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ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT **Land east of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint**

September 2026

BMD.22.0022.RPE-IA.003.ECIA

DOCUMENT HISTORY

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Declaration of compliance with professional code of ethics or conduct

The information which we have prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bonafide opinions.

Every reasonable attempt has been made to comply with the relevant best practice guidelines including BS 42020:2013, the Environment Act 2021 (Schedule 7a: Biodiversity Gain), the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), CIEEM EcIA Guidelines (2018, updated 2024), and relevant Natural England guidance.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Client Thakeham Homes Ltd.
Consultant Bradley Murphy Design Ltd.

SITE

Location Land east of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex.
National Grid Reference ... Approx. centre: TQ 29212 16026.
Over-view The Site comprises approximately of 5.4 hectares of grazed fields and associated plantation woodland, pond, and treelines with associated ditches. The Site is situated in the urban outskirts of the village of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks and to the south of the village of Hurst Wickham in the county of West Sussex. Burgess Hill town centre lies approximately 3.5 km north east of the Site
Landscape context The site is situated on the outskirts of the village of Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex. The site can be found on the eastern fringes of the village, between College Lane and Belmont Lane. The immediate surroundings consist of development to the immediate south and west and pasture/arable to the north and east.

DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING BACKGROUND

Proposed works Erection of 100 dwellings, with associated access, car parking, refuse/recycling storage, landscaping, infrastructure and works.
Planning stage Full Planning Application.

ECOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

General An Ecological Assessment of the Site was undertaken by BMD in August 2022, which informed the scope of subsequent Phase 2 surveys. Updated Phase 2 survey work and an ecological verification walkover have since been undertaken to inform the current Full Planning Application. Full details can be found within 22.0022.RPE.TN.001. Ecological Verification & 22.0022.RPE – P2.002. Eco Assessment.

SURVEY

Objectives
1. Establish the baseline ecological conditions at the Site
2. Identify any significant effects of the proposed scheme in the absence of mitigation.
3. Set out the ecological measures required to effectively avoid or mitigate any significant effects.
4. Identify any compensating measures required for any residual impacts.
5. Identify the potential ecological enhancement measures that would be delivered by the Scheme.
6. Provide confirmation that the Scheme complies with relevant legislation, policy and industry best practice.
Approach This Ecological Impact Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2018, updated 2024), which represent current best practice.
Date July 2026.
Results The Site lies approximately 200 m from the South Downs National Park boundary. The National Park is a landscape designation and is considered principally through landscape and planning assessment. In ecological terms, no significant effects on statutory nature conservation designations are predicted, subject to the mitigation measures set out in this EcIA. Reptile surveys in 2025 indicated the likely absence of reptiles on Site. The Site supports commuting and foraging habitat of local value only for bats and potential roosting features in trees; however, all trees are to be retained within the current proposals. The Site lies within a red NatureSpace Partnership great crested newt risk zone and local records are present. However, P1 and P2 returned negative eDNA results in 2023 and 2025, and the main suitable terrestrial habitats are largely associated with retained peripheral habitats. On this basis, a precautionary working method statement is considered proportionate and no significant adverse residual effect on great crested newt is anticipated. The published West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) has also been reviewed. None of the identified priorities are considered to apply specifically to the Site, with the exception of those relating to the retention and management of veteran trees. As confirmed within the accompanying arboricultural assessment, the trees on Site have been assessed and are not considered to qualify as veteran trees. Nevertheless, all trees are to be retained and managed as part of the proposed woodland enhancement works,

thereby supporting the long-term condition and ecological value of the Site in accordance with the overarching objectives of the LNRS. Embedded mitigation and habitat enhancement measures, together with the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain in accordance with the Environment Act 2021, ensure that no significant adverse residual ecological effects are predicted. The Proposed Development is therefore considered compliant with relevant national and local planning policy, including the objectives of the West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy, in respect of ecology and biodiversity.

Conclusions.....

With the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures set out within this EclA secured and implemented, no significant adverse residual ecological effects are anticipated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Key habitat of elevated ecological value should be retained and protected.

Mitigation measures for implementation during the construction stage are provided.

Opportunities for enhancement include the use of native and wildlife friendly species within any soft landscaping and the installation of bird, bat and invertebrate boxes

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

- 1.1.1 Bradley Murphy Design Ltd. (BMD) was commissioned by Thakeham Homes Limited in March 2026 to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) of their site: Land east of College Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex —hereafter referred to as ‘the Site’. The Site is approximately centred on national grid reference: TQ 29212 16026. A plan depicting the Site’s location is provided in the Appendix.
- 1.1.2 The EclA is informed by a desk study and habitat survey undertaken in 2022; great crested newt HSI/eDNA and reptile surveys undertaken in 2023; updated great crested newt eDNA and reptile survey work undertaken in 2025; and an ecological verification walkover undertaken in February 2026.
- 1.1.3 This Ecological Impact Assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2018, updated 2024), which represent current best practice and the *Biodiversity: Code of practice for planning and development* published by the British Standards Institute (BS 42020:2013).
- 1.1.4 This EclA aims to:
- Establish baseline ecological conditions at the Site;
 - Identify any likely significant effects of the proposed scheme, in the absence of mitigation, including cumulative impacts;
 - Set out any ecological measures necessary to effectively avoid or mitigate likely significant effects, and identify residual impacts;
 - Identify any compensation measures required to offset residual impacts;
 - Set out potential ecological enhancement measures that may be delivered by the proposed scheme;
 - Confirm how proposed mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures will be secured; and
 - Provide sufficient information to determine whether the project accords with relevant nature conservation policies and legislation, and where appropriate, to allow conditions or obligations to be proposed by the relevant authority.
- 1.1.5 An EclA can be used for appraisal of projects of any scale.
- 1.1.6 This EclA supersedes the previous Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (ref: BMD.22.0022.RPE/P1.801.-.Ecology).

2. LEGISLATION, PLANNING POLICY & STANDING ADVICE

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Legislation relating to wildlife and biodiversity of particular relevance to this EclA includes National, Regional and Local planning policies such as:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (2026);
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended);
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000);
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
- The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996;
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
- The Environment Act 2021;
- West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) (2026);
- Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2031);
- Mid Sussex District Plan (2014-2031);
- South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan (2026-2031).

2.1.2 The above legislation has been addressed, as appropriate, in the production of this report. Further information on the above legislation is provided in the Appendix.

2.2 National Planning Policy

2.2.1 The NPPF places strong emphasis on achieving net gain in all developments (not just 'no net loss') through the planning system's purpose of achieving sustainable development (HM Government 2026). The NPPF notes three overarching objectives to achieve sustainable development and opportunities to be taken. The environmental objective relates to biodiversity:

- *"to support efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy; and to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, and minimising waste and pollution."* (NPPF Paragraph 17, HM Government 2026).

2.2.2 The following objectives and policies are of particular relevance to the Development of the Site and are set out in Chapter 19 of the NPPF, 'Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment':

- N1: Identifying environmental opportunities and safeguards: *"Development plans should safeguard and enhance the natural environment, and reflect the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services, by using Local Nature Recovery Strategies, Protected Landscape Management Plans, River Basin Management Plans, National Forest Strategies, Community Forest Plans and other relevant evidence at the most appropriate level..."*;

- N2: Improving the natural environment: *“To contribute positively to the natural environment, and support nature’s recovery...”*;
- N3: Trees in development: *“In recognition of the benefits which trees can provide for biodiversity, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and the character and quality of the built environment...”*; and,
- N6: Areas of particular importance for biodiversity and geodiversity: *“To support the conservation of important habitats, species and sites of geodiversity value...”*.

2.3 Local Planning Policy

- 2.3.1 A number of local planning policies relate to ecology, biodiversity and/or nature conservation. These are briefly summarised below and have been addressed, as appropriate, in the production of this report. These policies are outlined in full detail within the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Ref: BMD.22.0022.RPE-P1.801.-.Ecology).

West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) (June 2026)

- 2.3.2 The West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and interactive map was published in June 2026. The document sets out the main principles and priorities for nature recovery in West Sussex and the actions needed to deliver them. The LNRS has been reviewed in relation to the proposed development at the Site to ensure post-development biodiversity enhancements align with the strategic priorities identified for the Site.
- 2.3.3 Following review of the published LNRS, none of the identified priorities or measures are considered to apply specifically to the Site, with the exception of those relating to the retention and management of veteran trees. As confirmed within this report and the Arboricultural report (Ref: TGA. 2786.TreeSurveyRevA), the trees on the Site have been assessed and are not considered to qualify as veteran trees. Nevertheless, the existing mature trees and woodland will be retained where appropriate and managed as part of the proposed woodland enhancement works, ensuring the development supports the long-term condition and ecological value of these habitats in accordance with the overarching objectives of the LNRS.

Hurstpierpoint & Sayers Common Neighbourhood Plan (2015-2031)

- 2.3.4 The key policies within the Neighbourhood Plan related to ecology and the Site include:
- **Policies HurstC1-HurstC6 – Countryside, Landscape and Conservation** - Development proposals must protect and enhance the parish's countryside, including its biodiversity, woodland, hedgerows, ponds, Conservation Areas and the setting of the South Downs National Park. Development that would result in settlement coalescence, harm landscape character, or adversely affect important ecological and heritage assets will not be supported.

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014-2031

- 2.3.5 The key policies in the District Plan for Mid Sussex related to ecology and the Site include:

- **Development in the countryside – Setting of the South Downs National Park:** All development proposals within land contributing to the setting of the South Downs National Park should conserve and enhance the National Park's landscape character, natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage, tranquillity and dark skies. Development must not adversely affect important views into or out of the National Park, transitional open green spaces, or its special qualities through inappropriate location, scale, form or design, and should be consistent with National Park purposes and management objectives.
- **Nature and quality of Development – Natural Resources – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows:** All development proposals should protect, retain and enhance existing trees, woodland and hedgerows, recognising their importance for landscape character, biodiversity, green infrastructure and climate resilience. Ancient woodland, veteran trees and important hedgerows should be safeguarded from direct and indirect impacts, with development incorporating these features into site design and maintaining ecological connectivity. Opportunities for new native tree and hedgerow planting are encouraged, and development should maintain a minimum 15 m buffer from ancient woodland wherever possible.
- **Nature and quality of Development – Natural Resources – Biodiversity:** All development proposals should protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity by avoiding habitat loss, minimising fragmentation, restoring priority habitats and strengthening ecological networks. Opportunities to create, expand and connect habitats and green infrastructure should be maximised. Development should deliver biodiversity net gain, protect designated sites, ancient woodland, veteran trees and protected species, and provide appropriate mitigation, enhancement or compensation where impacts cannot be avoided. Habitat enhancements should contribute to local biodiversity priorities and ecological resilience across the district.

South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan (2026-2031).

- 2.3.6 A summary of the South Downs National Park Partnership Management Plan related to ecology and the Site include:
- Development proposals should support the conservation and enhancement of the South Downs National Park by delivering nature recovery, biodiversity net gain, climate resilience and net zero carbon development.
 - Proposals should protect designated sites, ancient woodland, veteran trees, water resources, dark skies, tranquillity, landscape character and cultural heritage, while improving habitat connectivity and ecological resilience.
 - Development should promote sustainable transport, accessible green infrastructure, affordable housing, community wellbeing, education, and a thriving rural economy, ensuring that the National Park's natural beauty, wildlife and special qualities are conserved and enhanced for future generations.
- 2.3.7 Whilst the Site does not lie within the National Park, the southern boundary of the Site lies approximately 200 m north of the designated site. Therefore, any effects should be considered during development plans. In particular, regard should be had to potential indirect effects on the

National Park's wider ecological context, ensuring that development does not result in adverse impacts on its protected features or overall integrity.

