderal/ephemeral habitat, where previously urban land has been unmanaged and colonised by forbs and weedy species with some scattered grass. Species present within this habitat include, but are not limited to, common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), sow-thistle (*Sonchus spp.*), bittersweet nightshade (*Solanum dulcamara*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), black nightshade (*Solanum nigrum*), herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*), greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), petty spurge (*Euphorbia peplus*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale agg.*), bristly oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolata*), ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), pineapple mayweed (*Matricaria discoidea*), thorn-apple (*Datura stramonium*), fleabane (*Erigeron canadensis*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), and common mallow (*Malva sylvestris*). The structure is varied, with the habitat to the west reaching up to 1 m in height, whereas the habitat surrounding the artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface was sparser and more had a shorter structure.

Urban habitats

- 3.10 There is an area of **artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1c)** in the eastern section of the site, which comprises mostly gravel and bare ground, with the edges beginning to be colonised by scattered forbs from the Ruderal Ephemeral habitat.

- 3.11 There is also a small area of hardstanding (**developed land; sealed surface – u1b**) at the site entrance, where the access road connects with the site.

Native hedgerow (h2a)

- 3.12 A native hedgerow is present along the eastern boundary, approximately 1 m in width and 4 m in height. It has been subject to heavy management and is dominated by hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with frequent blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*).

Ditch (r1e)

- 3.13 There is a wet ditch running parallel to the northern boundary on the western half of the site, which was full of water at the time of the survey and connects to a pond approximately 5 m west of the site boundary within adjacent land. This land is owned by the farm located to the south of the site.
- 3.14 Mammal holes were present along the northern bank of the ditch, approximately 0.5 m in length and located 5–10 cm above the waterline. These are considered likely to have been made by brown rat (*Rattus norvegicus*). A dead brown rat was also found within the ditch at the time of the survey, providing further evidence that the holes were created by this species.

Individual trees

- 3.15 Within the site boundary there are three individual trees: a small goat willow (*Salix caprea*) in the northwest corner; a medium willow (*Salix sp.*) in the centre adjacent to the northern boundary; and a small Norway spruce (*Picea abies*) in the northeast corner of the site.
- 3.16 Overall, the majority of habitats within the site were assessed to be of low ecological value. However, the individual trees, native hedgerow and ditch on site had intrinsic value and had site level value for wildlife.

Protected Species Survey

Bats

- 3.17 The site had moderate potential to support foraging and commuting bats with individual trees, a native hedgerow, a ditch and the majority of the site comprising of

ruderal/ephemeral habitat. Although the site is adjacent to the A2300 and A23 which causes high disturbance, the site is surrounded by open fields and ponds in the wider landscape (Figure 2).

- 3.18 Although containers were identified on the site location plan, these have all been removed prior to the walkover survey and there were no structures recorded within the site boundary during the survey. Three individual trees were identified within the site boundary, although none of these supported Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) therefore were not considered suitable for roosting bats. As such, roosting bats are not considered a constraint to the development and do not require further consideration.

Amphibians and Reptiles

- 3.19 There are three known registered licences for GCN within 2km of the site with the closest licence located approximately 0.57 km south of the site. There are seven great crested newt class survey licence returns within 2km of the site, with the closest located approximately 0.66km south of the site.
- 3.20 There are no existing ponds on site; however, there is a wet ditch running parallel to part of the northern boundary which connects to a pond off-site approximately 5m to the west. Ten waterbodies are located within 500m of the site. Three of these ponds are located to the east of the A23 which forms a major barrier to dispersal for GCN therefore can be scoped out. However, the ponds located on the western side of the A23 are connected to the site by suitable terrestrial habitat (open grassland fields) therefore potential GCN populations should be considered.
- 3.21 The habitats on site are considered to provide limited foraging habitat due to the lack of dense shrub and refugia opportunities, although the ruderal/ephemeral habitat provides some foraging and commuting opportunities particularly surrounding the ditch. Due to there being potential breeding habitat on site which will be removed as part of the proposed development, further surveys for GCN are recommended to determine presence/absence of GCN within the site.
- 3.22 Due to the small size of the site, the site is considered unlikely to support a permanent population of reptiles and therefore further surveys are considered disproportionate to the

level of impact. As such, reptile surveys are not considered to be required but precautionary mitigation should be implemented.

Breeding birds

- 3.23 The three individual trees and native hedgerow on site offer potential nesting habitat for common garden species of birds. No birds nests were identified during the survey. Although the ruderal habitat is overgrown and supports a varied sward height, it was not considered suitable for ground nesting birds. The ditch within the site was also not considered suitable for waterbirds.

Badgers

- 3.24 No evidence of badgers or badger setts was found during the survey, and the habitat on site is considered to provide limited foraging and commuting opportunities. Given the adjacent major road and surrounding fenceline limiting access to the site, badgers are not considered a constraint to the proposed development, and no further surveys or mitigation are required.

Hedgehogs

- 3.25 Given the adjacent major road and surrounding fenceline limiting access to the site, hedgehogs are not considered a constraint to the proposed development, and no further surveys or mitigation are required.

