Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

The Brook
Crawley Down
July 2026 (v02)

Site name	The Brook, Cuttinglye Road, Crawley Down, West Sussex, RH10 4LR	
Client	Mr & Mrs Roff	
Survey type & date	Walkover survey, July 2024 & update in August 2025	
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Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this report and its contents, in view of potential ecological constraints to development or the likely presence or absence of species, it must only be viewed as a snap-shot in time and, therefore, not be viewed as definitive. Due to external factors, such as seasonality, weather etc, having the potential to affect survey results, no liability can be assumed for omissions or changes that may, or may not occur, after the date this report was produced.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PROPOSAL	• Construction of a new replacement dwelling following demolition of the existing property.
KEY FINDINGS	• The habitats within the Site included buildings and hardstanding (developed land; sealed surfaces), woodland, vegetated garden (shrubs and grassland), scattered trees, a ditch and other neutral grassland. • There are no statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designations within the Site boundary. However, Lobb's Wood and Furnace Pond Local Wildlife Site (LWS) is immediately to the north, beyond Cuttinglye Road. Given this proximity, the adoption of precautionary mitigation measures during construction is recommended to safeguard the integrity of the LWS. • Ancient woodland lies within the Site boundary. While no direct impacts are anticipated, precautionary mitigation measures are recommended to minimise the risk of indirect effects during construction. • The main house and annex (B1) were subject to a PRA and assessed as having *low suitability* to support roosting bats. Accordingly, at least one bat emergence/re-entry survey has been recommended during the bat activity season (May to September inclusive). • The outbuildings were subject to a PRA and found to have negligible suitability to support roosting bats and no additional surveys are therefore required. • The Site has the potential to support nesting birds, hedgehogs, foraging and commuting bats, and foraging and commuting badgers. An outlying badger sett was recorded in the woodland section of the garden (>30m from the proposed works area). • The Site is highly unlikely to impact reptiles or great crested newts due to the scale of the works and the lack of suitable habitat within the works area. However, precautionary mitigation measures to ensure there is no residual risk to these species have been recommended. • Precautionary mitigation measures have been recommended for minimising potential impacts on protected/notable species during any Site vegetation clearance, demolition and construction.



CONTENTS

			Page
1	INTRODUCTION		7
	1.1	Background	7
	1.2	The Site	7
	1.3	Proposed development	8
	1.4	Scope of the Assessment	8
2	LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT		9
3	METHODOLOGY		9
	3.1	Desk study	9
	3.2	Field survey	10
	3.2.1	Walkover survey	10
	3.2.2	Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA)	11
	3.2.3	Categorisation of bat roosting potential	11
	3.2.4	Ground level tree assessment (GLTA)	12
	3.3	Limitations	12
4	EVALUATION		13
5	RESULTS – ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS		15
	5.1	Statutory designated sites	15
	5.2	Non-statutory designated sites	15
	5.3	Valuable habitats and habitat connectivity	16
6	FIELD SURVEY – HABITATS		18
	6.1	Developed land; sealed surface and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1b5 u1b6 u1c)	18
	6.1.1	Evaluation	18
	6.2	Vegetated garden (g4 828 100)	18
	6.2.1	Evaluation	18
	6.3	Scattered trees (g32)	18
	6.3.1	Evaluation	19
	6.4	Deciduous woodland (w1g)	19
	6.4.1	Evaluation	19
	6.5	Other neutral grassland (g3c)	19
	6.5.1	Evaluation	19
	6.6	Ditch	19
	6.6.1	Evaluation	19
	6.7	Summary	21
7	PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES		23
	7.1	Mammals	23
	7.1.1	Badgers	23
	7.1.2	Bats	23

	7.1.3	Dormice	25
	7.1.4	Hedgehogs	26
	7.1.5	Otters and water voles	26
	7.2	Birds	26
	7.3	Reptiles and amphibians	27
	7.3.1	Amphibians	27
	7.3.2	Reptiles	28
8	DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER SURVEYS		31
	8.1	Bats: Buildings	31
9	DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MITIGATION		31
	9.1	Woodland and Non-Statutory Designated Site	31
	9.2	Other Habitats on Site	32
	9.3	Badgers and hedgehogs	32
	9.4	Bats	33
	9.4.1	Mitigation and Licence strategy	33
	9.4.2	Foraging and commuting bats	34
	9.5	Nesting birds	34
	9.6	Reptiles & Amphibians	35
10	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCEMENTS		36
	10.1	Habitats	37
	10.2	Protected and notable species	37
11	CONCLUSION		38
12	BIBLIOGRAPHY		39

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Deepdene Ecology Ltd was instructed by Mr and Mrs Roff to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of 'The Brook, Cuttinglye Road, Crawley Down, West Sussex RH10 4LR' (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). A planning application will be submitted for the demolition of the existing residential house and the construction of a new detached residential property on a similar smaller footprint. Ecological input has been requested in support of the application.

A walkover survey was originally conducted in July 2024, and a draft report was prepared but not formally issued. Following revisions to the final design, an updated walkover survey was undertaken in August 2025. This report presents the baseline conditions as recorded in August 2025, noting any changes since July 2024.

1.2 The Site

The Site (TQ 35127 38651) comprises a main house and associated outbuildings, situated within a large, wooded garden plot on the northern edge of Crawley Down (see **Figures 1** & **2**). The immediate surroundings are characterised by large residential properties within a low-density settlement. The wider landscape contains a mosaic of habitats including woodland, arable fields, and pasture, interspersed with mature trees and hedgerows. Woodland is present both on Site and within the surrounding area, providing structural habitat connectivity for wildlife.



Figure 1: Site boundary (indicative only). Image taken from Google Earth.



Figure 2: Site context shown in red (indicative only). Image taken from Google Earth.

1.3 Proposed development

A planning application will be submitted to Mid Sussex District Council for demolition of the existing residential house to facilitate the construction of a new residential property within a similar, albeit slightly smaller footprint.

A full set of drawings will be provided with the planning application with the proposed block plan and the existing plan, with the new footprint overlaid, provided in **Appendix B**.

1.4 Scope of the Assessment

This report presents ecological information obtained during a desk study and walkover survey undertaken in July 2024 and an update undertaken in August 2025 and follows best practice guidance[1].

The walkover survey included an assessment of the potential of the habitats within the Site to support any relevant protected or notable species to ensure that no valuable habitats/protected species are adversely affected by the proposed development.

The purpose of the appraisal is to satisfy the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) by identifying the potential impacts of the proposed development on protected species and features of ecological value. The findings also help inform how the development can help contribute to local biodiversity priorities, in accordance with the local

[1] CIEEM, (2017). *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.

planning policy, and in-line with the British Standard 42020 (2013) Biodiversity: Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

This report identifies the need for any measures to avoid or mitigate damage and disturbance to species, and provides recommendations for further ecological surveys, as required.

2 LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

The relevant legislation and planning policy is outlined in **Appendix A**. Where possible, this report has provided guidance on how the proposals can meet the requirements of both local planning policy (Mid Sussex District Council) and the NPPF.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk study

A detailed desk study was undertaken to inform this assessment with baseline information collated from the following sources:

- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website[2] –
  - To identify statutory designated sites of nature conservation importance within 2km of the Site and extended to 5km for Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs);
  - To identify any valuable habitats, granted European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licences, great crested newt survey and class licence returns within 2km of the Site; and
  - To determine if the Site was within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ).
- Mid- Sussex District Council Planning Policy Map[3] - to identify non-statutory designated sites (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and potential (p)SINCs) within a 1km radius around the Site;
- Google Earth - use and analysis of aerial photographs to consider the surrounding landscape and identify any potential features that bats may use to access the Site (including hedgerows and lines of mature trees).

A search for water bodies was carried out within 500m of the Site boundary using the Ordnance Survey website (http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/oswebsite/), and aerial photography (http://maps.google.co.uk).

[2] MAGIC – www.magic.gov.uk (accessed September 2025).

[3] Mid Sussex Planning Policy Maps - https://www.midsussex.gov.uk/planning-building/policies-maps/ (accessed September 2025)

3.2 Field survey

3.2.1 Walkover survey

A walkover survey of the Site was undertaken which mapped the existing habitats on Site and assessed their potential to support protected/notable species. Photographs were taken and these are shown in **Sections 6** & **7**.

The survey was completed by Nadine Clark BSc MSc MCIEEM on the 22nd July 2024 and updated on 21st August 2025.

Habitat survey

The main habitats within the Site were mapped using the UK Habitat Classification system[4] (UKHabs) with features of ecological interest highlighted as Target Notes (TN) in **Figure 4.** The system comprises a principal hierarchy (the Primary Habitats), which include ecosystems, broad habitats, Priority Habitats and Annex 1 habitats, and non-hierarchical Secondary Codes. Any Secondary Codes selected are appropriate to the Site and habitats recorded. The Minimum Mapping Unit used is 25m^2 and 5m in length.