- 2.3.8 Overall, ecological matters relevant to the setting of the South Downs National Park are limited to the protection and enhancement of retained habitats, ecological connectivity and dark corridors. Landscape and visual effects are considered separately.

2.4 Proposed Development

- 2.4.1 Erection of 100 dwellings, with associated access, car parking, refuse/recycling storage, landscaping, infrastructure and works

2.5 Site Context

Historic Context

- 2.5.1 A review of readily available historical maps and aerial imagery indicate that the Site's location formed part of an agricultural complex comprising two field parcels and associated marginal features such as treelines and hedgerows from at least the late 18th century onwards. The eastern boundary of the Site consisted of a treeline adjacent Belmont Lane within the late 18th century, this area was subject to new woodland planting and scrubland within 2015 which extended the treeline further into the Site. The northwest/northeast hedgerow and onsite waterbodies and ditch, sourced from a tributary of Herring Stream at the northern boundary of the Site, appear to have been present in the landscape since at least the late 18th century.
- 2.5.2 With regard to the local context change throughout the centuries, the residential block connected to College Lane adjacent the west of the Site was originally arable land within the 18th century until the mid-19th century. At this time period this area alongside adjacent blocks to the south of the Site became part of a residential development that transformed the majority of the land to built form.
- 2.5.3 Further urban expansion has occurred within the surrounding areas within the 19th century, in particular the expansions of the village of Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks has led to many residential blocks being constructed to the south, west and east of the greater landscape near to the Site. Aside from boundary features, the main habitats within the Site, as well as the dominant landscape features within the vicinity of the Site – dominant agricultural field complexes and scattered woodland blocks primarily to the south – have changed little in composition of the last 100 years.

Present Context

- 2.5.4 The Site is an approximately 5.4 ha parcel of land comprising of a large grazed field, scrub and plantation woodland, pond, a stream and peripheral hedgerows and trees. The elevation above sea level on the Site approximately ranges from 40-70 m.
- 2.5.5 An area of scrub and new woodland planting was established in approximately 2015 along the eastern boundary of the Site.

- 2.5.6 The Site is situated in the urban outskirts of the village of Hurstpierpoint, west of Hassocks and to the south of the village of Hurst Wickham in the county of West Sussex. Burgess Hill town centre lies approximately 3.5 km north east of the Site. The urbanised areas, including residential developments, industrial complexes, and transport infrastructure associated with Burgess Hill and its suburban fringe, are present to the north east of the Site. This landscape sits in juxtaposition to the south of the Site beyond the existing residential development, which is dominated by agricultural fields (chiefly arable, but with significant tracts of land set to pasture). Thus, it is considered that the Site occupies a rural-urban transitional zone that defines its local ecology.
- 2.5.7 A ditch is present in the northern boundary of the Site which in areas culminate into two separate historic pond features; one on Site and another north of the Site boundary. There are further waterbodies and watercourses which continue into the wider landscape particularly to the east of the Site.
- 2.5.8 Considering the outlined above contextual features regarding the Site and its surrounding landscape, while there is some overland connectivity of the Site to its adjacent habitats, particularly to the east and south, the presence of numerous significant dispersal barriers within the vicinity, including roadways and rail lines, is deemed to leave dispersal capacity of terrestrial fauna to/from the Site relatively moderate. Aquatic and semi-aquatic species may potentially have access to onsite habitats via the watercourse corridor along the north of the Site and associated off site waterbodies. It is further estimated that more mobile, flying species, such as bats, birds, and insects, would be more readily able to commute to the Site from surrounding habitats.

2.6 Ecological Context

- 2.6.1 A preliminary ecological assessment of the Site was undertaken by BMD in October 2022, including an initial assessment of structures and trees relating to roosting bats. Full results are detailed within BMD.22.0022.RPE-P1.801.-Ecology. This assessment then informed further species surveys conducted in April-June 2023 and then updated between June – October 2025 including:
- Great crested newt HSI assessment and eDNA sampling (April 2023 & June 2025); and
 - Reptile surveys (May/June 2023 & September/October 2025).
- 2.6.2 Full results of species surveys are detailed within Phase 2: Further Ecological Assessment Land East of College Lane (see BMD.22.0022.RPE-P2.002).
- 2.6.3 A verification of the original preliminary ecological assessment of the Site was undertaken by BMD in February 2026 to verify the previous condition of the Site. Full results are detailed within BMD.22.0022.RPE.TN.001. Ecological Verification.
- 2.6.4 A tree survey was conducted by TGA arboricultural consultants in July 2026 to record and assess trees on Site (see full results within TGA.2786.TreeSurveyRevA).

2.7 Compliance with Policy, Guidance and Legislation

- 2.7.1 A summary of national planning policy and wildlife legislation relating to development projects in England is provided in Appendix A. The protocols, evaluations and recommendations contained within this report were made in accordance with these policies and legislation.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 This Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) has been undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2018, updated 2024), which represent current best practice.
- 3.1.2 The assessment has been informed by the National Planning Policy Framework (2026), the Environment Act 2021 (including Schedule 7A: Biodiversity Gain), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 3.1.3 Ecological features have been evaluated within a defined Zone of Influence and assigned a value based on geographic scale (Site, Local, County, Regional, National or International) in accordance with CIEEM guidance. Potential impacts arising during construction and operation have been characterised in terms of magnitude, extent, duration, reversibility and timing.
- 3.1.4 The significance of effects has been determined through professional judgement, taking into account the sensitivity of ecological receptors and the predicted magnitude of impact. Mitigation has been applied following the mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimise, restore, compensate), and residual effects have been identified following the implementation of embedded and additional mitigation measures.
- 3.1.5 The assessment has been prepared to support a Full Planning Application and is proportionate to the scale and nature of the Proposed Development.

3.2 Scope

- 3.2.1 The previously undertaken Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Ref: BMD.22.0022.RPE-P1.801_ Ecology) has formed the basis of scoping features in, or out of this assessment.

3.3 Sources of Information

- 3.3.1 The desk study undertaken in support of the EclA (as part of the Ecological Verification) included a review of the following sources of information:
- Previous ecology surveys and reports
 - Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (*MAGIC*)
 - Local Biological Record Centre
 - The Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory;
 - Readily available maps (modern and historic);
 - Readily available aerial photographs, and
 - Field Surveys.

3.4 Data Limitations

- 3.4.1 The above assessments were conducted at the appropriate time of year. Specific limitations associated with each methodology are set out in the supporting baseline reports where relevant.
- 3.4.2 In the absence of data, assumptions have been made based on local contextual information, previous studies, habitat suitability and the application of professional judgement.
- 3.4.3 A full consideration of limitations is provided in the relevant baseline report. It is considered that none of the limitations were sufficient to negatively affect the overall outcome of that assessment.

3.5 Evaluation of Habitats, Species and Sites.

- 3.5.1 In accordance with current best practice (CIEEM, 2018) it is considered inappropriate to attempt to investigate all potential ecological issues in relation to the Proposed Development.
- 3.5.2 To determine the likelihood of significant ecological effects, it is necessary to identify whether the receptor is sufficiently important for a significant effect upon it to be a material consideration in decision making. To achieve this, species and populations have been valued where possible on the basis of a range of factors such as rarity, conservation status and distribution informed by contextual information where possible. Habitats and plant communities have been evaluated against existing selection criteria for SSSIs or other designations such as Local Wildlife Sites (see below on specific features).
- 3.5.3 The latest version of the CIEEM guidelines (2018) continues to recommend the use of appropriate geographic frames of reference and recognises that the frame of reference can be adapted to suit local circumstances. The geographic frame of reference used in this assessment is set out below:
- International;
 - UK;
 - National;
 - County;
 - District;
 - Local / parish; and
 - Within the immediate zone of influence / Site only (less than local value).
- 3.5.4 The geographic frame of reference set out above is applied to the features identified in the baseline surveys and desk-top studies. Some features are already recognised as having ecological value and as such may already be designated as statutory or non-statutory sites. Other features may require an evaluation based on their previously unassessed nature conservation value with the rationale for grading such features summarised below.

3.6 Important Ecological features

- 3.6.1 The term 'ecological features' is used to cover habitats, species and ecosystems. The following have been used to define 'important' ecological features for this assessment:

- Designated Sites;
- Statutory sites designated under national legislation, for example:
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest; and
 - National Nature Reserves (UK).
- Local Nature Reserves (UK);
- Locally designated wildlife sites;
- Country and Local Biodiversity Lists;
- Species or habitats listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006: Habitats or Species of Principal Importance (HPI or SPI) are recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework and important at a national scale;
- Species or habitats listed in the local Biodiversity Action Plan;
- Red Listed, Rare or Protected Species;
- Species listed under Schedule 5 (animals) or Schedule 8 (plants) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act;
- Species listed under Schedule 2 (animals) or Schedule 5 (plants) of the Habitat Regulations 2017 as amended (European Protected Species EPS);
- Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (2021): provides guidance on the conservation status of UK bird species. Red status species are those species of highest conservation concern and green status species are those of low or no conservation concern. Amber status species are those species of some conservation concern; and
- Nationally rare and nationally scarce species.

3.6.2 A summary of relevant wildlife legislation and national planning policies can be found in Appendix A.

3.7 Zone of influence

3.7.1 The 'zone of influence' (Zol) for the Site is the area over which ecological features may be subject to significant effects as a result of the proposed project and associated activities.

3.7.2 The zone of influence varies for different ecological features depending on their sensitivity – different Zol have therefore been chosen for different features.

3.7.3 Where possible, the surveys which have fed into this assessment considered a much wider area than the likely Zol (i.e. a 'standard' desk study area for protected sites), and this assessment considers a reviewed Zol based on the proposed activities.

3.8 Assessment

3.8.1 The assessment of impacts takes into account the baseline conditions to describe how these conditions will change as a result of the project and associated activities, and the cumulative impacts of the proposal and those arising from other developments.

3.8.2 The impact assessment process used in this report involves:

- identifying and characterising impacts;
- incorporating measures to avoid and mitigate (reduce) these impacts;
- assessing the significance of any residual effects after mitigation;
- identifying appropriate compensation measures to offset significant residual effects; and
- identifying opportunities for ecological enhancement.

3.8.3 The following terms are used:

- **Impact** – Actions resulting in changes to an ecological feature. For example, the construction activities of a development may require the removal of a hedgerow.
- **Effect** – Outcome to an ecological feature from an impact. For example, the effects on a dormouse population from the loss of a hedgerow.