Dormice

- 3.26 The habitat within the site is not considered suitable to support dormice and there is no connectivity to any suitable habitat within the wider local landscape. As such, hazel dormice are not considered a constraint to the proposed development, and no further surveys or mitigation are required.

4.0 ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Designated Nature Conservation Sites

- 4.1 There are no statutory sites within 2km of the site. The closest statutory designated site to the site is Bedelands Farm LNR which is located approximately 4.8km east of the site. Due to the distance, there are likely to be no direct impacts and no further action is required.

Habitats

- 4.2 The site supports habitats comprising of developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated unsealed surface, and ruderal/ephemeral, with individual trees, a native hedgerow and a ditch. The majority of the habitats within the site are considered to be of low ecological value. However, the individual trees, boundary hedgerow and ditch on site had intrinsic value and had site level value for wildlife.

Protected Species

Flora

- 4.3 None of the floral species recorded during the survey are specifically protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) or considered nationally or locally rare (see Preston et al., 2002⁷). Also, none of the species recorded are listed as Species of Principal Biological Importance on Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 or as Priority Species on the national BAP (UK BAP, 2007⁸).
- 4.4 There is no UKBAP Priority Habitat within the site proposed to be impacted.
- 4.5 It is understood the proposed works will not impact the native hedgerow or individual trees. However, the ditch will be lost to facilitate the proposed development.

Fauna

- 4.6 The site has moderate potential to support foraging and commuting bats due to the ruderal habitat, as well as the trees, hedgerow and ditch, producing foraging habitat for bats. No further surveys for roosting bats are required.

⁷ Preston, C.D., Telfer, M.G., Arnold, H.R., Carey, P.D., Cooper, J.M., Dines, T.D., Pearman, D.A., Roy, D.B. & Smart, S.M. 2002. *The changing flora of the UK*. Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, London.

⁸ UKBAP (2007) Report on the Species and Habitat Review: Report by the Biodiversity Reporting and Information Group (BRIG) to the UK Standing Committee, June 2007

- 4.7 The hedgerow and trees on site had the potential to support common species of nesting birds during the spring/summer. However, the trees and native hedgerows are due to be retained in the proposed development. As such, no impacts on nesting birds are currently anticipated.
- 4.8 The site has very low potential to support reptiles. However, due to the limited amount of suitable habitat within the site, it is considered unlikely that the site will support a permanent population of reptiles and therefore further surveys are considered disproportionate to the level of impact the proposed development may cause. As such, precautionary mitigation is recommended.
- 4.9 Due to there being potential breeding habitat on site which will be removed as part of the proposed development and close proximity of pond, further surveys for GCN are recommended to determine presence/absence of GCN within the site.
- 4.10 The site supports low value for hedgehogs, a priority/BAP species and it is considered unlikely that they will use the site for foraging or commuting purposes given the limited habitat on site and lack of connectivity to any suitable habitat in the wider surroundings. As such, no mitigation is considered to be required.
- 4.11 The site has no suitable habitat to support populations of dormice.

Invasive species

- 4.12 No invasive non-native species were recorded within the site boundary.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Wherever possible, negative ecological impacts should be avoided. If this is unavoidable, then mitigation and compensation measures will be proposed for adverse ecological effects. In addition, it is best practice to seek positive biodiversity benefits through enhancement measures, in particular with regard to Priority Habitats and Species listed on the national and local Biodiversity Action Plans and the NERC Act 2006.
- 5.2 The ecological input at the design phase should be an iterative process to ensure that the proposals are designed to minimise the need for mitigation or compensatory measures.
- 5.3 CIEEM (2017)⁹ endorses the following principle, recommended by the Royal Town Planning Institute (2019)¹⁰ for optimising the biodiversity outcomes of planning decisions.
- 5.4 New benefits: seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for mitigation and compensation.
- 5.5 The provision of compensation/enhancements helps local planning authorities in meeting requirements as stipulated under the National Planning Policy Framework¹¹, which states that sustainable development should seek to achieve net gains in biodiversity for nature.

⁹ CIEEM (2017) *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal, 2nd edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

¹⁰ <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/practice/2019/november/biodiversity-in-planning/>

¹¹ National Planning Policy Framework. (2012) Department of Communities and Local Government.

6.0 MITIGATION & FURTHER SURVEY

Designated sites

- 6.2 The development proposals must ensure no long-term significant impact on any statutory or non-statutory designated sites as per national and local planning policy. There are no statutory sites within 2km of the site. The closest statutory designated site to the site is Bedelands Farm LNR which is located approximately 4.8km east of the site. Due to the distance from any designated sites, the development is not anticipated to have any adverse impact on any designated sites or their qualifying features; therefore, no further action is required.

