Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Land Adjacent to The Meadows, Little Park Farm, Hurstpierpoint

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LIABILITIES:

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

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

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

1.0 Introduction

Background

1.1 In 2018 the site, Little Park Farm, Hurstpierpoint, BN6 9UZ was originally assessed by The Ecology Partnership and a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was completed to support a planning application. Planning has been granted subject to a number of conditions.

1.2 In order to discharge the conditions associated with the permission DM/22/0204 the removal of dormer dairy, mobile home and other outbuildings and construction of 2 dwellings (revisions to approved scheme DM/21/2367). The Ecology Partnership has been commissioned in September 2021 by DMH Stallard to undertake an update PEA at Little Park Farm in order to support the discharge of ecological conditions.

1.3 Finally, in response to a new application, DM/25/1549, an update ecological assessment has been commissioned on the land outside the curtilage of The Meadows house and in the designated paddock land.

1.4 The key objectives of a PEA (CIEEM 2017) are to:

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

1.5 This report comprises the:

- Legislative and planning context (Section 1);
- Assessment methodologies (Section 2);
- Results and review of previous reporting (Section 3);
- Implications for development (Section 4);
- Wildlife Protection Plans (Section 5)
- Enhancement Plans linked to BNG (Section 6); and
- Conclusions (Section 7).

Site Context and Status

1.6 The site lies to the south of the village of Hurstpierpoint, southeast of Burgess Hill in West Sussex (TQ284816650). The site covers approximately 0.12ha and consists of garden curtilage. There is also a mature treeline and scrub edges around the boundary of the site. In the surrounding landscape, the site is bound by developed areas to the noth, south and east, and agricultural fields to the east.

1.7 The approximate red line boundary of the site is shown in Figure 1. This was also the approximate survey boundary. The google image is shown in Figure 2 below and show the extent of the land.

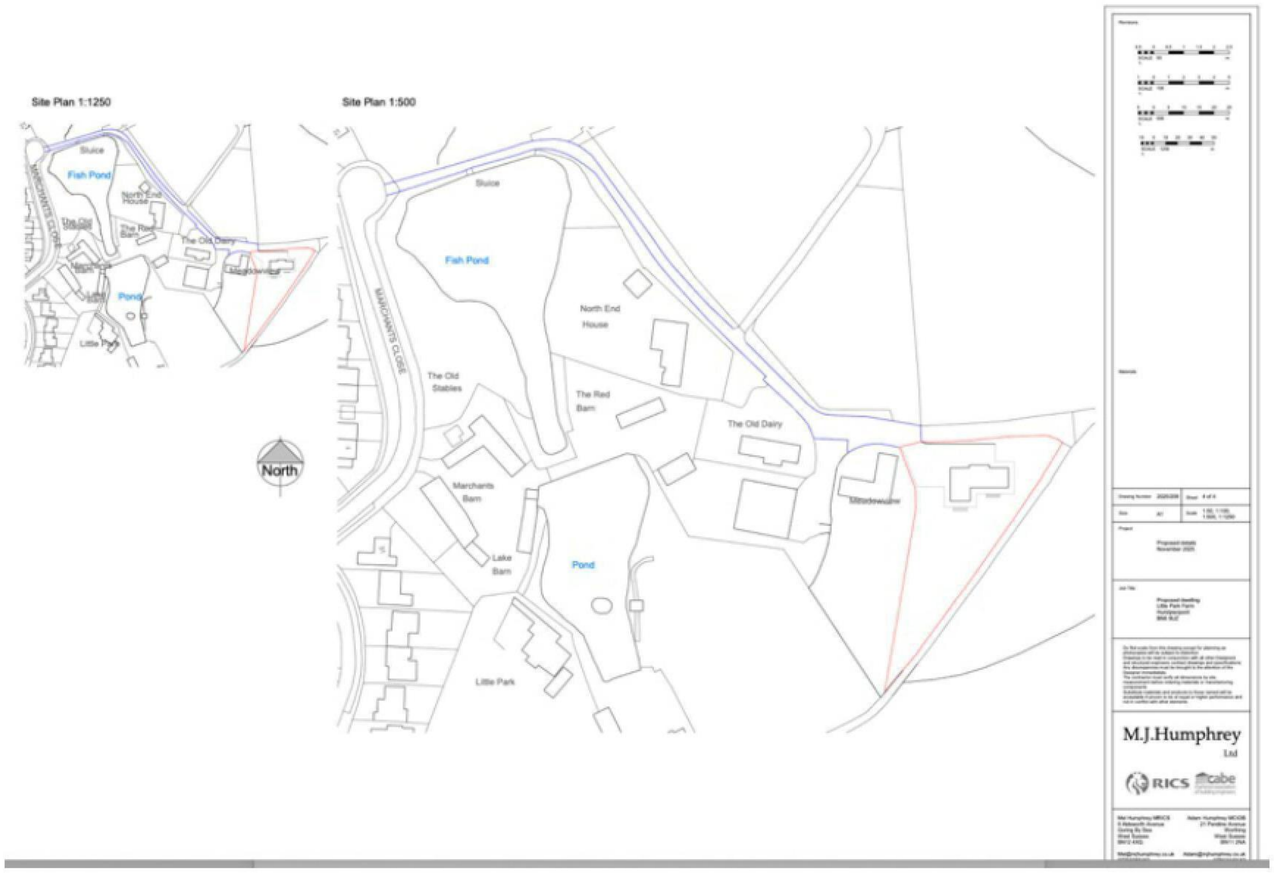

Figure 1: Survey boundary

Figure 2: Approximate location of the red line boundary

Description of Consented Development

1.8 The proposed development is for a single proposed dwelling, on land adjacent to The Meadows.

Planning Policies

1.9 The site was surveyed to assess its ecological value and to ensure the proposals were compliant with relevant planning policy and legislation. Policy guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2024) as well as policies from the Mid Sussex District Council.

- ***Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside***
- ***Policy DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC***
- ***Policy DP18: Settings of the South Downs National Park***
- ***Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows***
- ***Policy DP38: Biodiversity***

1.10 The Environment Bill (Environment Act 2021) received Royal Assent on 9th November 2021 and is now enacted as the Environment Act 2021. Part 6 (Nature and Biodiversity) and Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021 insert a new section 90A and Schedule

7A into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA), which contain the provisions requiring mandatory biodiversity net gain for development granted planning permission pursuant to the TCPA. These provisions require developments to provide a biodiversity value post-development that exceeds the predevelopment biodiversity value of the onsite habitats by at least 10%. This was adopted in February 2024 although there are a number of exemptions which may mean that biodiversity net gain is not required. These are listed under government guidance and are as follows:

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

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

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

2.0 Previous Surveys

2.1 An initial survey of the site was conducted by The Ecology Partnership in July 2018. The site was dominated by semi-improved grassland of varying sward heights, with scrub boundaries under a mature tree line. All buildings on site were considered to have negligible value to support roosting bats, however further inspection of the trees for their roosting bat potential was recommended. An update badger and nesting bird survey was also recommended as well as sensitive strimming for reptiles and RAMs for GCN.