Protected/notable species

During the walkover survey, the potential for notable/protected fauna to occur in or adjacent to the Site was also assessed. The following assessments were undertaken in respect of the presence of the following legally protected species:

- Assessment of the terrestrial habitat suitability for amphibians, including great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*;
- Assessment of suitable habitats for reptiles;
- Assessment of the habitat suitability for nesting birds;
- Assessment of habitat suitability for hazel dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius;* and
- Assessment of habitat suitability for badgers *Meles meles* and any evidence including setts, dung pits/latrines, badger paths, hairs, bedding, footprints and scratching of trees was noted within a 30-40m buffer around the Site (where access allowed)
- The watercourse was present within the Site and therefore an assessment of habitat suitability and signs of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* and otter *Lutra lutra* not undertaken.

Consideration was given to the potential for the Site to support other notable habitats and species of conservation interest, including:

- Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006); and
- Previously listed UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats and Species.

[4] UKHab Ltd, (2023). *The UK Habitat Classification, Version 2.0*. Available online: https://www.ukhab.org.

Whilst every effort is made to notify the client of any plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the WCA (1981) (as amended) present on Site, it should be noted that this was not a specific survey for these species.

3.2.2 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment (PRA)

During the walkover survey, a detailed PRA was also undertaken to look for potential roosting opportunities and any evidence of bats at the buildings. The inspection was undertaken in accordance with guidance provided by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023) and (Mitchell-Jones & McLeish, 2004).

The external inspection comprised of searching for potential access points or roosting locations such as crevices or holes within the brickwork, around windows, missing, broken or slipped tiles, gaps beneath barge boards, soffits and facias, and any lifted flashing or roof tiles. Evidence of bats such as droppings on window sills or oil staining from bat fur was also searched for. The survey was conducted from the ground around the buildings and was aided by binoculars and a high-powered torch.

The internal inspection assessed the complexity and size of any internal spaces and daytime light levels. A search was also undertaken for potential access points and evidence of roosting bats such as bat droppings, oil staining from bat fur, feeding remains and actual bats.

The weather conditions were dry and cloudy and approximately 18°C and the survey was unconstrained.

3.2.3 Categorisation of bat roosting potential

Following the inspections and taking account of the habitat features, the buildings were then assigned a level of potential bat roost suitability based on the criteria given in the '*Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines, 4th Edition*' (Collins, 2023) and professional judgement (see **Table 1**).

Table 1: Classifying the bat roosting suitability of buildings (Collins, 2023).

None	No habitat features on Site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on Site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more features that could be opportunistically used by individual bats. Unlikely to support maternity or hibernation roosts.

Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support roosts of high conservation status.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat.
Confirmed roost	Evidence of bat occupation found.

3.2.4 Ground level tree assessment (GLTA)

A detailed Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) was carried out on all trees within the Site to identify potential bat roosting opportunities and any signs of bat presence where trees might be affected by the proposed works. The assessment followed the guidance set out by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023) and Mitchell-Jones & McLeish (2004).

The inspection focused on identifying potential roosting features (PRFs), including woodpecker holes, rot holes, lifted or peeling bark, vertical or horizontal cracks and splits, partially detached ivy, and hollows or cavities. The survey also sought evidence of bat activity, such as droppings or oil staining.

All trees were examined from the ground using binoculars and a high-powered torch to aid visibility. Following the survey, the trees were then assigned a level of bat roosting suitability based on guidance (see **Table 2**).

Landscape features such as hedgerows, trees and shrubs were also assessed for their potential suitability for bat foraging and commuting.

Table 2: Classifying the bat roosting suitability of trees (Collins, 2023)

None	No PRF noted from the ground or highly unlikely to be any.
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to the size or lack of suitable surrounding habitat.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and therefore may be used by a maternity colony.

3.3 Limitations

Ecological surveys are limited by factors which affect the presence of plants and animals such as the time of year, migration patterns and behaviour. The ecological walkover survey has not produced a complete list of animals within the Site and the absence of evidence of any particular species should not be taken as conclusive proof that the species is not present, or that it may not be present in the future. Nevertheless, the results of the ecological survey allow

evaluation of potential constraints and the potential for negative impacts from the proposed works.

It was not possible to survey the whole of the 30-40m buffer zone around the Site for badger setts or signs, as some of the land fell within private ownership, but the majority of the buffer zone could be searched. It is not considered to be a significant constraint as no badger signs were observed within the Site boundary and it was possible to search within 30m of the works areas, as this fell within the Site boundary.

4 EVALUATION

Based on the desk study and field survey results, an ecological evaluation of the Site was undertaken using a combination of evaluation criteria for habitats and species, following the general framework provided by CIEEM (*Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial and Freshwater*, 2018).

These guidelines aim to give consistency in evaluating the importance of the ecological features within and around a Site, which help inform any effects or impacts a scheme will have upon them.

A value of the ecological features (designated sites or habitats) has been assigned according to their level of importance using the terms outlined in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Examples of the criteria used to define the value/sensitivity of ecological receptors.

International	**Very high importance and rarity, international scale and limited potential for substitution:** An internationally designated site or candidate site (SPA, SAC, Ramsar Site, Biogenetic reserve). Internationally significant and viable areas of a habitat type listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive. Regularly occurring globally threatened species. Any regularly occurring populations of species listed on Schedules 2 or 5 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 that are rare or threatened in the UK or of uncertain conservation status. A regularly occurring significant population/number of any internationally important species.
National (UK or England)	**High importance and rarity, national scale and limited potential for substitution:** A nationally designated Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserve (NNR) or a discrete area which meets the published selection criteria for national designation irrespective of whether it has yet to be notified. A viable area of a UK priority habitat or smaller areas of such habitat that is essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole.

	A regularly occurring significant population/number of any nationally important species i.e. listed on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Any regularly occurring population of a nationally important species that is threatened or rare in the county or region. A priority habitat or species featured on the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework.
Regional or County	**High or moderate importance and rarity, regional scale, limited potential for substitution:** Viable areas of habitat or smaller areas of such a habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of the larger whole. Regional/County significant and viable areas of habitat identified as being of regional value in the appropriate Natural England Natural Area. Any regularly occurring significant population of a species listed as being nationally scarce, or on the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework or relevant Natural Area on account of its regional rarity or localisation. Significant populations of a regionally/county important species (those listed on the Priority List). Sites such as County Wildlife Sites (CWS) or Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) selected on Regional/County criteria. Any regularly occurring significant population of a protected/notable species on account of its rarity or localisation.
Borough	**Low or moderate importance and rarity, borough scale:** Areas identified in the relevant natural area profile. Sites/features that are scarce within the locality or which appreciably enrich the local area's habitat resource. A diverse and/or ecologically important valuable hedgerow network. A significant population of a locally important species. Species populations of local importance.
Local	**Very low importance and rarity, local scale:** Areas of habitat considered to appreciably enrich the habitat resource within the study area itself. A small population of a species of conservation.
Site	Habitats with limited value beyond their capacity to support common and widespread species.
Negligible	Habitats of intrinsically low ecological value including amenity grassland and hard standing.

At the PEA stage, it is not possible to assign value to any species and instead, the potential for the Site to support the species is assessed and recommendations are provided for further surveys/mitigation.

5 RESULTS – ECOLOGICAL DESIGNATIONS

5.1 Statutory designated sites

There is one statutory designated site for nature conservation within 2km of the Site which is described below in **Table 4.** There are no internationally designated sites within 5km.

Table 4: Statutory designated sites within 2km of the Site.

Hedgecourt Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1.3km to the north	It is designated as the most important wetland site in Surrey. The large lake present is a former mill pond which supports a range of rare water beetles and assemblage of birds. The site also supports woodland, fen-type habitat and neutral and damp grassland

The Site is within a SSSI IRZ where it is recommended that the Local Planning Authority consult Natural England on certain planning applications. However, residential applications, where there is no increase in residential units, such as this one, are not a type where consultation is required.

Given the relatively small scale of the development and distance from Hedgecourt SSSI, there are unlikely to be any impacts of the proposals and designated sites will not be considered any further.

5.2 Non-statutory designated sites

There are two non-statutory designated Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) for nature conservation within 1km of the Site which are discussed in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Statutory designated sites within 2km of the Site.