Habitat

- 6.3 The main footprint of the works consists of artificial unvegetated unsealed surface and ruderal/ephemeral which provide low ecological value. Two of the three individual trees as well as the ditch will be removed as part of the proposed development which hold intrinsic value, although the boundary native hedgerow will be retained.
- 6.4 The three individual trees within the site are due to be retained in the proposed development. . Best practice should be followed (i.e. S5837:2012 Trees in Relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations) where feasible.
- 6.5 Any new planting within the site as part of the proposed development should use native tree and hedgerow species that will enhance the biodiversity of the site. See Appendix 4 for details of planting that will enhance the site for foraging bats and other wildlife.

Bats

- 6.5 No structures were recorded within the site boundary during the survey and the trees present within the site did not have suitability for roosting bats. As such, no further surveys for roosting bats are required.
- 6.6 The site has moderate potential to support foraging and commuting bats limited to the individual trees and areas of introduced shrub. As such, it is best practice for the new development to follow lighting scheme which should be low level and designed to minimise light spillage onto non-target areas.

Mammals

- 6.7 The site has low potential to support foraging and commuting mammals such as hedgehogs and badgers given the limited habitat on site and connectivity to suitable habitat in the wider surroundings. However, given the widespread distribution urban foxes, there is a potential that they may use the site for commuting purposes. As a precaution, any deep excavations or trenches should be covered overnight or access out of the trench via a plank should be provided. It is recommended that any change in boundary treatment of the site continue to allow access for local wildlife to continue to move across the site for example through the use of post and rail fencing rather than close board fencing or by providing gaps in gravel boards.

Reptiles

- 6.8 The site supports very little habitat suitable for populations of common reptile species. No further surveys are required. However, precautionary mitigation measures are recommended so that any log piles, brash, compost heaps or manure heaps which are not to be retained within their original location should be dismantled by hand during weather conditions when reptiles may be active (>8°C).

Great crested newts

- 6.9 The site supports limited areas of habitat suitable for populations of amphibian species, but it is recommended that the pond neighbouring the site and the suitable habitat on site are subject to a presence/likely absence survey. An eDNA survey for great crested newts would be appropriate in this circumstance as given the scale of the impact it is not anticipated that the proposals would be of sufficient impact to require a full population assessment to be conducted. Alternatively, the applicant may wish to explore Natural England's District Level Licensing (DLL) Scheme instead of further surveys, subject to eligibility and acceptance within the local authority area.

Dormice

- 6.10 The proposed works will not impact any habitat that could be considered potentially suitable for supporting populations of dormice, therefore no further surveys are required.

Breeding birds

- 6.11 The hedgerow and trees on site have potential to support common nesting bird species. All three trees and the native hedgerow are due to be retained in the proposed development. As such, no impacts on nesting birds are currently anticipated. However, if anything changes and any of the trees are due to be removed, these should be inspected for evidence of nesting activity by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 24 hours in advance of clearance. If this identifies any nesting activity the habitat feature should be left undisturbed until nesting ceases and chicks have fledged the nest. If any vegetation removal is undertaken on site during the bird-nesting season, all resultant brash should be immediately removed from the site to prevent birds from nesting in it.

7.0 ENHANCEMENTS

- 7.1 In line with local and national policy (NPPF 2024¹²), the new development should seek to provide biodiversity enhancements. The following suggestions would enhance the site for wildlife.

Shrub/tree planting

- 7.2 It is recommended that native hedgerows and trees (of local provenance) are planted as part of the landscaping scheme for the site. A list of native and non-native species that are beneficial to pollinating insects, produced by the Royal Horticultural Society, is provided in Appendix 4.

Landscaping

- 7.3 Any landscaping plan should take account of this guidance. Furthermore, any planned areas of the amenity grass could be replaced with a species rich turf e.g. Wildflower Native Enriched Turf or Species Rich Lawn Turf to enhance diversity (which will in turn attract insects, birds and bats)¹³.

Bats

- 7.4 One bat box¹⁴ to improve the site for roosting bats, should be integrated into the new dwelling. The box should be located on a southerly aspect, between three and six metres (the higher the better) from the ground. Integrated bat boxes should also be considered and designed into the new dwelling.

- 7.5 If additional plants are added to the existing garden, it is recommended that species rich plants are used, a guide to bat friendly gardening is provided in Appendix 4.

Bird Boxes

- 7.6 One nest box for nesting birds should be installed on the new dwelling (due to the lack of mature trees within the proposed development). Types of nest boxes include the Schwegler

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

¹³ <http://www.wildflowerturf.co.uk/Products/species-rich-lawn-turf.aspx>

¹⁴ <https://www.nhbs.com/2f-schwegler-bat-box-general-purpose>

1B Hole Nest Box designed for tits and the Ark Cedar Bird Nest Box, an open fronted box, typically used by robins and flycatchers. This box should be erected in an area of good cover and out of the reach of domestic cats. Integrated nest boxes should also be considered and designed into the new dwelling. A good universal box that can be incorporated within the new building is an integrated swift box¹⁵. Whilst these boxes are unlikely to be used by swifts they are known to be frequently used by other nesting birds including sparrow, tits and starling and provide more flexibility than species-specific integrated boxes.