3.8.4 The emphasis of the assessment is on *significant* effects rather than *all* ecological effects. Significant effects are sufficiently important to require assessment and reporting so that the decision maker is adequately informed of the environmental consequences of permitting a project; a significant effect does not necessarily equate to an effect so severe that the project should be refused planning permission. For example, many projects with significant negative ecological effects can be lawfully permitted following EIA procedures as long as the mitigation hierarchy has been applied effectively as part of the decision-making process:

- **Avoidance** Seek options that avoid harm to ecological features (for example, by locating on an alternative site).
- **Mitigation** Adverse effects should be avoided or minimised through mitigation measures, either through the design of the project or subsequent measures that can be guaranteed – for example, through a condition or planning obligation.
- **Compensation** Where there are significant residual adverse ecological effects despite the mitigation proposed, these should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures.
- **Enhancements** Seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation or compensation.

3.8.5 A significant effect in this assessment may include an effect on the distribution or population size of a feature and its long-term viability. It also includes effects to the conservation objectives of a feature e.g. if the effect is to the detriment of targets in a local Biodiversity Action Plan. Some effects may be included that are not significant and do not meet these criteria, but the species or habitat are protected, and the impact has legal implications that require mitigation. Where this is the case, it is stated in the report.

3.8.6 Significant effects are qualified with reference to the geographic scale (as described in this section) at which the effect is significant, which may not be the same as the level at which the feature is considered important.

4. BASELINE CONDITIONS

- 4.1.1 Full results of the Preliminary Ecological Assessment are reported in BMD.22.0022.RPE-P1.801.-. Ecology & BMD.22.0022.RPE.TN.001. Ecological Verification which should be referred to in conjunction with this assessment. This EclA will supersede and verification will supersede the previous Preliminary Ecological Assessment.
- 4.1.2 In summary, the Site comprises a parcel of cattle grazed modified grassland divided/bound by treelines, with scattered trees, patches of scrub, areas of woodland and a pond. To the south, a treeline and bramble scrub extend along the boundary, to the east is woodland and treeline, to the west is offsite residential gardens and to the north is scrub, treeline, ditch, woodland and pond. There is an area of hard standing and bare ground at the entrance to the field, as well as some scattered scrub within the north of the field. Tree cover on the Site is restricted to the peripheral treelines and young plantation woodland areas in the east.
- 4.1.3 The following features were assessed as important and are included in this assessment and summarised in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Important Ecological Features

Feature	Justification	Significance of feature
South Downs National Park	The South Downs National Park is located approximately 200 m south of the Site and is designated for its miles of chalk grassland, numerous areas of ancient woodland and heathland valleys. The area contains regions with high importance for ecology, geology and geography. Whilst the Site does not lie within the National Park, the southern boundary of the Site lies approximately 200 m north of the designated site. Therefore, any effects should be considered during development plans. Regard should be had to potential indirect effects on the National Park's wider ecological context, ensuring that development does not result in adverse impacts on its protected features or overall integrity.	Local
Scattered tree features	There are scattered trees present around the peripheries of the Site, mostly offsite within residential gardens adjacent that may encroach onto the Site. There is a group of trees onsite along the northern boundary of the Site: several mature oak trees with potential roosting features including knot holes, lifting bark, broken branches, tear outs and trunk cavities. At the time of writing, mature trees are proposed to be retained during development. There are no veteran trees onsite (Ref: TGA. 2786.TreeSurveyRevA).	Site only
Treelines	Tree line features bound the Site along the north, east and south. A ditch is associated with the northern treeline, adding ecological value. The features act as wildlife corridors offering sheltering, foraging and dispersal opportunities. They may also support a range of common nesting bird species.	Site only
Area habitats	Other habitats within the Site comprise predominantly of low value modified grassland, alongside limited plantation woodland, patches of scrub and a pond. The grassland and woodland within the Site are considered to provide some foraging, commuting and sheltering (likely woodland only) habitat for species such as badger, bats and small mammals like hedgehog. The pond may provide breeding habitat for common amphibians.	Site only

Feature	Justification	Significance of feature
Reptiles	Small peripheral areas of the Site, particularly along the eastern and northern boundaries, provide suitable habitat for reptiles in the form of scrub, rough grassland, woodland-edge habitat and associated ecotones. The central part of the Site is dominated by intensively cattle-grazed; short-sward modified grassland and is considered to be sub-optimal for reptiles. Reptile surveys undertaken in 2023 confirmed a low population of grass snake and slow worm within the Site. The majority of records, 27 out of 31 individuals, were associated with the eastern boundary, where scrub and grassland bordering the road provided good structural, botanical and invertebrate diversity. The remaining four individuals, comprising two slow worm and two grass snakes, were recorded within scrub and grassland along the northern boundary, adjacent to further scrub and grassland habitats. Updated reptile surveys undertaken in 2025 recorded no reptiles. However, given the confirmed presence of grass snake and slow worm in 2023, and the continued presence of suitable peripheral habitats, reptiles should not be treated as absent from the Site. Instead, the baseline should be interpreted as supporting a low and localised reptile population, or at minimum recent reptile use, concentrated around the retained peripheral habitats. Significant populations are not considered to be present, and the central grazed field is of limited value for reptiles; however, a precautionary low-population mitigation approach remains appropriate during vegetation clearance and works affecting suitable habitat.	Site only, with the principle reptile interest associated with retained and enhanced peripheral scrub, grassland and woodland-edge habitats.
Badger	The Site is considered to provide low potential for commuting and foraging badgers through peripheral habitats such as hedgerows and small wooded areas. Overall, however, sett building habitat is considered to be limited as the Site is topographically flat and lacks suitable earth banks typically utilised. Furthermore, no evidence of badger was recorded onsite during numerous site visits undertaken during 2023 and 2025/2026. Given these factors, impacts would not be significant in EclA terms, but regardless general protection measures are included.	Site only
Bats	The Site provides some suitability for commuting and foraging bats, principally associated with the peripheral treelines, woodland edge, scrub, pond and ditch features. The central part of the Site is dominated by intensively cattle-grazed; short-sward modified grassland and is considered to be of limited value for bats. Given the small scale of the Site, limited extent of strong green corridor habitat within the development area, and the retention of the principal peripheral habitats within the current scheme, the impact on bats is considered low and as such bat activity surveys were not considered to be required. The Site is considered to be of local-level value for bats overall owing to the boundary features likely to be used by commuting and foraging bats. The main bat interest is associated with retained boundary and woodland-edge features, particularly towards the eastern boundary. Trees with bat roosting potential are understood to be retained under the current proposals. Subject to retention of these features and implementation of a sensitive lighting strategy, significant adverse effects on bats are not anticipated.	Local
Great crested newt	Two European protected species applications for great crested newt were granted within 1 km of the Site, as depicted on <i>MAGIC</i> .	Site only

Feature	Justification	Significance of feature
	These records were both 650 m northeast of the Site with good connectivity via agricultural fields, woodland blocks, hedgerows and a stream. West Sussex Biological Records Centre returned 33 records of GCN within the wider landscape, most of which have some terrestrial connectivity to Site. Additionally, the Site is within a red Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for GCN, as identified by NatureSpace. This indicates that the landscape contains suitable habitat for GCN. Onsite there is one pond within the northeast corner of the Site. Offsite, there is one pond adjacent to the northeast corner of the Site, and three ponds within 500 m of the Site boundary, as depicted by <i>MAG/C</i>. The onsite and adjacent pond were eDNA tested in spring 2023 and 2025, both sample periods returned negative results (BMD.22.0022.RPE-P2.002). The additional three offsite ponds were not eDNA tested given that it is known that GCN are present within the locality, the distance from Site and dispersal barriers to Site. The majority of the Site was comprised of modified grassland, with limited areas of scrub and plantation woodland, which provides limited suitable terrestrial habitat for GCN. Given the eDNA results, the limited suitable terrestrial habitat present and the Site is considered to be of low suitability for breeding and terrestrial GCN and they are considered likely absent from Site. Based on the current landscape strategy (ref:3481-5-2-DR-0001 Landscape Strategy-0001 P5) existing vegetation within the northeast of the Site is to be retained. Retention of this vegetation is considered to minimize potential impacts and disturbance to the onsite and offsite northeastern ponds. Given this retention of vegetation, the negative eDNA results and dispersal barriers to offsite ponds, an appropriate non-licensed method statement is considered sufficient and appropriate to mitigate and minimize impact to GCN and other amphibians. Therefore, a precautionary approach will be adopted to safeguard this species during construction.	
Nesting birds	The Site is likely to support a small number of common nesting birds (their presence is confirmed) associated with hedgerows, small wooded areas, scattered trees and scrub. It is considered that the potential for ground nesting birds is extremely limited due to intensive, frequent management of grassland resulting in high disturbance levels and a short sward with inappropriate shelter and vegetation for nesting. Nesting bird interest is likely to be associated primarily with boundary treelines, scrub and woodland-edge habitats, which are largely retained. Impacts would not be significant in EclA terms, but as active bird nests are protected, these are included with regard to legal implications/best practice measure.	Site only
Hazel dormouse	One hazel dormouse record was returned by West Sussex Biological Records Centre, associated with Stonecroft Copse approximately 550 m south of the Site. The record has only slight/limited connectivity to the Site via fragmented woodland corridors and hedgerow linkages. The majority of the Site comprises intensively cattle-grazed modified grassland, which provides negligible opportunities for hazel dormouse. Small areas	Site only

Feature	Justification	Significance of feature
	along the eastern boundary, including emerging/young plantation woodland, scrub and treeline habitat, may provide limited structural suitability; however, these habitats are limited in extent, relatively narrow, recently established and not well connected to the core areas of suitable dormouse habitat in the wider landscape. More suitable dormouse habitat is present off-site within larger, more mature and better-connected woodland blocks and hedgerow networks. The current proposals retain the eastern boundary woodland, scrub, treeline and associated peripheral habitats, and no clearance of suitable woody dormouse habitat is proposed. On this basis, targeted dormouse surveys are not considered proportionate or necessary to inform the application. Hazel dormouse is therefore considered to be of Site-level value only and is retained within the assessment on a precautionary basis due to the nearby record and legal protection afforded to the species.	
Other notable mammals (including hedgehog)	The Site is considered to have low potential for notable mammals including hedgehog due to grassland margins, hedgerows and wooded areas. The majority of the Site, however, is comprised of short sward height, species-poor grassland and areas of scrub and woodland which provides limited foraging, commuting and sheltering habitat for hedgehog.	Site only

5. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 Site Proposals

- 5.1.1 Erection of 100 dwellings, with associated access, car parking, refuse/recycling storage, landscaping, infrastructure and works.
- 5.1.2 A landscape strategy has been produced in support of the application (Ref: 3481-5-2-DR-0001 Landscape Strategy-0001 P5).

5.2 Assessment of Significant Effects and Mitigation Measures

West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

- 5.2.1 **Impact** - The West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was published in June 2026 and has been reviewed in relation to the proposed development. The LNRS identifies priorities and opportunities for nature recovery across West Sussex. Review of the strategy indicates that the only priority with potential relevance to the Site relates to the retention, protection and management of mature and veteran trees.
- 5.2.2 As confirmed within the accompanying Arboricultural Report, although the Site supports several mature trees, none have been classified as veteran trees. The Proposed Development has been designed to retain all existing trees and woodland, with no direct loss of mature trees proposed.
- 5.2.3 **Effect** - No direct adverse effects are anticipated on the LNRS priority relating to mature and veteran trees. As no veteran trees are present, the proposed development will not result in the loss or deterioration of this priority habitat feature. Existing mature trees will be retained and protected throughout the construction period in accordance with the recommendations.
- 5.2.4 The retained woodland and mature tree resource will continue to provide habitat connectivity, foraging opportunities for bats and birds, and wider ecosystem services. The proposed development also incorporates woodland enhancement measures that will improve the long-term condition and structural diversity of the retained habitats.
- 5.2.5 **Mitigation** – Tree protection measures will be implemented during construction through the Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP). Protective fencing will be installed prior to commencement of works and retained throughout the construction period. Any works within root protection areas will be undertaken in accordance with arboricultural supervision and the recommendations of the AIA.
- 5.2.6 Retained woodland and mature trees will be managed as part of a long-term Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). Enhancement measures will include the removal of invasive species where appropriate, selective woodland management to improve structure and species diversity, retention of standing and fallen deadwood where safe to do so, and supplementary native planting where required to strengthen woodland resilience and ecological function.

