



Ecological Impact Assessment

Land West of Gatesmead,
Haywards Heath

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Report	Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)
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N.B. Please note that with the exclusion of Figures 1 & 2, the red line boundary used in mapping within this report are for indicative purposes only.

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Executive Summary

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Crest Nicolson Operations Limited to conduct ecological surveys in support of an EclA of a parcel of 'Land West of Gatesmead, Haywards Heath'. This was required in order to identify any potentially important ecological features that may be affected by the proposed development. As part of this assessment, the following surveys were undertaken:

- 2km desktop search submitted to Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SBIC) (April, 2025)
- Walkover survey assigning UKHab habitat types and assessing for protected / notable species suitability (April, 2025)
- Ground Level Tree (roost) Assessment (GLTA) (April, 2025)
- Bat activity surveys (walked transects and static deployments covering April – October 2025)
- Bat Emergence Surveys and Aerial Close Inspection Surveys (Trees) (August – September 2025)
- Reptile Presence/ Likely absence survey (April - May 2025)
- Dormouse Nest Tube Survey (April – September 2025)
- Breeding Bird/ Ground Nesting Bird Survey (April – June 2025)

Based on the results of the above survey work, outline mitigation measures for each species group / feature are indicated in **Table 1** below.

Table 1. Summary of the proposed mitigation / compensation measures to address impacts to the identified receptors / constraints on site.

Species Group / Features	Potential Impacts	Outline Mitigation / Compensation
Bats (Foraging & Commuting)	Site considered to be of at least 'county' importance for commuting and foraging bats, with notable registrations/ species including <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> , Serotine <i>Eptesicus serotinus</i> and Leisler's Bat <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i> . Scheme will result in limited vegetation removal which may reduce foraging resources and introduction of new lighting on site may disrupt foraging areas and commuting routes.	Retention of the majority of the existing hedgerow and boundary woodland habitat with dark corridors implemented along these features and sensitive lighting recommended across the site. Enhancement of foraging resources through enhancement/ reinforcement of boundary habitats/ commuting routes.
Bats (Trees)	A number of trees identified as supporting PRF-I features will require removal as part of the proposed works which may result in	The vast majority of trees will be retained on site as part of the proposed scheme to minimize impacts to roosting bats and existing commuting/ foraging resources.

	damage and destruction of bats/ associated roosts, should they be present.	Notwithstanding this, where tree removal works are unavoidable (with minimal removal proposed as part of the scheme), such works will adopt a precautionary working methodology, which will include inspections of features prior to felling under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist and soft felling techniques were appropriate.
Reptiles	A 'low' population of Slow Worm and a 'Low' population of Grass Snake was identified within the site, with the majority of the individuals recorded within along the western and north-eastern boundaries. The works will involve impacts to areas of suitable reptile habitat and in the absence of mitigation this may result in the harm or killing of reptiles.	Combination of passive dispersal (March - October)/ reptile translocation methodology to be adopted with exclusion fencing within the main development footprint and 30-60 day translocation effort (March - September). On site receptor areas will be enhanced with targeted habitat creation/ management with two log piles to be provided within this habitat to enhance its suitability for reptiles.
Badgers	No evidence of Badger setts or associated field signs recorded on site. Notwithstanding this, the site is considered suitable to support foraging and commuting Badger activity with potential for them to be entrapped within open excavations during construction.	Pre-commencement walkover to be undertaken within 4 weeks of commencement of ground works to ensure no setts present. Open excavations left overnight should either be covered to prevent commuting Badgers falling in or escape ladders should be used.
Hazel Dormice	Confirmed presence of Dormice utilizing the onsite habitats. Potential for Dormice to be harmed and/or disturbed through proposed vegetation clearance works which will result in a deficit in foraging/ nesting resources	All vegetation clearance works (if required) to be undertaken with an EPS licence adopting a single stage active season approach. Compensational/ enhancement planting to provide alternative foraging/ nesting resources on site, with targeted planting and site design to prevent habitat fragmentation. Dormouse boxes to be erected to increase the carrying capacity of the site, with reinforcement planting of hedgerows/ boundary habitats to be implemented where appropriate.
Breeding and nesting birds	Site noted to support a number of breeding and nesting birds including 11 species noted as Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BoCC5), with the majority of activity	Majority of boundary habitats to be retained through the site design. Clearance of woody vegetation to be undertaken outside of bird nesting season (or following an appropriate

	recorded within the surrounding woodland which will be largely retained as part of the proposed works. Notwithstanding this, through vegetation removal works there is potential for disturbance of nesting birds and direct impacts to nests.	PWMS were this is not possible) with compensational planting proposed around site and a variety of nest boxes due to be installed on retained mature trees and erected dwellings.
Designated Sites	Wickham Woods Local Wildlife Site (LWS), designated primarily for supporting ancient woodland habitat is situated approximately 0.07km north of the Site boundary.	A minimum buffer zone of 15m will be provided from the ancient woodland situated to the north of the proposed access route, with sensitive measures implemented to minimise damage to trees/ roots within this area as required.
Rush Pasture	Areas of rush pasture are present within the north-eastern portion of the site which represents a priority habitat type of value. The proposed works will result in impacts to this habitat type and in the absence of mitigation permanent habitat loss.	Scheme designed to retain as much of this habitat type in situ as possible, with sensitive translocation of this habitat to be undertaken within SUDs basins and other appropriate locations identified on site to ensure that there is no net-loss of this habitat on site.
Biodiversity Net Gain	Requirement to demonstrate a 10% net gain in the site's biodiversity value as quantified using the Defra Statutory Metric.	BNG report with the mapping, metric and habitat management / monitoring details will be provided in a separate document to support the application.

In addition to the above species / feature specific recommendations, ecological enhancements are proposed in **Section 6.0** which will include the provision of bird and bat boxes along with features to enable Hedgehog movement throughout the site.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief

Ecosupport Ltd was commissioned by Crest Nicholson Operations Limited to conduct an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of the 'Land West of Gatesmead, Haywards Heath' (here after referred to as 'the site'). The purpose of this survey was to assess any ecological impacts that may arise as a result of a proposed residential development. The objectives of the survey were as follows:

- Identify and classify any priority habitats;
- Assess the ecological value of the site;
- Identify any signs of protected species and potential features that may support them
- Make recommendations for further survey work as necessary;
- Make recommendations for any necessary ecological avoidance and mitigation where possible.

NB. If the works do not take place within 18 months of this report¹ then the findings of this survey will no longer be considered valid and certain aspects may require updating.

1.2 Site Description & Location

The site is located along the northern outskirts of Haywards Heath, comprising of a parcel of land situated off Old Wickham Lane, RH16 1AN (centred on OS grid reference TQ 3314 2563 - **Figure 1**). The site comprises of three grassland parcels separated by tree lines/ linear woodland, with the site encompassed by deciduous woodland habitat. The site is bounded to the west by the rail lineside estate, with residential housing development to the south and east, with an adjacent grassland parcel retained within a previous development scheme. The northern boundary supports ancient woodland which expands northwards, surrounding Haywards Heath golf course which is situated to the north of the site. The wider environ comprises predominantly of residential dwellings and urban infrastructure within the settlement of Haywards Heath to the south of the site, with woodland copses (including ancient woodland), linear hedgerow and arable pasture dominating the land use to the north of the site.

¹ <https://cieem.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Advice-Note.pdf>

Figure 1. Aerial image of the site with redline boundary provided (DWG No. 25714/5000F, PAD, 2026)



1.3 Proposed Development

The proposed development will entail the construction of 49 new homes, together with open space and associated infrastructure (**Fig 2**).

2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 The Environment Act (2021)

The Environment Act 2021 is the UK's new legislation for environmental protection in the UK, which includes protection of water quality, clean air, and biodiversity among other key protections. This Act provides the government power to set targets to reach long-term aims relating to the environment, which will be periodically reviewed and updated. This legislation also establishes a new environmental watchdog organisation, the Office for Environmental Protection (OEP), which will hold the government accountable on environmental issues.

Part 6 of The Environment Act relates to nature and biodiversity. This section makes provision for biodiversity net gain to be a condition of planning permission in England and a requirement for nationally significant infrastructure projects. Biodiversity net gain will require maintenance for a period of at least 30 years after the completion of enhancement works to be achieved.

The legislation also includes updates to existing environmental legislation, such as the NERC Act 2006, to strengthen biodiversity enhancement rather than just conservation and includes a requirement for local, or relevant, authorities to publish biodiversity reports. Further, The Environment Act places a requirement on responsible authorities to prepare local nature recovery strategies, which will outline nature conservation sites and priorities and opportunities for recovering or enhancing biodiversity within the local area. Within England, the legislation also provides Natural England with the power to publish 'species conservation strategies' and 'protected site strategies' to identify activities that may affect a species or site's status and outline their opinions on measures that would be appropriate to avoid, mitigate or compensate any adverse impacts.

2.1.2 The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 transposes the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into UK domestic law. It provides protection for sites and species deemed to be of conservation importance across Europe. It is an offence to deliberately capture, kill or injure species listed in Schedule 2 or to damage or destroy their breeding sites or shelter. It is also illegal to deliberately disturb these species in such a way that is likely to significantly impact on the local distribution or abundance or affect their ability to survive, breed and rear or nurture their young.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit) makes changes to the three existing instruments which transpose the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives so that they continue to work (are operable) upon the UK's exit from the European Union (EU). These include The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This instrument also amends section

27 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to ensure existing protections continue. The intention is to ensure habitat and species protection and standards as set out under the Nature Directives are implemented in the same way or an equivalent way when the UK exits the EU.

In order for activities that would be likely to result in a breach of species protection under the regulations to legally take place, a European Protected Species (EPS) licence must first be obtained from Natural England.

2.1.3 The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)

This is the primary piece of legislation by which biodiversity is protected within the UK. Protected fauna and flora are listed under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. They include all species of bats, making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any bat whilst it is occupying a roost or to intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to a bat roost. Similarly, this Act makes it an offence to kill or injure any species of British reptiles and also makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to take, damage or destroy their eggs and nests (whilst in use or being built).

The Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) states that it is an offence to 'plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild' any plant listed in Schedule 9 part II of the Act. This list over 30 plants including Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) and Parrot's Feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).

2.1.4 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)

This Act strengthens the Wildlife & Countryside Act by the addition of "reckless" offences in certain circumstances, such as where there is the likelihood of protected species being present. The Act places a duty on Government Ministers and Departments to conserve biological diversity and provides police with stronger powers relating to wildlife crimes.

2.1.5 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 requires that public bodies have due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. This means that Planning authorities must consider biodiversity when planning or undertaking activities. Section 41 of the Act lists species found in England which were identified as requiring action under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and which continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the *UK Post – 2010 Biodiversity Framework*.

2.1.6 Protection of Badgers Act

The Protection of Badgers Act (1992) relates to the welfare of Badgers (*Meles meles*) as opposed to nature conservation considerations. The Act prevents:

- The wilful killing, injury, ill treatment or taking of Badgers and / or
- Interference with a Badger sett
- Damaging or destroying all or part of a sett
- Causing a dog to enter a sett and
- Disturbing a Badger while it is occupying a sett

Provisions are included within the Act to allow for the lawful licensing of certain activities that would otherwise constitute an offence under the Act.

2.2 Policy

2.2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.

Chapter 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity, the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, minimising impacts on and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity including by incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.

The NPPF states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites and land should be allocated with the least environmental or amenity value and take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale.

To protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation and promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

The NPPF states determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a SSSI, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs;

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Potential SPAs and possible SACs, listed or proposed Ramsar sites and sites required as compensatory measures for the previous should be given the same protection as habitats sites.

2.2.2 Local – Mid Sussex District Council (Adopted March 2018)

Adopted in March 2018 the District Plan states nearly 50% of the District is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and over 10% is within the South Downs National Park. Mid Sussex is the tenth most wooded District in the South East and two-thirds of this woodland is classified as 'ancient'. It also has many sites valued for their biodiversity including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas.

Strategic Objectives to protect and enhance the environment include:

1. To promote development that makes the best use of resources and increases the sustainability of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change
2. To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District's distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence
3. To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities
4. To protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities
5. To create and maintain easily accessible green infrastructure, green corridors and spaces around and within the towns and villages to act as wildlife corridors, sustainable transport links and leisure and recreational routes
6. To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that supports development and sustainable communities. This includes the provision of efficient and sustainable transport networks

DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows

The District Council will support the protection and enhancement of trees, woodland and hedgerows, and encourage new planting. In particular, ancient woodland and aged or veteran trees will be protected.

Development that will damage or lead to the loss of trees, woodland or hedgerows that contribute, either individually or as part of a group, to the visual amenity value or character of

an area, and/ or that have landscape, historic or wildlife importance, will not normally be permitted.

Proposals for new trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of suitable species, usually native, and where required for visual, noise or light screening purposes, trees, woodland and hedgerows should be of a size and species that will achieve this purpose.

Trees, woodland and hedgerows will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- *incorporates existing important trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design of new development and its landscape scheme; and*
- *prevents damage to root systems and takes account of expected future growth; and*
- *where possible, incorporates retained trees, woodland and hedgerows within public open space rather than private space to safeguard their long-term management; and*
- *has appropriate protection measures throughout the development process; and*
- *takes opportunities to plant new trees, woodland and hedgerows within the new development to enhance on-site green infrastructure and increase resilience to the effects of climate change; and*
- *does not sever ecological corridors created by these assets.*

Trees, woodland and hedgerows form part of the District's green infrastructure, and in particular, are important for health and well-being, biodiversity, and increasing resilience to the effects of climate change. Ancient woods are irreplaceable wildlife habitats with complex ecological conditions that have developed over centuries. They contain a wide range of wildlife including rare species, however, because the resource is limited and highly fragmented, ancient woodland and their associated wildlife are particularly vulnerable and must be protected from damaging effects of adjacent and nearby land uses that could threaten the integrity of the habitat and survival of its special characteristics.

The District Plan recognises this contribution and will support the protection of trees, woodland and hedgerows, as well as encouraging new planting. Development will be required to incorporate trees, woodland and hedgerows into the design and landscaping scheme.

All hedgerows on farmland and open land are protected and consent is required from the District Council to remove them. The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 also define 'important' hedgerows as being of particular archaeological, historical, wildlife or landscape value.

DP38: Biodiversity

Biodiversity will be protected and enhanced by ensuring development:

- *Contributes and takes opportunities to improve, enhance, manage and restore biodiversity and green infrastructure, so that there is a net gain in biodiversity, including through creating new designated sites and locally relevant habitats, and incorporating biodiversity features within developments; and*

- *Protects existing biodiversity, so that there is no net loss of biodiversity. Appropriate measures should be taken to avoid and reduce disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. Unavoidable damage to biodiversity must be offset through ecological enhancements and mitigation measures (or compensation measures in exceptional circumstances); and*
- *Minimises habitat and species fragmentation and maximises opportunities to enhance and restore ecological corridors to connect natural habitats and increase coherence and resilience; and*
- *Promotes the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitats in the District; and*
- *Avoids damage to, protects and enhances the special characteristics of internationally designated Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation; nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Ancient Woodland or to other areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors, aged or veteran trees, Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, and Nature Improvement Areas. Designated sites will be given protection and appropriate weight according to their importance and the contribution they make to wider ecological networks.*

Policy DP38 'Biodiversity' reflects the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (section 11) where it relates to biodiversity and the natural environment. It takes into account the duty on the District Council to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Development proposals should be informed by local ecological and geological evidence and national guidance. Local ecological evidence should include protected and notable species as well as considering the potential effects of the development on the habitats and species on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 section 41 list.

2.3 Biodiversity Action Plans & UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (JNCC & DEFRA, 2010) supersedes the UK Biodiversity Action Plan 1992-2012 (UKBAP), setting out goals relating to nature conservation at a UK scale, for example the reduction and reversal in the decline of threatened species and improving the status of biodiversity. The specific habitats and species contained within the UKBAP continue to be regarded as conservation priorities under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework and are required to be a material consideration in the planning process under the 2021 NPPF.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Data Request

A data request was submitted to the Sussex Biodiversity Information Centre (SBIC) to ascertain any records held of nature conservation designations and protected species within 2km of the boundary of the site.

The data search covered:

- Statutory designated sites.
- Non-statutory designations such as Local Wildlife Sites.
- Records of protected and notable species.

3.1.2 Waterbodies

Any ponds located within 500m of the proposed development were searched for using Magic Maps and Google aerial satellite images.

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 Habitats

The field survey work which forms the basis of the findings of this report was carried out by Adam Jessop BSc MCIEEM and Louise Davies BSc ACIEEM of Ecosupport Ltd on the 23rd April 2025, with an updated survey undertaken on 21st July 2025.

Habitats on site pre-development were identified in accordance with the categories specified for a UK Habitats survey, using Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). This was chosen as an appropriate habitat categorisation system as it fits within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation.