Hedgehogs (and other mammal fauna)

- 7.7 The overall design of the scheme should consider connectivity of the landscape to enable hedgehogs (and other mammals) to move freely across the site which could be hampered by alterations to the boundary fences and new fences installed within the site. Mammal access points such as purpose-made gravel boards with gaps for hedgehogs should be included or alternatively boundary treatments could use native hedgerows as an alternative.

¹⁵ <https://www.wildcare.co.uk/wildlife-nest-boxes/bird-boxes/building-integrated-bird-boxes.html>

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 This report sets out the ecological features that have the potential to be affected by the Proposed Scheme. The key ecological constraints identified were commuting and foraging bats, commuting and foraging mammals and GCN. Roosting bats are not considered to be an ecological constraint to the proposed development.
- 8.2 Further GCN eDNA surveys are recommended. No other further surveys are required for protected species and habitats are considered to the necessary.
- 8.3 Precautionary mitigation measures in relation to protected species has been provided along with enhancement measures to maintain the ecological value of the site post development. If these measures along with the recommended enhancement measures are followed there will be no residual adverse effects and there should be a net gain of biodiversity across the site.

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Appendix 1 – Protected Species Legislation.

Plants

All wild plants are protected against unauthorised removal or uprooting under Section 13 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Plants listed on Schedule 8 of the Act (e.g. triangular club rush and Deptford Pink) are afforded additional protection against picking, uprooting, destruction and sale. Bluebell is protected against sale only.

Amphibians (Common Species)

Common amphibian species (i.e. common frog, common toad, smooth newt and palmate newt) are afforded partial legal protection under UK legislation, i.e. Schedule 5, Section 9 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. This legislation prohibits:

- sale
- transportation
- advertising for sale

Badgers

Badger is a widespread and generally common species. However, they are legally protected under The Protection of Badgers Act 1992, which is based primarily on the need to protect badgers from baiting and deliberate harm or injury. Under this legislation it is illegal to:

- Wilfully kill, injure, take, or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or attempt to do so
- Possess any dead badger or any part of, or anything derived from, a dead badger
- Intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett by disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, damaging or destroying a sett, causing a dog to enter a sett, or obstructing access to it

A badger sett is defined in the legislation as *“any structure or place, which displays signs indicating current use by a badger”*.

Bats

All bat species are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally or deliberately take, kill or injure a bat
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts
- Deliberately disturb bats

A bat roost is defined in the legislation as *“any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection”*. Roosts are protected whether or not bats are present at the time. If a development activity is likely to result in disturbance or killing of a bat, damage to its habitat or any of the other activities listed above, then a licence will usually be required from Natural England.

Birds

The bird breeding season generally lasts from early March to September for most species. All birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000. This legislation makes it illegal, both intentionally and recklessly to:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;

- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or in use;
- Take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird; and
- Possess or control any wild bird or egg unless obtained legally.

Birds listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) (e.g. barn owl and kingfisher) are afforded additional protection, which includes makes it an offence to disturb a bird while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Great crested newts

Great crested newts and their habitat are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This makes it is an offence to kill, injure or disturb great crested newts and to destroy any place used for rest or shelter by a newt. The great crested newt is also listed on Annexes II and IV of the EC Habitats Directive and Appendix II of the Bern Convention. If a development activity is likely to result in disturbance or killing of a great crested newt, damage to its habitat etc, then a licence will usually be required from Natural England.

Reptiles

There are six native species of reptiles in the UK, including the slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*), viviparous lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) and adder (*Vipera berus*), smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*) and sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*), which are afforded varying degrees of protection under UK and European legislation.

Slow-worm, viviparous lizard, adder and grass snake are protected under Schedule 5, Section 9 (1 and 5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000 against deliberate or reckless killing and injuring and sale.

Dormice

Dormice are fully protected under the Habitats Regulations through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- Deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of Schedule 2 species
- Deliberate disturbance of bat species as:
- to impair their ability:
 - to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young;
 - to hibernate or migrate
 - to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species
- Damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place

Dormice are also protected under the WCA through their inclusion on Schedule 5. Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- Intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level)
- Intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection

Appendix 2 – Plans, Figures and Photographs



Figure 1 – Approximate location and boundary of the site (red outline). Image taken from Google Satellite Hybrid (November 2025).