2.2 In 2019, the site boundary was extended to include another building. The Ecology Partnership assessed the building internally and externally and completed a single

emergence survey with two surveyors on the 24th September 2019. No bat emergences were recorded during the course of the survey, however there were moderate levels of foraging activity from common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) with a single serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*) and brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) pass.

2.3 In 2021, the site was resurveyd to support the discharge of condition. An update PEA was undertaken on 6th October 2021 by The Ecology Partnership. The site was predominately modified grassland of a medium sward length with a large area of tall ruderal dominated vegetation in the north-eastern corner of the site. The grassland was dominated by perennial rye, Yorkshire fog, cocks foot and creeping bent, whereas the section of tall ruderal was more nettle dominated. Other species present in both the grassland and the ruderal included white clover, creeping thistle, bristly ox-tongue, common hogweed, nettles, meadow buttercup, greater plantain and creeping cinquefoil.

2.4 The site also supported areas of bramble scrub, bare earth and buildings located acorss the site. The mature treeline along the eastern boundary was dominated by ash, hawthorn, hazel, sycamore, sweet chestnut and oak.

2.5 The baseline habitat is shown in Figure 3 below.

2.6 In response to the application, a biodiversity net gain plan was submitted. Here, a section of the site was to be enhanced. The enhancement plan identified areas for an orchard, areas of retained scrub and areas of grassland. The biodiversity net gain plan is shown below in Figure 4 below.

Appendix 1: Site Habitat Baseline

Figure 3: Baseline habitats taken from 2021

Appendix 2: Site Habitat Creation and Enhancement

Figure 4: Net gain plan

3.0 Methodology

Desktop Study

3.1 A desktop study was completed using an internet-based mapping service (www.magic.gov.uk) for statutory designated sites and an internet-based aerial mapping service (maps.google.co.uk) was used to understand the habitats present in and around the survey area and habitat linkages and features (ponds, woodlands etc.) within the wider landscape.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

3.2 A update PEA was undertaken on 5th November 2025 by The Ecology Partnership ecologis Alexia Tamblyn. The surveyors identified the habitats present, following the standard 'Phase 1 habitat survey' auditing method developed by the Joint Nature Conservancy Council (JNCC). The site was surveyed on foot and the existing habitats and land uses were recorded on an appropriately scaled map (JNCC 2010). In addition, the dominant plant species in each habitat were recorded. The potential for the site to support protected species was also assessed.

Additional Protected Species Assessments

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

Limitations

3.4 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no single investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. The site was visited over the period of one site visit, as such seasonal variations cannot be observed and potentially only a selection of all species that potentially occur within the site have been recorded. Therefore, the survey provides a general assessment of potential nature conservation value of the site and does not include a definitive plant species list.

3.5 The protected species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on-site, based on the suitability of the habitat and any

direct evidence on site. It should not be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group. The assessment is only valid for the time when the survey was carried out. Additional surveys may be recommended if, on the basis of this assessment it is considered reasonably likely that protected species may be present.

4.0 Results

Desktop Study

4.1 The site does not fall within or adjacent to any statutory designated areas, and there are no statutory designated areas within 1km of the site boundary. There are international designations, with Castle Hill SAC over 12km to the south and Lewes Downs over 14km south east of the site, as per Figure 5.

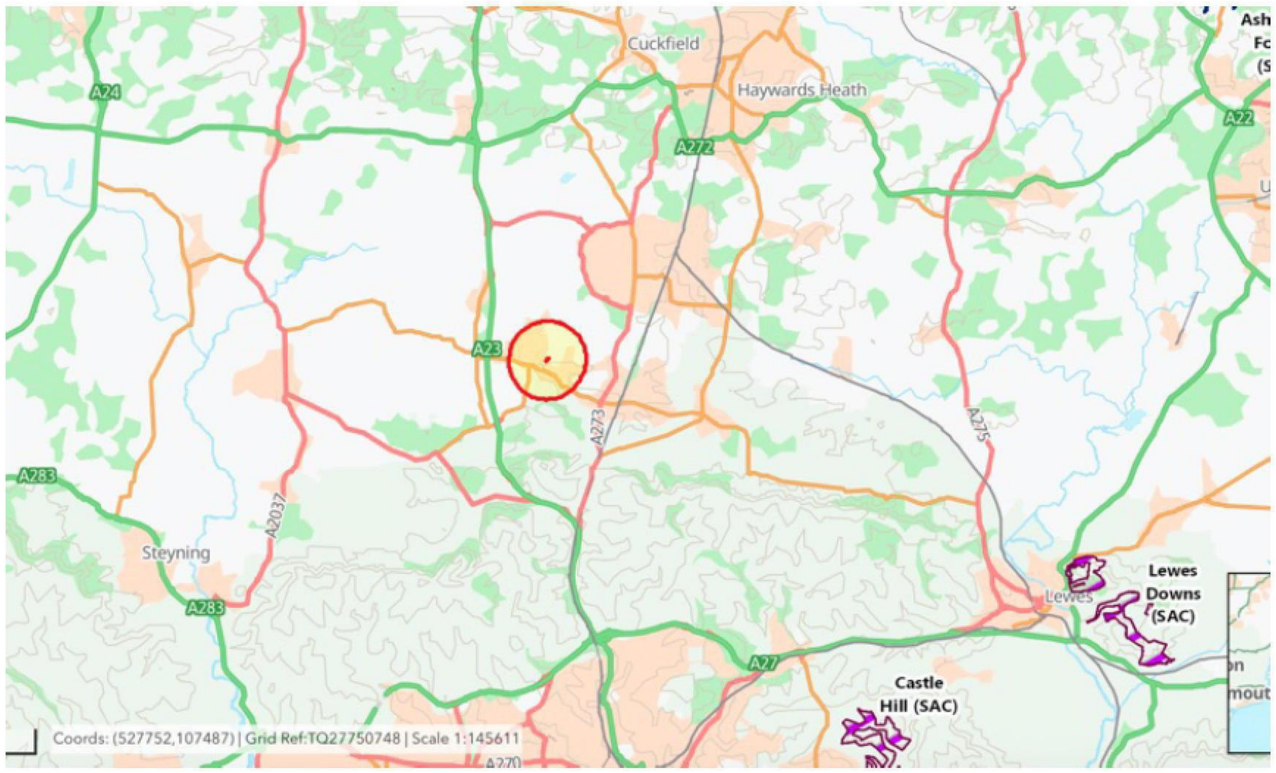

Figure 5: Location of the site 1km buffer and location of the internationally designated sites

4.2 The closest statutory designated site is Wolstonbury Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) *c.* 2.3km south of the site, as per Figure 6 below. The site falls within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for several SSSIs within the surrounding landscape. However, the IRZ does not list residential development as likely to have an impact on the statutory designated sites.