UKHab represents a method for classifying habitats which has been produced to provide an up-to-date replacement for the current industry standard phase 1 survey method. One of the main benefits of UKHab is that it supports the evaluation of habitats for EclA and no net loss/net gain analysis, providing a more detailed interpretation of habitat types, which is important for assessing the distinctiveness and condition of habitats against which biodiversity net gain is measured.

The standard survey methodology has been 'extended' in this report to include the following:

- Floral species lists for each identified habitat;
- Descriptions of habitat structure, the evidence of management and a broad assessment of habitat condition;
- Mapping of additional habitat types (e.g. hardstanding);
- Identification of Priority Habitats under Section 41 of the NERC Act;
- Evidence of, or potential for, the presence of certain species/groups

3.2.2 Badger

3.2.2.1 Walkover Survey

The site was thoroughly searched for evidence of use by Badgers (*Meles meles*) with the specific aim of identifying the presence and location of any setts. In accordance with the *Badgers and Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing* (Natural England, 2011) guidance, the survey accounted for a 30m from the site's boundary (observed where possible i.e. does not conflict with private dwellings). Evidence of Badgers could include latrines, dung pits, feeding remains and foraging evidence, trails and setts.

3.2.3 Bats

3.2.3.1 Trees

A non-exhaustive Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) assessment of any notable trees on site was undertaken by Gareth Ainscough during the initial walkover survey on the 23rd April 2025. This followed BCT (Collins (ed) 2023) best practice survey which includes aiming to identify the following Potential Roost Features (PRFs):

- PRFs formed by disease and decay: woodpecker holes, squirrel holes, knot holes, pruning cuts, tear outs, wounds, cankers, compression, forks, butt rots
- PRFs formed by damage: lightning strikes, hazard beams, subsidence cracks, shearing cracks, transverse snaps, welds, lifting bark, desiccation features, frost cracks; and
- PRFs formed by association: fluting Ivy.

The presence or absence of any of the features listed above are then feed into the classification of the tree which is as follows (**Table 2**).

Table 2. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of sites for bats (Trees) (adapted from Collins, 2023).

Suitability	Description
	Roosting Features
Negligible	Tree does not support any suitable features that could be potentially utilized by roosting bats.
FAR	Further Assessment Required (FAR) to establish if any PRFs are present in the tree.
PRF - I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF - M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

3.2.4.1.1 Close Inspection Surveys

Trees identified during the GLTA as holding potential to support roosting bats (including trees that could not be fully inspected) which were scoped for removal as part of the proposed works were subject to aerial close inspection surveys using a ladder, climbing equipment, ropes, harnesses, binoculars and an endoscope to assess each tree/ feature for bat presence,

bat evidence such as droppings, and for investigating cavity size in trees where present. BCT guidelines (Collins, 2023) of best practice were adhered to. The surveys were undertaken Whaddon Site Services under the supervision of a suitably licenced ecologist on 15th August 2025.

3.2.3.2 Walked Transects / Night-Time Bat Walkovers

Based on the suitability of the habitat for foraging and commuting bats (high based on records and nature of habitats), in total, three No. walked transects were completed between April - October 2025 (1 per season) in line with the latest best practice guidance (Collins, J. (ed), 2023) with the starting point and route indicated in **Figure 3** below. Surveyors remained at the starting point until 30-60 minutes after sunset (dependent on bat activity) before proceeding on the walkover route. They then walked continuously until 2-3 hours after sunset, occasionally stopping / detouring to record bat activity. Both a Bat Box duet / Elekon heterodyne batscanner and Elekon bat logger (for analysis of calls via sonogram) were utilised during the survey. The surveys were carried out by Ben Wightman, Ashleigh Pearce, Shannon Dagnell, and Joanna King (staff and experienced bat surveyors with Ecosupport Ltd).

Figure 3. Night-time bat walkover transect route.



3.2.3.3 Static Monitoring

In addition to the walked transects / night-time bat walkovers, static monitoring was conducted between April - October 2025. In accordance with the latest best practice guidance (Collins, J. (ed), 2023), 3 No. static detectors were placed within each key habitat types on site (woodland, grassland, hedgerows / tree lines) for 5 consecutive nights each month. The locations of the static bat detectors (Song Meter Mini detector I/II) are shown in **Figure 4**

below. Whilst guidance recommends deploying statics at fixed locations, static deployments were placed at strategic locations within the site over the duration of the monitoring period, to provide a more representative survey of the bat activity within habitats across the site.

Echolocation recordings captured during the Phase II surveys were processed and analysed using Wildlife Acoustics Kaleidoscope Version 5.7. The AutoID function was used in conjunction with reference collection 'Bats of Europe 5.4.0 - United Kingdom' at classifier threshold of 0 Balanced (Neutral). AutoID results were manually reviewed and corrected where necessary in order to identify species present on site. All recordings were reviewed with the exceptions of *Pipistrellus* spp., noise files and non-identifiable (NoID) recordings in which auditing effort was reduced due to high quantities of data. The results were then multiplied proportionately to be applicable to the entire data set. For *Pipistrellus* spp., noise files and non-identifiable files, an auditing effort of between 5-20% was utilized, depending on the overall number of files.

Figure 4. 2025 static bat detector locations. (A = April, B = May, C = June, D = July, E = August, F = September, G = October)



3.2.3.4 Emergence Surveys (TBC Ash Removal)

Three dusk emergence surveys were undertaken for the tree with identified bat potential on site (TN2) that is scoped for removal as part of the proposed works and could not be accessed for close inspection surveys due to health and safety restrictions. These were conducted on 20th August, 5th September and 25th September 2025.

An Elekon Batlogger and Batscanner were utilised for identifying species calls / analysis of calls via sonogram (where required), with 3 Nightfox Whisker Night Vision Binoculars used to record each surveyor's field of view for the duration of the survey and to assist in identifying bat activity. The dusk emergence survey began approximately 15 minutes prior to sunset and continued until approximately 1.5 hours after.

Survey sheets were used to record the following information:

- Time of call registration
- Species (if possible to identify using heterodyne detector)
- Location / activity
- Direction of flight (if seen)

The surveyor locations and fields of view are shown in **Figure 5** and **Table 3** below.

Figure 5. Location of the surveyed tree and the surveyor/camera locations used during the surveys.



Table 3. Table showing the field of view of surveyors during the emergence survey of the noted trees. It should be noted that the locations of surveyors were the same for both surveys.

NVA	Field of view (start of survey)	Field of view (end of survey with final infrared setting)
1		
2		
3		

3.2.4 Reptile Survey

The reptile surveys undertaken by Ecosupport Ltd were carried out in accordance with best practice guidelines as stated in various resources (Froglife 1999) (Gent & Gibson 1998) during May 2025. Artificial refugia comprising of bitumen roofing felt were distributed throughout the suitable reptile habitats on site (50 No). Due to interference from members of the public, some refugia were removed or relocated with the locations of the undisturbed 43 pieces of refugia are shown in **Figure 6**. Seven visits to the site were subsequently undertaken during suitable weather conditions during which all the refugia were checked for the presence of reptiles in combination with a visual observation transect.

This survey is considered sufficient to identify the presence or likely absence of reptiles on the site. It does not provide sufficient information to allow an accurate assessment of population sizes however, it does allow inferences to be made as to population size class in combination with other considerations such as the extent and quality of the habitat.

Figure 6. Approximate locations of the reptile refugia distributed across the site.



3.2.5 Dormice

Due to the presence of suitable Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) habitat on the site, a survey was undertaken to determine their presence or likely absence. Methodological guidance for Dormouse surveys is provided in the *Dormouse Conservation Handbook* (Bullion *et al* 2025) whereby a minimum of 50 tubes is recommended to be used per site, at a spacing of 20m. A total of 50 tubes were deployed across the site in April 2025 with the approximate locations of these shown in **Figure 7**. The surveys were carried out between April to November 2025 to ensure that all key parts of the season were covered. The tubes were checked by Gareth Ainscough and Ashley James (both Class Level 1 licence holders) with Ecosupport Ltd.

Figure 7. Locations of the dormice tubes distributed throughout the site (50 No).



3.2.6 Breeding Birds

3.2.6.1 Field Survey

The survey methodology was broadly based upon the British Trust of Ornithology (BTO) Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) and Common Bird Census methods, including the BTO Standard Recording Codes (BTO, 2004). Surveys were undertaken monthly between April and June 2025 during favourable weather conditions. Survey visits were carried out at dawn, with each survey visit taking approximately 2 hours each. All surveys were undertaken during suitable weather conditions (with little or no rain, little to no wind and good visibility).

Each survey followed a pre-defined linear transect route, including 10-minute observational points from where the surveyor could observe bird activity and listen for birdcalls to establish territories and presence of breeding/nesting birds (**Figure 8**). Behaviours such as singing male birds, young, nests, feeding behaviour, territorial disputes and defensive behaviour around possible active nests were noted. The surveys were carried out by Dean Swensson, an experienced bird surveyor and ecologist with Ecosupport Ltd.

Figure 8. Breeding bird survey route



3.2.6.2 Evaluation Methodology

The conservation value of the breeding bird communities identified on site were then assessed and evaluated using the most current Birds of Conservation Concern priority status list published by the British Trust for Ornithology (Eaten *et al*, 2015), and the British Trust for Ornithology Bird Facts tool (2023a) which includes published approximate numbers of breeding pairs and species statuses for the UK.

The Birds of Conservation Concern split the UK's birds into three categories, the highest conservation priority being listed as Red, with Amber being the next most critical group followed by Green. Birds of Red and Amber listing are subject to at least one of the relevant factors listed in **Table 4**.

Table 4. Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) categories, with the relevant criteria used to evaluate species.

Red List Criteria	(1) Globally threatened (2) Historical population decline in UK during 1800-1995 (3) Severe (at least 50%) decline in the UK breeding population over last 25 years, or longer-term period (the entire period used for assessments since the first BOCC review, starting in 1969) (4) Severe (at least 50% (contraction of UK breeding range over last 25 years, or the longer-term period
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Amber List Criteria	(1) Species with unfavourable conservation status in Europe (SPEC = European Conservation Concern) (2) Historical population decline during 1800-1995, but recovering; population size has more than doubled over last 25 years (3) Moderate (25-49%) decline in the UK breeding population over the last 25 years, or the longer-term period (4) Moderate (25-49%) decline in the UK breeding range over the last 25 years, or the longer-term period (5) Moderate (25-49%) decline in the UK non-breeding population over the last 25 years, or the longer-term period (6) Rare breeder; 1-300 breeding pairs in the UK (7) Localised; at least 50% of UK breeding or non-breeding population in 10 or fewer sites, but not applied to rare breeders or non-breeders (8) Internationally important; at least 20% of European breeding or non-breeding population in UK (NW European and East Atlantic Flyway populations used for non-breeding wildfowl and waders respectively)
Green List Criteria	(1) Species that occur regularly in the UK but do not qualify under any of the above criteria

3.2.7 Great Crested Newts

3.2.7.1 Waterbodies - Habitat Suitability Index

A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) was carried out on the ponds within 500 m of the site following the guidance provided with ARG (2010). This considers the following factors when calculating the ponds suitability to support GCN:

- Location of Pond,
- Surface Area,
- Permanence,
- Water Quality,
- Shade,
- Presence of Waterfowl and Fish,
- Number of Ponds within 1km,
- Quality of Terrestrial Habitat,
- Macrophyte Cover.

These criteria are used to calculate a score according to ARC Guidelines (ARC 2010) using the Oldham (2000) calculation formulae. This gives a score between 0 and 1 of the suitability of the pond for GCN with:

0.40 – 0.50: Poor suitability for GCN

0.51 – 0.59: Below average suitability for GCN

0.60 – 0.69: Average suitability for GCN

0.70 – 0.79: Good suitability for GCN

0.80 – 1.00: Excellent suitability for GCN

3.2.7.2 eDNA

Where access was permitted, eDNA surveys were undertaken in accordance with best practice guidance and within acceptable timeframes (15th April – 30th June). eDNA samples collected utilised kits supplied by SureScreen Scientifics with all associated sample collection guidance adhered to (collection of min. 20 evenly spaced samples around the perimeter of the waterbody), with the samples sent to a reputable laboratory (SureScreen Scientifics) for processing.

3.3 Assessment Methodology

3.3.1 Introduction

The methodology for the assessment of the likely ecological effects of the proposed development is based on CIEEM's *Guidelines for Ecological Assessment in the UK* (CIEEM 2018). This includes establishing the likely Zone of Influence (Zoi) for the project.

3.3.2 Valuation

Features of ecological interest are valued on a geographic scale. Value is assigned on the basis of legal protection, national and local biodiversity policy and cultural and/or social significance.

3.4 Limitations

3.4.1 Habitats

The initial survey was conducted outside of the optimal season for vascular flowering plants. Notwithstanding this, in addition to an updated survey visit undertaken in July 2025, during the numerous survey visits undertaken across the 2025 season, any notable observations of the on-site habitats were recorded and utilised to inform the overall ecological site assessment. As such, based on both this and the nature of the habitats present on site, it is not considered to be a significant constraint.

This survey does not constitute a full site assessment for Schedule 9 invasive plant species such as Japanese knotweed but these were noted if found.

3.4.2 Phase II Survey Work

3.4.2.1 Great Crested Newt HSI/ eDNA

Access could not be gained to all of the ponds identified within 500m of the site boundary. Access to the ponds was attempted on 6th May 2025 with ponds '1', '3' and '4' (See **Section 4.7**) accessed and a habitat suitability assessment undertaken for these waterbodies. Access to pond '2' was not permitted with no response to subsequent requests. Following subsequent requests to undertake eDNA analysis for ponds '1' and '3', permission was not granted/ no response was received to facilitate the collection of water samples. Whilst the majority of records returned for this species were noted within a series of ponds situated

approximately 1.63km south-west of the site and therefore considered to be beyond reasonable dispersal potential, two records from 2013 were also returned approximately 0.24km to the east of the site boundary, potentially associated with Pond '2'. Notwithstanding this, in support of the adjacent planning application (DM/15/3415) (*which is situated between the application site and pond '2'*) a 60-day trapping survey was undertaken with no GCN found in 2014.

3.4.2.2 Bats (Trees) – Close Inspection & Emergence Surveys

Following the arboricultural assessment issued in August 2025 (SJA, 2025) and design revisions to minimise impacts to existing woodland and trees, due to the assessed poor condition of tree 'TN2' (situated outside of the redline boundary) its removal was scoped in as necessary on the grounds of health and safety in relation to the proposed access road. Following this assessment and design implications, following the ground level tree assessment, further close inspection surveys were scoped in and subsequently undertaken on 15th August 2025. Due to health and safety constraints, tree TN2 was subsequently assessed as unsuitable to climb, with the location considered unsuitable for alternative MEWP inspection. Whilst three subsequent emergence surveys were undertaken for this tree on 20th August, 5th September and 25th September 2025, due to the unforeseen delays associated with the poor condition of the tree limiting climbing operations, it is recognised the recommended three-week spacing could not be achieved due to timing constraints. Notwithstanding this, during the 2nd and 3rd surveys, a Grey Squirrel was noted occupying the feature (was not noted to exit on both occasions) on both these occasions. As such, whilst this does not necessarily rule out utilisation of the feature as a bat roost (with potential for multiple voids/ crevices), the presence of squirrel occupation is considered to reduce the likelihood of this feature being utilised by bats. Notwithstanding the above, it is understood that TN2 will be retained as part of the proposed works.