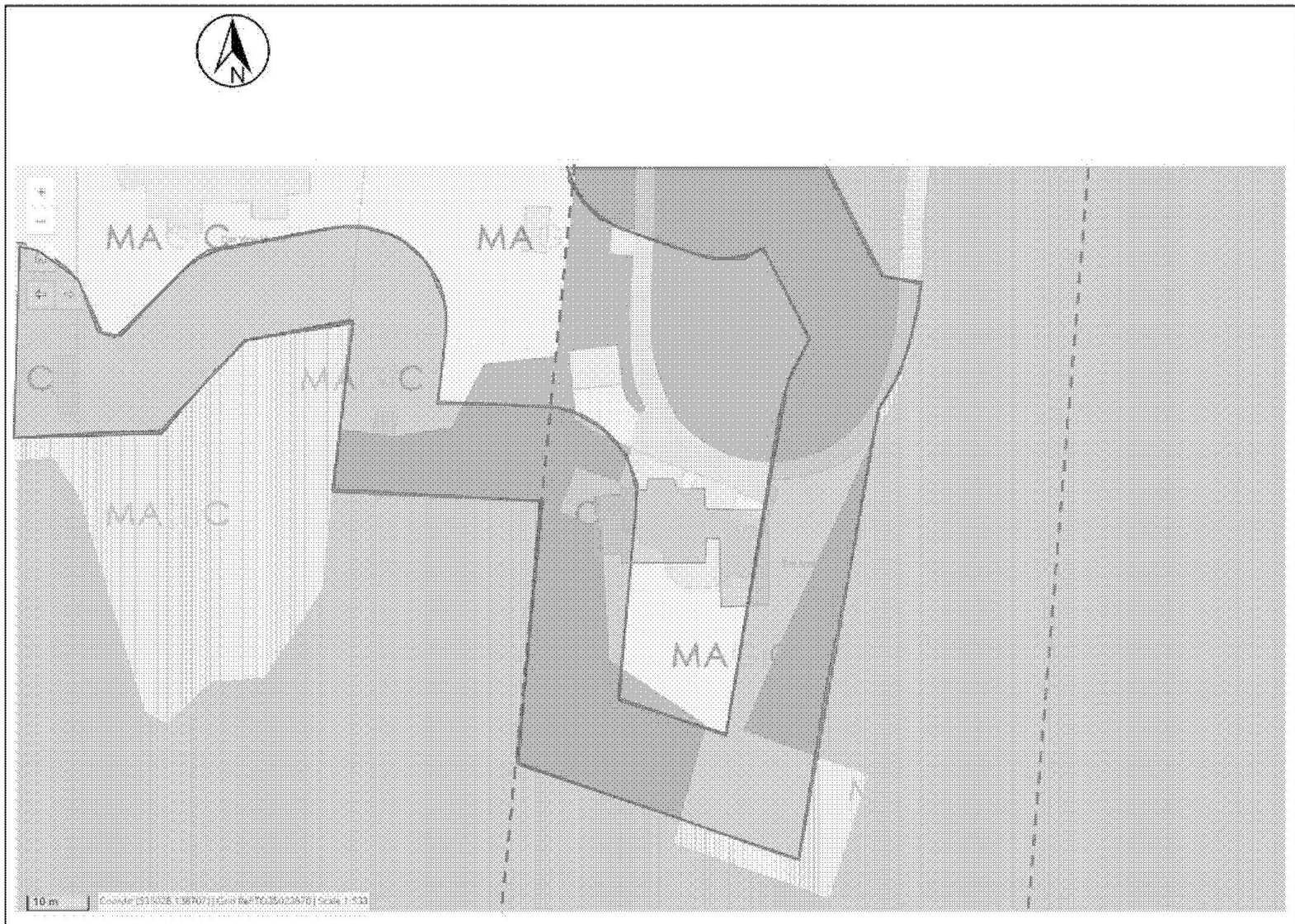
Lobbs Wood & Furnace Pond LWS	35m to the northwest	It is designated as an area of ancient woodland with Furnace Pond providing a large area of open water habitat.
Worth Way LWS	800m to the south	A former railway line forming a green corridor with woodland and open water such as Crawley Down Pond.

Lobbs Wood and Furnace Pond LWS is approximately 35m from the Site boundary and approximately 125m from the works area. Whilst the proposals are small scale and no direct impacts are anticipated, due to the close proximity of the LWS to the development, precautionary mitigation measures are recommended, and these are outlined in **Section 9**.

5.3 Valuable habitats and habitat connectivity

The majority of the woodland within the Site is classified as ancient semi-natural woodland, although the sections closest to the proposed works area are recorded as Priority Deciduous Woodland on the MAGIC Map. The ancient woodland boundary lies within approximately 4m of the existing building footprint, with the southwestern corner of the annex forming the closest point. The relative positions of the existing main house, the ancient woodland, and the proposed new building footprint are illustrated in **Figure 3** below.

Given the distance of the valuable habitat from the works area, precautionary mitigation measures to ensure there are no indirect impacts are outlined within **Section 9**.



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Existing Building Footprint
- Proposed building footprint
- Ancient woodland 15m buffer zone*
- Ancient woodland recorded from Magic Map
- Priority Deciduous Woodland recorded from Magic Map

* DEFRA Magic Map (accessed September 2025)

Project	The Brook, Crawley Down
Title	Ancient Woodland Buffers
Drawing	Figure 3
Date	12th September 2025

6 FIELD SURVEY – HABITATS

The main habitats within the Site have been described below alphabetically and are depicted on the map in **Figure 4** with photographs in **Table 6**.

6.1 Developed land; sealed surface and artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (u1b5 u1b6 u1c)

The buildings within the Site comprise the main house with its annex (B1) and associated outbuildings (Photograph 1, **Table 6**), together with a patio, looping access track, and parking areas (Photograph 2, **Table 6**). The driveway and parking areas at the front of the property were recorded as artificial, unvegetated unsealed surfaces, while the remainder of the Site is classified as developed land.

6.1.1 Evaluation

The buildings, areas of hardstanding and hardcore support limited botanical interest with little encroachment by vegetation due to their regular use. As such, these habitats are considered to be of **negligible** ecological value at the local level. The building's potential to support roosting bats is discussed separately in **Section 7**.

6.2 Vegetated garden (g4 828 100)

There were areas of modified grassland and ornamental planting (vegetated garden) in association with the main house. Species such as creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, meadowgrass *Poa sp.*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans* (Photograph 3, **Table 6**) were recorded. In addition to the modified grassland within the garden, there were also mature ornamental shrubs such as wisteria *Wisteria sp.*, rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*, ornamental conifers, currant *Ribes spp.*, pendulous sedge *Carex pendula* and *Hypericum sp.* (Photograph 4, **Table 6**).

6.2.1 Evaluation

The modified grassland was species-poor and had poor structure for foraging and shelter for local wildlife. The ornamental shrubs were predominantly non-native but they may have some value to local wildlife. As such, these habitats are considered to be of **Site** level ecological value at most.

6.3 Scattered trees (g32)

There were a small number of trees within the Site boundary that fell outside of the woodland habitat. These included species such as box elder *Acer negundo* (Photograph 5, **Table 6**), Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris,* apple *Malus domesticus*, yew *Taxus baccata* and cypress *Cupressus sp.* Apart from the Scots pine in the rear garden, all trees are to be retained.

6.3.1 Evaluation

The trees provide some value to local wildlife, in particular nesting birds and invertebrates. As a whole, the trees on Site are considered to be of at least **Site** ecological value.

6.4 Deciduous woodland (w1g)

The garden and house were surrounded by woodland which is predominantly comprised of deciduous species. The canopy was dominated by oak *Quercus robur* and beech *Fagus sylvatica* with other species such as yew, birch *Betula pendula* and holly *Ilex aquifolium* also present (Photograph 6, **Table 6**). There was encroachment into the woodland of non-native invasive species such as rhododendron and cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* (Photograph 7, **Table 6**). The woodland had very limited ground cover although some areas of bramble *Rubus fruticosus agg.* and bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* was present in places.

6.4.1 Evaluation

The woodland provide value to local wildlife, in particular nesting birds, mammals and invertebrates and in places the woodland has been recorded as ancient woodland. The woodland present within the site was connected to other sections of woodland providing connectivity across a wider area. As a whole, the woodland on Site is considered to be of at least **Local** ecological value.

6.5 Other neutral grassland (g3c)

There was a small, fenced paddock /menage which had developed into a predominant grass habitat with a few ruderal species noted such as bracken and nettle *Urtica dioica* noted around the edges (Photograph 7, **Table 6**).

6.5.1 Evaluation

The grassland habitat was species poor and as it was small and isolated from other habitat, it had limited ecological value and was considered to be of **Site** value.