- 5.2.7 **Construction Effects** - Subject to implementation of the AMS, TPP and CEMP, no significant adverse construction effects on retained mature trees or woodland are anticipated. Temporary construction activities will be controlled to avoid damage to retained vegetation and root protection areas.
- 5.2.8 **Residual Effects** - The proposed development accords with the objectives of the West Sussex LNRS in relation to veteran trees by retaining and appropriately managing the existing tree resource. Although no veteran trees are present on Site, the proposed woodland enhancement and long-term management will deliver a beneficial effect on the condition and resilience of retained habitats. Consequently, no significant adverse residual effects are anticipated, and the proposed development is considered consistent with the relevant objectives of the West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

South Downs National Park

- 5.2.9 **Impact** - The Site lies approximately 200 m north of the South Downs National Park. As the Site is located outside of the designated boundary, there are no specific policy constraints relating to residential development arising directly from the National Park designation.
- 5.2.10 Residential development of the Site has the potential to increase recreational pressure on South Downs National Park. In addition, potential indirect effects associated with construction activities, including construction traffic movements and associated emissions, require consideration. However, considering the large size of the National Park (162,700 hectares), recreational pressure is unlikely to have a significant effect.
- 5.2.11 Atmospheric pollution pathways have also been considered. South Downs National Park lies approximately 200 m north of the Site. Potential operational effects could theoretically arise from increases in road traffic emissions (NO_x and ammonia), leading to increased nitrogen deposition on sensitive woodland habitats.
- 5.2.12 **Effect** - No direct habitat loss, land take, or physical encroachment to the designated site will occur as a result of the Proposed Development, given its separation distance of approximately 200 m from the boundary of South Downs National Park.
- 5.2.13 Increased recreational pressure arising from new residential development could occur to the National Park. However, given the small size of the development and the large size of the National Park, it is unlikely to have significant effect.
- 5.2.14 With regard to atmospheric effects, the Site is physically separated from the National Park by Wickham Hill and residential houses. Given the relatively small scale of the Proposed Development and the large size of the National Park, the risk of significant increases in nitrogen deposition or ammonia concentrations affecting the qualifying woodland habitats of the National Park is considered negligible. The Site itself does not provide extensive suitable habitat for species of note associated with the National Park (e.g. saproxylic invertebrates dependent on ancient, pollarded trees). Woodland within the Site is extremely limited, lacks diversity and structure and significant deadwood features. Ecological connectivity between the Site and the National Park is constrained by intervening urban development and road infrastructure.

- 5.2.15 Accordingly, the Proposed Development is not expected to compromise species populations or qualifying habitats present within South Downs National Park.
- 5.2.16 **Mitigation** – Potential short-term construction-related effects, including traffic emissions, dust generation and disturbance, will be mitigated through implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), secured by planning condition.
- 5.2.17 The CEMP will incorporate measures including:
- Identification and management of construction vehicle routes to minimise unnecessary movements in proximity to South Downs National Park;
 - Measures to control dust generation (e.g. wheel washing, damping down of haul routes, covering of loads where appropriate);
 - Timing controls on HGV movements to reduce cumulative disturbance;
 - Measures to minimise vehicle idling and associated emissions;
 - Toolbox talks and site management protocols to ensure contractor compliance.
- 5.2.18 **Construction Effects** - Through implementation of the above measures, construction-related dust, emissions and traffic effects will be effectively controlled. Given the separation distance and intervening urban context, short-term construction activities are not anticipated to result in adverse effects on the integrity of South Downs National Park, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 5.2.19 **Pollution Control**- Additional indirect effects such as pollution risk (including dust and surface water contamination) will be managed through standard industry best practice and detailed within the CEMP. These measures will ensure that no pollutant pathways to the National Park are created during construction.
- 5.2.20 **Residual Effects** - The Site is sufficiently removed from South Downs National Park such that no direct impacts (e.g. habitat loss or encroachment) will occur.

Reptiles

- 5.2.1 **Impact** – A low population of grass snake and slow worm has previously been confirmed within the Site in 2023, with records principally associated with the eastern boundary and, to a lesser extent, the northern boundary. The main reptile interest is therefore considered to be associated with peripheral scrub, rougher grassland, woodland-edge habitats and associated ecotones. The central part of the Site is dominated by intensively cattle-grazed, short-sward modified grassland and is considered to be sub-optimal for reptiles.
- 5.2.2 **Effect** – Although updated reptile surveys undertaken in 2025 did not record reptiles, the confirmed 2023 records and continued presence of suitable peripheral habitats mean that reptiles should be considered as an ecological receptor within the assessment. Significant reptile populations are not considered likely to be present; however, individual grass snake and slow worm could be present within suitable peripheral habitats during vegetation clearance, groundworks or landscaping works. Direct harm, injury or killing could occur if suitable habitat is cleared without appropriate precautionary mitigation. Temporary disturbance and displacement

of individual reptiles may also occur during construction. These effects are not considered likely to be significant at more than Site level, but reptiles are protected from intentional killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, and mitigation is therefore required.

- 5.2.3 **Mitigation** – Vegetation clearance within suitable reptile habitat will be undertaken under a precautionary approach and supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist where required. Clearance will be undertaken during the reptile active season where practicable, typically March to October inclusive, and during suitable weather conditions. Suitable habitat will be cleared using a phased and directional approach, working away from the construction area and towards retained suitable habitat along the Site boundaries.
- 5.2.4 Where suitable vegetation requires removal, it will initially be cut to approximately 150 mm and left for a suitable period to encourage any reptiles present to disperse. A second cut to ground level will then be undertaken, where required, once the area has been checked by the ecologist. Potential refugia, including log piles, brash, rubble, stored materials or other sheltering features, will be hand-searched and dismantled carefully by hand where appropriate. Arisings will be removed from the working area to avoid creating temporary refugia within construction zones. Cleared areas will then be maintained in a condition unsuitable for reptiles until works commence, including keeping vegetation short and preventing the accumulation of debris.
- 5.2.5 If reptiles are encountered during works, works in the immediate area will stop and the ecologist will advise on the appropriate course of action. Where necessary, reptiles will be carefully moved by a suitably qualified ecologist to retained suitable habitat within the Site, away from the working area.
- 5.2.6 **Residual Effects** – Retained boundary habitats, woodland edge, scrub and rough grassland will continue to provide suitable habitat for reptiles during and following construction. The Proposed Development will also provide opportunities to enhance reptile habitat through the creation and management of varied grassland, scrub margins, pond and SuDS habitats, and the provision of habitat features such as log piles, stone piles, grass heaps and hibernacula within retained green infrastructure.
- 5.2.7 Subject to implementation of the precautionary approach detailed within this assessment, protection of retained peripheral habitats and delivery of habitat enhancement measures, no significant adverse residual effects on reptiles are anticipated. The conservation status of grass snake and slow worm within the local area is expected to be maintained.

Badger

- 5.2.8 **Impact** – The Site provides limited suitability for badger commuting and foraging, primarily associated with retained peripheral habitats including treelines, woodland edge, scrub margins and grassland field margins. The central part of the Site is dominated by intensively managed modified grassland and is considered to provide limited foraging value. Previous survey work has not identified any badger setts within the Site; however, a sett has previously been recorded in the locality on the eastern embankment of Belmont Lane, and badger may use boundary habitats for occasional commuting and foraging.

- 5.2.9 The Proposed Development will result in the loss of areas of modified grassland and localised disturbance during construction. Retained boundary habitats, woodland edge and peripheral green infrastructure are expected to continue to provide commuting and foraging opportunities during and following construction, subject to appropriate protection. No direct loss of a known badger sett is anticipated based on the current survey evidence and layout.
- 5.2.10 **Effect** – In the absence of mitigation, potential effects on badger could include temporary disturbance during construction, reduced access to parts of the Site for foraging/commuting, and risk of injury or entrapment within excavations, open pipework or construction materials. If a sett were to be created or identified prior to works, there would also be potential for disturbance or damage to a sett if works were undertaken within the relevant disturbance zone without appropriate mitigation or licensing.
- 5.2.11 Given the absence of known setts within the Site, the limited value of the central grazed grassland, and the retention/enhancement of peripheral habitat corridors, significant adverse effects on badger are not anticipated. However, as badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, precautionary mitigation is required.
- 5.2.12 **Mitigation** – A pre-commencement badger check will be undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to vegetation clearance, enabling works and groundworks. The check will cover the Site and accessible land within at least 30 m of the proposed works, extending to 50 m where practicable and where works with higher disturbance potential are proposed. The purpose of the check will be to confirm that no new setts have been created and that there is no evidence of badger activity that would alter the assessment or require additional mitigation.
- 5.2.13 If an active badger sett is identified within or close to the works area, works with potential to damage, destroy, obstruct or disturb the sett will stop and an appropriate mitigation strategy will be prepared. Where required, a licence from Natural England will be obtained before works recommence within the relevant disturbance zone.
- 5.2.14 General badger protection measures will be implemented during construction, including:
- trenches, pits and other excavations will be covered overnight where practicable, or provided with a means of escape such as a ramp no steeper than approximately 45 degrees;
 - excavations will be checked at the start of each working day for trapped fauna before works recommence;
 - open pipework will be capped or covered overnight and when not in use;
 - chemicals, fuels and potentially harmful materials will be securely stored;
 - unnecessary night working and lighting of retained boundary habitats will be avoided where practicable; and
 - piles of soft earth or loose material that could attract sett-building activity will be avoided within active construction areas where practicable, or fenced/demarcated to prevent access.
- 5.2.15 **Residual Effects** – Subject to the pre-commencement badger check, implementation of general construction safeguards and retention/enhancement of boundary habitats, no significant adverse

residual effects on badger are anticipated. The Proposed Development is not expected to result in loss of a badger sett or materially affect the conservation status of badger within the local area.