4.3 There are also no non-statutory designations on site or within 2km of the site boundary.

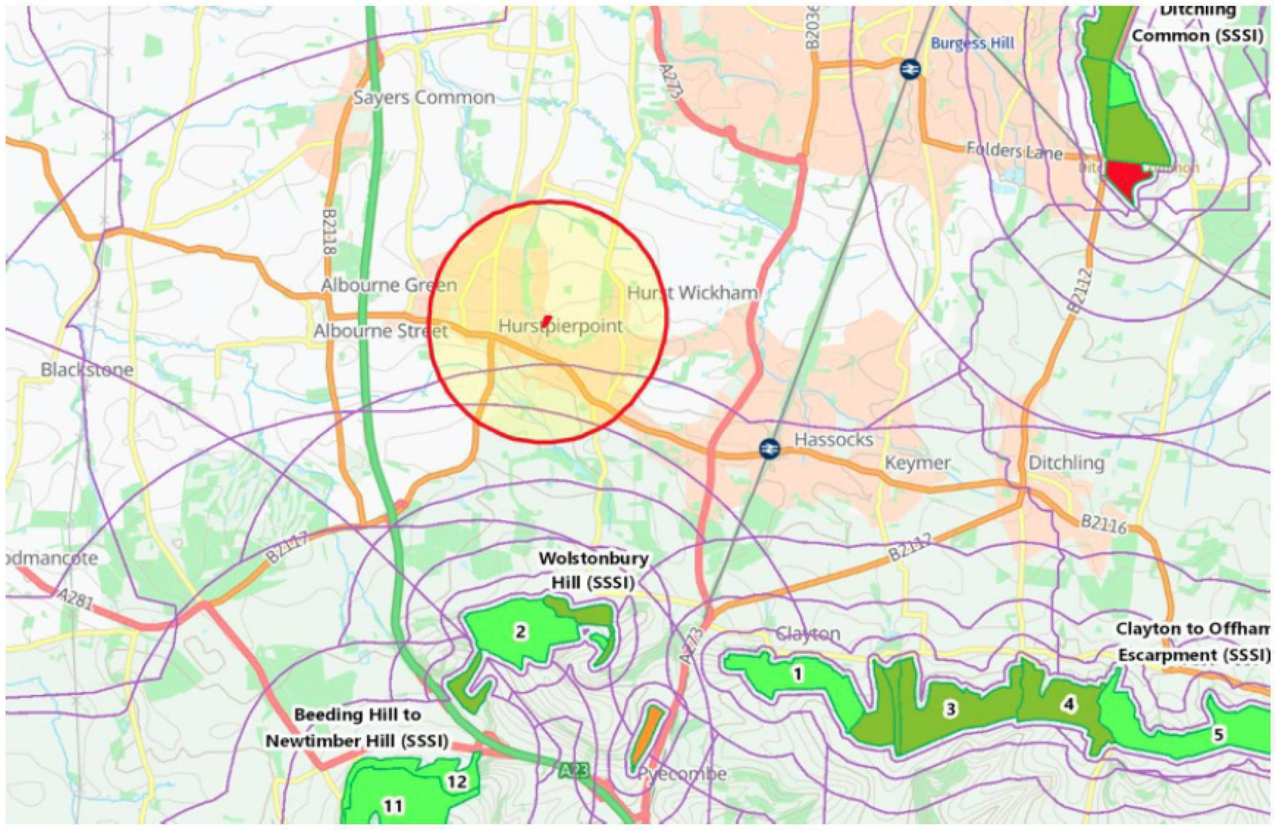

Figure 6: Location of site, 1km buffer and location of SSSI and impact risk zones (purple lines)

4.4 There are several units of priority habitat within 2km of the site (Figure 7). The closest of each type is:

- Deciduous woodland *c.* 130m west of the site;
- Ancient semi-natural woodland *c.* 170m northwest of the site;
- Wood pasture and parkland *c.* 920m southeast of the site; and
- Traditional orchards *c.* 530m northeast of the site.

4.5 There is one past European Protected Species (EPS) licence within a 2km radius of the site (Figure 8) for Great Crested Newts, located *c.* 440m northeast of the site, 2015-2019 2015-0446-EPS-MIT licence for the damage and destruction of a resting place, shown as light green square. GCN returns shown in dark purple as postive records for GCNs

4.6 The closest EPS licence for bats (blue square) was *c.* 2.6km southeast of the site and for dormice (pink square), *c.* 4.7km northeast of the site.

Figure 7: Priority habitat within 1km wood-pasture and parkland (light green with the tree and grassland symbols) Ancient semi-natural woodland (green vertical stripes) and ancient replanted woodland (horizontal brown stripes). Deciduous woodland (bright green) and traditional orchards (lime green).