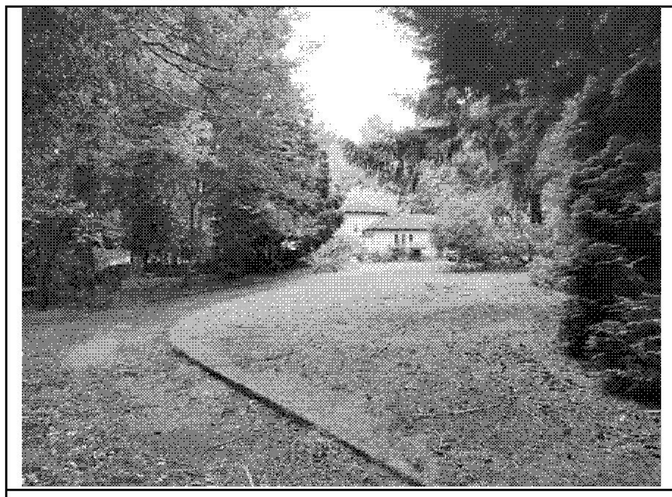
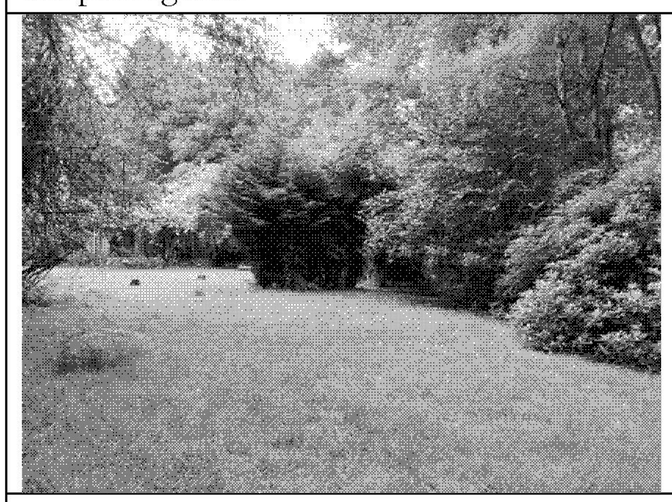
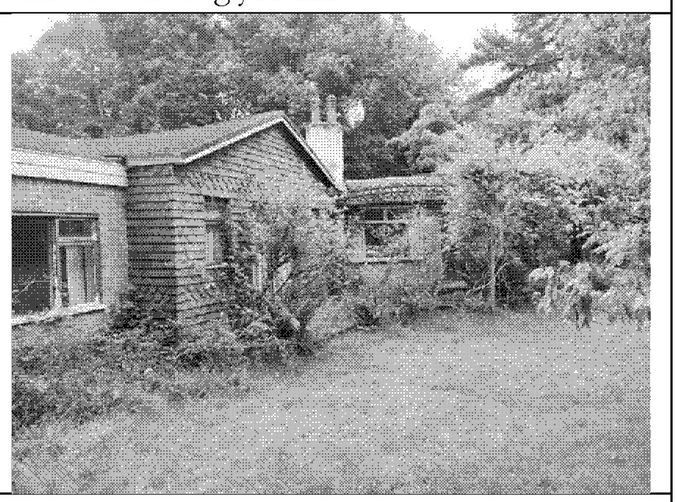
6.6 Ditch

A small ditch runs along the eastern boundary of the Site within the woodland habitat (Photograph 8, **Table 6**). During both surveys, the ditch contained limited water and supported very little vegetation. Although the Ordnance Survey map indicates an online pond along this feature, field observations confirmed that no pond was present, with only the ditch evident on the ground.

6.6.1 Evaluation

The ditch had very limited vegetation present with occasional patches of moss only. However, due to providing some connectivity to the wider area the ditch was considered to be of **Site** value.

Table 6: Habitats around the Site.

	
Photograph 1: Main house and associated access and parking area.	**Photograph 2**: Hardcore compacted access track off Cuttinglye Road.
	
Photograph 3: Modified grassland forming part of the vegetated garden mosaic in the rear garden.	**Photograph 4**: Mature ornamental borders within the vegetated garden.
	
Photograph 5: A small number of scattered trees were present within the garden habitat outside of the woodland boundary.	**Photograph 6**: Deciduous woodland habitat present around the garden habitats.



Photograph 7: Other neutral grassland present on the former paddock/menage.



Photograph 8: Ditch along the eastern boundary of the Site with limited water flow and no vegetation.

6.7 Summary

The Site supported common and widespread habitat types around the works area but within the wider redline boundary of the Site, the deciduous woodland was of higher ecological value. The majority of the Site consisted of buildings, hardstanding, vegetated garden and deciduous woodland. The proposed works involve limited impacts on natural habitats. There will be some small losses of vegetated garden habitat, developed land and scattered trees but other habitats, including the woodland habitat, will not be directly impacted. It is proposed to retain the majority of the trees and all the woodland and other neutral grassland, along with the majority of the vegetated garden habitats.



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Deciduous Woodland
- Vegetated Garden
- Developed Land, sealed surface
- Other Neutral Grassland
- Scattered Trees
- Ditch
- Target Note
  - TN1- Badger outlier sett
  - TN2- Scots pine - PRF-I

Project	The Brook, Crawley Down
Title	UK Habs Map
Drawing	Figure 4
Date	12th September 2025

7 PROTECTED AND NOTABLE SPECIES

The following section summarises the assessment of the Site's potential to support protected/notable species. Any relevant existing desk study information is also discussed with photographs provided in **Table 8.**

7.1 Mammals

7.1.1 [redacted]

7.1.2 Bats

Desk study

There are five existing EPSM licences that have been granted for bats within 2km of the Site (see **Table 7**).

Table 7: Existing EPSM Licences within a 1km buffer.

[redacted]				
2014-3084-EPS-MIT	0.5km south	Brown long-eared & common pipistrelle	Destruction of a resting place	2014-2016
2014-965-EPS-MIT	0.7km northeast	Brown long-eared & barbastelle	Destruction and damage of a resting place	2014
EPSM2012-4307	1.1km southwest	Common pipistrelle & brown long-eared	Destruction of a breeding site and resting place	2012-2014

2017-31276-EPS-MIT	1.3km south	Brown long-eared	Damage of a breeding site and resting place	2017-2027
2018-36616-EPS-MIT	1.95km northwest	Common pipistrelle, & brown long-eared	Destruction of a resting place	2019-2024

Field survey

The main house and attached annex (B1) will be demolished to accommodate the new replacement property and as such, it was subject to a PRA assessment which is detailed below.

The other buildings on Site, including the garage and sheds, will not be affected by the proposed works. As such, a full description of these structures is not provided. However, all were subject to a PRA and were found to have negligible suitability for roosting bats.

Main House (B1)

The residential property is a detached, brick-built one- and two-storey house with a combination of flat and hipped roof sections. The majority of the exterior is rendered, and the brickwork and render were observed to be in good condition. The roof is covered with large-format pantiles that are closely fitted and sit flush with one another (Photograph 3, **Table 8**), providing no suitable features for roosting bats along the ridges or hips. All windows and doors were well fitting.

Concrete hanging tiles are present on the rear and eastern elevations. Around the curved section at the rear, these tiles are closely fitted with no potential roosting features (Photograph 4, **Table 8**). However, minor gaps were noted under some hanging tiles on the southern rear and eastern side elevations (Photograph 5, **Table 8**), which provide limited potential for bat roosting.

Internally, the property has three loft spaces with heights of approximately 1.2 m to the roof apex (Photograph 6, **Table 8**). The voids predominantly have wooden sarking over bitumen felt under the tiles, except for a small front void which has only bitumen felt. The lofts appear well sealed with no obvious gaps or access points. No evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the internal inspection. The annex attached to the western elevation has no roof void.

No evidence of roosting bats was recorded during the internal or external survey of the house. Based on the inspection, the property (B1) is assessed as having **low suitability** to support roosting bats, with only limited potential associated with minor gaps under modern hanging tiles on the southern rear and eastern elevations.

Trees

The proposed works will not result in the loss of any trees, with the exception of a mature Scots pine located in the rear garden to the southeast of the main house (TN2, **Figure 4**). This tree exhibits a few occluded wounds from historically removed branches (Photograph 7, **Table 8**), which form very shallow features. The tree was assessed as PRF-I as per **Table 2**.

Accordingly, precautionary mitigation measures are recommended during its felling to avoid impacts on any potential bat roosting features.

Several small cypress trees in the rear garden and a small tree near the annex were removed between the 2024 and 2025 surveys; however, no features suitable for roosting bats were identified on these trees during the initial survey in July 2024.

Foraging and commuting

The Site contains areas of natural habitat, including vegetated gardens, and woodland that is connected to other nearby suitable habitats. These habitats are likely to be used by bats for foraging and commuting.

Evaluation

Three species of bat were recorded within the desk study but as this was only from EPSM licence data, this is likely to be skewed towards certain species most often found associated with buildings.