Bats

- 5.2.16 **Impact** - Trees within the Site were assessed as having negligible to moderate suitability to support roosting bats. Trees identified as having roost potential are to be retained within the current layout and therefore no direct loss of potential tree roost features is anticipated, therefore no further surveys were carried out on trees.
- 5.2.17 Bats will likely use the peripheries of the Site for commuting and foraging purposes. The ecological value of the Site for bats is therefore considered to be at local level.
- 5.2.18 Bat activity surveys were not considered proportionate to support the planning application, as the areas proposed for development are dominated by short-sward, modified grassland of low foraging value. The principal features of value to bats are retained peripheral habitats, including treelines, woodland edges, scrub, pond and ditch habitats, which are likely to be used for commuting and foraging. The current layout retains these features, with only limited vegetation removal required to facilitate access. The assessment is therefore based on habitat suitability, supported by a precautionary approach to lighting design and the protection of retained habitat features. Should the layout or lighting strategy be amended such that retained boundary habitats, woodland-edge features, or trees with potential roosting suitability are directly affected, the requirement for further bat surveys should be reviewed.
- 5.2.19 **Effect** - During construction, vegetation clearance and construction activity may lead to temporary displacement of bats from areas of active works. Given the absence of confirmed roosts and the retention of principal boundary features, displacement would be short-term and reversible. Bats are highly mobile and are expected to redistribute to retained hedgerows, woodland edges and adjacent off-site habitat during the construction period.
- 5.2.20 The magnitude of impact during construction is assessed as low, temporary and localised. The effect is therefore considered to be minor adverse at the Site level.
- 5.2.21 The principal operational pathway for impact relates to lighting and potential fragmentation of commuting corridors. Any bats will likely be using linear features which provide connectivity across the Site and to surrounding habitat.
- 5.2.22 Without mitigation, increased artificial lighting could reduce the suitability of these features for light-sensitive species, particularly *Myotis* species. Higher-value woodland habitat occurs within the wider landscape, including extensive woodland to the south.
- 5.2.23 Provided that boundary treelines and woodland edges are retained and appropriate lighting controls are implemented, the Site will continue to function as a commuting corridor and foraging resource. The magnitude of operational impact is therefore considered low.
- 5.2.24 **Mitigation** - Mitigation measures will follow the mitigation hierarchy.

- 5.2.25 A sensitively designed lighting strategy will be implemented during construction and post-development, if lighting is proposed. Retained habitat corridors within and adjacent to the Site, including treelines, woodland edge, scrub, pond and ditch habitats, will be maintained as dark corridors as far as practicable, with no increase in current light levels where feasible. Lighting will be designed to avoid unnecessary spill onto retained vegetated boundaries and aquatic/marginal habitats through the use of directional fittings, shielding, low mounting heights, low-intensity luminaires, warm colour temperature lighting and controls such as dimming or motion sensors where appropriate. No additional floodlighting will be used between sunset and sunrise without agreement from a suitably qualified ecologist
- 5.2.26 Retained trees with low bat roost potential will be protected during construction through tree protection measures to prevent accidental damage. Should design changes result in removal of trees with potential roost features, further assessment will be undertaken prior to works.
- 5.2.27 Precautionary working methods will be adopted during demolition and vegetation clearance. If bats or evidence of bats are encountered at any stage, works will cease and advice will be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist before recommencement.
- 5.2.28 Enhancement measures including native treeline and woodland strengthening, wildflower grassland establishment, SuDS features and provision of integrated bat boxes within new buildings and retained trees will increase foraging resource availability and provide additional roosting opportunities within the Site.
- 5.2.29 **Residual Effects** – No confirmed bat roosts have been identified within the Site. Trees with low to moderate Potential Roost Features (PRF) are understood to be retained under the current proposals. If any tree with PRF requires removal or works affecting roosting features, further inspection and/or survey will be undertaken prior to works.
- 5.2.30 Following implementation of mitigation, key commuting corridors will be retained and strengthened, artificial lighting will be controlled, and foraging resource will increase through habitat enhancement. The Site will continue to function as a commuting and opportunistic foraging resource within the local landscape. Should the layout or lighting strategy change such that retained boundary habitats, woodland-edge features or trees with bat roosting potential are directly affected, the need for further bat survey should be reviewed.
- 5.2.31 Given that the principal habitats likely to support commuting and foraging bats are located around the Site peripheries and are retained within the current proposals and that the main developable area comprises low-value grazed modified grassland, the magnitude of impact on bats is considered low. Subject to implementation of a sensitive lighting strategy and protection of retained treelines, woodland edge, pond, ditch and scrub habitats, no significant adverse residual effect on bats is anticipated.

Great crested newt

- 5.2.32 **Impact** – The Site contains suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians, principally associated with the eastern and northern peripheral woodland, scrub, ditch and pond habitats. However, these habitats are largely retained, and repeated negative eDNA results indicate that a breeding population is unlikely to be associated with the Site. P1 and P2 were subject to eDNA sampling

in 2023 and 2025, with negative results returned in both survey seasons. It is anticipated great crested newt are absent from the Site due to eDNA results and the dominance of intensively managed modified grassland habitat, of which provides poor opportunities for the species during their terrestrial phase. However, the Site falls within an red Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for great crested newt as identified through NatureSpace Partnership Risk Mapping, and so the species are considered within this impact assessment as a precautionary approach. Development of the Site will likely result in the disturbance of limited suitable habitat onsite including loss of grassland margins and small amount of scrub removal.

- 5.2.33 **Effect** – It is anticipated great crested newt are absent from the Site and therefore no negative effects are predicted, however construction works and habitat removal have the potential to directly harm and effect great crested newt habitat in the unlikely event they are present. Given the low suitability of habitats present within the Site and negative eDNA results, a precautionary approach is considered an appropriate and proportionate mitigation strategy to address the Site falling within a red IRZ.
- 5.2.34 **Mitigation** –A precautionary approach will be implemented to avoid the risk of incidental harm during construction, including sensitive timing of works, tool-box talks for contractors, ecological supervision where appropriate, and procedures to be followed should great crested newts be encountered unexpectedly. This approach accords with the mitigation hierarchy and Natural England guidance, ensuring legal compliance while remaining proportionate to the ecological value and risk profile of the Site. On this basis, a European Protected Species licence or registration on the District Licence is not considered to be required.
- 5.2.35 **Residual Effects** – With the implementation of the mitigation detailed within this assessment, no significant adverse effects on great crested newt are predicted.

Nesting birds

- 5.2.36 **Impact** – The Site provides suitable habitat for nesting birds, principally associated with retained woodland, treelines, scrub, scattered trees and boundary vegetation. The central modified grassland is intensively grazed and short-sward, and is considered to provide limited suitability for ground-nesting birds. The Proposed Development may result in limited loss or disturbance of scrub, grassland margins and other vegetation, together with temporary construction-phase disturbance from machinery, personnel, noise and movement.
- 5.2.37 The current proposals retain the principal woodland, treeline and boundary habitats, and the post-development landscape strategy is expected to provide replacement and enhanced nesting/foraging opportunities through native tree, shrub, scrub, hedgerow, grassland, wetland and SuDS planting.
- 5.2.38 **Effect** – In the absence of mitigation, vegetation clearance and works close to nesting habitat during the nesting bird season could result in damage or destruction of active nests, killing or injury of eggs/young, or disturbance of nesting birds. These effects would be legally significant, as all wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Schedule 1 bird species receive additional protection from disturbance while nesting.

- 5.2.39 At the Site level, any loss or disturbance of nesting bird habitat is expected to be limited and localised, given the retention of the main woodland, treeline and boundary habitats. However, legal compliance measures are required during construction.
- 5.2.40 **Mitigation** – Vegetation clearance and works affecting, or in close proximity to, woodland, treelines, scrub, scattered trees, grassland margins and other suitable nesting bird habitat will be undertaken outside the core nesting bird season, March to August inclusive, where practicable.
- 5.2.41 Where such works are required during the nesting bird season, the affected habitat and an appropriate buffer will be inspected by a suitably qualified ecologist no more than 48 hours before works commence. The inspection will check for active nests, nest-building behaviour and other evidence of breeding birds.
- 5.2.42 If no active nests are identified, works may proceed, provided they are commenced within the validity period of the check and are completed without delay or prolonged interruption. If works do not commence within 48 hours, or if works are paused for a period that would allow birds to establish nests, a further check will be required.
- 5.2.43 If an active nest is identified, works likely to damage, destroy or disturb the nest will stop and an appropriate exclusion zone will be established. The exclusion zone will be maintained until the ecologist confirms that the nest is no longer active and that the young have fledged. The size and duration of the exclusion zone will be determined by the ecologist, taking account of the species, nesting stage, vegetation type, surrounding screening and the nature of the proposed works.
- 5.2.44 If a Schedule 1 bird species is identified nesting within or close to the works area, works will stop and a bespoke mitigation strategy will be prepared by a suitably qualified ecologist. This will set out appropriate buffers, timing restrictions and monitoring requirements before works recommence.
- 5.2.45 **Residual Effects** – Subject to timing vegetation clearance outside the nesting bird season where practicable, use of pre-works checks where this is not possible, and protection of any active nests until no longer active, no breach of nesting bird legislation is anticipated. Retention of the principal woodland, treeline and boundary habitats, together with new native planting and habitat creation, is expected to maintain and enhance nesting and foraging opportunities within the Site. No significant adverse residual effect on nesting birds is anticipated.

Hazel dormouse

- 5.2.46 **Impact** – The likelihood of hazel dormouse being present within the Site is considered low. This reflects the single off-site record approximately 550 m south of the Site, the limited and fragmented connectivity to that record, the dominance of intensively grazed modified grassland within the Site, and the limited extent and recent establishment of potentially suitable eastern boundary woodland/scrub habitat. The areas of habitat with any limited potential to support dormouse are located around the Site periphery and are retained within the current proposals. No clearance of suitable woody dormouse habitat is proposed. As such, there is no realistic direct impact pathway to hazel dormouse and targeted survey is not considered proportionate.

- 5.2.47 **Effect** – It is anticipated that hazel dormouse, if present, will not be directly affected by the Proposed Development, given the retention of suitable habitat and the absence of direct works within key areas of connectivity. However, there remains a low risk of temporary disturbance during construction activities, which could result in indirect effects such as short-term avoidance of nearby habitats. Any individuals present are expected to remain within retained and connected habitat within the Site and wider landscape. Given the precautionary approach and the species' legal protection, standard good practice measures will still be required.
- 5.2.48 **Mitigation** - As direct impacts on hazel dormouse are not anticipated, no species-specific mitigation or licensing is considered necessary. However, precautionary working methods will be implemented during vegetation clearance, including checks of suitable habitat by a suitably qualified ecologist prior to works and the retention of key boundary treelines, scrub, and woodland. Vegetation clearance will be undertaken in a controlled manner to avoid unnecessary disturbance to retained habitat features.
- 5.2.49 **Residual Effects** – No significant effects on hazel dormouse are anticipated as a result of the Proposed Development. The retention of suitable treelines, scrub, and woodland is expected to maintain habitat connectivity across the Site, ensuring continued availability of suitable habitat within the local landscape.