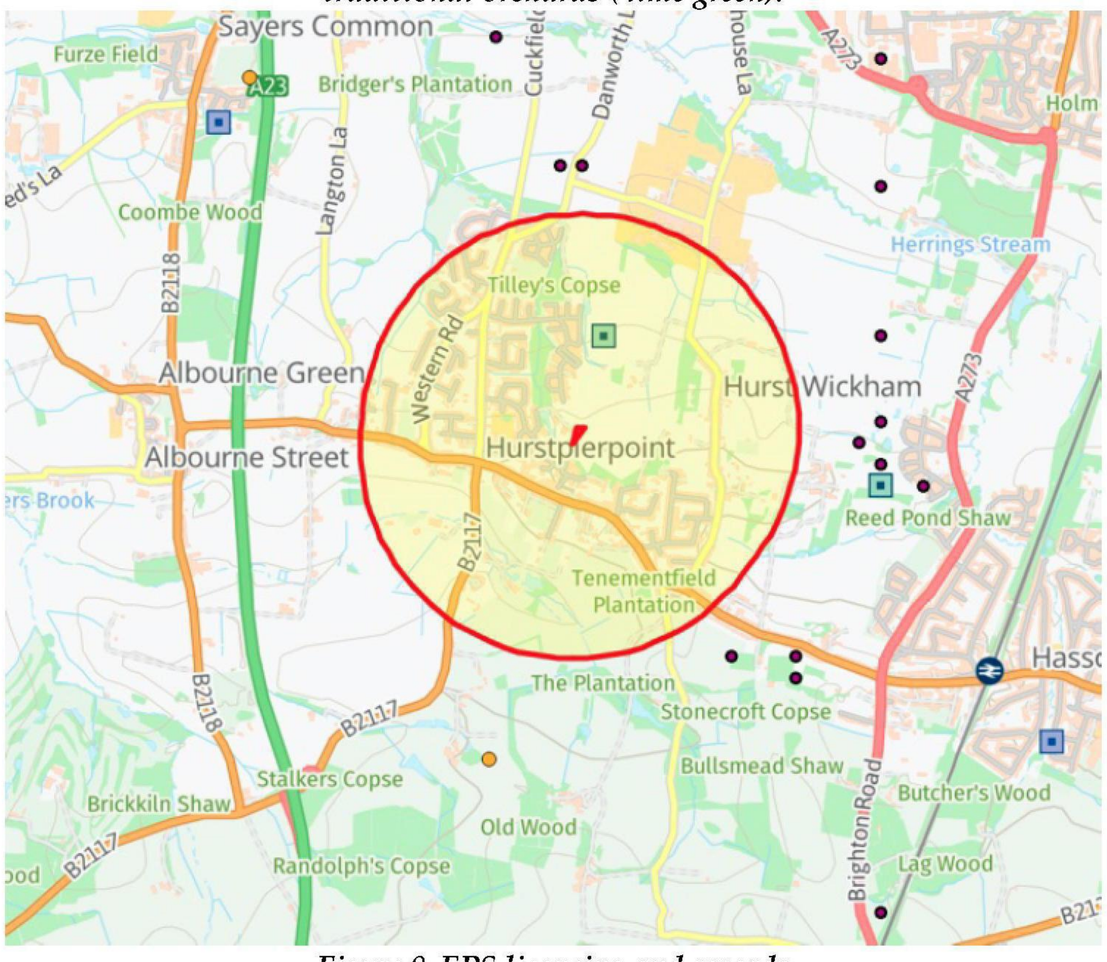

Figure 8: EPS licencing and records

4.7 There are no ponds on site and two ponds within 250m of the site boundary (Figure 9).

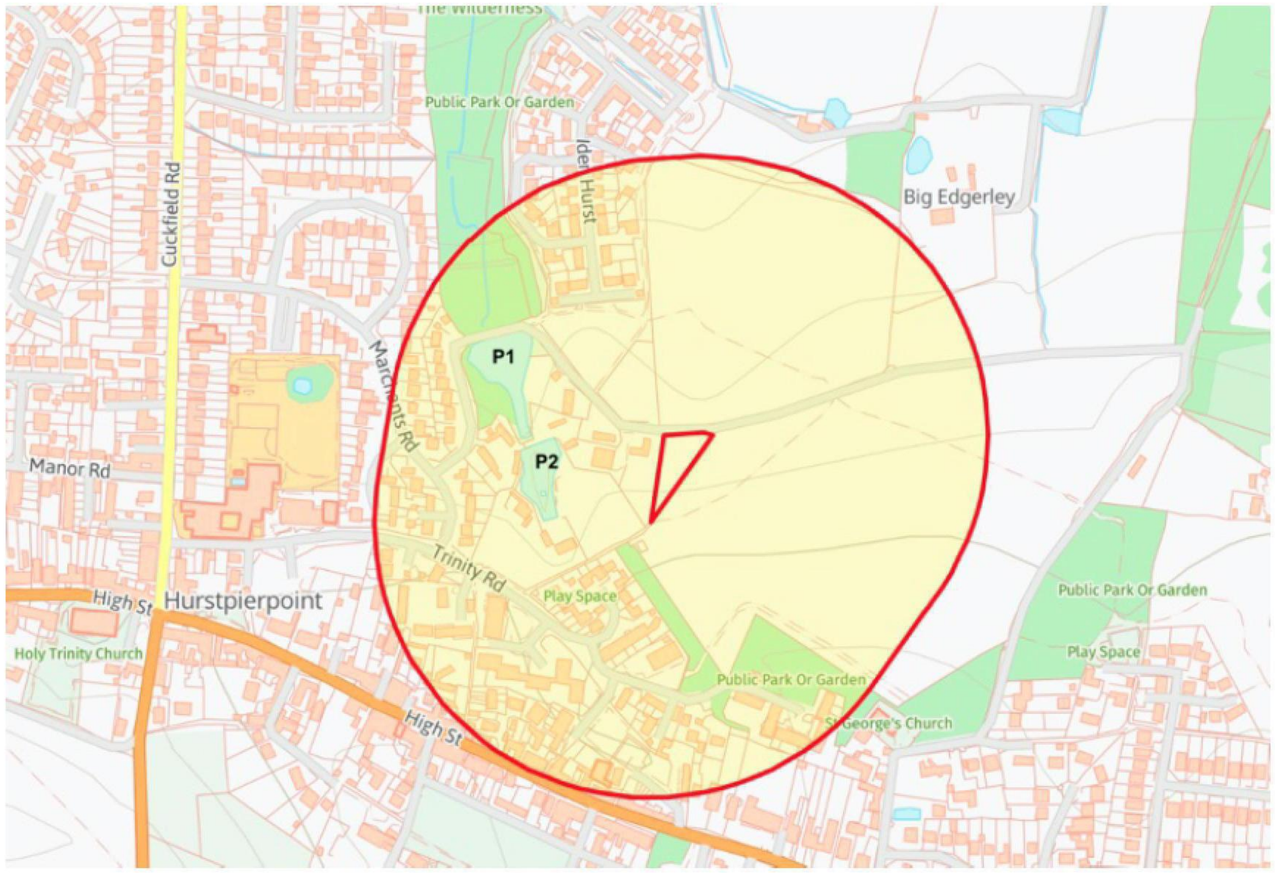

Figure 9: Waterbodies within 250m of the site boundary.

4.8 A 2km data search was requested from the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) in July 2018. Records to note included, GCN *c.* 1.3km north of the site (2017), West European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) *c.* 400m north-west (2018), and common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*), adder (*Vipera berus*) and slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) all within 1.4km (2015) of the site boundary. Also approximately 400m east of site there are previous records (2013) of Bechstein's bats (*Myotis bechsteinii*), one of the UK's rarest bat species.

Phase 1 Habitat Survey

4.9 The habitat map is presented in **Appendix 1,** site photos are in **Appendix 2**.

Modified Grassland

4.10 The site was predominately modified grassland of a medium sward length. The grassland was dominated by perennial rye, Yorkshire fog, red fescue, cocks foot and creeping bent. Other species present in both the grassland and the ruderal included white clover and meadow buttercup and creeping buttercup.

Treelines / hedgerows

4.11 The mature treeline along the eastern boundary was dominated by ash, hawthorn, hazel, sycamore, sweet chestnut and oak. The understory supported some holly, bramble, common nettle, hogweed and snowberry.