The main house (B1) was assessed as having low suitability to support roosting bats due to the presence of hanging tiles providing a small number of crevice roosting opportunities on the southern rear and eastern side elevation. As the whole building will be demolished to accommodate the proposals, further surveys should be undertaken to determine if bats will be impacted by the proposals (see **Section 8**).

The Scots pine (TN2) was assessed as PRF-I with minimal features suitable for individual roosting bats and as such, no additional surveys are recommended. However, during felling, precautionary mitigation measures have been recommended in **Section 9**.

The habitats present on Site are of moderate to high value to foraging and commuting bats. Therefore, mitigation measures in relation to lighting are required and have been provided in **Section 9** as a precaution.

7.1.3 Dormice

Desk study

There are no existing EPSM licences that have been granted for dormice within 2km of the Site.

Field survey

The woodland exhibits some suitability to support hazel dormice and falls within the species' natural range. The woodland is predominantly deciduous, with a limited understory, which may reduce habitat connectivity and nesting opportunities for dormice.

Evaluation

Whilst the Site falls within the dormouse's natural range, no woodland habitat will be impacted by the proposals and there will be no reduction in connectivity across the Site or wider woodland. As the proposals will not impact any suitable dormouse habitat, dormice will not be considered any further within this assessment.

7.1.4 Hedgehogs

Field survey

The vegetated garden and woodland habitat offered some potential to support foraging/commuting hedgehogs.

Evaluation

There is some potential for the Site to be used occasionally by hedgehogs, although no evidence of the species was found during the survey. Overall, there is considered to be low potential for hedgehogs to use the work area and precautionary mitigation has been recommended in **Section 9**.

7.1.5 [redacted]

7.2 Birds

Field survey

The vegetation and buildings within the Site have the potential to support common and widespread species of nesting birds.

Evaluation

The Site offers a range of opportunities for bird species with the buildings and denser habitat providing the most suitable habitat for nesting. The Site is considered to be of value at the Site level for common species of nesting birds and precautionary mitigation has been recommended in **Section 9**.

7.3 Reptiles and amphibians

7.3.1 Amphibians

Desk study

There are three EPSM licences that have been granted for great crested newts within 2km of the Site. The closest is approximately 750m to the southwest.

Great crested newts typically will use habitat within 250m/500m of a waterbody. Surveys of land greater than 250m from the nearest waterbody are normally appropriate when all of the following conditions are met (Natural England, 2015):

a) Maps, aerial photos, walkover surveys or other data indicate that the waterbodies have potential to support a large great crested newt population;
b) The development footprint contains particularly favourable habitat, especially if it constitutes the majority available locally;
c) The development would have a substantial negative effect on that habitat; and
d) There is an absence of dispersal barriers.

The proposed project does not meet the criteria above, and therefore consideration is only required for land and waterbodies within 250m of the Site.

There are three waterbodies within 250m of the Site noted from OS maps and aerial photographs, consisting of online ponds and an ornamental pond. Two of the ponds were located on private land and therefore were not subject to a field survey and the third was shown within the Site on OS maps but was not present on the ground. The closest pond that can be verified to exist, an ornamental pond within a garden to the northeast is located approximately 65m to the edge of the Site, but approximately 165m from the works area.

Field survey

There are no waterbodies present on Site. Whilst the OS maps noted a small pond in line with the ditch, it was found not to be present during any of the site visits and there were no obvious features that could become a pond in higher water levels.

Great crested newts spend a large amount of time on land and so both breeding ponds and terrestrial habitat around breeding ponds are protected and require assessment where there is likely to be an impact to the species. The habitats present within the Site has some value with the woodland habitat providing some suitable habitat should they be present within the wider area. However, the proposed works will not impact the woodland. The works area is limited to existing buildings, hardstanding, short-sward modified grassland, and small areas of ornamental

flower beds. These habitats have very limited ecological value, lacking refugia and offering minimal opportunities for foraging or shelter for protected or notable species.
The only natural habitat within the Site which will be impacted by the proposals was short sward modified grassland that does not have the structure to support foraging and resting great crested newts. No dense habitat or log piles/refugia will be impacted by the proposals.

Evaluation

The habitats on Site that will be directly affected by the proposed works—primarily buildings, hardstanding, and modified grassland—are suboptimal for great crested newts, providing minimal opportunities for foraging or shelter. Consequently, it is highly unlikely that newts would utilise the works area as part of their terrestrial habitat. While at least one ornamental pond is present in the wider area, the limited habitat on Site and the small scale of the proposals mean that, even if great crested newts occur locally, they are very unlikely to be affected by the development. No loss of suitable terrestrial habitat for the species is anticipated. Nonetheless, to eliminate any residual risk to individual newts, precautionary mitigation measures are detailed in **Section 9**.

7.3.2 Reptiles

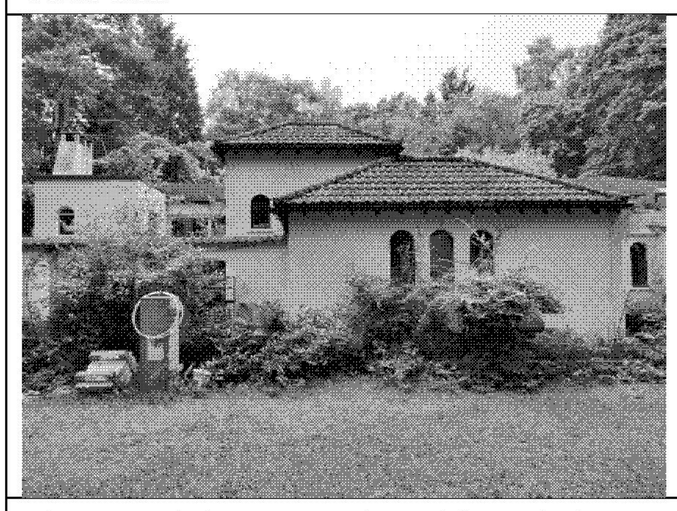
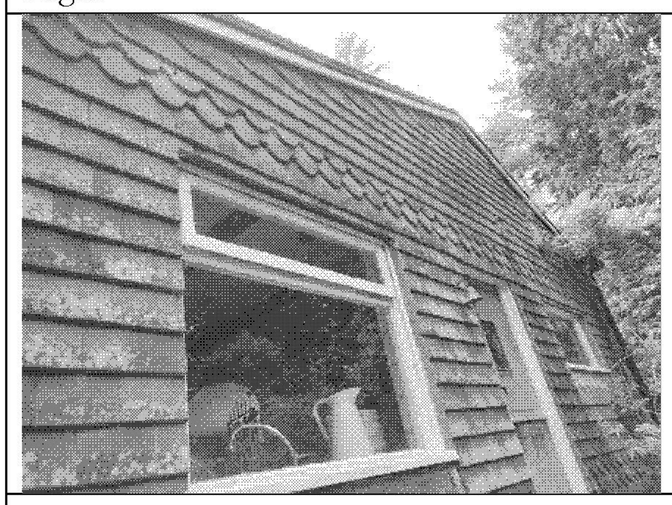
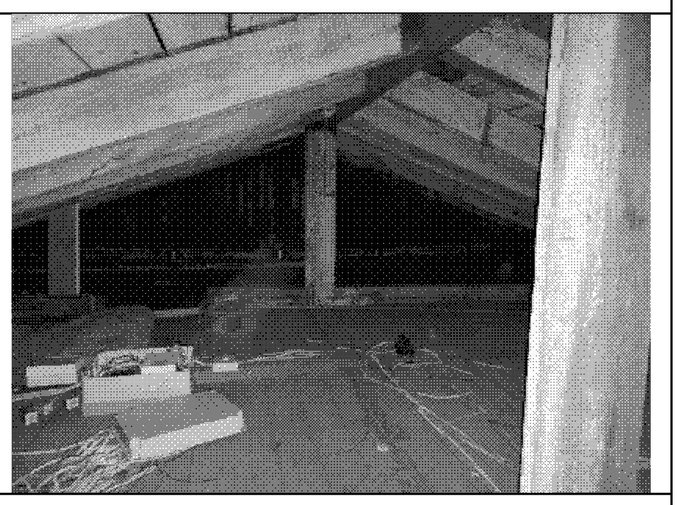
Field survey

The Site does not provide optimal habitat for reptiles with the majority of the works area consisting of buildings, hardstanding and short sward modified grassland. Whilst the more open section of woodland and small area of other neutral grassland may provide some habitat for individual reptiles, these will not be impacted by the proposals. No suitable habitat was noted on Site for the rarer species of reptiles either.

Evaluation

There is a very low likelihood of individual common reptiles being present within the works area; therefore, further surveys are not considered necessary. However, precautionary mitigation measures for reptiles have been provided in **Section 9**, as individuals may occur in the wider surrounding habitat.