4.0 ECOLOGICAL BASELINE

4.1 Designated Sites

4.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

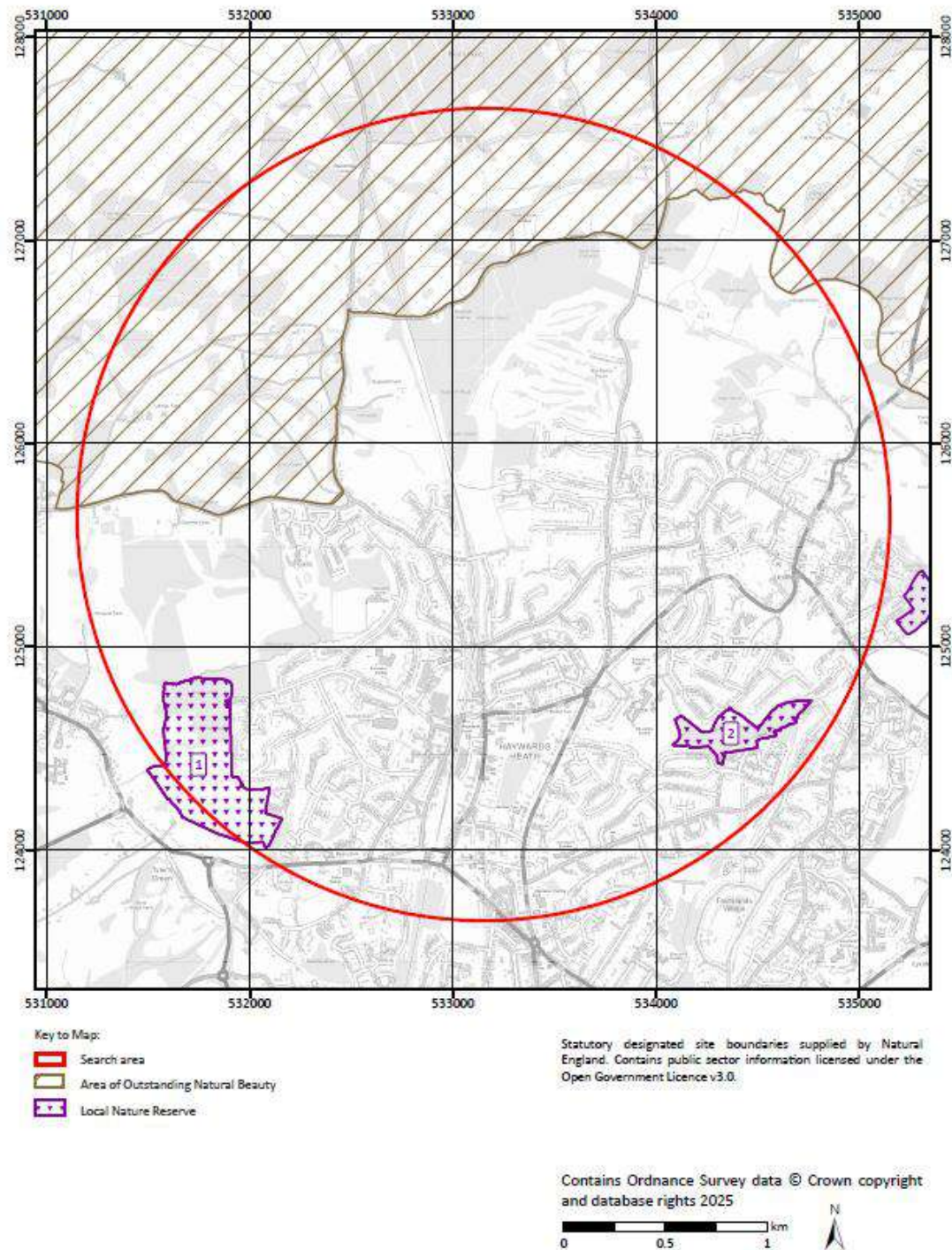
Figure 9 displays the map provided from SBIC (2025) showing the statutory designated sites from within 2 km of the site, with **Table 5** providing a greater level of detail.

Table 5. Statutory designated sites within 2 km (HBIC, 2025)

Site Name	Designation	Distance and Direction	Description of Interest
Blunts and Paiges Wood	LNR	1.35 km South-West	The site supports ancient and semi-natural woodland, wet woodland and two species rich lowland meadows, and is noted to support diverse Lepidoptera assemblages.
Scrase Valley	LNR	1.21 km South-East	Scrase Valley supports a mosaic of habitats including wet woodland, ancient drier woodland and seasonally inundated rush pasture within an urban setting.

LNR: Local Nature Reserve

Figure 9. Map showing statutory designated sites located within 2 km of the site boundary (SBIC, 2025).



4.1.2 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

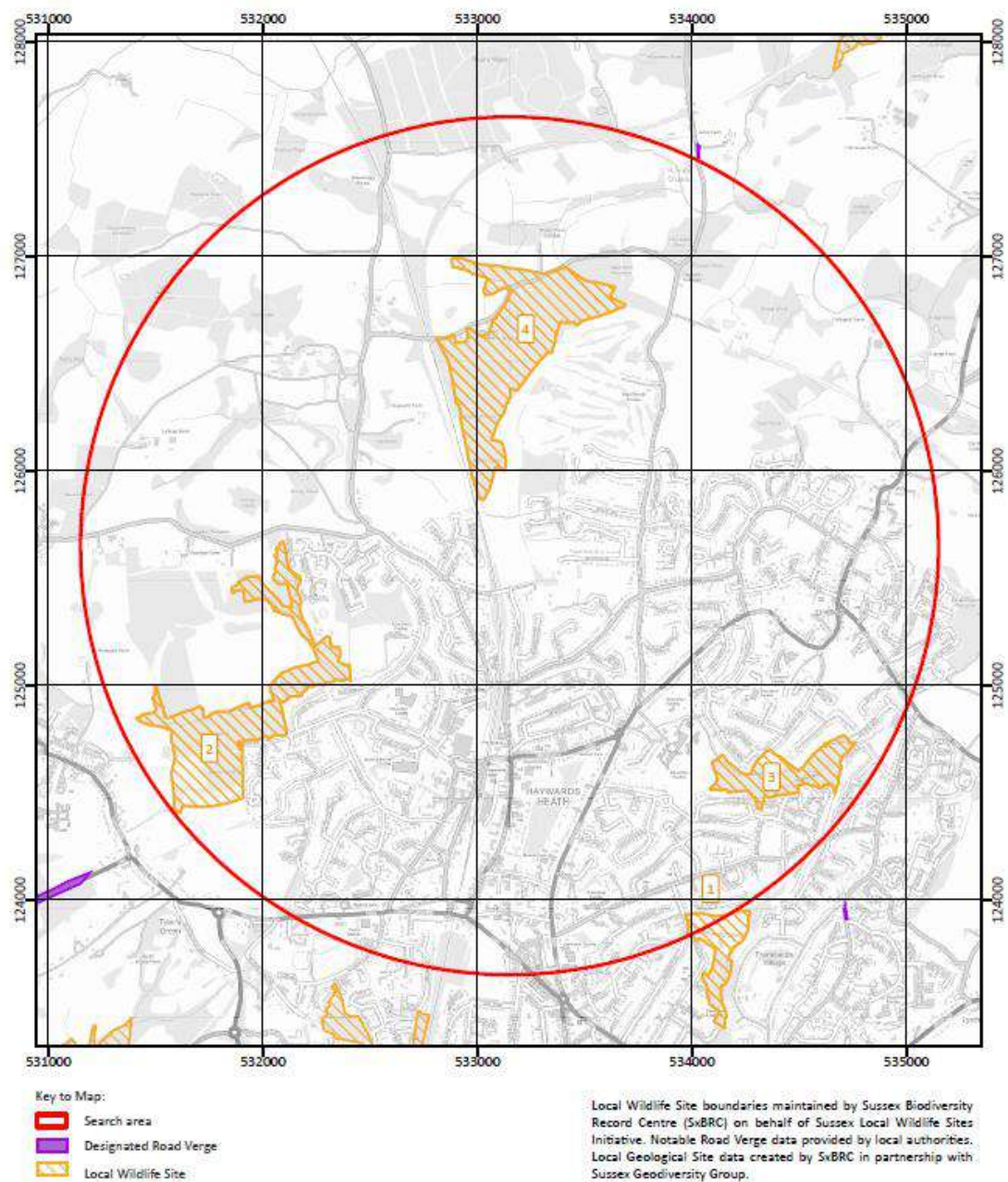
Figure 10 displays the map provided from SBIC (2025) showing the non-statutory designated sites from within 2 km of the site, with **Table 6** providing a greater level of detail.

Table 6. Non-Statutory designated sites within 2 km (SBIC, 2025)

Site Name	Map Label	Site Code	Designation	Distance and Direction
Western Road Cemetery	1	M19	SINC	1.75km South
Blunts & Paiges Woods	2	M23	SINC	1.35km South-West
Scrase Valley	3	M25	SINC	1.21km South-East
Wickham Woods	4	M49	SINC	0.07km North

SINC: Site of Importance for Nature Conservation

Figure 10. Map showing non-statutory designated sites located within 2 km of the site boundary (SBIC, 2025).



4.2 Vegetation Survey Results

The vegetation within the site has been described below using classification terminology as described within Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd, 2023). The below species should not be considered an exhaustive list and instead refer to dominant, characteristic and other noteworthy species associated with each community within the survey area. A UKHabs map showing the locations of the habitats present within the site has been included within **Appendix A**. The habitat types identified within the site comprise of:

- w1f – Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland (30 - Semi-Natural Woodland, 34 – Ecologically Valuable Line of Trees)
- g3c – Other Neutral Grassland (503 – Wet)
- g3c8 – Holcus-Juncus Neutral Grassland
- g4 – Modified Grassland (16 – Tall Forbs, 32 – Scattered Trees, 106 – Mown)
- f2b – Purple Moor-grass and Rush Pastures
- h3f – Hawthorn Scrub
- h3d – Bramble Scrub
- g1c – Bracken

4.2.1 w1f – Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland (30 – Semi-Natural Woodland, 34 – Ecologically Valuable Line of Trees, 50 – Ditch)

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland habitat (**Figs 11 & 12**) was present along the boundaries of the site, with the woodland situated along the northern boundary of the site comprising of ancient woodland habitat (with a number of ancient woodland indicator species recorded within the understory – situated outside of the redline boundary), directly linked to the adjacent Wickham Woods SINC. A number of veteran trees were noted throughout the site, particularly along the eastern boundary of the site, with a public footpath running along this section of the site. The woodland understory throughout the site was generally well developed, with sections of Hazel coppice and young saplings present. Tree species noted included Oak (*Quercus robur*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*), Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), with Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Cleavers (*Galium aparine*), Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Lords & Ladies (*Arum maculatum*), Wood Anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*), Dogs Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), Wild Garlic (*Allium ursinum*), Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*) and Yellow Archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon*) and Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) recorded in the understory.

Figure 11. View of a section of g4 grassland habitat present along western boundary of the site, with sections of the w1f woodland which encompasses the site visible along the sites northern and western boundary. Taken from the eastern boundary facing north (July, 2025)



4.2.2 g3c – Other Neutral Grassland (16 – Tall Forbs, 503 – Wet)

Other neutral grassland habitat was noted within the north-eastern portion of the site (**Fig 12**), with damper areas noted adjacent to the rush pasture situated in close proximity. In contrast to the adjacent modified grassland, these grassland parcels generally were managed to support a tall sward height, with scrub noted to encroach along the boundaries of this habitat. Species noted included Field Wood-Rush (*Luzula campestris*), Meadow Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), Lesser Stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*), Sweet Vernal Grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Cuckoo Flower (*Cardamine pratensis*) and Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*).

4.2.3 g3c8 – Holcus-Juncus Neutral Grassland

A small area of Holcus-Juncus neutral grassland was noted along the southern boundary of the site. Compact Rush (*Juncus conglomeratus*) coverage was frequent, with Yorkshire Fog, Creeping Buttercup, Sweet Vernal Grass, Self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) and Marsh Thistle (*Cirsium palustre*) also recorded.

4.2.4 g4 – Modified Grassland (32 – Scattered Trees , 106 – Mown)

Modified grassland was the dominant habitat recorded on site (**Fig 13**), with variation of the structural diversity of the sward noted, with longer and short areas created through management of the public footpaths that are present throughout the site. The central field was predominantly rabbit grazed, with sporadic areas of bare ground noted throughout. The grassland was noted to support a forb density of consistently > 6 species / m² with species noted including Sweet Vernal Grass, Yorkshire Fog, Meadow Buttercup, Creeping Buttercup,

Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*), Bramble, Self-heal, Marsh thistle, Dog Violet (*Viola riviniana*) and Thyme leaved speedwell (*Veronica serpyllifolia*).

Figure 12. View of a section of g3c grassland habitat present along the northern boundary of the site, with a section of f2b rush pasture present in the foreground. Taken from the eastern boundary facing north-west (April, 2025)



Figure 13. View of a section of g4 grassland habitat present along the northern boundary of the site. Taken from the eastern boundary facing west (April, 2025)



4.2.5 f2b – Purple Moor-grass and Rush Pastures

Areas of rush pasture habitat were present within the north-eastern portion of the site where the ground conditions were notably damp (**Figs 12 & 14**). Compact Rush (*Juncus conglomeratus*) was the dominant rush, with Soft Rush (*Juncus effusus*) and Sharp-flowered Rush (*Juncus acutus*) also noted. Herbaceous coverage was generally good with 7 species / m² recorded, with species including Cuckoo Flower, Common Sorrel, Ragwort, Creeping Buttercup, Meadow Buttercup, Marsh Thistle (*Cirsium palustre*), Meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), Common Vetch (*Vicia sativa*), Greater Birds Foot Trefoil (*Lotus pedunculatus*), Sweet Vernal Grass, Greater Stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*), Lesser Stitchwort (*Stellaria graminea*) and Small-leaved Willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*) recorded within this habitat.

Figure 14. View of a section of f2b rush pasture habitat present along the eastern boundary of the site. Taken from the eastern boundary facing south-west (July, 2025)



4.2.6 h3f – Hawthorn Scrub

A small section of Hawthorn dominated scrub was recorded along the northern boundary of the southern grassland parcel, with Elder also present.

4.2.7 h3d – Bramble Scrub

A small section of linear Bramble dominated scrub was present along a section of the sites north-western boundary.

4.2.8 g1c - Bracken

Small patches of Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) were noted along the eastern and western boundaries of the site, with scattered Hawthorn and Elder shrubs present.

4.3 Bat Survey Results

4.3.1 Pre-existing Information

The data request from SBIC returned the following records within 2 km of the site (**Table 7**).

Table 7. List of Bat records within 2 km of the site (SBIC, 2025)

Taxon Name	Species Name	Number of Records	Distance to nearest record
<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	Serotine	5	0.94 km
<i>Myotis</i>	Myotis Bat species	5	1.26 km
<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	Daubenton's Bat	1	1.72 km
<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>	Whiskered Bat	1	1.72 km
<i>Myotis mystacinus/brandtii</i>	Whiskered/Brandt's Bat	3	1.54 km
<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	Natterer's Bat	2	0.91 km
<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	Noctule Bat	6	1.02 km
<i>Pipistrellus</i>	Pipistrelle Bat species	7	1.54 km
<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>	Nathusius's Pipistrelle	1	1.11 km
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Common Pipistrelle	57	0.82 km
<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	Soprano Pipistrelle	12	0.78 km
<i>Plecotus</i>	Long-eared Bat species	7	1.58 km
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Brown Long-eared Bat	27	1.58 km

4.3.2 GLTA and Close Inspection Survey Results (Trees)

The results of the ground level tree assessment (GLTA) and subsequent aerial close inspection surveys of trees likely to impacted/ require removal as part of the proposed works is outlined below in **Table 8**, with the tree ID numbers in accordance with the Preliminary Tree Survey Schedule (SJA, 2025).

Table 8. GLTA and close inspection survey results of the trees within the site (See Appendix for locations). All other trees outlined within the Preliminary Tree Survey Schedule (SJA,2025) that were assessed as part of the survey (i.e. scoped for impact/ removal as part of the proposed works) were found to be of negligible potential for supporting roosting bats were scoped out at this stage and therefore further information regarding these trees has not been provided within this table (*PRF-M – suitable for large numbers of bats or a maternity roost, PRF-I – suitable for individual or small numbers of bats, FAR – Further Assessment Required*).

Tree Number	Figure	Description of Tree and PRFs	Assessed Suitability for Roosting Bats
TN2		Mature Ash in state of terminal decline situated off-site. Large east facing wound/ knot hole approximately 6'' in diameter in upper 3rd of tree (FAR). Failed branches facing easter and south-west supporting sporadic lifting bark (PRF-I). <i>To be retained as part of the proposed scheme.</i>	<i>FAR</i> (See section 4.3.3)
TN4		Mature English Oak with large 5m tall wound on northern trunk with missing bark and decayed sapwood – no suitable roosting features noted. North-west facing failed limb support horizontal (upwards facing) hazard beam feature with the crevice extending approximately 10cm in length – due to facing of feature and exposure roosting potential considered to be limited (PRF-I). North-western facing failed limb supporting two parallel transverse snaps with the crevices approximately 8cm depth and 4cm width (PRF-I). Western facing lower branch supporting hazard beam feature approximately 4ft in length with limited sized/ suitable crevice opportunities (exposed on both sides) to support roosting bats (PRF-I). Sporadic lifting bark noted across failed limbs (PRF-I). Sporadic ivy	<i>PRF-I</i>

		cover not considered suitable to support roosting bats.	
TN5		Mature English Oak situated off-site. Two cavities noted at the base of tree at ground level extending approximately 30cm upwards – features appear to be in use by squirrels/ rodents and feature offers limited protection to roosting bats (Negligible). South facing failed branch situated within lower 3rd of tree supports shearing crack feature approximately 60cm length and 2-6cm deep – no evidence of roosting bats noted and cobwebs present along length (PRF-I). <i>To be retained as part of the proposed scheme.</i>	<i>PRF-I</i>
TN6		Mature English Oak supporting two lower north facing branches supporting transverse snap features – lower branch features approx. 3ft in length with crevice approximately 4cm depth - cobwebs noted in feature (PRF-I). Both limbs feature a ragged end with a series of crevices – individual crevices noted to extend between 1-5cm in depth with upwards facing limbs limiting protection/ exposure from inclement weather (PRF-I) Number of small limbs noted across tree with sporadic lifting bark (Negligible). Upper 3rd limb supporting downwards facing knot hole – Close inspections noted this to be superficial (Negligible). <i>To be retained as part of the proposed scheme.</i>	<i>PRF-I</i>

TN7		Mature English Oak supporting sporadic lifting bark across failed limbs (PRF-I). West facing failed branch situated within upper 3rd of tree supporting lifting bark and hazard beam extending approx. 3ft in length – crevice feature extends approx. 5cm in depth (PRF-I). <i>To be retained as part of the proposed scheme.</i>	PRF-I
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4.3.3 Emergence Survey

The results of the bat emergence surveys along with other relevant information of survey conditions are provided in **Tables 9** and **10** below.