4.12 The northern feature supports a defunct hedgerow with some trees and supports ash, hawthorn, snowberry, and sycamore.

4.13 A short cherry laurel hedge is located along the northern aspect of the site. This has been recently planted and lies within the vegetated garden, along the top of the bank supporting the northern defunct tree hedgerow.

Scrub / Ruderal edges

4.14 Species located and associated with the northern defunct hedgerow and the tree line on the eastern aspect include creeping thistle, common hogweed, common nettles, meadow buttercup, greater plantain, hedge woundwort, broadleaved dock, herb Robert, ivy and wood avens.

Access Track / Bund

4.15 The access route along the northern aspect of the site and the bund associated with the edge supported a range of species including snowberry, hawthorn, bramble, common nettle, broadleaved dock, perennial rye grass, cocksfoot, common hogweed, bristly oxtongue, and ragwort. Compacted ground was present along the access route.

Protected Species

Bats

4.16 There are no buildings present within the red line boundary. A tree line is present along the north and eastern aspect, however with the current proposals, the majority of trees will be retained. Of note is the sweet chestnut tree which is located to the north eastern corner of the site. This tree supported multiple woodpecker holes. This tree would be classified as PRF-M. A hollow ash is present along the northern aspect. This is completely hollow and does not provide suitable bat roosting potential, albeit as standing dead wood, it is considered to be of some value.

Dormice

4.17 There is still dormouse suitable habitat along the edges of the site, particularly the mature tree line with scrub understorey to the east of the site, which has connectivity to the broadleaved woodland and ancient woodland within 100m of the site boundary. However, the closest EPS licence is 4.7km northeast of the site and surveys carried out by Ecological Solutions on neighbouring land in 2010 found no dormice presence in hedgerows and woodland within 500m north of the site boundary. Considering the limited nature of the habitats present on site and that the tree lined edge habitat is to be retained, these features are likely to have some value for a range of species, but it is considered unlikely dormice would be present on site.

Reptiles

4.18 The modified grassland was of a relatively short sward and has been previously managed and mown. The edge habitats, along the tree lines, support some elements of scrub and more diverse sward height. There is potential for common reptiles to be present along this edge habitat.

Great Crested Newts

4.19 No ponds are present on site, however there are two ponds within 250m of the site boundary. Pond P1 supported ducks at the time of the survey. A duck house was recorded. P2 could not be viewed.

4.20 As noted previously, the new development to the northeast around Little Edgerley and Big Edgerley found a medium population of GCN in May 2010, within ponds 300m and 410m northeast of the redline boundary, and a translocation exercise was completed between September and November 2015 (licence 2015-9446-EPS-MIT-1).

4.21 The areas of suitable habitat for GCN during their terrestrial phase is limited to tree lines and scrub along the edges of the site. The managed grassland is considered suboptimal, albeit GCNs would cross such habitats.

[redacted]

[redacted]

Nesting Birds

4.23 The treelines and scrub provide suitable nesting opportunities for birds. Birds' nests were recorded on the eastern tree line.

Other Species

4.24 The boundary woodland habitat is considered to be suitable for hedgehogs.

4.25 The tree lines and scrub, alongside standing dead wood are considered to be of some value for common invertebrates.

4.26 Due to a lack of suitable habitat, the site was not considered suitable for other protected species, such as water voles and otters.

5.0 Discussion

4.1 The following paragraphs consider the effects of the development on designated sites, priority habitats and protected and priority species. Where the desk study and Phase 1 survey provide sufficient evidence for an assessment of effects on any of these groups to be taken through planning, these are detailed below, the need for additional surveys and when and how these should be completed are summarised, if required.

4.2 Provisional recommendations are also given for means to achieve net biodiversity gain, following the principle (CIEEM et al. 2016) of following the mitigation hierarchy of; avoidance, minimisation of loss, compensation on site and biodiversity offset.

Effects on Designated sites

4.3 There are no statutory or non-statutory sites located within 2km of the proposed development. The site over 18km from the Ashdown forest and therefore outside the 7km zone of influence outlined by Mid Sussex Council and therefore in line with Policy DP17: Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC. The site is also located over 12km from Lewes Downs SAC and Castle Hill SAC. Given the size of the proposed development and its distance from any protected sites, it is considered that there will be no detrimental impact on any protected areas. The proposals, a single unit, will not impact upon the integrity of the internationally designated sites.

4.4 The closest statutory designated site is Wolstonbury Hill Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI and lies approximately 2.3km from the site. The site lies within several IRZ's for surrounding SSSI, which does not list residential development as likely to have an impact on the statutory designated site. Considering this, the development is not considered likely to impact upon integrity of the SSSI.

Effects on Priority Habitats

4.5 There are a number of priority habitats within the wider landscape, which are all habitats of principle importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. The closest priority habitats include deciduous woodland 130m west and ancient semi-natural woodland 170m northwest of the site and are present on either side of the existing access track into the site.

4.6 Considering the distance between the priority habitats and the small scale nature of the development of the site, no impacts are predicted.

Effect on On-site Habitats

4.7 The habitats on site are common and widespread, with modified grassland dominating the habitat present. The most significant habitats are the mature boundary tree lines and associated scrub and ruderal edges.

4.8 Due to the small-scale nature of the development and the loss of predominantly modified grassland, the development is not considered to be ecologically significant.

Effects on Protected Species

Bats

4.9 The site supports one large sweet chestnut which is considered to be PRF-M, i.e. multiple roost habitats in the form of a number of woodpecker holes. This tree is located in the north eastern corner of the site and will be retained within the scheme. A hollow ash tree is also present just along the north eastern edge of the site. Whilst hollow it did not support roosting potential (with the hole open access for rain etc, the standing dead wood is considered to be of some value and should be retained where possible. If this is not possible and the ash tree needs to be removed, the wood should be stacked within the edge habitats for invertebrate use.

4.10 It is recommended that tree protection measures are employed, with a condition for tree protection, detailed as part of the consent.

4.11 It is understood that no trees which are to be removed within the current proposals, however if the master plan is to change to include any trees along the eastern and southern boundaries, an update assessment may be required.

4.12 The grassland on site is considered to offer limited value for commuting and foraging bats due to it being regularly mown to a short sward. The boundary habitat offers potential to support foraging and commuting bats and has good connectivity to a wider network of hedgerows, woodland and potential roosts in the surrounding area. It is understood this habitat will be mostly unaffected by the works.

4.13 According to Bat Conservation Trust guidelines it is important that proportionality is employed when recommending further survey work for bat species on a proposed development site. As stated within section 2.2.19 of the latest survey guidelines (2023), the following points need to be considered with regard to planning bat surveys:

- Likelihood of bats being present;
- Type of proposed activities;
- Scale of proposed activities;
- Size, nature and complexity of the site;
- Species concerned;
- Number of individuals.