Tree Resource

- 5.2.50 **Impact** - There are a number of trees and tree groups within the Site. All mature trees are proposed to be retained as part of the development proposals. Several trees, particularly mature oak trees along the northern boundary, as well as mature trees within adjacent residential gardens that overhang into the Site, display features that may have the potential to support bats. Trees also provide valuable habitat and foraging resources for a range of other species. The removal of trees would therefore result in the loss and fragmentation of this resource, with the potential to displace or disturb species reliant upon them within the local area. In addition, tree removal could directly damage or destroy resting or breeding sites, potentially resulting in harm to bats and nesting birds. No veteran trees have been identified on Site.
- 5.2.51 **Effect** – It is anticipated that the development will result in a beneficial impact following completion of the construction phase, as the proposals include the retention of all existing trees and areas of woodland within the Site. This will maintain existing green infrastructure, preserve ecological corridors, and sustain habitat permeability for fauna, while supporting the continuation of current levels of on-site biodiversity. However, there remains potential for indirect impacts on fauna associated with construction activity, particularly in relation to disturbance of species that may utilise trees for foraging, shelter, or roosting. There is also a risk that retained trees could be adversely affected by construction works, for example through root damage, compaction, or changes in hydrology. With all trees and woodland retained, no direct loss of arboricultural resource is anticipated; however, without appropriate mitigation measures, there remains potential for temporary or localised adverse effects on ecological receptors at the Site level.
- 5.2.52 **Mitigation** - Tree protection fencing will be installed within the Site to avoid impacts to any retained trees. It is understood that where feasible all trees will be retained within the scheme design. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement has been produced in

support of the planning application detailing the tree retention and protection measures required. Where detailed in relevant mitigation proposals above, and where necessary, a suitably qualified ecologist will inspect all tree to be removed. The inspection should be undertaken within 48 hours of the proposed works to ensure continued absence of protected and any other notable species, such as nesting birds. Full details of the required mitigation for habitat removal is found in the Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Ref: BMD.22.0022.RPE-P1.801_ Ecology).

- 5.2.53 **Residual Effects** – Through implementation of the above mitigation and compensation measures no significant adverse effects are predicted.

Treelines

- 5.2.54 **Impact** – The treelines within and bounding the Site are largely retained under the current post-development proposals, including the retention of existing native treelines of ecological value within the Site. Limited removal of treeline in the southeast corner of the Site is proposed to facilitate access and residential development.

- 5.2.55 **Effect** – It is anticipated that the development will result in beneficial impacts following the construction phase, as the design proposals include the establishment of a new native hedgerow to compensate for the small loss of boundary features and to create a buffer between the new development and the existing houses, providing greater ecological value for wildlife once established. However, there is potential for temporary disturbance to retained boundary features during construction, which may affect their ecological integrity and species that utilise these habitats, including nesting birds. Appropriate mitigation measures will therefore be required during the construction phase to avoid and minimise impacts on retained treeline habitats and associated species.

- 5.2.56 **Mitigation** - The Preliminary Ecological Assessment (Ref: BMD.22.0022.RPE-P1.801_ Ecology) sets out measures to minimise impacts to retained habitat features through measures such as pollution prevention and protection fencing to maintain RPAs. At construction stage a detailed CEMP will be produced to include full details of the proposed construction works near to retained treelines and the measures to be implemented to minimise indirect impacts. Furthermore, if treelines are to be removed or disturbed during the core nesting bird season (March to August inclusive), then a check, performed by a suitably qualified ecologist, will be undertaken 48 hours prior to works is required to avoid negative impacts on bird species. Any removal of treelines will be quantified within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric calculation. Where hedgerow units are lost, replacement habitats will be provided to achieve measurable net gain.

- 5.2.57 **Residual Effects** – Through implementation of the above mitigation and compensation measures such as additional native hedgerow planting, no significant adverse effects are predicted to the treeline resource within the Site.

Area Habitats

- 5.2.58 **Impact** – The Site is dominated by modified grassland, which will be largely lost to facilitate the Proposed Development. Small areas of bramble scrub, grassland margins and other low to moderate value habitats may also be removed or locally disturbed. The woodland, pond, ditch

features, treelines and the main peripheral boundary habitats are understood to be retained under the current proposals and will form the principal retained ecological framework for the Site.

- 5.2.59 The pond, ditch and associated marginal habitats form part of the retained ecological network and provide potential value for amphibians, reptiles, invertebrates, birds and commuting/foraging bats. These features also contribute to ecological connectivity across the Site and with adjacent habitats, particularly in association with woodland-edge, treeline and scrub habitats.
- 5.2.60 **Effect** – Habitat loss will primarily affect modified grassland of relatively low ecological value. Localised loss or disturbance of scrub/grassland margins may also occur, with potential temporary disturbance to species using these habitats for foraging, commuting or sheltering. Construction activities could also indirectly affect retained habitats through dust, runoff, pollution, soil compaction, accidental encroachment, lighting, damage to retained root protection areas, or inappropriate storage of materials.
- 5.2.61 In the absence of mitigation, retained woodland, treeline, pond, ditch and marginal habitats could be degraded during construction. However, with appropriate habitat protection, construction controls, pollution prevention and delivery of the landscape and biodiversity strategy, significant adverse effects on retained area habitats are not anticipated. New and enhanced habitats, including species-rich grassland, native scrub, SuDS, wetland/reedbed planting and strengthened boundary habitats, will improve habitat diversity and help maintain permeability through the Site.
- 5.2.62 **Mitigation** – Retained habitats will be protected during construction through a Construction Environmental Management Plan or equivalent ecological protection measures. The CEMP will set out the location of retained habitat protection zones, working methods, pollution prevention measures and responsibilities for implementation.
- 5.2.63 The following measures will be implemented as appropriate:
- retained woodland, treelines, scrub, pond, ditch and marginal habitats will be clearly identified on construction drawings and protected through fencing, signage or demarcation before relevant works commence;
 - retained trees and woodland-edge habitats will be protected in accordance with the arboricultural method statement and root protection area requirements;
 - no storage of materials, plant movement, fuel storage, fires, chemical storage, ground level changes or uncontrolled access will occur within retained habitat protection zones;
 - pollution prevention measures will be implemented to protect retained pond, ditch and marginal habitats, including appropriate fuel/chemical storage, spill kits, designated refuelling areas, control of sediment-laden runoff and emergency response procedures;
 - surface water management and SuDS design will avoid adverse water quality or hydrological effects on retained aquatic and marginal habitats;
 - retained pond and ditch habitats will be buffered and protected from construction runoff, excessive shading, sedimentation and accidental encroachment;
 - construction lighting will avoid unnecessary spill onto retained woodland, treelines, pond, ditch, scrub and boundary habitats;

- vegetation clearance will be restricted to the minimum extent necessary and undertaken in accordance with the relevant species mitigation measures set out in this EclA; and
- any temporary disturbance to retained habitat edges will be reinstated or enhanced following completion of works.

5.2.64 Habitat losses and gains will be quantified within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric and reported in the accompanying Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. Habitat creation and enhancement will be secured through the Biodiversity Gain Plan, landscape proposals and long-term management arrangements.

5.2.65 **Residual Effects** – The loss of modified grassland will be compensated through habitat creation and enhancement within the Proposed Development, including new species-rich grassland, native scrub, tree and hedgerow planting, SuDS/wetland habitats and strengthened peripheral green infrastructure. The retained woodland, pond, ditch, treeline and scrub habitats will continue to provide the key ecological framework for the Site and will be protected during construction.

5.2.66 The accompanying Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment should confirm the final metric outcome, including the percentage net gain in habitat units and hedgerow units. Subject to confirmation of measurable Biodiversity Net Gain, implementation of retained habitat protection measures and long-term management of created/enhanced habitats, no significant adverse residual effects on area habitats are anticipated.

5.2.67 The accompanying Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment confirms a 17.41% net gain in habitat units and a 55.69% net gain in hedgerow units. Habitat creation and enhancement will be secured through the Biodiversity Gain Plan and long-term management arrangements.

5.3 Cumulative effects and impacts

5.3.1 The potential for cumulative ecological effects has been considered in accordance with CIEEM guidance, taking into account other known or reasonably foreseeable developments within the local area.

5.3.2 The Site lies approximately 200 m north of the South Downs National Park. Given the nature of the intervening context, there is considered to be no clear functional link that would give rise to additional recreational pressure from the development. As such, cumulative recreational effects on the South Downs National Park are not anticipated. The published West Sussex LNRS has also been reviewed. The only potentially relevant priority relates to the retention and management of mature and veteran trees. As confirmed within the accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment, no veteran trees are present on the Site and all mature trees are to be retained and managed as part of the proposed woodland enhancement works. Consequently, no cumulative effects on the delivery of the LNRS objectives are anticipated.

5.3.3 Potential in-combination air quality effects have also been considered. The Proposed Development is of limited scale and is not expected to materially alter traffic flows beyond existing baseline conditions on College Lane or within the wider local road network. Given the separation distance of approximately 200 m between the Site and the South Downs National Park, intervening urban development, and the absence of substantial traffic-generating infrastructure,

the risk of significant cumulative increases in nitrogen deposition or ammonia concentrations affecting qualifying woodland habitats is considered negligible. No in-combination air quality effects on the National Park are predicted. Furthermore, as the proposed development retains existing mature trees and woodland and includes their long-term management and enhancement, no in-combination effects on the objectives of the West Sussex LNRS are predicted.

- 5.3.4 With regard to other ecological receptors, no cumulative loss of locally important habitats or species populations is anticipated, as retained boundary habitats and proposed enhancements will maintain Site-level ecological functionality. The Proposed Development is therefore not expected to result in significant cumulative ecological effects, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- 5.3.5 A review of relevant committed and reasonably foreseeable developments within the likely ecological Zone of Influence has been undertaken. No cumulative significant ecological effects are predicted where each scheme implements standard construction controls, protected species safeguards, lighting controls and biodiversity mitigation/enhancement. The Proposed development is therefore not expected to give rise to significant cumulative ecological effects.

5.4 Enhancement

- 5.4.1 Under the National Planning Policy Framework and the Environment Act (2021), development should seek to contribute a net gain in biodiversity. In order to achieve this, losses must be mitigated or compensated for and additional biodiversity provided by the scheme.
- 5.4.2 Enhancement measures will include native tree and shrub planting, strengthening of retained treelines and woodland-edge habitats, species-rich grassland creation, SuDS/wetland planting, scrub management, hibernacula/log piles, bird boxes, bat boxes and invertebrate features. These measures will be integrated with the landscape strategy and Biodiversity Gain Plan to deliver measurable biodiversity net gain and maintain ecological connectivity across the Site.
- 5.4.3 The accompanying Biodiversity Net Gain Plan demonstrates how the Site is anticipated to deliver a biodiversity net gain of 17.41% habitat units and 55.69% hedgerow units, with trading rules satisfied. Full details are within BMD.22.0022.RPE.IA.005.Biodiversity Net Gain Plan.
- 5.4.4 The landscape proposals shown in the Landscape Strategy detail the provision of further habitats and prescriptions for key features (Ref:3481-5-2-DR-0001 Landscape Strategy-0001 P5).

5.5 Legal implications

- 5.5.1 Potential legal constraints relate principally to bats, nesting birds, reptiles, great crested newt, badger and other mobile fauna. Legal compliance will be secured through retention of key habitats, sensitive lighting, pre-commencement checks, timing restrictions, PWMS/reptile method statements and ECoW supervision where required.
- 5.5.2 No bat roosts were identified within trees during survey works. Consequently, no European Protected Species (EPS) licence is required in respect of bats, provided works proceed in

accordance with the mitigation and precautionary measures outlined in this report. Should the scheme change such that trees with roost potential are removed, or if bats are discovered during works, further assessment and consultation with Natural England would be required.