Table 9. Relevant information on survey conditions recorded

Date	Start Temp (°C)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (Beaufort scale)	Sunset Time	Start Time	Finish Time
20/08/2025	18	50	2	20:15	20:00	21:45
05/09/2025	16	20	1	19:36	19:21	21:06
25/09/2025	15	0	2	18:51	18:36	20:21

Table 10. Results from the emergence survey for tree TN2. HNS = Heard Not Seen, SNH = Seen Not Heard.

Survey Date	Recorded Bat Roost(s)	Bat Activity on Site		
		Species	First Pass	Last Pass
20/08/2025	No emergences recorded	Common Pipistrelle	20:31	20:57
		Soprano Pipistrelle	20:28	20:28
		Noctule	20:39	20:39
		<u>Summary:</u>		
		Activity and species diversity recorded during this survey was low, with a maximum of 4 species over the duration of the survey, comprising of a total of 6 individual registrations.		
		No emergences were recorded.		

05/09/2025	No emergences recorded	Species	First Pass	Last Pass
		Common Pipistrelle	19:41	20:12
		Soprano Pipistrelle	19:51	19:53
		Noctule	19:57	19:57
		<u>Summary:</u> Activity and species diversity recorded during this survey was low, with a maximum of 3 species over the duration of the survey, comprising of a total of 4 individual registrations. A squirrel was noted entering the knot hole feature on the main stem at 19:37 shortly after sunset. It was not noted to exit the feature for the duration of the survey. No emergences were recorded.		
25/09/2025	No emergences recorded	Species	First Pass	Last Pass
		Common Pipistrelle	19:01	19:16
		Noctule	19:05	19:05
		<u>Summary:</u> Activity and species diversity recorded during this survey was low, with a maximum of 2 species over the duration of the survey, comprising of a total of 6 individual registrations. A squirrel was noted entering the knot hole feature on the main stem at 18:49 prior to sunset. It was not noted to exit the feature for the duration of the survey. No emergences were recorded.		

4.3.4 Activity Surveys

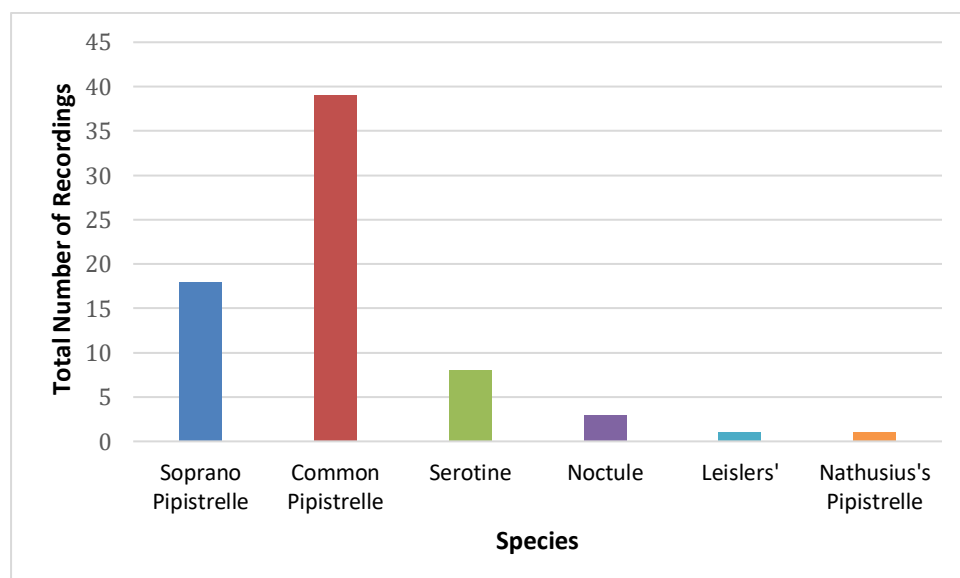
4.3.4.1 Walked Transect / Night-Time Bat Walkovers

Table below indicates the dates and other relevant information recorded during the transect surveys with the results presented below in **Fig 15**.

Table 11. Relevant information recorded during the walked transect / night-time bat walkover surveys. Wind speed is approximated in the Beaufort Scale. ACW = Anti Clockwise (refer to **Fig 3** for survey route).

Date	Temp (°C)	Cloud Cover (%)	Precipitation	Wind (Beaufort scale)	Start Time	Walkover Start Time	Finish Time	Starting Point / Direction of Travel
14/05/2025	16	5	0	1	20:43	21:13	23:13	ACW
14/07/2025	17	5	0	2	21:10	21:40	23:40	ACW
15/09/2025	15	0	0	2	19:14	19:44	21:44	ACW

Figure 15. The number and species composition of bat recordings noted across the May, July and September walked transects / night-time bat walkovers (with areas of highest activity and notable recordings indicated in **Figur** below based on the combined walked transect / night-time bat walkover and static deployment data)



4.3.3.2 Static Monitoring

The results from the static detector deployments during the 2025 survey work (refer to **Fig 4** for approximate locations) are provided below in **Table 12** (with key areas of importance for foraging and commuting bats taking the walked transect / night-time bat walkover survey work into account as well indicated in **Fig 16**).

Table 12. Results from the static detector deployments covering April - October 2025 (refer to **Figure 4** for approximate locations).

Location	Date	Species	Total passes	Average passes per night	Average passes per hour
A1	29 th - 3 rd March/April 5 Nights 11 hrs p/n	C.pip	355	71.0	6.45
		S.pip	378	75.6	6.87
		Noctule	1	0.2	0.02
		Serotine	13	2.6	0.24
		<i>Plecotus spp.</i>	7	1.4	0.13
		<i>Myotis spp.</i>	10	2.0	0.18
		Leisler's	2	0.4	0.04
A2	29 th - 3 rd March/April 5 Nights 11 hrs p/n	C.pip	231	46.2	4.20
		S.pip	85	17.0	1.55
		Noctule	6	1.2	0.11
		<i>Myotis spp.</i>	33	6.6	0.60
		Leisler's	1	0.2	0.02
		Barbastelle	10	2.0	0.18
A3	29 th - 3 rd March/April 5 Nights 11 hrs p/n	C.pip	440	88.0	8.00
		S.pip	10	2.0	0.18
		Noctule	1	0.2	0.02
		<i>Myotis spp.</i>	6	1.2	0.11
		Leisler's	5	1.0	0.09
B1	14 th - 19 th May 5 Nights 8.5 hrs p/n	C.pip	125	25.0	2.94
		S.pip	26	5.2	0.61
		Noctule	2	0.4	0.05
		Serotine	9	1.8	0.21
		<i>Myotis spp.</i>	6	1.2	0.14
		Leisler's	5	1.0	0.12
B2	14 th - 19 th May 5 Nights 8.5 hrs p/n	C.pip	440	88.0	10.35
		S.pip	90	18.0	2.12
		Noctule	1	0.2	0.02
		Serotine	39	7.8	0.92
		<i>Myotis spp.</i>	86	17.2	2.02
		Leisler's	3	0.6	0.07
B3	14 th - 19 th May 5 Nights 8.5 hrs p/n	C.pip	847	169.4	19.93
		S.pip	336	67.2	7.91
		Serotine	70	14.0	1.65
		<i>Plecotus spp.</i>	27	2.2	0.26
		<i>Myotis spp.</i>	40	4.0	0.02
		Barbastelle	42	8.4	0.99
C1	13 th - 18 th June 5 Nights	C.pip	531	106.2	14.16
		S.pip	266	53.2	7.09
		Noctule	3	0.6	0.08

	7.50 hrs p/n	Serotine	5	1	0.13
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	2	0.4	0.05
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	16	3.2	0.43
		Leisler's	1	0.2	0.03
		Barbastelle	2	0.4	0.05
C2	13 th - 18 th June 5 Nights 7.50 hrs p/n	C.pip	61	12.2	1.63
		S.pip	13	2.6	0.35
		Serotine	6	1.2	0.16
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	2	0.4	0.05
		Barbastelle	4	0.8	0.11
C3	13 th - 18 th June 5 Nights 7.50 hrs p/n	C.pip	296	59.2	7.89
		S.pip	60	12	1.60
		Noctule	2	0.4	0.05
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	1	0.2	0.03
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	1	0.2	0.03
D1	14 th - 19 th July 5 Nights 8.00 hrs p/n	C.pip	887	177.4	22.18
		S.pip	9	1.8	0.23
		Serotine	35	7	0.88
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	27	5.4	0.68
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	26	5.2	0.65
		Leisler's	1	0.2	0.03
		Barbastelle	2	0.4	0.05
D2	14 th - 19 th July 5 Nights 8.00 hrs p/n	C.pip	563	112.6	14.08
		S.pip	302	60.4	7.55
		Noctule	2	0.4	0.05
		Serotine	1	0.2	0.03
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	6	1.2	0.15
D3	14 th - 19 th July 5 Nights 8.00 hrs p/n	C.pip	48	9.6	1.20
		S.pip	254	50.8	6.35
		Serotine	20	4	0.50
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	23	4.6	0.58
E1	14 th - 16 th August 3 Nights 9.5 hrs p/n	C.pip	726	242	25.47
		S.pip	354	118	12.42
		Noctule	1	0.3	0.04
		Serotine	9	3	0.32
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	5	1.6	0.18
E2	14 th - 17 th August 4 Nights 9.5 hrs p/n	C.pip	612	153	16.11
		S.pip	371	92.75	9.76
		Noctule	15	3.75	0.39
		Serotine	23	5.75	0.61
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	92	23	2.42
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	38	9.5	1.00
		Leisler's	2	0.5	0.05
E3	14 th - 19 th	C.pip	1162	232.4	24.46

	August 5 Nights 9.5 hrs p/n	S.pip	153	30.6	3.22
		Noctule	6	1.2	0.13
		Serotine	2	0.4	0.04
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	16	3.2	0.34
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	348	69.6	7.33
		<i>Leisler's</i>	4	0.8	0.08
		Barbastelle	20	4	0.42
F1	15 th - 20 th September 5 Nights 11.75 hrs p/n	C.pip	693	138.6	11.80
		S.pip	201	40.2	3.42
		Noctule	1	0.2	0.02
		Serotine	11	2.2	0.19
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	34	6.8	0.58
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	3	0.6	0.05
F2	15 th - 20 th September 5 Nights 11.75 hrs p/n	C.pip	1939	387.8	33.00
		S.pip	1	0.2	0.02
		Noctule	3	0.6	0.05
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	19	3.8	0.32
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	26	5.2	0.44
F3	15 th - 20 th September 5 Nights 11.75 hrs p/n	C.pip	167	33.4	2.84
		S.pip	34	6.8	0.58
		Noctule	1	0.2	0.02
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	57	11.4	0.97
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	12	2.4	0.20
G1	10 th - 15 th October 5 Nights 13.00 hrs p/n	C.pip	648	129.6	9.97
		S.pip	87	17.4	1.34
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	50	10	0.77
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	99	19.8	1.52
		Barbastelle	7	1.4	0.11
G2	10 th - 15 th October 5 Nights 13.00 hrs p/n	C.pip	70	23.3	1.79
		S.pip	39	13.0	1.00
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	43	14.3	1.10
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	5	1.7	0.13
		Barbastelle	1	0.3	0.03
G3	10 th - 15 th October 5 Nights 13.00 hrs p/n	C.pip	169	33.8	2.88
		S.pip	107	21.4	1.82
		<i>Plecotus</i> spp.	1	0.2	0.02
		<i>Myotis</i> spp.	25	5	0.43

Figure 16. Areas of notable bat activity recorded within the site based on the 2025 night-time bat walkovers and static detector deployments. Blue = areas of highest bat activity. Yellow circles = key areas of activity from rarer and rarest bats. The size of yellow circles indicates the relative abundance of species registrations at each activity point.



4.3.3 Evaluation

During the activity surveys and static detector deployments, calls were dominated by *Pipistrellus* spp (which is to be expected based on a typical species composition sampled across an active season) with Common Pipistrelle representing the most commonly recorded species throughout the site, with a peak counts of 1,939 (F1 – September), 1,162 (E3 – August), 887 (D1 – July) and 847 (B3 – May) recorded along the sites eastern (F1 & E3) and northern boundaries (D1 & B3) over the survey period. Occasional registrations of Serotine, Noctule, *Myotis* spp., Leisler's and *Plecotus* spp. were also recorded throughout the monitoring period. Whilst registrations of such species were relatively low (approx. 5-30 registrations per month), notable exceptions include the recording of 348 *Plecotus* sp. registrations during deployment E3 (August) along the western boundary, 99 *Myotis* sp. registration at deployment G1 (October) along the eastern boundary, 92 *Plecotus* spp. registrations during the E3 deployment (August) along the eastern boundary, 86 *Myotis* spp. registrations during the B2 deployment (May) along the central tree line within the site, and 70 Serotine registrations during deployment B3 (May) along the northern boundary. Registrations of Barbastelle bat (which represent the rarest/ rarer species within southern England as outlined within Reason P.F and Wray S, 2023) were also recorded sporadically throughout the duration of the survey period, with registrations recorded along the sites northern, eastern and southern boundaries. Whilst peak monthly registrations for this species were typically below 6 (with the majority of individual static deployments recording this species comprising of 2 registrations), notable exceptions include deployment B3 (May) which recorded 43 registrations along the northern boundary and deployments A2 (April)/ E3 (August) which recorded 10 and 20 registrations respectively along the site's eastern boundary.

High numbers of relatively common UK bat species along with more sporadic registrations of rarer bats species were recorded throughout the majority of the boundaries situated around the proposed development parcels as shown in **Figure 16**, with Barbastelle registrations limited to the sites northern, eastern and southern boundaries (highest levels of activity recorded along the northern and eastern boundaries) and the northern/ eastern boundaries generally recording the highest activity levels for both common and rarer UK bat species during the monitoring period. Notwithstanding this, with a well-connected network of woodland, linear tree lines and grassland present across the site, the woodland/ trees line situated along the sites western, southern and central areas, and the central grassland habitats also are considered to form part of the network of commuting and foraging resources available for local populations.

The Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2023) provides a standard method for assessing importance of bat assemblage. This approach has been developed to reflect geographic variations in species distributions. To determine the maximum possible score any site could achieve, a score is assigned to each species that could be present where:

- widespread in (almost) all geographies [score 1]
- widespread in many geographies, but not as abundant in all [score 2]
- rarer or restricted distribution [score 3]
- rarest Annex II species and very rare [score 4]

Table 13. Rarity category and associated score for calculating importance score (for ‘Southern England’). **Those recorded on this site are emboldened and italicised.*

Rarity Category	Species	Score
Widespread	<i>Common Pipistrelle</i>	1
	<i>Soprano Pipistrelle</i>	1
	<i>Brown Long-eared</i>	1
Widespread in many geographies but not as abundant in all	<i>Whiskered</i>	2
	<i>Brandts</i>	2
	<i>Daubentons</i>	2
	<i>Natterers</i>	2
	<i>Noctule</i>	2
Rarer or restricted in distribution	Alcathoe	3
	<i>Serotine</i>	3
	<i>Leislars</i>	3
	Nathusius Pipistrelle	3
Rarest Annex II Species and very rare	Greater Horseshoe	4
	Lesser Horseshoe	4
	Bechstein	4
	<i>Barbastelle</i>	4
	Grey Long-eared	4
	Maximum Score	45

Once the score for each has been calculated and summed to determine the maximum theoretical score, the threshold score needed for any assemblage to meet each geographic level of importance, can be calculated:

- Assemblage score meets or exceeds 45% of the maximum score: County importance
- Assemblage score meets or exceeds 55% of the maximum score: Regional importance
- Assemblage score meets or exceeds 70% of the maximum score: National importance

The threshold for any site in the Southern England achieving a score of –

- 20 would be classed as of at least ‘County’ importance,
- 25 would be classed as of ‘Regional’ importance,
- 32 classed as of ‘National’ importance.

Using this system, the site scores 23 points for commuting and foraging bats (see **Table**) and is correspondingly considered to be of at least ‘**County**’ importance.