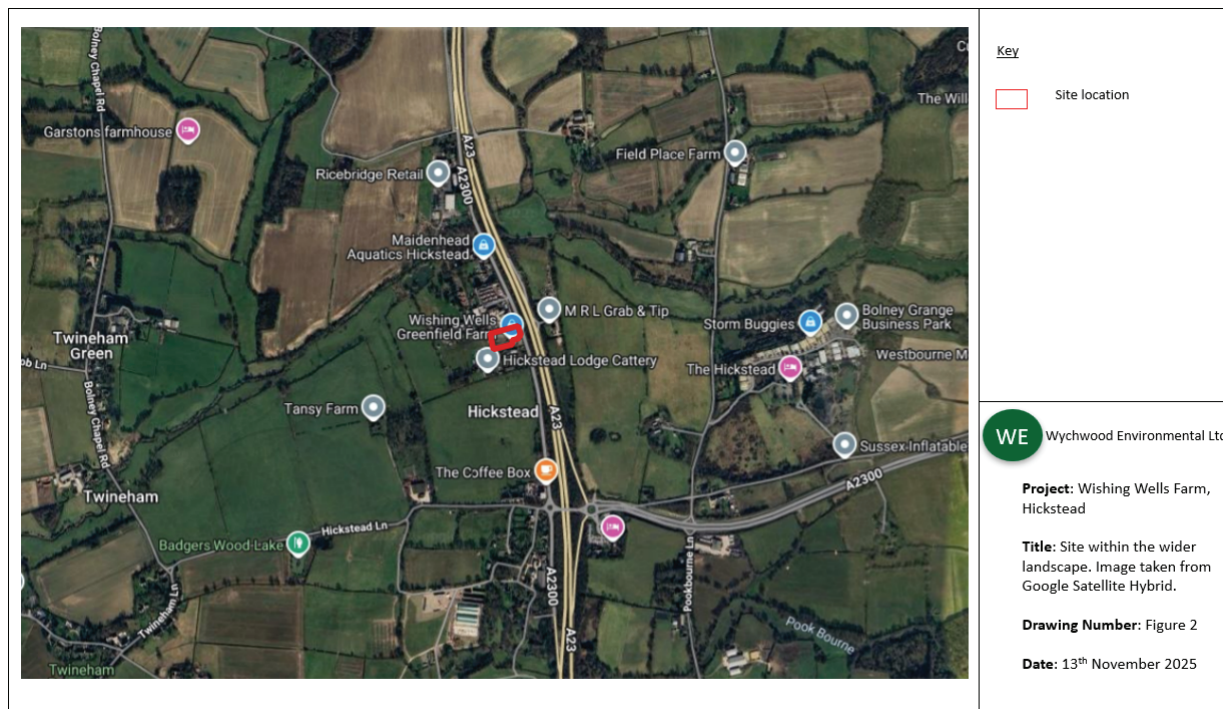


Figure 2 – Approximate location of the site (red outline) within the wider landscape. Image taken from Google Satellite Hybrid (November 2025).



Figure 3 – Proposed site plan and proposed street elevation. Image provided by KLA Architects.

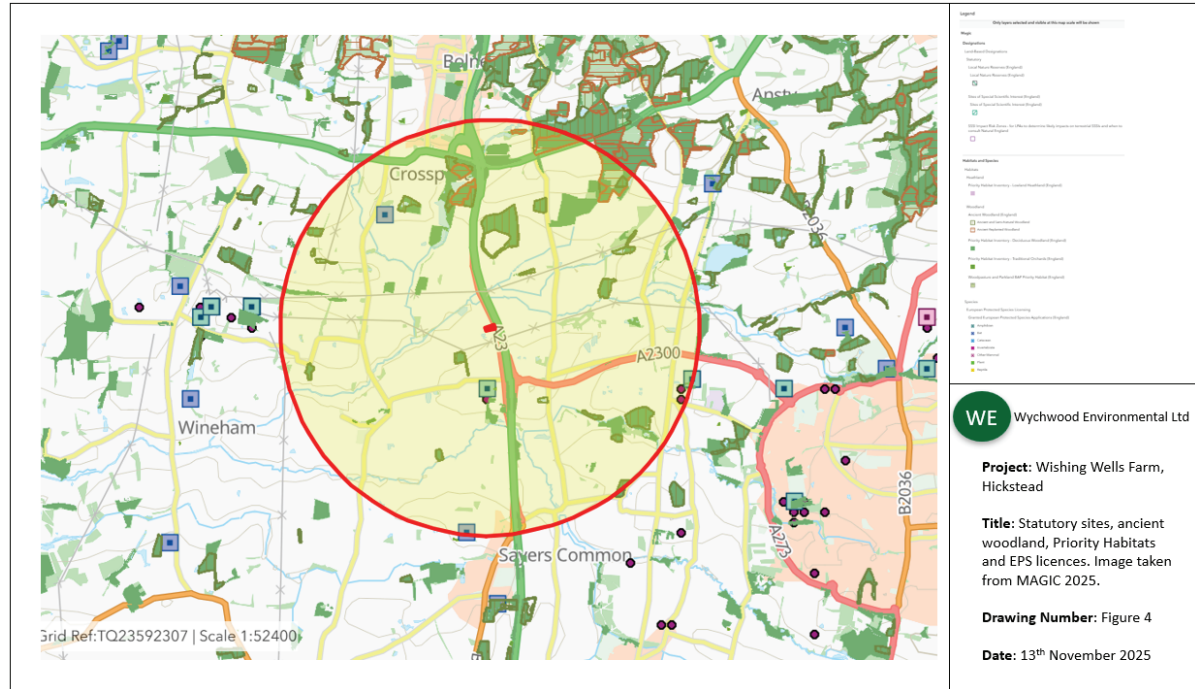


Figure 4 - Location of statutory designated sites, Priority Habitats & Granted European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licences (www.magic.gov.uk) within 2km of the site (red circle). Red square illustrates the location of the site.