4.14 Overall, as the extent of the development is considered to be limited in nature and extent, and the trees are to be retained, no further bat surveys have been recommended at this time.

4.15 However, it is recommended that any proposed lighting scheme as part of the development will have to consider bats in the surrounding area, as well as on site. All bat species are nocturnal, resting in dark conditions in the day and emerging at night to feed. Bats are known to be affected by light levels which can affect both their roosting behaviour as well as their foraging behaviour. This needs to be considered, with a sympathetic lighting scheme for the development. Recommendations include:

- Installing lighting only if there is a significant need;

- Using LED luminaries due to their lower intensity, sharp cut-off and good colour rendition – any lights with UV elements or metal halide lights should not be used;
- Lights with peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012);
- Lights with an upward light ratio of 0% and good optical control;
- Careful consideration of column height to avoid light spill;
- Any external security lights should use motion-sensors and short (1-minute) timers;
- Accessories such as baffles and hoods should be used as a last resort to reduce light spill and direct light only to where needed;
- Avoid putting lighting near trees or hedgerows and angling light away from these linear features which are used by commuting and foraging bats.

Badgers

4.16 No evidence of badgers, such as setts, latrines or snuffle holes were found anywhere on site. However a main sett was found within the ancient woodland 100m north of Little Park Farm, by Ecology Solutions in 2010. Due to this, it is likely that badgers use the site for commuting purposes.

4.17 Due to the semi-rural site location and, as such, best practice guidelines are recommended to be followed throughout development, to help ensure no individuals are harmed during the construction phase of the project:

- Any excavations and/or trenches associated with construction are either covered at night or supplemented by means of escape for any badgers that may fall into the excavation whilst foraging;
- Any open pipes or conduits laid should be blocked off each night to prevent badgers from entering them;
- As far as possible, construction work should only take place between dawn and dusk with no late evening work to reduce possible disturbance.

4.18 If these methods are followed, no significant residual impacts are predicted on badgers on site or within the local area. These steps will also help to ensure no harm comes to other mammals such as rabbits. If any badger setts or holes are identified during construction, all works should stop immediately and an ecologist contacted for advice.

Dormice

4.19 It was previously recommended that's the scheme retain the boundary features, and as such suitable habitat will not be lost or fragmented for any potential dormice in the area. At this stage, no further surveys are recommended as the northern and eastern tree lines and associated scrub are being retained within the scheme. These should be protected during construction works with a tree protection plan / heras fencing or similar.

Reptiles

4.20 Common reptiles are known to be present at the field margins of adjacent fields around the site at Little Park Farm, from surveys in 2012. The majority of the grassland on site is not considered to be suitable for common reptile due to its managed nature and relatively short sward.

4.21 The areas of suitable habitat are considered to be limited in their extent and the majority of the boundary features are to be retained, notably the northern and eastern tree line. As such, no further surveys are recommended. It is however , recommended that the grass is managed to ensure it does not become more attractive to common reptile species.

Great Crested Newts

4.22 A licence (2015-9446-EPS-MIT) was granted for the translocation of GCN in relation to a new development (12/04141/OUT, with permission granted under appeal AP/13/0057) on land adjacent to the new proposed development at Little Park Farm. The ponds surveyed are 300m and 410m northeast of Little Park Farm.

4.23 It is recommended that the project apply for district licencing for great crested newts through the West Sussex Nature Space scheme. This would not require further survey work; however, a financial contribution would be agreed to provide targeted enhancement and management for the species within the county. This approach works on a worst-case scenario approach. The applicant should ensure that the relevant certificate and the required financial contributions are agreed prior to the start of works.

Other species

4.24 The site has potential to support hedgehog and their presence on site cannot be ruled out. As such, it is recommended that best practice guidelines be followed throughout any proposed development to ensure no individuals are harmed. This includes a pre-clearance check of any scrub habitat and the translocation of any hedgehogs found to safe, retained habitat.

4.25 No potential for any other species, such as otters or water voles was identified within the site boundary.

4.26 The boundary tree had some potential to support nesting bird species. It is understood this feature will be mostly retained during development. It is recommended that any vegetation with potential to support nesting birds should be removed outside of the breeding bird season (March-September inclusive) or immediately after a nesting bird check by a suitably qualified ecologist. If active nests are identified, works in the vicinity of the nest must cease until the birds have fledged the nest.

5.0 Biodiversity Net Gain

5.1 The previous application submitted a biodiversity net gain plan. This is the area where the new single dwelling is to be located. Whilst the construction of the site has been completed, the planting in line with the gain plan has not been completed. However, as this area is to be planted under current permission, the baseline for the net gain assessment is taken as the habitats which have been proposed following previous submissions.

5.2 The October 2021 submission 'Little Park Farm, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex - Biodiversity Net Gain' proposed the post development habitats detailed in the tables 1 and 2 below. This is for a wider application area, and the 2021 metric is not considered to be out of date, with subsequent metrics released.

Table 1: Proposed habitats taken from the 2021 reports

Proposed Habitat	Area (ha)	Habitat Condition
Urban - Developed land; sealed surface	0.1475	Area used to describe all areas of hardstanding and buildings. Considered '**N/A-Other**' condition
Urban - Vegetated garden	0.2090	Assigned condition as '**Poor**' guidance for use of BNG calculator.
Heathland and shrub – Mixed scrub	0.0168	Area used to describe indigenous planting along the southwestern boundary. Assigned condition as **'Moderate'** due to the mix containing three woody species, there will be an absence of non-native or invasive species, and a good age range of plants can be planted.
Grassland – Traditional Orchards	0.0775	Area of habitat creation in the southern corner of the site. Assigned condition as **'Moderate'.**
Total	**0.7794 ha**	(including retained habitats)

Table 2: Proposed linear habitats taken from the 2021 reports

Habitat Type	Length (km)	Habitat Condition
Native hedgerow	0.0722	The hedgerow is set to be planted throughout the site Considered **'moderate'** condition due to good native species diversity.
Total	**0.0722km**	

5.3 The biodiveristy net gain report, which should be read in conjunction with this, provides the base line taken from the 2021 proposed habitat baseline and the post development plan.

6.0 Impact Assessment

6.1 This section of the report forms an EcIA (Ecological Impact Assessment) and is designed to quantify and evaluate the potential impacts of the development on habitats and species present on site or within the local area.

6.2 The approach to this assessment accords with guidance presented within the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM 2018). In essence, an EcIA assesses the activities associated with a proposed scheme that are likely to generate changes within identified zone of influences, on identified ecological features and receptors. The proposals are subsequently reviewed, and mitigation and compensation measures are outlined which help to reduce negative impacts.