N.B. Detailed data analysis was undertaken to distinguish which *Myotis* species were present on site as recorded during the static monitoring surveys in 2024. When distinguishing between *Myotis* species the frequency of maximum energy is not a conclusive parameter, it is more effective to use parameters such as call duration, inter-pulse intervals and end and start frequencies. For this analysis the primary parameters were inter-pulse interval and call length, though both of these rely in some way on the start frequency which can be hard to accurately record when dealing with quieter or more distant bats.

4.4 Reptiles

4.4.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned recorded 14 records of Slow Worms (*Anguis fragilis*), 31 records of Grass Snake (*Natrix helvetica*) and 6 records of Common Lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) from within the 2km search radius.

4.4.2 Reptile Survey

Excluding the grassland areas managed for public access and the shorter sward grassland habitat present within the southern field parcel and along the western boundary of the site, large areas of the on-site habitats were considered suitable to support the pre-requisite structure to support common reptile species, with the rush pasture and neutral grassland (supporting favourable variable sward heights) habitats within the north-east portion of the site considered to be particularly favourable. A suite of reptile presence/ absences surveys were undertaken in May 2025 with refugia situated within areas of suitable habitat across the site. The full results of the survey effort are provided below in **Table 14** with the locations of reptiles identified during the survey indicated in **Figure 17**.

4.4.3 Evaluation

Given the size of the suitable areas of habitat (approximately 2.7ha) present within the site, the number of refugia deployed (at a density of approximately 15.9 per ha) and the maximum count of adults (2 Grass Snake and 5 Slow Worm) it is considered that a '**Low**' population of Slow Worm and '**Low**' population of Grass Snake are present on-site. Both Slow Worm and Grass Snake are however relatively widespread within southern England and given the context of the site in relation to wider environ, the population size recorded and the relative abundance of favourable reptile habitat adjacent to the site, the site it is considered to be of **Site Value** for reptiles.

Table 14. Results of the reptile surveys undertaken on site in May 2025. Wind speed is estimated in the Beaufort scale.

Date	Start Time	Weather Conditions (Temp, Wind, Cloud & Precipitation)	Grass Snake	Common Lizard	Slow Worm			
					AM	AF	SA	J
06/05/2025	10:30	15°C, 1, 0% cloud cover, 0% precipitation	1	0	0	1	0	0
09/05/2025	08:30	17°C, 1, 25% cloud cover, 0% precipitation	2	0	0	2	0	0
13/05/2025	10:15	19°C, 1, 20% cloud cover, 0% precipitation	0	0	0	0	0	0
16/05/25	10:15	16°C, 1, 10% cloud cover, 0% precipitation	0	0	1	2	0	0
19/05/25	11:30	16.5°C, 1, 50% cloud cover, 0% precipitation	0	0	1	0	0	0
22/05/25	10:15	13°C, 2, 50% cloud cover, 0% precipitation	0	0	0	1	0	0
28/05/25	11:35	16°C, 1, 100% cloud cover, 0% precipitation	0	0	0	2	3	0

Figure 17. The locations of where reptiles were identified on site during the presence / likely absence surveys undertaken in 2025.



4.5 Badgers

4.5.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned no records of Badger (*Meles meles*) from within 2km of the site boundary. Notwithstanding this, given the historic persecution of this species, such records are often kept confidential and as such negative records does not necessarily indicate an absence of this species from the local area / site.

4.5.2 Site Assessment & Evaluation

During the initial site assessment undertaken in April 2025 no evidence of Badger was recorded within the site (including latrines, dung pits, feeding remains and foraging evidence, trails and setts). During subsequent attendances of the site alongside the undertaking of other species-specific ecological surveys no evidence of Badger has been recorded within the site. Notwithstanding the above, the grassland, scrub and woodland habitats on site represent suitable foraging resources, with the surrounding woodland and scrub providing cover for commuting activity. As such, the site is considered to hold **Moderate** potential to support foraging and commuting Badgers.

4.6 Hazel Dormouse

4.6.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned 28 records of Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) from within 2km of the site boundary. Additionally, presence of this species was confirmed within habitat directly connected to the east of the site during ecological surveys undertaken in support of the adjacent development at Birchen Lane, Lindfield (14/00209/OUT) by Derek Finnie Associates Ltd (2015).

4.6.2 Presence/ Absence Surveys

Based on the presence of suitable habitat comprising of a network of deciduous woodland, scrub and hedgerows both bounding and situated within the site, presence/ absence surveys were undertaken between April – September 2025, with the results outlined in **Table 15** below.

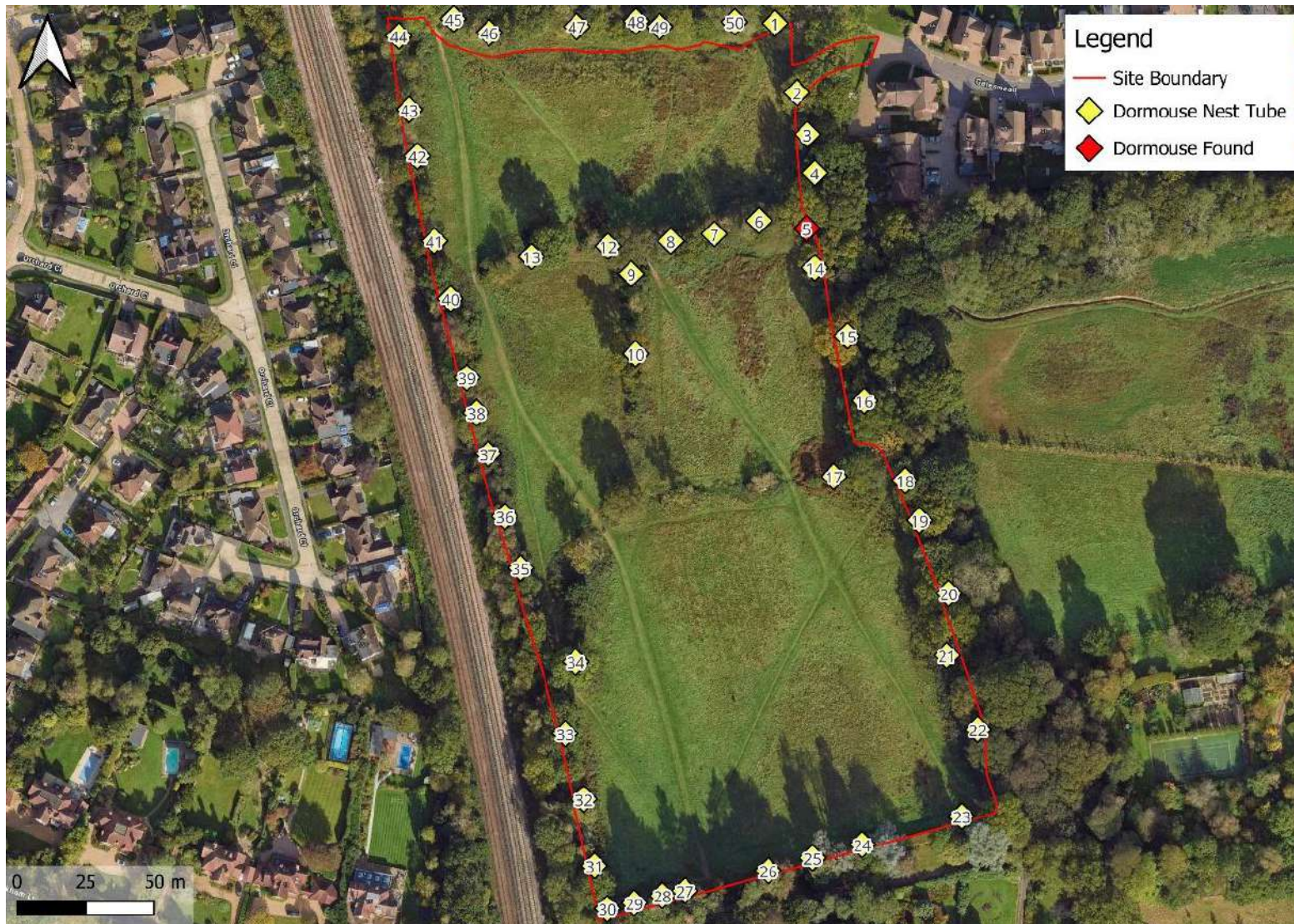
4.6.3 Evaluation

During the September survey a nest with a single juvenile Dormouse was identified along the eastern boundary of the Site (**Figure 18**). As a consequence, the site is considered to hold **Confirmed presence** of Hazel Dormice.

Table 15. Results of the Dormouse nest tubes survey work on site carried out between April – September 2025.

Survey No	Date	Other Occupancy	Dormice				Dormice Evidence
			GEC	GEO	Juvenile	Adult	
1	19/05/2025	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence found
2	19/06/2025	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence found
3	21/07/2025	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence found
4	20/08/2025	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence found
5	17/09/2025	-	-	-	1	-	Dormouse nest located long eastern boundary, with one juvenile escaping the tube

Figure 18. Results of the dormice surveys carried out between April - September 2025



4.7 Great Crested Newt

4.7.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned 63 records of Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*) from within 2km of the site boundary, with the majority of the returned records clustered approximately 1.63km south-west of the site. In addition to the distance, these records are separated from the site by significant urban infrastructure in the form of the settlement of Haywards Heath, with negligible opportunities for dispersal. Two records from 2013 were also returned approximately 0.24km to the east of the site boundary, potentially associated with the two waterbodies situated within the proximity of Gatesmead Road.

In addition to the above, pit fall trapping surveys were undertaken by Derek Finnie Associates Ltd (2015) in support of the former development site situated adjacent to site at Birchen Lane, Lindfield (DM/15/3415 – Allowed at Appeal) in 2014, with no GCN recorded during over the 60-day trapping period between June to September.

4.7.2 Waterbodies

A total of 4 waterbodies were identified within 500m of the site boundary with further details provided in **Figure 19 & Table 16** below.

Figure 19. Map showing waterbodies of interest within 500m of the site boundary (DEFRA, 2025).

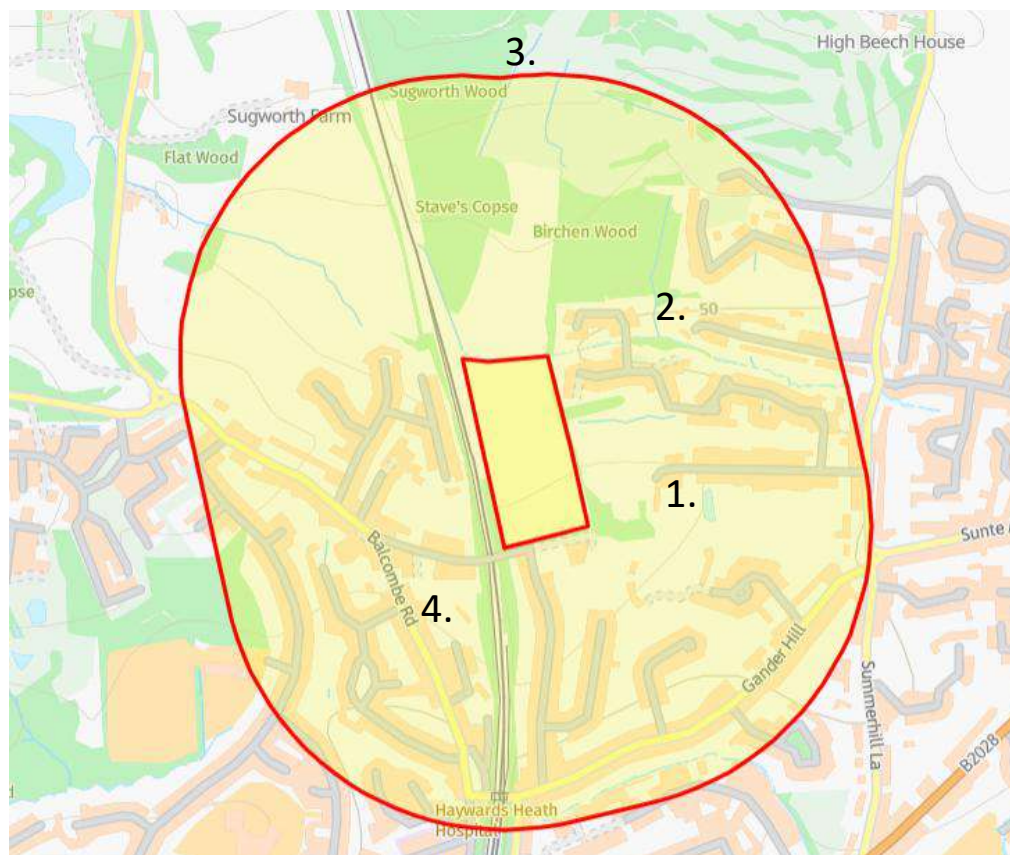


Table 16. Location and description of the 4 waterbodies located within 500m of the site.

Pond Number	Distance From the Site	Assessment (for GCN potential)
1	0.21km East	Large pond situated within the grounds of a large private dwelling. No access permitted to waterbody.
2	0.25km North-East	No access permitted to waterbody.
3	0.43km North	Moderately sized pond situated within the grounds of Haywards Heath golf course. Access was permitted to undertake initial HSI inspection however was not forthcoming to undertake subsequent eDNA analysis of the waterbody to determine presence/ absence.
4	0.16km South-West	Isolated ornamental pond situated centrally within a gated residential estate, with a number of water features present along its length. Notwithstanding the HSI result, it is noted that the result is slightly skewed by the number of ponds within 1km of the waterbody, with a high number of ponds situated approximately 0.76km west despite the presence of high-density residential dwellings significantly decreasing dispersal opportunities between these waterbodies. No access was permitted for eDNA analysis, however given the dispersal limitations outlined above, the waterbody is considered unsuitable to support GCN.

4.7.3 Habitat Suitability Index (HSI)

The results of the HSI assessments of the two accessible ponds found situated within 500m of the site boundary are provided below (**Table 17**).

Table 17. Results of the HSI assessment undertaken on accessible ponds the situated within 500m of the site boundary (as per ARG 2010).

Suitability Indices/ Score	Pond 3	Pond 4
Location	1	1
Pond area	0.7	0.1
Pond drying	0.9	0.9
Water quality	0.67	0.67
Shade	1	1
Waterfowl	1	1
Fish	0.7	0.7
Ponds within 1 km	0.95	1
Terrestrial habitat quality	0.33	0.33
Macrophytes	1	0.35
HSI Score	0.78 (Good)	0.58 (Below Average)

4.7.4 Evaluation

The grassland, woodland, scrub and rush pasture habitats within the site are considered suitable to support opportunities for terrestrial GCN. Whilst waterbody '4' is considered unsuitable to support GCN, due to restricted access to ponds within 500m of the site boundary scope to undertake further assessment (such as eDNA) to determine presence/absence of this species was limited. Notwithstanding the above, trapping presence/ absence surveys undertaken in 2014 in support of an adjacent planning application returned no positive results for GCN, with very limited opportunities for dispersal in the interim period, with further development in the immediate vicinity of the site further limiting opportunities for GCN to colonise local ponds in the interim period. With regards to the pond situated within the grounds of Haywards Heath golf course, whilst presence of GCN cannot be discounted in the absence of further survey work, based on the distance between the site and the waterbody (0.43km) and the abundance of alternative terrestrial habitat within the immediate vicinity of the waterbody, with the stream running along the northern boundary of the site representing a potential barrier to dispersal, the site is considered to offer **Low** potential to support GCN. As such, based on the above, it is considered proportionate to employ a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS).

4.8 Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) / Notable Birds

4.8.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned a relatively high volume of records for bird species within 2km of site boundary. Notable and relevant records returned based on the habitats present within the site included Woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*), Cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*), Lesser Redpoll (*Acanthis cabaret*), Bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*), Marsh Tit (*Poecile palustris*), Willow Warbler (*Phylloscopus trochilus*), Firecrest (*Regulus ignicapilla*), Song Thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), Mistle Thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*), Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (*Dryobates minor*) and Green Woodpecker (*Picus viridis*).

4.8.2 Breeding Bird Survey Results

A total of 20 bird species were recorded within the site during the survey period, with 9 species recorded as maintaining territory within or just beyond the site boundaries. Of the species observed, 11 appear on the Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BoCC5) as declining (red or amber lists) (Stanbury et al., 2021) and / or are listed as Species of Principle Importance (SoPI) under the NERC Act (2006). The notable species recorded on site are detailed in **Table 18** and **Figure 20**.

The majority of bird interest recorded on site was found to be from common garden and woodland species situated along the boundaries and hedgerows of the site, albeit some of these species are classified as amber or red listed species. These include but are not restricted to Stock Dove, Bullfinch, Mistle Thrush and Song Thrush. A single Nightingale was also noted during the May survey.

Table 18. Protected bird species, BoCC5 Red and Amber listed species and Species of Principle Importance recorded on site.