Table 8: Protected species assessment.

	
Photograph 1: Single entrance badger sett located within the woodland, over 30m from the works area.	**Photograph 2**: Mammal path used by badgers, running east to west across the front of the property through the woodland.
	
Photograph 3: Front section of the main house (B1) showing close fitting roof tile, hips and ridges.	**Photograph 4**: Close fitting strip of hanging tiles on the curved section of the rear of the property.
	
Photograph 5: Eastern side of the property showing hanging tiles which had a few gaps present that could be used by roosting bats.	**Photograph 6**: Largest roof void of the main house showing shallow roof space with sarking under the tiles.

	
Photograph 7: Scots pine (TN2), assessed as PRF-I and is proposed to be removed.	

8 DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER SURVEYS

This section summarises the findings of the desk study and walkover survey and provides recommendations for any further surveys based on the current layout.

8.1 Bats: Buildings

The proposals involve the demolition of the main house and attached annex (B1), which was assessed as having low suitability to support roosting bats due to minor gaps under hanging tiles on the rear and eastern elevations. Consequently, a minimum of one bat emergence survey, undertaken by two surveyors, us recommended to determine whether roosting bats are present in these features.

No further surveys are required for roosting bats in other buildings or in trees.

9 DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MITIGATION

This section summarises the findings of the desk study and walkover survey and provides recommendations for any mitigation based on the current layout.

9.1 Woodland and Non-Statutory Designated Site

The proposals are small in scale, involving the replacement of the main house with a new dwelling on a similar, albeit slightly smaller, footprint. There will be no change in the use of the Site post-development, which will continue as a single residential property. Provided that a sensitive lighting strategy is implemented, no adverse ecological impacts are anticipated following completion of the development.

No loss of ancient woodland or Priority Deciduous Woodland is expected as a result of the proposals. However, due to the close proximity of the works area to the ancient woodland and to Lobb's Wood and Furnace Pond LWS, there is a potential risk of direct or indirect impacts during construction. Consequently, precautionary mitigation measures are required and are summarised below.

To protect retained habitats, the working area should be minimised and clearly demarcated using temporary protective fencing. Additionally, a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be produced for the Site to ensure best practice throughout demolition and construction. The CEMP should include, but is not limited to, the following measures:

- **Working Area and Access**
  - Construction activities confined to defined working areas.
  - All plant, machinery, and storage areas to be located on existing areas of hardstanding.
- **Lighting and Working Hours**
  - No night-time working permitted.
  - No artificial lighting directed towards the woodland habitats (see Lighting Strategy).

- **Pollution Prevention**
  - Adherence to current CIRIA good practice guidance (CIRIA C532, 2001) and Defra pollution control guidelines.
  - Run-off from construction activities to be minimised through the use of appropriate control measures.
  - Chemicals, oils, and hazardous substances to be stored securely on impermeable surfaces, with appropriate spill kits available.
  - No discharge of contaminants (including oil, vehicle washings, or concrete mixes) within or adjacent to retained habitats. Any such activities will take place only on hardstanding at a designated location outside the Site.
- **Vegetation and Habitat Protection**
  - Protective fencing installed to prevent accidental encroachment into neighbouring woodland.
  - Notice boards, cabling, and services will not be attached to retained vegetation.
  - Fires prohibited during all phases of works to minimise risk to habitats.
- **Dust and Waste Management**
  - Appropriate waste management procedures implemented throughout construction.
  - Dust control measures adopted, including use of screening during windy conditions, damping down of dust sources, and covering of loose materials.

These measures will ensure that retained woodland and other nearby habitats are safeguarded throughout the construction process and ecological impacts are minimised.

If these precautionary measures are followed, it is not anticipated that the proposals will result in any negative impacts to the non-statutory designated site or ancient woodland adjacent to the Site boundary and within the Site boundary.

9.2 Other Habitats on Site

It is recommended that the proposed works should minimise impacts on natural habitats wherever possible, although the habitats present on Site are common and widespread. This can be achieved through for example, minimising vegetation clearance required, ensuring that the volumes of material required is calculated to minimise any necessary stockpiles, ensuring that any temporary stockpiles for materials required are placed on geotextile matting to minimise impacts etc.

The design proposals do look to predominantly impact the negligible ecological value habitats with buildings and hardstanding being the dominant habitats to be impacted by the proposals. Any mature trees close to the working area should be protected through the use of root protection zones following best practice guidelines (i.e. BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations).

9.3 [redacted]

[redacted]

9.4 Bats

9.4.1 Mitigation and Licence strategy

The further emergence surveys will confirm if there are any roosting bats present within the building. If roosting bats are found to be present and a licence is necessary to undertake the works, the application would need to include a mitigation strategy to ensure that no bats are harmed during the works and that the favourable conservation status of bats will be maintained. The mitigation strategy would be devised on completion of the further surveys; however, the potential measures that might be required to safeguard bats could likely to include the following:

- Timing of the works - careful timing of the works to avoid the sensitive periods.
- Toolbox talk by a licenced ecologist regarding bats prior to works commencing.
- Pre-works inspection & supervised soft strip.
- Maintenance of roosts or compensation through the use of bat access tiles, gaps under new roof tiles, ridge ventilators, moulded flashings, bat tubes or bat boxes.
- Roofing materials – the use of timber sarking, bitumen felt or membrane that has passed a snagging propensity test.

Given the proposed works and the small scale of the proposals, mitigation can easily be accommodated. For example, if required, compensatory roosting opportunities could be included within the new proposed property by providing minor gaps under the tiles using slightly raised battens.

9.4.2 Foraging and commuting bats

A variety of bat species are likely to forage/commute within the Site and artificial lighting is known to result in the loss of foraging habitat available and can also interfere with commuting routes from roosts (Stone, 2013). Therefore, there should be no night-time working or lighting and operational lighting post development should be kept to a minimum (and avoiding the woodland areas) and follow guidance from the Bat Conservation Trust 'Bats and artificial lighting at Night' (2023). This includes:

- Avoid artificial lighting close to any mature trees or woodland within the Site or close to the boundary;
- Directing any task lighting used during construction away from vegetation;]
- White and blue wavelengths of the light spectrum should be avoided and the brightness should be kept as low as feasibly possible;
- All luminaires should lack UV elements and metal halide fluorescent sources should not be used;
- LED luminaires are preferred due to the lower intensity, sharp 'cut-off', colour rendition and dimming capability;
- A warm white light source (2700Kelvin or lower) should be adopted to reduce the blue light component;
- Only luminaires with a negligible or zero Upward Light Ratio, and with good optical control, should be used;
- Luminaires should always be mounted horizontally, with no light output above 90° and/or no upward tilt;
- Any necessary security lighting should be set on short timers (e.g. 1 minute) with a sensitivity to large moving objects only;
- Lighting times will be limited to provide dark periods; and
- The height of columns will be carefully considered to avoid light spill.

If the measures above are fully implemented, it is considered that any bats utilising the Site during the construction phase of the development will be protected. It is not anticipated, given the small scale of the proposals that the lighting scheme will alter post development.

9.5 Nesting birds

The buildings and vegetation within the Site have the potential to support common species of nesting birds.

It is recommended that vegetation clearance/demolition is undertaken outside the bird nesting season, which is generally accepted to extend from late February-August inclusive (although dates vary by species and are subject to prevailing weather conditions).

If this is not possible, and vegetation clearance/demolition is required during the bird nesting season, the following measures will be implemented:

- The area to be removed should be inspected for evidence of nesting activity by a suitably experienced ecologist no more than 24 hours in advance of clearance.
- If this identifies any nesting activity the feature should be left undisturbed with an appropriate exclusion zone until the end of the nesting season or until the birds have fledged and it is confirmed that the nest is no longer in use.
- All resultant brash should be immediately moved away from the working area.

If the measures above are fully implemented, it is considered that nesting birds will be protected during the construction phase of the development.