6.3 Table 1 summarises the impacts and required mitigation for each receptor as previously detailed in the discussion.

Table 1: Assessment of effects from the proposal after mitigation and compensation

Feature	Scale of Importance	Mitigation/Compensation Required	Residual Effect
Internationally Designated Statutory sites	International	Outside the ZOI of Ashdown Forest.	Not significant
National Statutory Designated Sites	National	None required – sufficient distance from site. No related habitat to be lost.	Not significant
Non-Statutory Sites	County	None required – sufficient distance from site. No related habitat to be lost.	Not significant
Priority habitats	Site	None required – sufficient distance from site. No related habitat to be lost.	Not significant
Bat (roosting)	Up to local	One PRF-M trees identified (sweet chestnut), to be retained and protected from the development and sensitive lighting scheme to be implemented.	Not significant
Bats (commuting and foraging)	Up to local	Suitable foraging/commuting habitat on site to be mostly retained as part of the development. Bat activity surveys not recommended. Sensitive lighting measures to be implemented.	Not significant
Badgers	Site	Best practice guidelines to ensure no individuals are harmed during the construction phase of the project	Not significant
Breeding birds	Site	Mitigating direct harm to nests by removal of any suitable nesting habitat outside of nesting bird season or after a check by a suitably qualified ecologist.	Not significant
GCN	Site	District license required to offset potential minor impacts associated with limited loss of terrestrial habitat on site.	Not significant
Reptiles	Site	Manage grassland to retain is lack of suitability. Maintain habitat edges	Not significant
Dormice	N/A	Considered unlikely to be present. However, retention of tree lines recommended	Not significant

7.0 Conclusions

7.1 The site does not lie within or adjacent to any statutory or non-statutory designated sites, and there are no deignated areas within 2km of the site boundary. The site falls within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for several SSSIs within the surrounding landscape. However, the IRZ does not list residential development as likely to have an impact on the statutory designated sites.

7.2 There are several units of priority habitat within 2km of the site boundary. No adverse impact on priority habitats are predicted due to the scale of the proposals and the distance between the site and the priorty habitats.

7.3 The habitats on site are common and widespread throughout the local area and the UK as a whole. The site is dominated by modified grassland, with tree lines to the north and east, which is associated with some scrub and ruderal species. A new cherry laurel hedge has also been planted in the northern aspect of the site.

7.4 The trees are mature along the eastern tree line. The sweet chestnut tree located to the north eastern corner of the site is considered to be PRF-M, i.e. that this has potential to support a number of bats within the woodpecker holes. This tree will be retained within the scheme. These trees along the northern and eastern aspect of the site must be protected using tree protection measures during construction works.

7.5 The site does support opportunities for foraging and commuting bats, however they will not be impacted by the development as the majority of the treelines are to be maintained as part of the proposals. Sensitive lighting is recommended however. No further surveys are required.

7.6 No evidence of badger activity, such as sett entrances, faeces, or badger hairs, was recorded within the site. However, a previous survey by Ecology Solutions in 2010 found a main sett located within the ancient within the wider landscape. Therefore, safety measures should be enforced on site during site works to mitigate the accidental harm to badgers commuting through the site.

7.7 Common reptiles are known to be present at the field margins of adjacent fields, from previous surveys in 2012. The majority of habitats on site were not considered suitable for common reptiles however, it is recommended that the grassland is managed to

short sward height (under current management regimes) to ensure it does not become valuable for reptiles.

7.8 GCN are present within the surrounding areas with a low population confirmed in ponds 300m and 410m northeast of Little Park Farm. The majority of the terrestrial habitat on site is not considered to be optimal for the species. However, it is recommended that a Nature Space application is sought to cover removal of GCN terrestrial habitat.

7.9 The site is considered to provide some suitable habitat for dormice in the form of mature treelines and scrub. However, there are no recent records of dormice within 2km of the site and surveys carried out in 2010 found no dormice in woodland blocks and hedgerows close to the site. Therefore no further surveys are required.

7.10 Birds may use the trees to nest within. Any works to these features should therefore be undertaken outside of bird nesting season (March – September inclusive) or after a nesting bird check by a qualified ecologist.

7.11 Recommendations with regards to BNG are detailed in a separate report and will include ecological enhancements. It must be noted that the proposed development is where the BNG enhancement area from the previous application. As such, the baseline is taken from the proposed BNG and not the existing baseline.

8.0 References

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Internet resources:

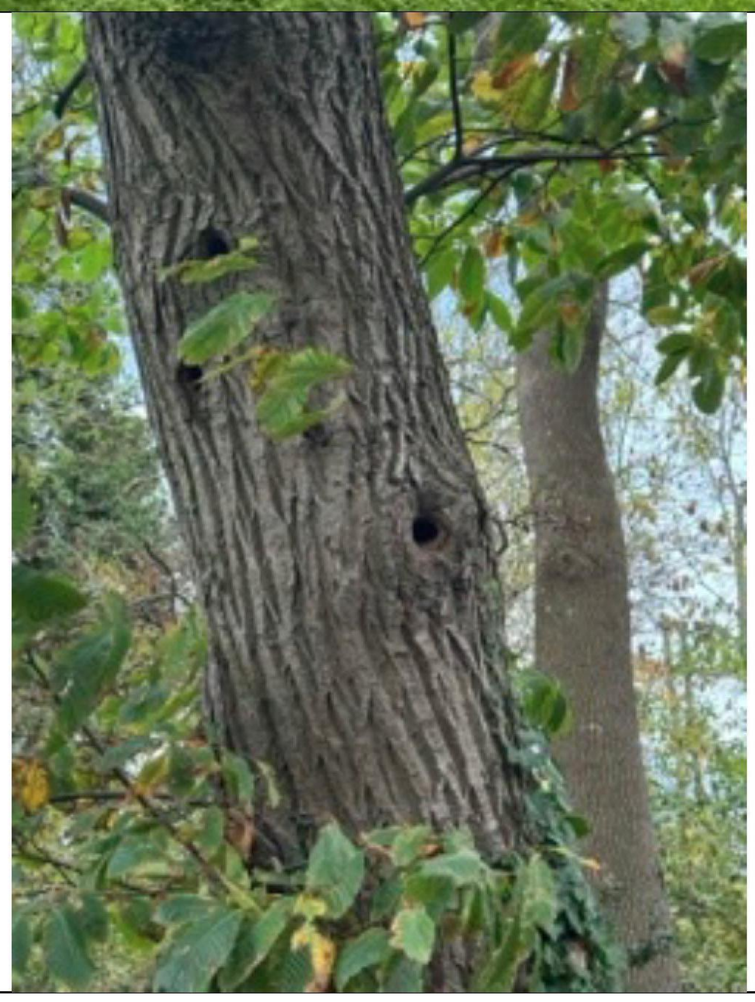
Google Maps: www.google.co.uk/maps

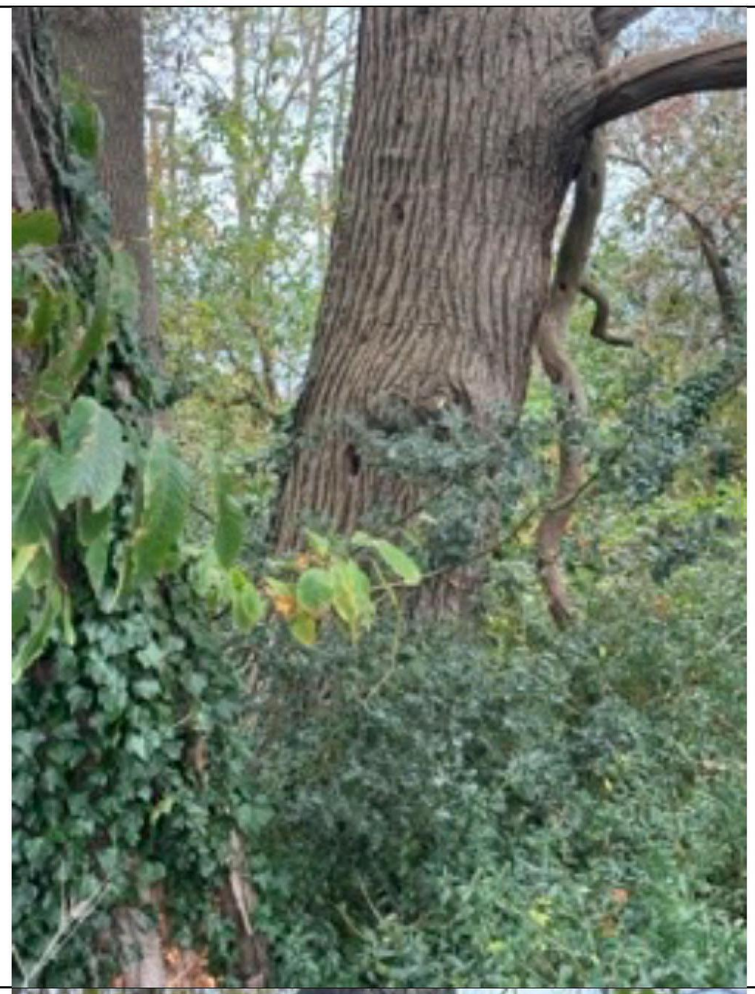
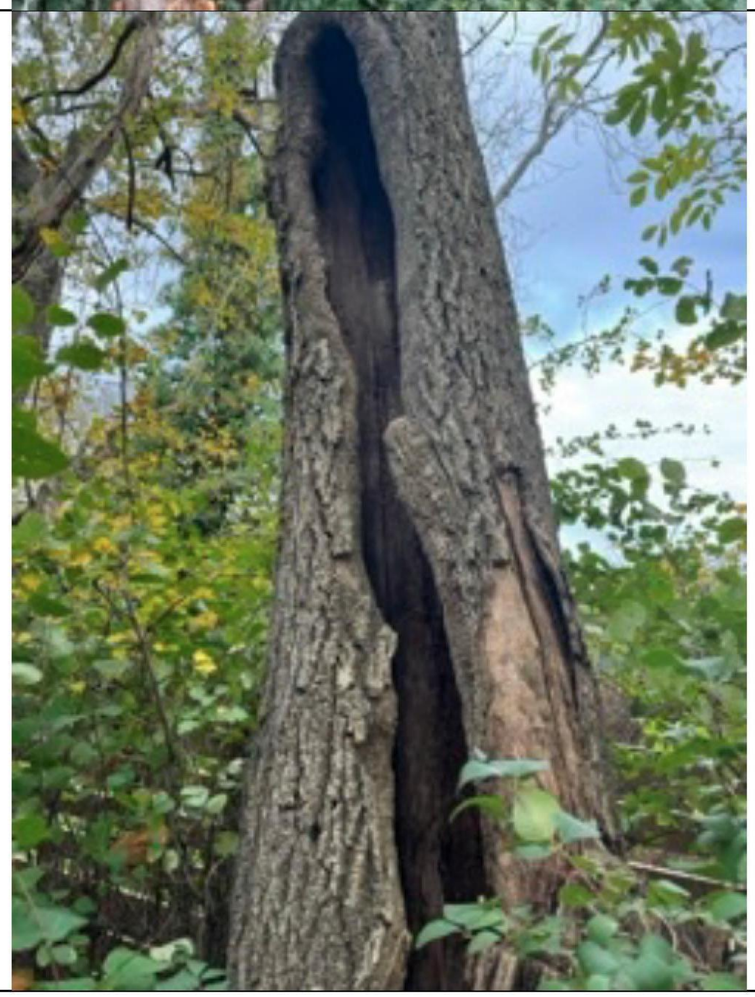
Magic Interactive Map: www.magic.gov.uk

Appendix 1: Habitat Map

Appendix 2: Site Photographs

Photograph 1: Overview of the site	
Photograph 2: The newly created cherry laurel hedge	

Photograph 3: The eastern tree line	
Photograph 4: Sweet chestnut woodpecker holes	

Photograph 5: Sweet chestnut woodpecker holes	
Photograph 6: Ash tree present in the north eastern corner of the site.	

Photograph 7: The ash tree is hollow and not suitable for roosting	
Photograph 8: Eastern edge of the site	

Appendix 3: Species List

Common name	Latin name
Modified Grassland and Tall Ruderal Vegetation	
Yorkshire fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Cocks foot	*Dactylis glomerata*
Creeping bent	*Agrostis stolonifera*
White clover	*Trifolium repens*
Perennial ryegrass	*Lolium perenne*
Spear thistle	*Cirsium vulgare*
Creeping thistle	*Cirsium arvense*
Common nettle	*Urtica dioica*
Field bindweed	*Convolvulus arvensis*
Meadow buttercup	*Ranunculus acris*
Willow herb sp.	*Epilobium sp.*
Greater plantain	*Plantago major*
Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*
Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
Bristly oxtongue	*Helminthotheca echioides*
Common hogweed	*Heracleum sphondylium*
Scrub	
Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus*
Common Nettle	*Urtica dioica*
Snowberry	*Symphoricarpos albus*
Cleavers	*Gallium aparine*
Common hogweed	*Heracleum sphondylium*
Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*
Hedge woundwort	*Stachys sylvatica*
Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
Dog rose	*Rosa canina*
Common vetch	*Vicia sativa*
Silver weed	*Potentilla anserina*
Treeline	
Ash	*Fraxinus excelsior*
Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
Hazel	*Corylus avellana*

Sweet chestnut	*Castanea sativa*
Oak	*Quercus robur*
Cherry laurel	*Prunus laurocerasus*

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