- 5.5.3 No breeding habitat for Great Crested Newt has been identified within the Site and no evidence of presence has been recorded. The Site supports terrestrial habitat of limited suitability only. On the basis of current evidence, no EPS licence is required. Works affecting suitable terrestrial habitat will be undertaken under a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) to minimise the risk of harm to amphibians.
- 5.5.4 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Vegetation clearance will therefore be undertaken outside the main bird nesting season (March–August inclusive) where practicable, or preceded by an inspection by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 5.5.5 Although the site is considered to provide only limited potential for reptiles, suitable habitat is present in limited areas. A precautionary approach to vegetation clearance will be adopted, including phased strimming and habitat manipulation, to avoid the risk of harm.
- 5.5.6 According to the Arbo-culturalist assessment (ref: TGA. 2786.TreeSurveyRevA), there are no veteran trees onsite. Trees T74 and T80 are included on the Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory, and while both trees exhibit veteran features, such as deadwood, both trees are tall with spreading crowns, On this basis, both trees are considered high value mature trees, but not veteran trees.
- 5.5.7 Subject to implementation of the mitigation and precautionary measures outlined within this EclA, the Proposed Development is not expected to result in an offence under relevant wildlife legislation.

5.6 Conclusion

- 5.6.1 The potential ecological effects of the proposed development, together with the embedded and additional mitigation measures, the resulting residual effects, and the significance of those effects, are summarised in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Summary of Ecological Impact Assessment

Ecological Receptor	Importance	Potential Impact Pathway	Unmitigated effect	Mitigation	Residual Effect	Significance
South Downs National Park	National	Increased recreational pressure; construction traffic, dust and emissions; operational traffic emissions (NOx/ammonia).	Potential indirect effects from recreation and atmospheric pollution. No direct habitat loss or encroachment.	Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), including dust suppression, traffic management, pollution prevention, HGV	No direct impacts. No adverse effects on the integrity of the National Park are anticipated.	Not significant

				controls and contractor toolbox talks.		
West Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) - Veteran Trees	County	Loss or deterioration of veteran trees and failure to deliver relevant LNRS priorities.	Potential conflict with LNRS objectives if veteran trees were removed or adversely affected.	All mature trees retained; Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP); woodland enhancement and long-term management through the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP). No veteran trees identified within the Site.	Development accords with the relevant LNRS objectives through the retention and enhancement of mature trees and woodland.	Not significant
Trees	Site	Construction damage to retained trees and disturbance to associated fauna.	Potential temporary disturbance and indirect impacts to retained trees.	Tree protection fencing, Arboricultural Method Statement, ecological inspections, where seasonal restrictions apply.	No significant adverse effects are predicted.	Not significant
Treelines	Site	Limited treeline removal and construction disturbance to associated fauna.	Potential temporary disturbance and indirect impacts to retained trees.	Tree protection fencing, Arboricultural Method Statement, where seasonal restrictions apply, hedgerow planting and biodiversity net gain measures.	No significant adverse effects are predicted following mitigation and replacement planting.	Not significant
Area habitats	Site	Loss of modified grassland; indirect construction effects on retained habitats through dust, pollution, runoff, lighting and encroachment.	Loss of low-value grassland and potential degradation of retained habitats.	CEMP, habitat protection fencing, pollution prevention, SuDS, lighting controls, habitat buffers, habitat reinstatement and Biodiversity Gain Plan.	Habitat creation and enhancement will compensate for habitat loss. No significant adverse residual effects are anticipated.	Not significant
Reptiles	Site	Vegetation clearance, groundworks and	Potential injury, mortality, disturbance and	Precautionary approach/working method, ecological	Retained and enhanced habitats will maintain the	Not significant

		landscaping affecting peripheral habitat.	temporary displacement of individual reptiles.	supervision, phased directional vegetation clearance, two-stage strimming, refugia checks, habitat enhancement and relocation if required.	local conservation status of grass snake and slow worm.	
Badger	Site	Vegetation clearance, groundworks and landscaping affecting peripheral habitat.	Temporary disturbance, reduced foraging opportunities and risk of injury; potential effects if an unknown sett is present.	Pre-construction badger survey, standard construction safeguards, licensing if required, excavation protection, lighting controls and habitat retention.	No significant adverse residual effects anticipated. The Proposed Development is not expected to result in loss of a badger sett or affect the local conservation status.	Not significant
Bats	Local	Vegetation clearance, construction disturbance and operational lighting affecting commuting routes.	Temporary displacement during construction and potential reduction in suitability of commuting corridors due to lighting.	Sensitive lighting strategy, retention of dark corridors, tree protection, precautionary working methods, bat boxes and habitat enhancement.	Key commuting corridors will be retained and strengthened, foraging resources increased and no significant adverse effects are anticipated.	Not significant
Great crested newt	Site	Disturbance to limited terrestrial habitat during construction.	Potential incidental harm if present, although repeated eDNA surveys indicate likely absence.	Precautionary approach/working method, toolbox talks, ecological supervision where required and procedures if newts are encountered.	No significant adverse effects on great crested newt are predicted.	Not significant
Nesting Birds	Site	Vegetation clearance and construction disturbance during the nesting season.	Potential damage or destruction of active nests and disturbance to breeding birds.	Vegetation clearance outside nesting season where practicable, pre-works nesting bird checks, exclusion zones and species-specific mitigation where required.	Nesting and foraging opportunities will be maintained and enhanced. No significant adverse residual effects anticipated.	Not significant

Hazel dormouse	Site	Temporary disturbance to retained habitat during construction.	Low risk of temporary disturbance to individuals if present.	Retention of woodland, scrub and treelines; ecological checks before vegetation clearance; precautionary working methods.	Habitat connectivity will be maintained. No significant effects are anticipated.	Not significant
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- 5.6.2 Following implementation of the embedded and additional mitigation measures set out above, including retained habitat protection, sensitive lighting, precautionary working methods for reptiles, great crested newt and other fauna, nesting bird safeguards, pollution prevention and delivery of BNG, no significant adverse residual ecological effects are predicted.

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7. GLOSSARY

7.1 Scientific Terms and Acronyms

BoCC Birds of Conservation Concern, the UK Red-list for birds, produced by the British Trust for Ornithology and last updated in 2021.

BTO British Trust for Ornithology

CIEEM Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, the professional organisation and provider of professional codes of conduct for ecological consultancy.

EPS European Protected Species For the purposes of this report EPS are species that require particular licences to allow certain works to go ahead. Species falling within the following situations are not considered as EPS within this report:

Birds listed on Appendix 2 of the Bern Convention (European legislation). The protection requirements of this Appendix are fully integrated in UK law, notably through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Birds listed on Annex 1 of the Birds Directive (European legislation). The protection of such species survival and reproduction within their geographic distribution is ensured through special conservation measures in relation to their habitats. Such measures are implemented through the establishment of Special Protection Areas. Therefore, any implications are considered at regional habitat and country level rather than individual bird/species level.

LBAP Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Level of protection – ‘EU’ Protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) as amended.

Level of protection – ‘UK’ Protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

LNR Local Nature Reserve. Statutory designation.

LNRS Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

LWS Local Wildlife Site. Non-statutory designation.

NNR National Nature Reserve. Statutory designation.

Non-native invasive species For the purposes of this report: species listed on Schedule 9 of the wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Widely naturalised species, such as grey squirrel, are excluded.

Notable species A species which is listed as a UK Priority Species, carries an unfavourable conservation status (e.g. scarce, rare, threatened, Red-listed), is invasive or is otherwise worthy of note from an ecological perspective.

Protected species A species protected under specific UK or European legislation, including Habitats Directive, Wildlife and Countryside Act.

PTES Peoples Trust for Endangered Species.

SAC Special Area of Conservation. Designated under European Union Habitat Directive (92/43/EEC) to protect species and habitat of European interest.

SPA Special Protection Area. A site designated under the European Union Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds.

SSSI Site of Special Scientific Interest. Statutory designation of biological or geological importance.

UK Priority Habitat and species A habitat or species identified as a priority for conservation in accordance with Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). Section 40 of the Act places a duty on public authorities to have regard for the conservation objectives of these habitats and species. (Also known as Section 41 (S41) habitats/species).

7.2 Scientific Names

Scientific names of species mentioned in this report are outlined in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Scientific names of species mentioned within this report

English Name	Scientific Name
Mammals (excluding bats)	
Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>
Hazel dormouse	<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>
West European hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>
Bats	
Barbastelle	<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>
<i>Myotis</i> sp.	<i>Myotis</i> sp.
Amphibians	
Great crested newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>
Plants	
Oak	<i>Quercus</i> sp.
Reptiles	
Grass snake	<i>Natrix helvetica</i>
Slow worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>

APPENDICES

PLANS

3481-5-2-DR-0001-P5 LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

TGA.2786.TSP.001A

21/09/2026 David Jarvis Associates Ltd. 1:500 Scale Drawing. 21/09/2026 David Jarvis Associates Ltd. 1:500 Scale Drawing. 21/09/2026 David Jarvis Associates Ltd. 1:500 Scale Drawing.



Notes

Related Drawings: DIA Drawing based on Thakeham 'H119-THA-P02-ZZ-D-A-1010-Site Layout - Standard' rec'd 16/09/2026

Issue: Drawn by David Jarvis Associates Limited (CROWN COPYRIGHT. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED 2026 LICENCE NUMBER 0100031). This drawing is for Planning purposes only. Do not use this drawing for Construction. The information contained in the drawing should be used as a guide to the final forms and finishes of the landscape scheme. Any revisions to be approved by the Client and Local Authority

Scaling: Do not scale this drawing. Use given dimensions only.

Setting out: refer to Engineers for information regarding setting out. In the event of discrepancy refer to Engineers in the first instance.

Survey: Original survey provided by the Client.

Services: Where possible these are identified on the drawings but, for the avoidance of doubt all service/utility locations should be considered indicative until identified on site. To ensure those services / utilities shown are current refer to the original survey provider or utilities designer or Client for confirmation and further information regarding easements. In the event of new services being installed refer to the appointed Engineer. It is recommended that hazard warning tape 'danger electric cable'/'danger services' to be installed over all service routes (to remain on site) to current BS guidelines (BS7671).

Lighting: Refer to lighting engineers drawings.

Planting: Plant species are selected and located in line with consideration of the site conditions, NHBC guidelines and discussions with the Local Authority and design team. All plants and planting procedure to conform to the David Jarvis Associates Limited Landscape Specification that will accompany the Construction Issue Drawings. No species or plant location is to be varied without prior consent of the Landscape Architect.

Biosecurity: All plant stock to be sourced from a supplier certified to be pest and disease free and in accordance with Plant Passport / Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and current DEFRA requirements. Supplier information / certification to be retained for a period of not less than 12 years and must be made available upon request.

Foundations: Developers / Contractors to ensure that all foundations (buildings and external walls) are designed and constructed so as to take into account, at the time of maturity, any existing or proposed trees, hedgerows or other vegetation on the application site or existing vegetation on land adjoining the site at the time of construction and any trees felled or hedgerows removed on or adjacent to the site during the previous 15 years. For this purpose the developer / contractors will submit all relevant details to the authority dealing with the Building Regulations Certificate.

Design Levels: Refer to Engineers where design levels are not shown.