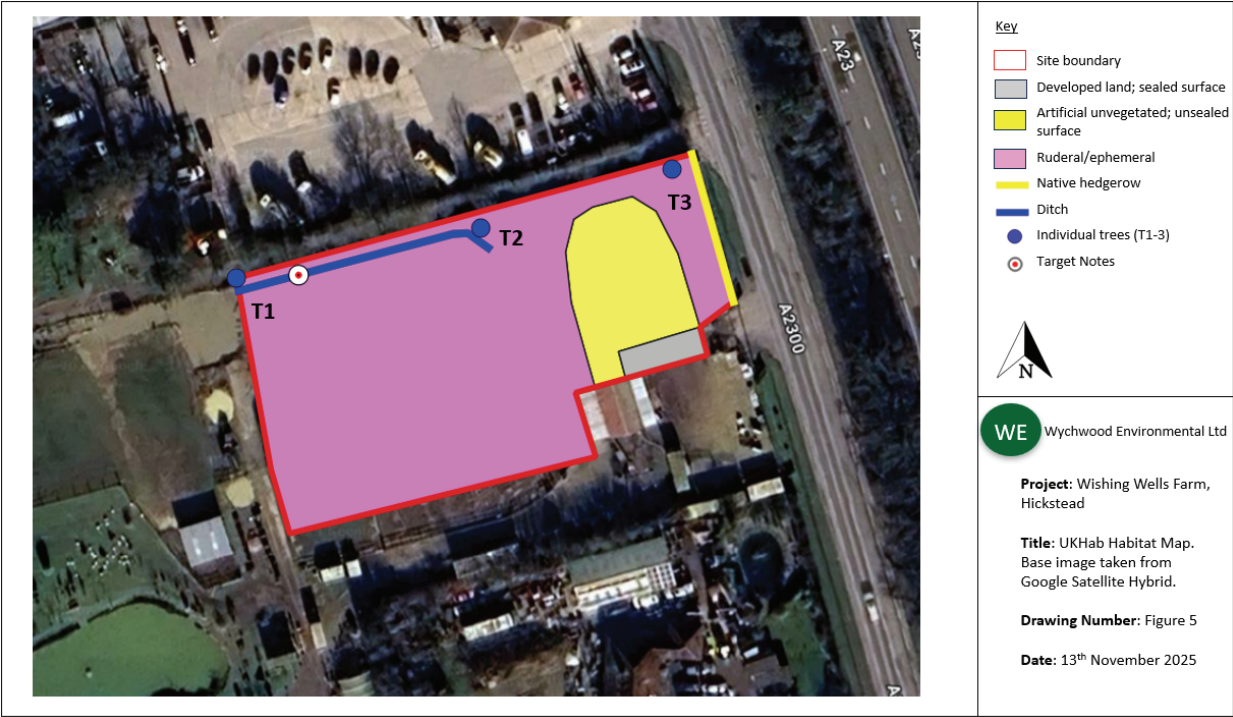
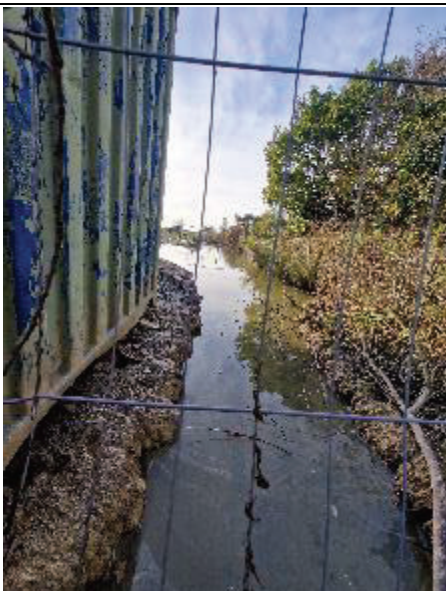


Figure 5 – UKHab survey map of the site.

Site photographs

	
Photograph 1 – Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface	Photograph 2 – Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface
	
Photograph 3 – Ruderal/ephemeral habitat	Photograph 4 – Ruderal/ephemeral habitat
	
Photograph 5 – Ruderal with native hedgerow in background	Photograph 6 – Ruderal with native hedgerow

	
Photograph 7 – Small Norway spruce tree in northeast corner of the site	Photograph 8 – Medium willow tree along northern boundary
	
Photograph 9 – Ditch leading to pond off-site	Photograph 10 – Ditch running parallel to northern boundary

	
Photograph 11 – Small willow tree in northwest corner of the site	Photograph 12 – Mammal burrow along bank of ditch (Target Note on UKHab map)

Appendix 3 – Lighting guidance - the impact of artificial light on bats

The following basic set of guidelines is summarized from the latest Guidance Note (08/18)¹⁶ provides a concise checklist of points to consider with any lighting scheme:

- *Use professional lighting design engineers to model and predict light spill so that it can be avoided.*
- *Reduce light levels to the minimum necessary to meet legal and safety requirements.*
- *Reduce horizontal and upward/downward light spillage to the minimum achievable. The use of cowling, masks, louvers etc. and limiting the height of lighting columns may be important depending on the design of the lighting units. No bare bulbs. Lighting should only light the target area.*
- *Use non-reflective surfaces within the area to be lit to minimise indirect (reflected) spillage of light. The use of planting or other structures to add screening.*
- *Reduce the duration of lighting. The use of lighting 'curfews' can also be helpful - especially in the vicinity of bats roosts. For example, the emergence of bats, typically within the hour after sunset, may be disrupted (delayed) by raised light levels and this may result in a loss of feeding opportunities.*
- *Consider the type of light to be used and whether a different type or design may reduce potential impacts on bats and other wildlife. Narrow spectrum lighting with minimal UV emission should be used.*
- *Use 'screen planting' to limit light spill into dark areas.*
- *Use narrow spectrum light sources to lower the range of species affected by lighting, as research has shown that spectral composition does impact biodiversity.*
- *Use light sources that emit minimal ultra-violet light*
- *Avoid white and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum to reduce insect attraction and where white light sources are required in order to manage the blue short wave length content they should be of a warm / neutral colour temperature <4,200 kelvin.*

For more details, please refer to:

<https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

http://www.bats.org.uk/pages/bats_and_lighting.html

<http://www.batsandlighting.co.uk/index.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

Appendix 4 – Gardening for bats.

GARDENING FOR BATS

All sixteen species of bats in the UK eat insects, and need a good supply of these from spring through to the autumn. By growing flowers attractive to a range of insects, our gardens can become important feeding stations for bats, birds and other wildlife.



Many plants depend on insects

We grow flowers in our gardens for our own enjoyment. But colour and perfume are really the plants' way of advertising themselves to insects. Sweet nectar and protein-rich pollen are bait to encourage insects to visit. In return, pollen is carried from one flower to another on their bodies so the flowers are fertilised.

Bats need insects

Flying uses a lot of energy, so bats have huge appetites. All our UK bats eat insects. Five species, including the long-eared bat, prefer moths, but most bats rely more heavily on flies as food than any other insect group. Especially important are crane flies, and a range of midge families and their relatives. Pipistrelles, the bats most likely to visit your garden, depend on catching very large numbers of tiny insects, some of which are pests.

Flower shape and insect tongues

Flowers with long narrow petal tubes, such as evening primrose and honeysuckle, are visited by moths and butterflies. Only their long tongues can reach deep down to the hidden nectar. Short-tongued insects include many families of flies and some moths. They can only reach nectar in flowers with short florets. By planting a mixture of flowering plants, vegetables, trees and shrubs, you can encourage a diversity of insects to drop in and refuel.

Follow these general rules

- ? Plant flowers varying not only in colour and fragrance, but also in shape.
- ? Daisies and daisy-like flowers are open with a mass of shallow florets.
- ? Pale flowers are more easily seen in poor light.
- ? Single flowers have more nectar than double varieties
- ? Native wild flowers or those closely related are most useful
- ? Flowers with landing platforms and short florets such as daisy or carrot family attract many insects.
- ? Many flowering vegetables such as beans and courgettes are also good for insects.

Plant trees and shrubs

These are important in providing

- food for insect larvae
- food for adult insects
- shelter for flying insects

- roosting opportunities for bats.

In a small garden, choose trees that can be coppiced – cut down to the ground every few years - to allow new shoots to spring from the base. Young shoots and leaves will support leaf-eating insects, even if they do not produce flowers. Hawthorn and elder are useful small trees.

Create a wet area

A pond, a marshy area, even a half-tub made into a mini-pond can attract insects. Many of the tiny flies favoured by bats start life in water as aquatic larvae.

Say NO to insecticides

Chemical pesticides kill natural predators and so may do more harm than good. They reduce bats' insect prey, and surviving insects carry traces of poison.

Encourage natural predators

Hoverflies, wasps, ladybirds, lacewings, ground beetles and centipedes are the gardener's friends. As natural predators they help keep the balance, eating many pests.

- ? Allow some weeds to grow to provide ground cover for natural predators
- ? Grow favourites of hoverflies and other predators close to the flowers and vegetables that tend to become infested.
- ? Leave hollow-stemmed plants to overwinter as shelter for ladybirds.
- ? Leave heaps of dead leaves and brushwood undisturbed for hedgehogs.
- ? Most garden birds are effective predators. Provide them with regular food and water.

Prevent a CATastrophe

Many bats and other small mammals fall prey to Britain's most dangerous four-legged predator, the domestic cat. Cats do not need to stay out all night. Bring your cat in an hour before sunset so bats can emerge undisturbed.

(Send for our special leaflet on cats and bats.)

The Bat Conservation Trust, 15 Cloisters House
8 Battersea Park Road, London SW8 4BG
Tel 0845 1300 228 Fax 020 7627 2628
enquiries@bats.org.uk www.bats.org.uk
Registered Charity no 1012361 Company limited by guarantee, registered in England no 271282

August 2004

Gardening for bats

Aim at having flowers in bloom through the year, including both annuals and herbaceous perennials.