Species	Legal/Conservation Status	Number of Pairs, nest locations, Males holding territory on site
Dunnock (<i>Prunella modularis</i>)	BoCC5 (Amber) and SoPI	One territory noted along the north-western boundary of the site situated along the lineside estate.
Wren (<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>)	BoCC5 (Amber)	Two territories noted, one along the south-eastern boundary and one within the woodland situated adjacent to the sites northern boundary.
Marsh Tit (<i>Poecile palustris</i>)	BoCC5 (Red)	This species was not noted to hold territory within the site. Heard calling along the northern boundary of the site.
Song Thrush (<i>Turdus philomelos</i>)	BoCC5 (Amber)	This species was not noted to hold territory within the site. Heard calling along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site.
Nightingale (<i>Luscinia megarhynchos</i>)	BoCC5 (Red)	A single Nightingale was heard close to the site within the south-west corner of the site within the scrub along the railway line. Potential unpaired male.
House Sparrow (<i>Passer domesticus</i>)	BoCC5 (Red) and SoPI	This species was not noted to hold territory within the site. Heard calling along the northern boundary of the site.
Greenfinch (<i>Chloris chloris</i>)	BoCC5 (Red)	This species was not noted to hold territory within the site. Heard calling along the northern boundary of the site.
Stock Dove (<i>Columba oenas</i>)	BoCC5 (Amber)	This species was not noted to hold territory within the site. Heard calling along the eastern boundary of the site.
Wood Pigeon (<i>Columba palumbus</i>)	BoCC5 (Amber)	This species was not noted to hold territory within the site. Heard calling along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site.
Starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>)	BoCC5 (Red) and SoPI	Not noted as nesting on site, however recorded regularly foraging in the fields, with potential nesting close by areas to the south beyond the site boundary.
Bullfinch (<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>)	BoCC5 (Amber)	This species was not noted to hold territory within the site. Heard calling along the northern boundary of the site.

4.8.3 Evaluation

A total of 5 red-listed and 6 amber-listed Birds of Conservation Concern were found to be nesting/breeding within/adjacent the site or likely using the site/adjacent boundary habitats. Whilst the open fields do not provide optimal habitat for ground nesting birds, with significant disturbance from recreational use across the entire area, the woodland edges of the site are

varied in structure providing a range of opportunities for various woodland species. The majority of the territorial activity recorded during the survey period was beyond the northern and eastern boundaries of the site within the adjacent woodland habitat, with the western boundary also noted to support territories, however this was to a lesser extent given the sub-optimal habitat along this boundary given the level of disturbance (recreational and railway activity) and habitat management present in this area. Of the species noted to be likely nesting or holding territory on site Great Tit, Blue Tit, Robin and Wren are noted as 'Abundant', Marsh Tit, Dunnock, Chiffchaff and Great Spotted Woodpecker are noted as 'Very Common' and Nuthatch and Mistle Thrush are noted as 'Common' within the County of West Sussex.

Excluding the loss of a small section of woodland within the central portion of the site, the proposals entail the retention of the vast majority of the nesting habitat on site within the key ecological receptors identified for breeding birds on site (the woodland along the northern and eastern boundaries), with these areas to be supported by appropriate buffer zones and scope for ecological enhancements through targeted habitat creation/ enhancement. As such, given the relatively small numbers of breeding or suspected breeding pairs utilising habitats to be lost by the proposed works, it is not considered that the displacement of these numbers of 'abundant, very common or common' listed bird species would be significantly detrimental to the overall County populations.

Notwithstanding the above, on a more local level there will be a reduction in nesting and foraging resources within the site, however, given the existing level of disturbance on site from recreational use and adjacent railway operations due to the considered low number of BoCC5 Red & Amber listed nesting pairs/territories present on site and the categorisation of the species using the site as a nesting and foraging resource during the nesting season, it is not considered that the loss of bird populations and the communities present would be significantly detrimental, with the surrounding woodland which is noted to be of particular value to breeding/ nesting birds through the survey effort to be retained.

Figure 20. Noted bird territories across the site collated across the three breeding bird surveys carried out in 2025. The Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) listed status of each species is indicated, and each species is represented by its BTO species code.



4.9 Riparian Mammals

4.9.1 Pre-existing Information

SBIC returned one record of European Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) from within 2km of the site boundary, situated approximately 1.4km south-east of the site. Whilst the record appears to be situated along the same watercourse that runs approximately 11m to the north of the northern redline boundary of the site, it is noted that there are numerous significant sections where the watercourse runs through underground culverts and as such dispersal opportunities are considered negligible.

4.9.2 Site Assessment

No riparian or other suitable habitats are present within the site, with the nearest watercourse situated approximately 11m from the site's northern redline boundary. As such, the site is considered to be **Negligible** to support riparian mammals.

5.0 LIKELY ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS IN ABSENCE OF MITIGATION

5.1 Introduction

The CIEEM guidelines (CIEEM 2018) require that the potential impacts of the proposals should be considered in absence of mitigation. In order for a significant adverse effect to occur, the feature being affected must be at least of local value. However, in some cases, features of less than local value may be protected by legislation and/or policy and these are also considered within the assessment. Although significant effects may be identified at this stage of the assessment, it is often possible to provide appropriate mitigation.

5.2 Site Preparation and Construction

5.2.1 Impacts to Habitats

The proposals will predominantly involve the loss and works to areas of other neutral grassland, modified grassland, scrub, lowland mixed deciduous woodland and rush pasture which are considered to be of value at the **site – county** level of significance. The works will also take place adjacent to retained trees, woodland (including ancient woodland situated to the north of the proposed access route), tree lines and hedgerow considered to be of **local – county** level of significance, and could therefore result in damage by machinery, particularly by root compaction or loss. Consequently, it is considered that the loss of habitat and potential indirect effects across site would have an **adverse impact** to habitats of **site – county value**.

5.2.2 Impacts to Wildlife

5.2.2.1 Bats

Several trees located both within the site and along the site boundaries were noted to support potential roost features (PRF's). Trees to be impacted upon by the proposed development have been assessed as either negligible potential to support bats or PRF-I, requiring an appropriate precautionary working method statement. Any tree removal or remedial works to said trees may lead to the damage and destruction of bat roosts, should they be present. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation **an adverse impact is possible** (scale unable to be determined without species confirmation).

The proposed works will result in the loss of suitable foraging and commuting habitat utilised by a range of bat species. The site has been identified as being of at least county importance for foraging and commuting bats with registrations of nationally rare Annex II species Barbastelle bat also recorded. As such, in the absence of mitigation **an adverse impact is certain** at the **county level**.

5.2.2.2 Reptiles

The proposed scheme will result in the loss of habitat which has been assessed as offering suitable habitat for reptiles, with the site identified to support 'low' populations of grass snake and slow worm. As such, removal of suitable habitat without adequate mitigation could result in the harm or killing of reptiles which would constitute an offence under the W&CA, 1891. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation it is anticipated that the works would result in an **adverse impact** at the **site level**.

5.2.2.3 Badgers

There is potential for foraging and commuting Badgers on site. If mitigation is not taken during groundworks and creation of excavations as part of the development, there is potential for them to become trapped or injured during the works. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation an **adverse impact is possible** at the **Local level**.

5.2.2.4 Hazel Dormice

The proposed scheme will result in the loss of woodland and scrub habitat that have been recorded to support Hazel Dormice. Without mitigation procedures put in place, this would potentially result in the direct harm of individuals and a reduction to foraging/nesting resource, in addition to potential fragmentation impacts through severance of linear habitats. This would therefore be contrary to the provisions of the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations (2019). Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, it is considered that the works will result in an **adverse impact** at the **County level** of significance.

5.2.2.5 GCN

The site has been assessed as being of low potential for GCN and the proposed works will require the clearance of the grassland on site which are considered to offer suitable terrestrial habitat to support GCN. This has the potential to cause harm or even death of individual GCN, if present. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation, an **adverse impact is possible** at the **Local level**.

5.2.2.6 Breeding and Nesting Birds

A total of 11 species of birds noted to be Birds of Conservation Concern were recorded as using the site as a resource or likely using the site. Any impacts on the tree lines, areas of scrub, hedgerow, and woodland on site could result in the disturbance of nesting birds and damage to their nests if conducted during the nesting season. As such, removal of suitable habitat without adequate mitigation could potentially constitute an offence under the W&CA, 1981 Therefore, in the absence of mitigation it is considered that the works will result in an **adverse impact** at the **local level**.

5.3 Site Operation

5.3.1 Impacts to Nocturnal Wildlife

The works will result in an increase in lighting within the general area from external lighting on the new dwellings / street lighting. This can affect the behaviour, particularly foraging, of nocturnal wildlife (i.e. bats, Badgers, Hazel Dormice). Therefore, in the absence of mitigation an **adverse impact is likely** on nocturnal species.

5.3.2 Impacts to Designated Sites

Wickham Woods Local Wildlife Site is situated approximately 0.07km north of the site boundary, with established public rights of way present both within the woodland and links the site along the northern and western boundaries. Notwithstanding this, as the development will result in a net increase of dwellings, it is considered that the development will result in a minor increase in recreational pressure on the designated site. However, given

the established footpaths and walkways in this area, in addition to the POS provided by the scheme to offset recreational pressure, it is considered that only a ***minor adverse impact is possible.***

6.0 MITIGATION, COMPENSATION AND ENHANCEMENTS

6.1 Introduction

The below sections outline the recommended measures to mitigate against any identified impact and where required provide proportionate compensation. In addition to this, measures to provide species specific ecological enhancements are provided, with recommendations for habitat enhancements outlined in the BNG HMMP report that will accompany this application.

6.2 Protection of Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland

Areas of woodland, hedgerow, tree lines and individual trees are due to be retained as part of the proposed works and will be appropriately protected using Heras fencing or similar to prevent access by machinery. Where large mature trees are present, they will be protected using standard arboricultural tree protection measures which include protection of the canopy and prevents root compaction. Access will not be permitted behind this fencing by construction personnel.

Whilst the proposed access road encroaches within the minimum 15m buffer zone of Birchen Road situated to the north of the site, following review of numerous alternative design options, the proposed design is considered to provide the least arboriculturally harmful route to the site (SJA, 2026). The proposed design comprises of an elevated carriageway to minimise both the level of encroachment and impact to RPZ's. Furthermore, it is considered that the watercourse situated to the north of the site boundary acts as a root barrier to the ancient woodland to the north of the proposed access route and as such it is considered that neither the hydrology or soil conditions within the ancient woodland will be altered, with all trees situated within the ancient woodland to be retained (SJA, 2026). All works will adhere to recommendations outlined within the arboricultural implications report to minimise impacts to both the adjacent ancient woodland and RPA's of retained trees on site, which includes the provision of appropriate RPZ's, tree protection fencing and geogrid/ geotextile membranes utilised where appropriate (SJA, 2026).

This will also provide protection for wildlife species that may be using the margins of the site including bats, reptiles, Hazel Dormice and other mammals. No vehicles will enter the protective ring fencing and no materials will be stored within their circumference. All protective fencing must be in place prior to any construction machinery arriving on site, before any works on site get underway, and will remain in place until all work is completed. This will minimise the level of disturbance within the boundary habitats during the works and ensure the habitats and any wildlife species that may be using them are protected.

6.3 Bats

6.3.1 Site Design

The site layout will retain the key areas of value for foraging and commuting bats identified on site with the woodland habitats situated along the sites boundaries to be retained, with the exclusion of the removal of a short section of hedgerow to facilitate access within the north-eastern corner of the site. Following the identification of Barbastelle bat utilization of

the site, a minimum 6m buffer will be provided along the sites northern, eastern and southern boundaries (along the sites northern and eastern boundaries this buffer zone is generally larger across the site to provide suitable root protection zones for surrounding woodland/ trees) with a minimum 5m buffer zone provided along the sites western boundary. Habitats within these buffer zones will be retained and enhanced through a mixture of scrub planting to create shrubby/ transitional edges and creation/ retention of species-rich grassland habitat buffers managed to support long sward heights in order to enhance the available foraging opportunities for bat assemblages utilizing the site (**Fig 21**). Additional reinforcement planting of the boundary hedgerows will be also undertaken were required to further enhance the suitability of the retained green corridors and therefore continue to provide valuable foraging area and commuting route for bats utilizing the site. Dark corridors will also be provided to limit disturbance to foraging and commuting bats and maintain connectivity across the site.

A road is proposed to cut through a section of woodland within the north-eastern corner of the site. This road will be single-track and has been designed to minimise ecological impacts and ensure retention of mature trees were possible. Notwithstanding this, removal of a number of mature trees is required due to the proposed location representing the only feasible location due to a number of limiting constraints, including minimising ecological impacts/ habitat removal. Existing mature trees situated either side of the proposed access road will be retained, with the height of the existing specimens providing bat 'hop-over' features (using crowns of trees) within the canopy. Additional scrub/shrub planting will also be undertaken either side of the access route following completion of the road to maintain connectivity across this feature.

6.3.2 Sensitive Lighting

A detailed sensitive lighting strategy will be provided as part of the scheme and will follow the general guidelines as set out below.

6.3.2.1 Lighting During the Construction Phase

In order to avoid any disturbance to bats (and other potential nocturnal wildlife) construction works should be limited to daylight hours and should not be undertaken 30 minutes prior to dusk through to dawn. All lighting should be sensitive to the use of the site by nocturnal wildlife, for example by including low-level downward-facing / hooded lights that are sensor-operated where possible.

Figure 21. Overview of site design indicating those features of particular benefit to roosting, foraging and commuting bats.



6.3.2.2 Lighting Post Construction Phase

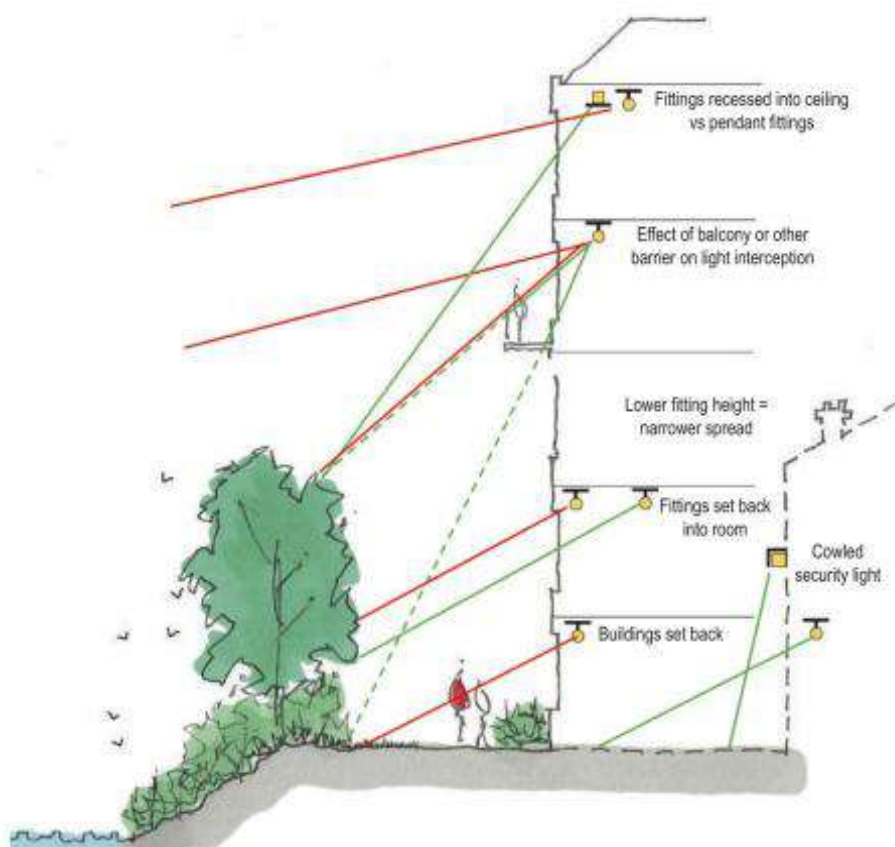
It is recommended that any lighting complies with the following the newly published *Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at night* (ILP / BCT, 2023) produced via a collaboration between the Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) and the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT), which outlines the latest recommendations to minimise the impacts of increased artificial lighting on bats. The key recommendations within this document have been outlined below and will be implemented as far as is practicable:

'Light sources, lamps, LEDs and their fittings come in a myriad of different specifications which a lighting professional can help to select. However, the following should be considered when choosing luminaires and their potential impact on Key Habitats and features:

- *All luminaires will lack UV elements when manufactured. Metal halide, compact fluorescent sources should not be used*
- *LED luminaires will be used where possible due to their sharp cut-off, lower intensity, good colour rendition and dimming capability*
- *A warm white light source (2700Kelvin or lower) will be adopted to reduce blue light component*
- *Light sources will feature peak wavelengths higher than 550nm to avoid the component of light most disturbing to bats (Stone, 2012)*
- *Internal luminaires can be recessed (as opposed to using a pendant fitting - See **Fig 22**) where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill*
- *Waymarking inground markers (low output with cowls or similar to minimise upward light spill) to delineate path edges (see Case Study 1)*
- *Column heights will be carefully considered to minimise light spill and glare visibility. This should be balanced with the potential for increased numbers of columns and upward light reflectance as with bollards*
- *Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, should be considered - See ILP GN01*
- *Luminaires will always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt*
- *Where appropriate, external security lighting will be set on motion sensors and set to as short a possible a timer as the risk assessment will allow. For most general residential purposes, a 1 or 2 minute timer is likely to be appropriate*
- *Use of a Central Management System (CMS) with additional web-enabled devices to light on demand Use of motion sensors for local authority street lighting may not be feasible unless the authority has the potential for smart metering through a CMS*
- *The use of bollard or low-level downward-directional luminaires is strongly discouraged. This is due to a considerable range of issues, such as unacceptable glare, poor illumination efficiency, unacceptable upward light output, increased upward light scatter from surfaces and poor facial recognition which makes them unsuitable for most sites. Therefore, they should only be considered in specific cases where the lighting professional and project manager are able to resolve these issues. See Case Study 6*

- Only if all other options have been explored, accessories such as baffles, hoods or louvres can be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed. However, due to the lensing and fine cut-off control of the beam inherent in modern LED luminaires, the effect of cowls and baffles is often far less than anticipated and so should not be relied upon solely'

Figure 22. Internal lighting mitigation options (ILP, 2023)



6.3.3 Dark Corridors and Lighting Buffers

Dark corridors will also be provided to limit disturbance to foraging and commuting bats and maintain connectivity across the site. Dark corridors will be incorporated along the key areas of interest to bats (site boundaries) forming habitat buffers (**Fig 21**). It is recommended that no lighting is incorporated within these areas. Should any lighting be necessary, it will follow the recommendations as set out in **Section 6.3.3** above, and it is recommended that the dark corridor is kept at a lux level at or below 1 lux (ILP / BCT, 2023) to ensure that there is no adverse impact upon bat assemblages utilising the site. This will be important as whilst some of the more common species recorded most frequently on-site (*P.pipistrellus*) can opportunistically feed on the Craneflies, Midges and Lacewings that are attracted to the light sources that emit an ultraviolet component (or have a high blue spectral) (ILP / BCT, 2018), this is not true for all species, with the broad winged slower flying species (such as *Plecotus* spp, *Myotis* spp and *Barbastelles*) have all been shown to typically avoid street lighting (Stone et al., 2015).