9.6 Reptiles & Amphibians

There are two ponds off Site but within 250m of the proposed development. Given the lack of suitable habitat within the works area, the risk to newts is considered to be very low. However in order to reduce this risk even further, the following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMs) should be adopted:

- Prior to the works starting, an ecological toolbox talk should be provided which will include newt identification and what to do in the unlikely event that a newt is found.
- A copy of the RAMS should be available on Site at all times during the works and the contact details of a SQE will be provided to the Contractor in case an animal is found at any point.
- The retained habitat should be fenced with temporary fencing (e.g. Netlon or Heras) prior to any works on Site. The fencing should be retained throughout the works to ensure the habitat outside of the works area is protected throughout. There must be no encroachment of machinery or spoil within areas of habitat outside of the works areas. This will minimise the risk of materials, machinery or personnel accessing retained habitat areas.
- It is not anticipated that any vegetation clearance is required, however if deemed necessary, sensitive, phased clearance should be undertaken:
    - Any tall vegetation or scrub (none currently present on Site), if present will be reduced to a height of approximately 250mm, with the arisings removed;
    - At least 24hrs later, the vegetation will be cut again to a height of approximately 150mm, in a directional manner moving towards suitable retained habitat. Arisings will be removed;
    - 48hrs later, or following a careful hand search, the soil strip can progress in areas where works will take place imminently. Once the soil strip has been undertaken, the area will be maintained as bare earth.
    - Site clearance should avoid the hibernation period to minimise the risk to individual newts in the unlikely event of hibernating individuals being present.
- Prior to the clearance of the brash piles, logs and tree roots, a hand search of the area should be undertaken by the SQE. Following completion of the hand search and once authorised by the SQE, clearance within the area would be undertaken using hand tools (a strimmer, hand-held brush cutter, chainsaw) only. The hibernation period will be avoided during any clearance of brash piles, logs and tree roots to ensure there is no risk to hibernating amphibians and reptiles.

- Construction works would not be permitted to start until hand searching and habitat manipulation works have been completed and the SQE has advised the area is clear for the works to proceed.
- Where any small areas of soil stripping is undertaken, this should be undertaken in a sequential pattern moving towards retained habitat around the Site. This should not be undertaken in very wet weather when newts are more likely to be active, or during the hibernation season where they may be immobile due to the temperature.
- Any materials required should be stored on areas of hardstanding or bare ground. Materials should be stored on pallets rather than directly on the ground to minimise the risk of amphibians using stored materials as refugia.
- Waste should be put straight into skips or removed off Site as soon as possible.
- Excavations should be backfilled as soon as possible to avoid the creation of temporary waterbodies.
- Any spoil, rocks, rubble piles should be hand searched by the ECW and carefully dismantled.
- Any trenches or deep pits that are left open overnight should be provided with a means of escape or where possible covered overnight to prevent animals including newts becoming trapped. This could simply be in the form of a roughened plank of wood placed in the trench as a ramp to the surface or plywood covers. The trenches/pits should be inspected each morning by a nominated member of staff to ensure that animals have become trapped overnight. Should a great crested newt become trapped, an ecologist should be contacted immediately for further advice. Alternatively, smaller trenches etc should be backfilled where possible before the end of the day to avoid open trenches.
- If a great crested newt was found at any point (not considered likely), all works would stop and an ecologist should be consulted to agree an appropriate working approach. The great crested newt would only be handled and moved by a licensed ecologist if it was in immediate danger. Natural England and, where necessary, the Local Planning Authority will be contacted and an assessment would be made regarding the requirement for a mitigation licence or low impact licence.
- Where any reptiles or amphibians are found during the site works a refugia will be created immediately within the garden of the property. Details of a specification for a suitable log pile is provided in **Appendix D**.

If the measures above are fully implemented, it is considered that reptiles and amphibians will be protected during the construction phase of the development.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENHANCEMENTS

The NPPF states that local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity where possible when determining planning applications. The development plans should maximise opportunities for enhancement, in order to achieve a net increase in biodiversity. This is in accordance with the NERC Act (2006) which requires that "*every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat.*"

The measures below will help improve the Site overall for biodiversity.

10.1 Habitats

The habitats on Site are of low ecological value and enhancement to habitats post development is recommended. Any new tree, shrub or hedgerow planting should include a diverse mix of native species, and a suitable list has been provided in **Appendix C.**

The woodland on Site had a limited understory and shows minimal evidence of natural succession. The presence of non-native species, including rhododendron and cherry laurel, negatively affects the condition of the woodland and inhibits the establishment of native saplings. It is recommended that the woodland is managed under a 'Woodland Management Plan', aimed at controlling non-native species and implementing measures to improve overall woodland condition and its ecological value for local wildlife.

It should be noted that rhododendron is listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which prohibits the intentional spread of this species. Therefore, any management regime for its removal should include detailed measures for the safe disposal of rhododendron material to ensure compliance with the legislation.

10.2 Protected and notable species

In order to increase the available nesting opportunities, at least two bird boxes should be installed on trees or walls/buildings around the Site. Suitable boxes include the Vivara Pro Seville bird box (see **Figure 5**) with a 32mm hole[5] or the Schwegler 2GR nest box (see **Figure 6**) as these boxes are suitable for species such as house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, great tit *Parus major*, nuthatch *Sitta europaea* and coal tits *Periparus ater*. All these species are commonly found within habitats such as those in the immediate vicinity of the Site.

All boxes should be installed at least 2 meters above ground level, away from possible sources of predation and away from strong direct sunlight and in proximity to vegetation where possible. This is in line with the RSPB[6] and British Trust for Ornithology's (BTO) guidance[7] on where to site a bird box.

[5] https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-seville-32mm-woodstone-nest-box

[6] https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/how-you-can-help-birds/nestboxes/nestboxes-for-small-birds/making-and-placing-a-bird-box/

[7] https://www.bto.org/how-you-can-help/providing-birds/putting-nest-boxes-birds/putting-nest-box



Figure 5: Vivara Pro Seville bird box

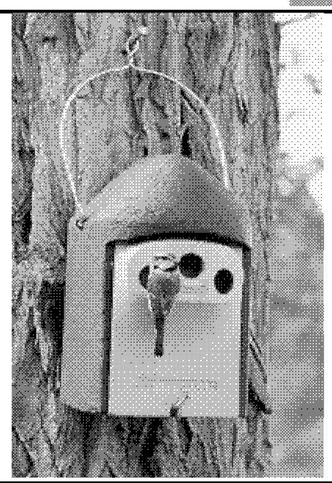


Figure 6: Schwegler 2GR

11 CONCLUSION

This report is based on a desk study and walkover surveys undertaken in July 2024 and updated in August 2025. Habitats within the works area are common and widespread, of limited ecological value, while the Site and surrounding landscape include ancient woodland and Priority Deciduous Woodland. The proposed building footprint is smaller than the existing and lies within 15 m of ancient woodland. The Site is also close to a LWS, and precautionary measures are proposed to minimise construction impacts.

The Site has low potential to support nesting birds, hedgehogs, and foraging or commuting bats and badgers. The main house (B1) is proposed for demolition and was found to offer low suitability to support roosting bats. At least one emergence survey has been recommended.

Mitigation measures are proposed to minimise impacts on protected species, and enhancements are recommended to improve the Site's biodiversity value.

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Appendix A – Summary of relevant legislation and policy

Legislation

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

The Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended) transposed the marine and terrestrial elements of the Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) and certain parts of the Wild Birds Directive (EC Directive 2009/147/EC) (known as the Nature Directives) into English law.

The duty of a competent authority in the 2017 Regulations is for the protection of sites or species and the competent authority is a public body, statutory undertaker, minister or department of government, or anyone holding public office.

The Habitats Regulations 2019 created a 'National Site Network' (NSN) on land and at sea, including both the inshore and offshore marine areas in the UK. The NSN includes:

- Existing Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), which are designated due to their importance to the habitats and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive;
- Existing Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which are designated due to their importance for wild birds in accordance with the Wild Birds Directive; and,
- New SACs and SPAs designated under these Regulations.

Designated Wetlands of International Importance (known as Ramsar sites) do not form part of the NSN. Many Ramsar sites overlap with SACs and SPAs and may be designated for the same or different species and habitats. All Ramsar sites remain protected in the same way as SACs and SPAs.

The 2019 Regulations sets out management objectives for the NSN, which are to:

- Maintain or, where appropriate, restore habitats and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive to a favourable conservation status; and,
- Contribute to ensuring, in their area of distribution, the survival and reproduction of wild birds and securing compliance with the overarching aims of the Wild Birds Directive.

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

The WCA, as amended, consolidates and amends pre-existing national wildlife legislation in order to implement the Bern Convention and the Birds Directive. It offers protection to a wide range of species alongside the Habitat Regulations 2019 & 2017.

The Countryside Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000

The CRoW Act amends and strengthens existing wildlife legislation detailed in the WCA. It places a duty on government departments to have regard for biodiversity, and provides increased powers for the protection and maintenance of Sites of Special Scientific Interest

(SSSIs). Habitats and species are listed (Section 74) for which conservation measures should be promoted, in accordance with the recommendations of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio Earth Summit) 1992.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Under Section 40 of the NERC Act, a duty is placed upon all local authorities and public bodies in England and Wales to promote and enhance biodiversity in all of their functions. Lists of habitats and species (Section 41) of principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity are provided which supersede Section 74 of the CRoW Act 2000.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations protect 'important' hedgerows from being removed without permission from the Local Planning Authority. Hedgerows are protected if they are at least 30 years old and meet at least one of the criteria listed in part II of Schedule I.