CDM: Drawings to be read in conjunction with Designers risk assessment. Potential risks above that of those associated with the general construction typical to the drawing are identified below:

KEY

APPLICATION BOUNDARY / LAND WITHIN APPLICANT'S CONTROL

PROPOSED GRASS: PRIVATE FRONT / REAR

PROPOSED GRASS: AMENITY PUBLIC / SPECIES RICH GENERAL PURPOSE

MOWN GRASS PATH

PROPOSED PLANTED BEDS / SCRUB

PROPOSED REED BEDS / MARGINAL PLANTING

PROPOSED PERMANENT WATER & AQUATIC PLANTING

PROPOSED TREES

PROPOSED ORNAMENTAL HEDGES 0.6m HIGH

PROPOSED NATIVE HEDGE 1.2m HIGH

LEAP SAFETY SURFACE & ILLUSTRATIVE PLAY EQUIPMENT

REFER TO ENGINEER DRAWINGS FOR HARD SURFACING

Drawing Revision

Rev.	Date	Description	DWN	CKD
P5	21/09/2026	Amended to client comments.	RO	GR
P4	15/07/2026	Amended to client comments.	VB	GR
P3	14/07/2026	Amended to client comments.	VB	GR
P2	09/07/2026	Amended to new layout & client comments.	JB	GR
P1	30/06/2026	First Planning Issue	JB/GR	GR

Status

PLANNING

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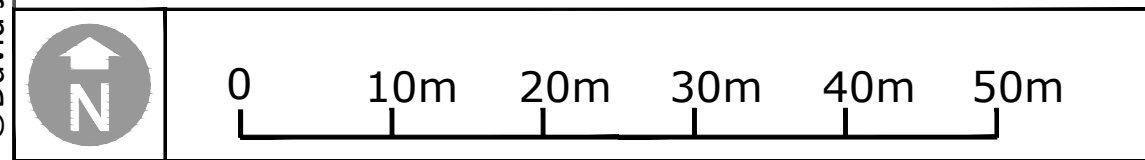
Client
THAKEHAM

Project
LAND OFF COLLEGE LANE, HURSTPIERPOINT

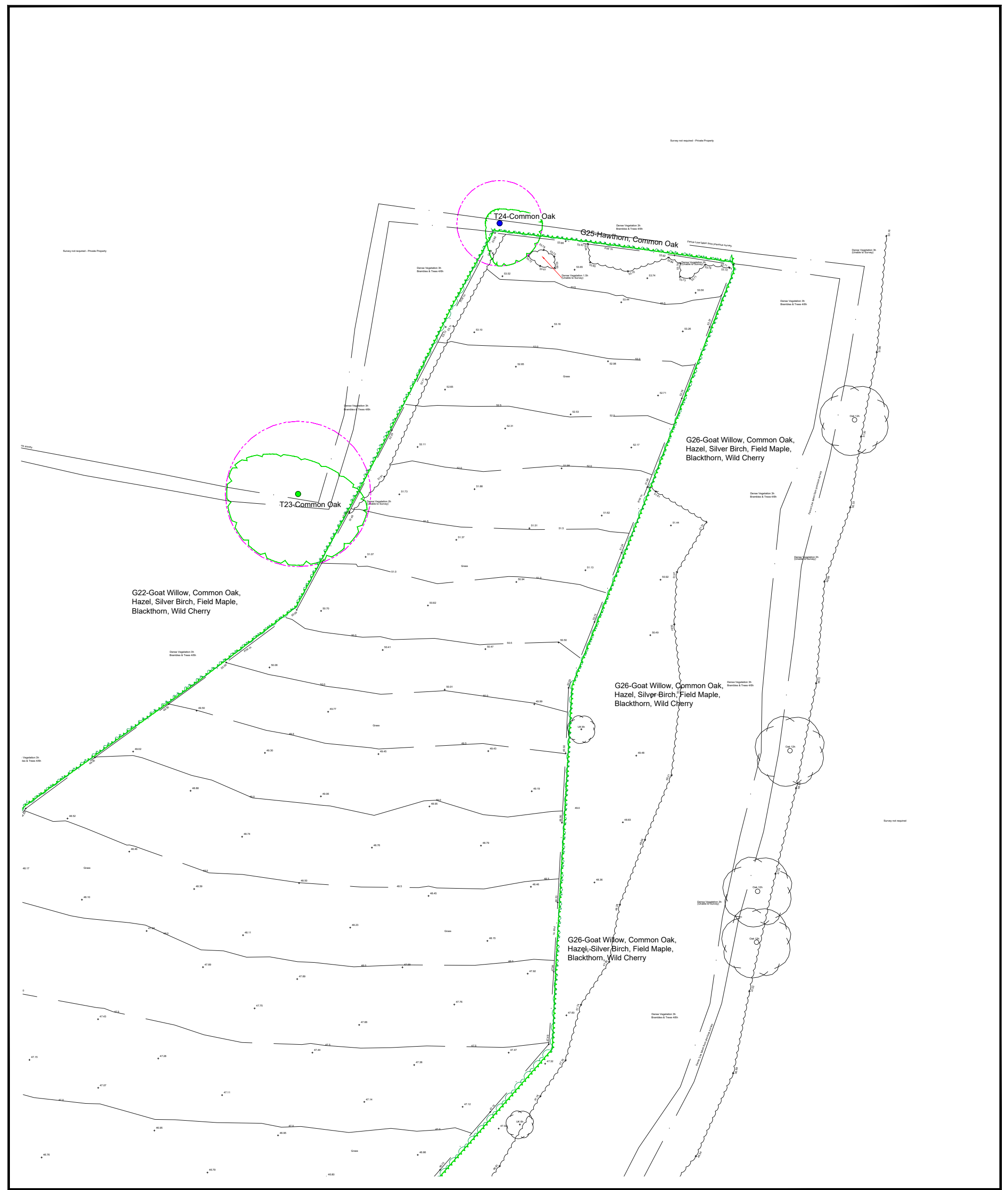
Drawing Title
LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

Scale 1:500	Sheet Size A1	Date Plotted 21/09/2026
Client Ref. -	Drawing Ref. 3481-5-2	Drawing No. DR-0001
Version P5		

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TREE CANOPY

A CATEGORY TREE

B CATEGORY TREE

C CATEGORY TREE

U CATEGORY TREE

ROOT PROTECTION AREA (RPA)

A & B CATEGORY TREE

ROOT PROTECTION AREA (RPA)

C CATEGORY TREE

N

DRAWING TITLE

Tree Survey Plan

CLIENT

Thakeham Homes

SITE

Land east of College Lane
Hurstpierpoint

SCALE

1:500 @ A1

DATE

15/07/2026

JOB NUMBER

2786

DRAWING NUMBER

001A

DRAWING REFERENCE

TGA.2786.TSP.001A

REVISION NOTES

REV	COMMENTS	DATE
001	Original issue	10/02/2020
001A	Revised topographical survey	15/07/2020

tga

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POLICY, LEGISLATION AND GUIDANCE

A.1 Overview

Tables A1.1 and A1.2 provide a summary of wildlife legislation and policy of relevance to development at the Site.

Table A1.1 Overview of species/species groups relevant to the current proposals and associated legislation and policy

Species/Species group	European	UK ¹	Priority species ²
Amphibians (common)		Various	Incl. common toad
Bats (all species)	✓	Full	Species dependent
Badger		Full	✓
Birds		Full	Species dependent, incl. House sparrow
Great crested newt	✓	Full	✓
Mammals (general)		Species-dependent	Incl. hedgehog
Reptiles (excluding sand lizard and smooth snake)		Partial – incl. killing and injury	✓
Notes ¹ Principally the Wildlife and Countryside Act: Full = full protection, either from the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) alone or in combination between this act and European legislation; partial = partially protected. ✓ = covered by other specific legislation. ² Includes over 900 species listed in accordance with section 41 of the NERC Act (2006). Species known or most likely to utilise the Site are indicated where appropriate.			

Table A1.2 Relevant species legislation for development at the Site

Species / group	Legislation ^{see notes}													
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Amphibians (common)										✓				
Badger	✓						✓							✓
Bats (all species)					✓		✓		✓	✓				✓
Birds (nesting)		✓	✓							✓				
Great crested newt					✓				✓	✓				
Hedgehog							✓			✓				✓
Reptiles					✓	✓				✓				
Notes ¹ Protection of Badgers Act 1992 ² Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) – Part 1 ³ Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) – Schedule 1 (some species, none recorded within the Site) ⁴ Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) – Schedule 5, Section 9 ⁵ Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) – Schedule 5, Section 9 (4b, 4c) and (5) ⁶ Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) – Schedule 5, Section 9 (1, in respect of killing and injuring) and (5) ⁷ Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) – Schedule 6, Section 11 ⁸ Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) – Schedule 9, Section 14 ⁹ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 – Schedule 2 (European protected species) ¹⁰ Natural England and Rural Communities Act (2006) – Various species listed in accordance with Section 41 ¹¹ Invasive Species regulations: EU Regulation (1143/2014) on invasive alien (non-native) species ¹² Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ¹³ Environmental Protection Act 1990 ¹⁴ Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996														

The key national planning policies and documents are:

- The Environment Act (2021);
- Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990);
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2026); and
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

B. LIMITATIONS REVIEW

Consideration	Comment
Survey & data	
Personal competence, i.e. qualifications, training, skills, understanding, experience	All survey/assessment works were undertaken by or directly supervised by personnel experienced in ecological surveying (see meta data; Section C1). <u>Jonathan Wood BSc (Hons) MCIEEM</u> has over 11 years' experience in ecological consultancy, including an experience of performing and coordinating the survey work and assessments undertaken at Site. <u>James Patmore CEng CEnv MCIEEM</u> has over 23 years of experience in ecological consultancy, including an extensive amount of experience performing and directing ecological survey work and assessments. <u>Katie Dalton BSc (Hons) MRSB ACIEEM</u> has over 7 years' experience in ecological consultancy, including an experience of performing the survey work and assessments undertaken at Site along with technical reporting. Katie holds a GCN class licence. <u>Jasmine Whitmore BSc (Hons) ACIEEM</u> has 3 years' experience in ecological consultancy, including experience in survey work and assessments undertaken at site and technical reporting.
Resources (equipment and/or personnel)	Appropriate resources and suitably qualified personnel were used.
Time spent surveying	Sufficient time was spent on Site to undertake all surveys to determine the baseline. No surveys were 'cut short'.
Data (e.g. arising from incomplete or inappropriate surveys)	The data used and collected were sufficient for the purpose of the works.
Lack of statistical robustness and higher uncertainties	Statistical analysis of data was not deemed necessary for the purpose of the current works.
Old and out of date data	The data used to complete this Ecological Impact Assessment was current and up to date.
Timing or seasonal constraints and suboptimal survey periods	The baseline survey was conducted between February. This is outside of the optimal period for habitat surveys, however this is not deemed a limitation due to numerous site walkovers.
Partial use of and/or departures from good practice guidelines	The assessment accorded with the relevant best practice guidelines.
Site conditions & other factors	
Adverse weather conditions	No significantly adverse weather conditions were encountered during the survey work undertaken at the Site that would be considered to have significantly adversely impacted the reliability and/or accuracy of data collected.
Restricted access to Site or part of Site	No Site restrictions.
Unrealistic deadlines	No restrictions on survey data collected or analysed to date are as a result of unrealistic deadlines.
Unproven or untested measures for mitigation and compensation	N/A
Evaluation of conservation value and impacts	The evaluation of the conservation value of habitats and species associated (or potentially associated) with the Site and impacts of the development, are based on the current information available. This evaluation will need to be reviewed and updated as necessary should a considerable period of time (24 months) elapse and/or more data from other survey work (on and within 500 m of the Site) becomes available.

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