The buffers will be planted with native tree, scrub, and species-rich wildflowers to enhance foraging interest within the site. Additional reinforcement planting of the boundary hedgerows will be also undertaken were required to further enhance the suitability of the retained green corridors and therefore continue to provide valuable foraging area and commuting route for bats utilizing the site.

Sensitive lighting will also be adopted around retained veteran trees (TN71, TN73 and TN74) situated centrally within the site (**Fig 21**) to ensure that bats potentially utilizing these trees as roosting features are not adversely impacted, with commuting and foraging corridors to these features and the wider environ maintained.

6.3.4 Habitat Retention, Compensation and Enhancements

As part of the proposals, the majority of the boundary habitats will be retained, of which were noted to be of high importance to local bat species, including Barbastelle. To protect the commuting and foraging habitat available on site, the dark corridor boundaries of the site will be enhanced through targeted planting and habitat management. Whilst areas of rush pasture habitat that represent suitable foraging resources on site will be retained or translocated (both within the SUDs basin and along the southern boundary) within dark corridor zones to maintain this resource on site, to compensate for the loss of foraging resources on site in the form of other-neutral grassland and woodland/tree lines within the north-eastern portion of the site, the buffer zones will be retained/ enhanced to create a species-rich grassland habitat buffer managed to support a long sward height in order to enhance the available foraging opportunities for this species within the site (**Fig 21**). A mixture of scrub and shrub planting will also be undertaken along the sites eastern and southern boundaries to create shrubby/ transitional edges. In addition, the southern boundary will be significantly enhanced to support an area of greenspace comprising of a mosaic of translocated rush pasture habitat, species-rich grassland, native scrub and trees to compensate and enhance the foraging resource for local bat assemblages on site. An appropriate seed mix should be selected to maximize the invertebrate interest on site. In addition, fruit bearing trees, providing food sources for insects and small mammals during the autumn and winter and nest sites for birds during the spring and summer, will be utilised. Species that are proposed for implementation within the schemes landscaping design (DJA, 2026) includes species such as Oak (*Quercus robur*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*), Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)

6.3.5 Precautionary Working Method Statement (Trees)

Several trees were identified as containing PRF-I features and as such, in accordance with the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (2025), any works or remedial works to these trees will follow a precautionary working method statement (PWMS) (*It is understood that TN4 represents the only tree identified to support PRF's to be removed as part of the proposed scheme*). The following PWMS will be undertaken to ensure no bats are harmed in the unlikely case that individuals are present on site.

Bats are most vulnerable during the maternity season and the hibernation period. Therefore, it is recommended that trees works avoid the maternity season (May - August) and hibernation period (November – February). Optimal time for works is generally considered to be in spring and autumn when bats are least vulnerable to disturbance (Reason & Wray, 2023). Works will take place in suitable weather conditions (i.e. it is dry/calm and temperatures are no lower than 8°C for at least an hour or two from dusk on 3-4 consecutive nights prior to works) (Reason & Wray, 2023).

Immediately prior to removal, the identified PRF's on the impacted tree(s) will be subject to close-inspection surveys to rule out the presence of bats. Once bats have been confirmed as absent the tree will be removed. If any cavities/crevices/voids that may support roosting bats are uncovered during works, the tree will require further assessment through endoscopy of potential features and felling under the supervision of a suitability qualified ecologist. All works will be done under supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist. All PWMS must be undertaken immediately prior to the removal or works to each tree.

In the unlikely instance that a bat or evidence of bats is found during any works, all works must immediately stop and the ecologist must be informed. Natural England will then need to be contacted in order to obtain a European Protected Species development licence before any further works proceed. It is essential that these processes are immediately followed to ensure that no offence is committed under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

6.3.6 Bat Boxes

To enhance the provision of roosting resources on site, roosting opportunities will be provided in the form of bat boxes which will be installed on suitable trees and integrated into new erected dwellings. A total of 50% of the new dwellings will incorporate integrated bat bricks to provide an uplift in the available roosting resources within the site, with the features ideally positioned on an elevation which will benefit from some degree of sunlight exposure and be located away from windows. These bricks will be installed following the below guidance from the Bat Conservation Trust (2024).

"In summary, locate boxes:

- *Where bats are known to feed and navigate (close to hedges and tree lines);*
- *Ideally at least 4m above the ground (where safe installation is possible);*
- *Away from artificial light sources (to protect them from predation);*
- *Sheltered from strong winds; and*
- *Exposed to the sun for part of the day (usually south, south-east or south-west)."*

In addition, a total of 6 bat boxes will be erected on suitable trees on site to provide additional roosting opportunities. The following boxes are recommended to provide roosting resources for both crevice and void dwelling species :

- 2 No General-Purpose Wood Concrete Bat Box

- 2 No Large Multi Chamber WoodStone Bat Box
- 2 No Schwegler 1FF Woodcrete Bat box (or similar)

The bat boxes will be erected by or under the supervision of an ecologist to ensure they are placed in the most appropriate / effective locations.

6.4 Rush Pasture

Whilst the site has been designed to retain as much rush pasture habitat in situ as possible on site, due to feasibility constraints of the site (largely due to the significant limitations regarding suitable access routes), it is proposed that areas of existing rush pasture that require removal, will be translocated to suitable locations on site to retain this habitat on site and ensure that there is no net loss of this priority habitat type.

As shown on **Fig 23** below, approximately 301m² of this habitat will be retained within the northern boundary of the site (with an appropriate boardwalk design to be implemented to facilitate public access whilst minimising impacts to retained habitat), with 500m² to be incorporated within the proposed SUDs situated within the north-eastern portion of the site, with a further 1852m² to be translocated within the southern greenspace area proposed along the southern boundary of the site. In addition to the presence an area of *Holcus-Juncus* neutral grassland situated along the southern boundary of the site indicating poorly-drained conditions, the ground condition investigations undertaken by Ridge (2025) confirmed the presence of predominantly clay substrate across the site with poor soil infiltration rate recorded during soakaway testing and comparable water table levels between the existing and proposed translocation area. As such the proposed areas are considered suitable to support successful translocation of this habitat.

Prior to the commencement of the translocation, the donor site will be cut to 50-75mm above ground level (this will be done in 2 stage approach to avoid impacts to reptiles as outlined in section 6.5) with arising removed. The initial proposed methodology suggested the removal of the rush pasture by excavating it with a substantial depth of topsoil, ensuring the inclusion of the rushes' roots and rhizomes. This will either be collected as turves or loose soil depending on the ground conditions. Where feasible to do so, translocation works should take place during the dormant season for terrestrial habitats in October – February. In the first instance all material should be transported on the same day, however where this is not possible (i.e. prior to the preparation of the receptor/ SUDs basin or until they are fully formed), the turves/ soil will be stored in a pile and covered on top and sides with black plastic or tarpaulin to prevent it from drying out, but not fully sealed. This way it can be stored for several months until it can be planted around the new SUDs on the site and promote viability of the translocation works.

Figure 23. Proposed Rush Pasture Translocation Plan



6.5 Reptiles

6.5.1 Introduction

Due to the legal protection relating to reptiles, it is necessary to implement mitigation to ensure these animals are not harmed as a result of the proposed vegetation clearance works and to ensure that there is no net reduction in the conservation status of reptiles in the local area. Therefore, this mitigation strategy has been produced in accordance with best practice guidelines relating to reptiles and development, published by Gent & Gibson (1998) and the HGBI (1998). The desirable approach is to avoid any habitat clearance within the areas used by reptiles. Where this is not possible, reptiles should be moved to areas within the site that are to be retained, enhanced and managed to provide suitable habitat (relocation).

6.5.2 Receptor Area

6.5.2.1 Location & Description

Whilst it anticipated that the entire of the southern greenspace area will be accessible to reptiles alongside the retained habitat along the northern, eastern and western boundaries, in order to facilitate the translocation of rush pasture habitat to southern portion of the site, a temporary receptor area will be utilised to ensure reptiles are not harmed as part of the proposed works.

The area displayed in **Fig 24**, below, will be utilised as a temporary receptor during construction works to ensure reptiles are translocated into a safe retained location, which also enables dispersal into surrounding habitats beyond the sites southern, western and northern boundaries. During site operation (and once the rush pasture habitat along the southern

boundary has been successfully translocated), the temporary reptile fencing will be removed, and reptiles will have free roam of the habitats along both the southern boundary and surrounding habitats.

Figure 24. Reptile Mitigation Strategy/ Exclusion Fencing Plan



6.5.2.2 Receptor Preparation

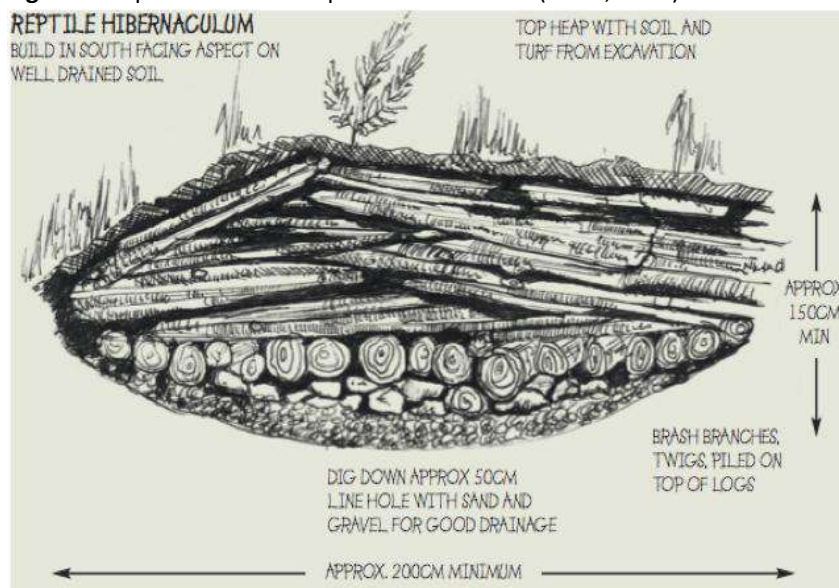
The existing receptor habitats comprise of a mixture of grassland (managed to both long and short sward heights), woodland and scrub habitat types. Prior to the commencement of translocation activities, the temporary receptor habitat areas will be enhanced and managed for the benefit of reptiles to ensure that the habitats are suitable to support reptiles. Targeted habitat measures to address biodiversity net gain gain/ species specific habitat enhancements/ landscaping (such as grassland seeding/ enhancement) within these areas that require significant impact to these habitats should also be undertaken prior to translocation works.

Where such habitat management is required, precautionary measures will be carried out to avoid impacts to reptiles. This will involve habitats being reduce to ground level in two stages, first to 15cm and then to ground level following a period of at least 24 hours to allow reptiles to dispersal. This will be directional toward suitable areas of retained habitat. Following management works it will be necessary to ensure this area is not cut or grazed for at least 2 – 3 months (during the spring / summer period to allow the growth of vegetation) prior to any relocation works taking place.

Additionally, within the receptor site, a wood-based hibernacula will be constructed to provide reptiles with a suitable area to hibernate in. This will be created following the

specification outlined within Reptile Habitat Management: Guidelines for Landowners (HART, 2009) (Fig 25).

Figure 25. Specification for reptile hibernaculum (HART, 2009)



6.5.3 Set-Up & Protection of Retained Habitats

Initial habitat manipulation will be implemented across the site if required. Any longer grass will be cut to reduce the sward height to 15cm. Vegetation will be cleared in a directional approach (working towards boundary habitats), encouraging reptiles away from the area of impact towards suitable habitat out of harms way. This will be undertaken during the active season for reptiles (April – September). One-way exclusion fencing will then be installed around the perimeter of the site and retained buffers that will form the receptor area for translocation operations. This will provide a division between the ‘working’ areas (i.e. those areas where humans and machinery will disturb the ground) to prevent reptiles passively moving across the site. The fencing will remain in place until all works are completed. The barrier will also illustrate the retained ecology areas.

All fencing will be made from robust HDPE material. In order to remain in line with the best practice guidance (English Nature, 2001) the following points will be addressed in the installation of the one-way exclusion fence and semipermanent drift fence;

- Fencing installation will be carried out under the supervision of an ecologist
- The grass within the proposed fence line will first be strimmed down to 10 – 15 cm then searched and cleared of any reptiles prior to the digger being on site to dig the trench.
- The fencing layout will avoid gaps through which reptiles could pass.
- The fence will be erected to a height of 600 mm above ground level with depth of 250 mm (to include a lip) to prevent reptiles from passing underneath.
- The backfill will be placed turf downwards in the trench to suppress re-growth of grass.

- All fence trenches will be filled on the same day as being dug. Artificial refugia will then be distributed throughout the site. The refugia used will be a mixture of bitumen roofing felt and corrugated metal.

6.5.4 Capture and Translocation

Reptile relocation entails the capture of reptiles from the construction area (donor site) and release into the on-site site receptor area. The relocation would be carried out in accordance with guidance published by the HGBI (1998). The methodology used for capture of reptiles is the same as that used during survey. Artificial refugia made from materials such as roofing felt and corrugated metal allow reptiles to be detected and captured relatively easily. These artificial refugia warm up faster and retain heat for longer than the ground or surrounding vegetation, reptiles, being exothermic will shelter under the refuges in order for their bodies to reach the temperature required for activity. The reptiles can then be captured by experienced field ecologists who regularly visit each refuge during suitable weather conditions.

Reptile exclusion fencing around the receptor area will prevent the movement of reptiles back into the area of impact (**Fig 24**). In accordance with the HGBI guidelines (1998), artificial refugia should be distributed across the site at a minimum density of 50/ha although a considerably higher density of refugia will be used in order to maximise the catching potential, particularly in areas where the density of reptiles recorded during the survey was found to be higher. Captured reptiles would then be transported to the receptor area in appropriate containers such as buckets with perforated lids.

6.5.4 Effort and Timing

Despite the recommendation for 90 capture days (as per **Table 19** reproduced from HGBI 1998), it is considered a lower figure than this would be appropriate (***estimated at 30 days***) although this can be reviewed during the capture works (***i.e. should the capture rates be higher than anticipated, the full 60 days will likely be required***). Capture visits will continue until 5 consecutive visits have been carried out in ideal weather conditions² where no reptiles are captured (or seen). This approach is based on survey guidance (Highways Agency, 2005), which suggests that a minimum of five visits are required to establish whether reptiles are present or likely to be absent from a site, during a standard survey. Therefore, if no reptiles are recorded after five consecutive visits (in optimal survey conditions), it can be concluded that reptiles are likely to be absent from the site (or the capture works complete).