Below are some suggestions, but this is by no means an exhaustive list. See what grows well in YOUR garden, and what seems most attractive to insects. Flowering times are approximate, varying in different areas. Regular dead-heading extends flowering period in many flowers. A=annual, HA=hardy annual, HHA=half-hardy annual, P=perennial, W=wild flower.

Flowers for borders

St John's Wort	Hypericum	P	March-
marigolds	Calendula	H/A	March – Oct.
aubrelia	a. deltoidea	P	March-June
honesty	Lunaria rediva	HB	March
forget-me-not	Myosotis sp.	A/P	March - May
elephant ears	Belamcanda	P	April
Wallflowers	Erysimum	B	April - June
Cranesbills	Geranium sp.	P	May – Sept.
Yarrow	Achillea	P	May -
Poppies	Papaver sp.	A	May - July
Dames violet	Hesperis matronalis	P	May - August
Red Valerian	Centranthus ruber	P	May – Sept.
Poached egg plant	Limnanthus	HA	June – Aug.
Knagweed	Centauria nigra	P	June-Sept.
Phacelia		HA	June – Sept.
Ox-eye daisy	Leucanthemum vulgare	P	June – Aug.
Evening primrose	Oenothera biennis	B	June-Sept.
Candytuft	Iberis umbellata	HA	June – Sept.
Sweet William	Dianthus barbatus	B	June - July
Blanket flowers	Gaillardia	P	June -
Verbena	V. bonariensis	HHA	June – Oct.
Scabious	Asotifolia arvensis	P	July-Aug.
Night-scented stock	Matthiola biconia	HA	July-Aug.
Pincushion flower	Scabiosa sp.	A/P	July – Sept.
Cherry pie	Salicaria	HHA	July – Oct.
Mexican aster	Cosmos sp.	A/P	July – Oct.
Cone flower	Rudbeckia sp.	A/P	August-Nov.
Mallow	Lavatera sp.	P	August-Oct.
Michaelmas daisy	Aster sp.	P	August-Sept.
Ice plant 'Pink lady'	Sedum spectabile	P	Sept.
Herbs – both leaves and flowers are fragrant			
Fennel	Foeniculum vulgare		July – Sept.
Bergamot	Monarda didyma		June - Sept.
Sweet Cicely	Myrrhis odorata		April - June
Hyssop	Hyssopus officinalis		July - Sept.
Feverfew	Tanacetum parthenium		June – Sept.
Borage	Borago officinalis		May – Sept.

Rosemary	Rosemary officinalis	March - May
Lemon balm	Melissa officinalis	
Coriander	Copernum sativum	June - August
Lavenders	Lavandula sp.	
Marjoram	Origanum sp.	

Trees, shrubs and climbers important to insects

Oak	Quercus sp.	large gardens only
Silver birch	Betula pendula	
Common alder	Alnus glutinosa	Suitable for coppicing
Hazel	Corylus avellana	Suitable for coppicing
Elder	Sambucus nigra	Small
Pussy willow	Salix caprea	Suitable for coppicing
Hawthorn	Crataegus monogyna	Suitable for coppicing
Honeysuckle	Lonicera sp.	grow a variety for succession.
Dog rose	Rosa canina	Climber
Bramble	Rubus fruticosus	Climber
Ivy	Hedera helix	Climber
Buddleia	Buddleia davidii	shrub
Guelder rose	Viburnum opulus	shrub
Gorse	Ulex sp.	shrub

Plants for pond edges and marshy areas

Purple loosestrife	Lythrum salicaria	W	June – Aug.
Meadow sweet	Filipendula ulmaria	W	June – Sept.
Lady's smock	Cardamine pratensis	W	April - June
Water mint	Monarda aquatica	W	July – Sept.
Angelica	Angelica sylvestris	W	July – Sept.
Hemp agrimony	Eupatorium cannabinum	W	July – Sept.
Marsh marigold	Caltha palustris	W	March – May
Creeping Jenny	Lysimachia nummularia	W	May - August
Fringed water lily	Nymphaea peltata	W	June – Sept.
Water forget-me-not	Myosotis scorpioides	W	June – Sept.

Allow part of your lawn to grow long in summer and cut in autumn, removing the clippings. Avoid using fertilizers.
Compost heaps are good producers of insects too.

Add a seat to watch your garden come to life!

Native plant species recommended

Hedging/shrubs (60cm whips)	
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Common Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Guelder Rose	<i>Viburnum opulus</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>
Trees (regular standard size)	
Apple	<i>Malus spp.</i>
Cherry	<i>Prunus spp.</i>
Field Maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Wild Service	<i>Sorbus torminalis</i>
English Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Shrubs/Herbaceous plants (formal beds)	
Use species attractive to pollinators e.g bees, butterflies, moths. See this selection of RHS plants for pollinators: http://www.rhs.org.uk/Gardening/Sustainable-gardening/Plants-for-pollinators (see Appendix 4)	
Note – all specimens should be of British native stock from reputable suppliers.	