² Suitable weather conditions are generally considered to be between 10 and 18°C with intermittent sunshine and little or no wind and rain (see Froglife 1999).

Table 19. The minimum capture effort for common reptile species based on HGBI (1998). The figures relevant to this scheme are emboldened.

Species	Population Size (adult density)	Refugia Density / ha	Minimum No of Trapping Days in Good Weather
Slow Worm	High (> 100 / ha)	100	All suitable days between March and September (min 90 suitable days)
	Medium (> 50 / ha)	100	All suitable days between march and September (min 70 suitable days)
	Low (< 50 / ha)	50	60 Suitable days
Grass Snake	High (> 4 / ha)	100	All suitable days between March and September (min 90 suitable days) – <i>estimated at 60 days</i>
	Medium (> 2-4 / ha)	100	All suitable days between march and September (min 70 suitable days)
	Low (< 2 / ha)	50	60 Suitable days

6.5.5 Destructive Search

Following the conclusion of the relocation, a destructive search of the site may be necessary. This would entail the sensitive stripping of vegetation on site using a toothed bucket where habitat is suitable for reptiles and can be focused on areas where reptile numbers were highest.

6.5.6 Protection & Management of Receptor Area

6.5.6.1 During Construction

The boundary of the construction area will be marked by semi-permanent 1mm HDPE reptile fence with the receptor fencing positioned behind Heras/ tree protection fencing or similar placed where feasible to provide an additional layer of protection. Signage will be placed on this fence with phrases such as:

Protected Reptile Habitat, Do Not Disturb

This level of protection will remain in place for the duration of the construction works and any repairs in the HDPE fence will be made as necessary. Upon completion of the construction works, these fences will be removed.

6.5.6.2 Management of Receptor

The habitats within the receptor area on site will be managed specifically to benefit reptiles (whilst also benefiting the wildflowers on site and providing resources for a range of other species). During cuts, the grassland will be cut to a height of no shorter than 30cm using hand held tools (such as a strimmer) to ensure that reptiles are not harmed during the cutting process. Scrub management will also be undertaken as required to prevent encroachment and ensure the long-term suitability of the area for reptiles. Some informal grass paths will be maintained in these areas providing basking opportunities and a varied sward height.

All management works as described above should be secured through an appropriate agreement such as a planning condition, that will oblige the developer to carry out the works. The responsibilities for the long-term management will be adopted by a (yet to be appointed) management company.

6.6 Hazel Dormice

Following the confirmed presence of Hazel Dormice utilising the site, whilst the site layout has been designed to avoid the removal of suitable Dormouse habitat where possible, based on the proposed site layout a Dormouse EPS mitigation licence from Natural England will be required to facilitate the proposed works that impact areas of suitable Dormouse habitat. The following mitigation strategy will be adopted to ensure that the works do not result in a negative impact to the conservation status of Hazel Dormice.

6.6.1 Dormouse Mitigation Strategy (Habitat Removal – EPS Licence)

6.6.1.1 Vegetation Clearance (Single Stage)

The proposals will involve the removal of approximately 0.06ha of suitable Hazel Dormouse habitat in the form of deciduous woodland, native hedgerow and mixed scrub. Given the relatively small area of habitat removal required and with the habitat considered suitable to undertake appropriate finger-tip searches prior to clearance, single-stage methodology is considered to be appropriate.

Vegetation clearance will be undertaken once an EPS has been granted by Natural England, with the works adopting a single stage active season approach as outlined within the Dormouse Mitigation Handbook (Wells et al, 2025). In line with this guidance, works will take place outside of the core breeding periods (June - September inclusive) and avoid the hibernation period (late November – March) and as such, the most appropriate timings would be April - May and late September – October. Prior to clearance, 10 No. Dormouse nest boxes will be placed into retained woodland habitat beyond the area of impact to act as receptors in the event of any Dormice being found (**Fig 26**). Any Dormice discovered during the works will either be left undisturbed in place (if deemed safe by the ecologist) or will be relocated to a retained habitat in a similar location to where they were found (e.g. if the animal is found within leaf litter, then the animal will be placed in leaf litter).

All works will be undertaken under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist, with a toolbox talk provided to operatives prior to commencement to inform them of the potential presence of dormice, their legal status, means of identification, habitat requirements, the

methodologies required to avoid impacts on the species and what they should do if a dormouse is found. A written record that this has been undertaken, signed by attendees, will be kept and made available to Natural England should it be required.

Given the relatively small area of habitat that is proposed for removal to facilitate the works, Dormice will not be displaced more than 150m in accordance with best practice guidance (the longest area requiring clearance is approximately 50m in length). All works will be undertaken in a directional fashion to passively encourage Dormice to move away from the works area towards retained, suitable hedgerow / treeline habitat. Where areas of scrub are being cut, this will be done directionally towards the retained habitats (**Fig 26**). All arisings will be chipped on site immediately. In alignment with the precautionary working methodology for bats detailed in *section 6.3.5*, prior to removal, suitable cavities will be inspected for Dormouse occupation under the supervision of a suitability qualified ecologist.

Figure 26. Dormouse Mitigation Plan



6.6.1.2 Protecting Retained Features

Prior to construction works commencing the retained woodland/ hedgerows will be protected from damage during the works. They will be fenced using Heras fencing or similar to prevent access by machinery. Where large mature trees are present, they will be protected using standard arboricultural tree protection measures which include protection of the canopy and prevention of root compaction. Access will not be permitted behind this fencing by construction personnel. This will protect Dormouse habitat from direct damage/disturbance and dust. Signage will also be added (on top of the usual warnings for tree protective fencing) stating things such as:

Protected Dormouse Habitat

It is an Offence to Damage / Disturb this Habitat

This will also provide protection for wildlife species, including Badgers, that may be using the margins of the site as well as bats, invertebrates and other mammals. No vehicles will enter the protective ring fencing and no materials will be stored within their circumference. All protective fencing must be in place prior to any construction machinery arriving on site, before any works on site get underway, and will remain in place until all work is completed. This will minimise the level of disturbance within the boundary habitat / buffer areas during the works and ensure the habitats and any wildlife species that may be using them are protected.

6.6.1.3 Dormouse Boxes

In order to increase the carrying capacity of the boundary habitats and provide additional nesting resources to compensate for the loss of suitable habitat, 10 No. Dormouse nest boxes will be erected on suitable trees within the retained woodland habitat surrounding the site (**Fig 26**).

6.6.1.4 Habitat Compensation/Connectivity

The permanent loss of approximately 0.06ha of habitat will be compensated through the combination of appropriate creation/enhancement of suitable habitat within the site, with 0.12ha of mixed scrub/ woodland edge habitat to be created within the habitat buffers along the eastern boundaries to create a transitional species-rich woodland edge habitat within the ecology buffer along these boundaries. The buffer will be planted with a variety of native shrubs to form a natural woodland edge environment. Planting density will seek to achieve a minimum of 2-3 plants per m² adjacent to the woodland, becoming sparser moving away from the woodland/hedgerow towards the east/south. This will allow a natural transition from woodland to scrub to grassland to develop, benefitting not only Dormice but also any reptiles that are translocated during the capture operations (see *section 6.5*).

Species that are proposed for implementation within the schemes landscaping design (DJA, 2026) within these proposed enhancement areas includes species such as Oak (*Quercus robur*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*), Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Field Maple (*Acer campastre*) and Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).

A road is proposed to cut through a section of woodland within the north-eastern corner of the site. This road will be single-track and has been designed to minimise ecological impacts and ensure retention of mature trees were possible. Notwithstanding this, removal of woodland in this area is required due to the proposed location representing the only feasible location due to a number of limiting constraints. In accordance with best practice guidance (Wells et al, 2025), where fragmentation is unavoidable, mitigation design will aim to minimise the size of gaps created, through the implementation of a single track road, retention of vegetation either side of the gap where feasible to do so and through targeted planting either side of the access road to reduce the gap further and allow for dispersal movements (**Fig 26**). Furthermore, as outlined within *section 6.6.1.4*, compensatory habitat in

the form of species rich mixed scrub will be planted to increase the overall carrying capacity of the on-site habitats for Dormice. Sensitive lighting measures will also be adopted at the proposed access route to further facilitate dispersal movements.

Whilst it is noted that the works will result in the isolation of a section of hedgerow within the central portion of the site, given the relatively poor quality and sparse structure of this habitat it is considered unsuitable to support Dormice (**Fig 27**), as such fragmentation impacts to this area are not anticipated. Notwithstanding this precautionary finger-tip inspections will be undertaken as part of the wider licenced works where appropriate.

Figure 27. Image showing the area of retained hedgerow that will be isolated within the north-western portion of the site as part of the proposed works.



6.6.2 Mitigating Operational Impacts

6.6.2.1 Habitat Buffers

A minimum habitat buffer of 5m will be maintained between the footprint of the development and suitable habitats to minimise disturbance during the operational phase of the development.

6.6.2.2 Cat Predation

To minimise the risk of cat predation once the houses have been completed and the new occupants moved in, thorny species (such as *Prunus spinosa*) will be included as part of mixed scrub creation and reinforcement planting where appropriate. As these species mature, they will provide a natural deterrent to cats moving into the Dormouse habitat on site.

6.6.2.3 Lighting

A sensitive lighting scheme for the site will be implemented as described in **Section 6.3.2** which includes specific recommendations for lighting types to mitigate against the impact of artificial lighting on nocturnal species.

6.7 Badgers

Although no evidence of Badgers was recorded on site the site does have potential to support foraging and commuting Badgers. Therefore, an updated walkover of the site will be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist in search of any recent or new Badger activity within 4 weeks of works commencing. In the case evidence of potential Badger setts are identified, further survey works may be required to assess the status of any potential Badger setts on site.

During the construction phase, any open excavations left overnight will either be covered to prevent commuting Badgers and other terrestrial mammals falling in or escape ladders will be used to prevent them from becoming trapped. Any open pipework will be checked and then capped nightly.

This will ensure there are no adverse impacts to Badgers, should they be present on site.

6.8 Great Crested Newt

6.8.1 Precautionary Working Method Statement

Given that the site has been assessed of holding low potential for Great Crested Newts, a full capture and trapping is not considered proportionate. Notwithstanding the above the given the limitations to the survey effort outlined in section 3.4 a precautionary working method statement (as outlined below) will be adhered to. It is anticipated that the recommended mitigation methods for reptiles will provide suitable degree of protection for GCN with additional measures outlined below.

6.8.1.1 Toolbox Talk

A suitably qualified ecologist must brief all site operatives, providing a Toolbox Talk. This briefing must include details of the legal protection of GCN, all precautionary steps that must be taken during the proposed works, an annotated key detailing the appearance, characteristics and optimal habitat of GCN as well as what actions need to be taken if a GCN is found on site.

6.6.1.2 Sensitive Habitat Removal

Longer areas of grass/ rushes will adopt a two-stage clearance approach as outlined in *section 6.5* followed by a fingertip search focusing on optimal GCN habitat such as tussocks. This must be carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any trees or shrubs requiring removal will be reduced in height gradually (50cm and then 10cm) under the direct supervision of an ecologist which will encourage any sheltering amphibians to move out of the area prior to removal of the scrub. An ecologist will undertake a fingertip search of the remaining scrub stalks / vegetation bases prior to clearance to ground level. Where common amphibians or reptiles are found, they will be moved to adjacent retained habitat/ receptor area (western and southern boundaries – see **Fig 24**)

6.6.1.3 Destructive Search

Following sensitive habitat removal, a destructive search of the site may be necessary (where rush pasture translocation is proposed this method will be adopted). This would entail the sensitive stripping of vegetation on site using a toothed bucket where habitat is suitable for

reptiles and can be focused on areas where reptile numbers were highest. This work must be supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist searching each bucket of removed vegetation and must be undertaken during the GCN active period (between March and October depending on the weather).

N.B. In the unlikely instance that any GCN are found during the works, all works must immediately stop and the ecologist must be informed with Nature Space or Natural England contacted in order to obtain a European Protected Species development licence or undertaken a site registration as part of the DLL scheme.

6.9 Breeding Birds

6.9.1 Mitigation

To avoid disturbance of nesting birds or damage to their nests, clearance of any trees and shrubs on site should be undertaken outside of the bird-nesting season (typically March – September, dependent on weather). If this is not possible, the area to be cleared should be thoroughly checked by an ecologist immediately prior to clearance. If any active nests are found they should be left undisturbed with a suitable buffer of undisturbed vegetation (ca. 5m) until nestlings have fledged.

6.9.2 Enhancements

As a general enhancement, any landscape planting will aim for a 70:30 ratio in favour of native species over non-natives and ornamentals (in line with the CIEEM guidance outlined within Smith & Day (2017)). This should include nectar, nut and berry producing species that will benefit birds using the site for feeding. Species that can be considered within any planting include: Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Holly (*Illex aquifolium*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). Non-natives and ornamentals will only be given a bias in formal locations where aesthetics is a priority.

6.9.3 Bird Boxes/ Bricks

In order to enhance the provision of nesting opportunities within the site, in accordance with the updated British Standard BS 42021:2022, newly constructed buildings will incorporate 1 No. Swift brick on a 1:1 ratio (In line within best practise guidance it anticipated that bricks will be positioned in clusters of 2-3 on select buildings). Suitable products include the 'CJ Wildlife Swift maxi nesting box' with entrance via a CJ Wildlife 'Cambridge Swift full-face brick' will be used (The Cambridge System is a concept comprising an entrance piece and a nest box embedded in the cavity and inner leaf. It is particularly suited to gable ends at roof-space level). These boxes will be installed following the below guidance from Swift Conservation (2022).

Swift bricks will be installed:

- At least 5m off of the ground
- With a clear entry route free from obstructions like trees or other buildings

- Away from windows to prevent predation
- At least 50-100cm apart
- In partial sunlight

Furthermore, 6 No. bird boxes will be erected onto retained mature trees on site in order to provide additional nesting opportunities for those species identified on site. The following boxes are recommended to provide additional nesting opportunities for a range of species :

- 3 No. Vivara Pro Seville WoodStone Nest Box (suitable for Blue Tit, Great Tit, and Coal Tit all identified on site) (**Fig 28**)
- 3 No. Vivara Pro Barcelona WoodStone Nest Box (suitable for Song Thrush, Robin, Wren and Blackbird all identified on site) (**Fig 28**)

Figure 28. Vivara Pro Seville nest box (left) and Vivara Pro Barcelona nest box to be erected on site (NHBS, 2025).



These boxes will be installed following the below guidance from the British Trust for Ornithology (2024). The Bird boxes will be located

- Independently to avoid aggression between neighbouring birds i.e. do not place the boxes in groups on a single tree.
- With shelter from the weather – place in a location with partial sunlight, angle slightly downwards to protect from rain, and avoid exposed locations with no wind protection.
- Approximately 3m off of the ground.
- Amongst creepers and shrubs for open-fronted boxes.
- Away from branches that could allow access by predators.

6.10 Design Consideration & Ecological Enhancements

6.10.1 Hedgehogs

To ensure permeability for small mammals across the site, gaps will be present within the gravel boards / bases of each fence line which adjoins other gardens or greenspaces. The gaps should be at least 15 cm high by 15 cm wide.

Small signage could be installed at these points to ensure they remain open upon completion of the development. The People's Trust for Endangered Species provide such signage, the purchase of which also supports conservation efforts (**Fig 29**).

Figure 29. Example of Hedgehog Highway signage to be placed above fence gaps provided to allow movements between gardens.



7.0 CONCLUSION

An Ecological Impact Assessment was undertaken of the site known as 'Land West of Gatesmead, Haywards Heath' in relation to the proposed development of 49 residential units with associated infrastructure and landscaping. The site has been identified to support habitats of Site-County value including rush pasture, neutral grassland and woodland. The site has also been identified as being of at least County value for foraging and commuting bats with species including Barbastelle, Serotine and Leisler's recorded utilising the habitats bounding the site, with a number of trees identified as supporting potential for roosting bats scoped for impact/ removal as part of the proposed works. The site also has confirmed presence of Hazel Dormice and common UK reptiles, with moderate potential for foraging and commuting Badgers and nesting birds. The site is also considered to support low potential for Great Crested Newt. Thorough mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures have been set out within this report including: retention of key foraging and commuting habitat for bats and other wildlife (including the provision of dark corridors); provision of new nesting and roosting opportunities for bats and birds; translocation (rush pasture) and retention of key habitats of value on site; appropriate measures to avoid harm and maintain the local conservation status of bats, reptiles, Hazel Dormice and nesting birds; with targeted habitat creation and enhancement features of benefit to those species that may be utilising the site. Therefore, it is considered that the measures within this report suitably mitigate against any potential impacts to the above noted species as a result of the development.

8.0 REFERENCES

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APPENDIX

Appendix A – UKHab Baseline Map

Appendix B – GLTA Tree Plan