Guidance

UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) has been replaced by the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework (2012) and the England Biodiversity Strategy has been replaced by the 'Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services' (2011). This sets out how the quality of our environment on land and at sea will be improved over the next ten years and follows on from policies contained in the Natural Environment White Paper.

Species and Habitats of Material Consideration for Planning in England

Previous planning policy (and some supporting guidance which is still current, e.g. ODPM Circular 06/2005, now under revision), refers to UK BAP habitats and species as being a material consideration in the planning process. Equally many local plans refer to BAP priority habitats and species. Both remain as material considerations in the planning process but such habitats and species are now described as Species and Habitats of Principal Importance for Conservation in England, or simply priority habitats and priority species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. The list of habitats and species remains unchanged and is still derived from Section 41 list of the NERC Act 2006.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) December 2024

The NPPF aims to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity. Chapter 15 '*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*' details what local planning policies should consider with regard to planning applications.

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

180 a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);

180 d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;

185 a) Identify map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitatas and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors, and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and

185 b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity;

186 a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused; and

186 d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Regional Planning Policy

Relevant regional planning policies for South East England are detailed in the following documents:

- **The South East Plan (2009)**; and
- **Biodiversity and Planning in Surrey (2019)**.

The South East Plan (2009)

The South East Plan was published in May 2009. It has since been revoked with the exception of Policy NRM6 on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). Policy NRM6 states "New residential development which is likely to have a significant effect on the ecological integrity of Thames Basin Heaths SPA will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects, such measures must be agreed with Natural England."

Local Planning Policy

Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031
Mid Sussex District Council's planning policy in relation to biodiversity includes Policy DP12 in the district plan (Adopted 2018) which states:

DP12: Protection and enhancement of countryside
Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination; and 15) To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations.

Evidence Base: A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex, A Strategy for the West Sussex
Landscape, Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study.
The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty.

Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:
• it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
• it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

Agricultural land of Grade 3a and above will be protected from non-agricultural development proposals. Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, detailed field surveys should be undertaken and proposals should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality.

The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment, the West Sussex County Council Strategy for the West Sussex Landscape, the Capacity of Mid Sussex District to Accommodate Development Study and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.

Built-up area boundaries are subject to review by Neighbourhood Plans or through a Site Allocations Development Plan Document, produced by the District Council.
Economically viable mineral reserves within the district will be safeguarded.

The District Plan also has specific planning Policy in relation to Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC in Policy DP17

DP17: Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities.

Evidence Base: Ashdown Forest Visitor Survey Data Analysis, Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Mid Sussex District Plan, Visitor Access Patterns on Ashdown Forest. In order to prevent adverse effects on the Ashdown Forest SPA and SAC, new development likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in combination with other development, will be required to demonstrate that adequate measures are put in place to avoid or mitigate any potential adverse effects. Within a 400 metres buffer zone around Ashdown Forest, mitigation measures are unlikely to be capable of protecting the integrity of the SPA and, therefore, residential development will not be permitted. Within a 7km zone of influence around the Ashdown Forest SPA, residential development leading to a net increase in dwellings will be required to contribute to mitigation through:

1) The provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) to the minimum level of 8Ha per 1,000 net increase in population; or a financial contribution to SANGs elsewhere; or the provision of bespoke mitigation; and
2) A financial contribution to the Ashdown Forest Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) Strategy.

Large schemes proposed adjacent or close to the boundary of the 7km zone of influence may require mitigation for the SPA. Such proposals for development will be dealt with on a case-by case basis. Where bespoke mitigation is provided, these measures will need to be in place before occupation of development and must be managed and maintained in perpetuity. The effectiveness of such 63 mitigation will need to be demonstrated prior to approval of the development. Bespoke mitigation will need to be discussed and agreed by the District Council as the competent authority following advice from Natural England.

Species	Legislation (England & Wales)	Offences	Licensing procedures and guidance (England & Wales)
Bats *European protected species*	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) Reg 41	Deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat; deliberate disturbance of bats; or damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by a bat. [The protection of bat roosts is considered to apply regardless of whether bats are present.]	A Natural England (NE) licence in respect of development is required in England. *European Protected Species: Mitigation Licensing- How to get a licence* (NE 2010) *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* (English Nature 2004) *Bat Workers Manual* (JNCC 2004)
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.9	Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection or disturb[3] a bat in such a place.	Licence from NE is required for surveys (scientific purposes) that would involve disturbance of bats or entering a known or suspected roost site.
Great crested newt *European protected species*	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) Reg 41	Deliberately capture, injure or kill a great crested newt; deliberate disturbance of bats; or damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by a great crested newt.	A Natural England (NE) licence in respect of development is required in England. *European Protected Species: Mitigation Licensing- How to get a licence* (NE 2010) *Great crested newt mitigation guidelines (English Nature 2001)*
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.9	Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection or disturb[3] a great crested newt in such a place.	Licence issued for science (survey), education and conservation by Natural England.
Birds	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.1	Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird; intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; intentionally take or destroy the nest or eggs of any wild bird. [Special penalties are liable for these offences involving birds on Schedule 1 (e.g. most birds of prey, kingfisher, barn owl, black redstart, little ringed plover).] Intentionally or recklessly disturb a Schedule 1 species while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; intentionally or recklessly disturb dependent young of such a species.	No licences are available to disturb any birds in regard to development. Licences are available in certain circumstances to damage or destroy nests, but these only apply to the list of licensable activities in the Act and do not cover development. General licences are available in respect of 'pest species' but only for certain very specific purposes e.g. public health, public safety, air safety.
[redacted]			

Reptiles	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) S.1 Smooth snakes, sand lizards and pool frogs are designated and protected as European protected species (EPS). EPS are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.	For an EPS animal, it is an offence to: -deliberately kill, injure, disturb or capture them -deliberately take or destroy their eggs -damage or destroy their breeding sites and resting places -possess, control or transport them (alive or dead) For smooth snakes and sand lizards, it is also an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to intentionally or recklessly: -disturb them while they occupy a structure or place used for shelter or protection -obstruct access to a place of shelter or protection Other native reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is an offence to kill or injure: Adder, grass snake, common or viviparous lizard slow worm All native reptiles are listed as rare and most threatened species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006). You must have regard for the conservation of Section 41 species as part of your planning decision.	The developer may need a licence for a development proposal or activity that affects sand lizards or smooth snakes.

Appendix B – Existing and Proposed Site Plan (Scandiahus, 2025)



2 Existing Site Plan
1 : 200

1

scandiahus

Mr. & Mrs. Rolf

The Brook
Cuttinglye Road
Crawley Down
West Sussex
RH10 4LR

Existing Site Plan

ROFF-541714-SCA-XX-PL-001 A



1 Proposed Site Plan
1 : 200

Appendix C- Wildlife Friendly Planting (Natural England, 2008. Gardening with Wildlife in Mind. London: Natural England)

Native and wildlife-friendly trees

Pedunculate oak	*Quercus robur*
Ash	*Fraxinus excelsior*
Wych elm	*Ulmus glabra*
Whitebeam	*Sorbus aria agg.*
Rowan	*Sorbus aucuparia*
Aspen	*Populus tremula*
Apple	*Malus domestica*
Bird cherry	*Prunus padus*
Common alder	*Alnus glutinosa*
Crab apple	*Malus sylvestris*
Crack willow	*Salix fragilis*
Downy birch	*Betula pubescens*
Field maple	*Acer campestre*
Hornbeam	*Carpinus betulus*
Juniper	*Juniperus communis*
Large-leaved lime	*Tilia platyphyllos*
Small-leaved lime	*Tilia cordata*
Pear	*Pyrus communis*
Scots pine	*Pinus sylvestris*
Sessile oak	*Quercus petraea*
Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
Sweet chestnut	*Castanea sativa*
Wild cherry	*Prunus avium*
Wild service-tree	*Sorbus torminalis*
Yew	*Taxus baccata*

Native and wildlife friendly shrubs

Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
Elder	*Sambucus nigra*
Goat willow	*Salix caprea*
Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
Dog rose	*Rosa canina*
Guelder rose	*Viburnum opulus*
Gorse	*Ulex europaeus*
Broom	*Cytisus scoparius*
Wayfaring tree	*Viburnum lantana*
Shrubby cinquefoil	*Potentilla fruticosa*
Raspberry	*Rubus idaeus*
Alder buckthorn	*Frangula alnus*
Wild privet	*Ligustrum vulgare*
Barberry	*Berberis* × *stenophylla*
Barberry	*Berberis vulgaris*
Bell heather	*Erica cinerea*
Bilberry	*Vaccinium myrtillus*
Black currant	*Ribes nigrum*
Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*
Buckthorn	*Rhamnus catharticus*
Butcher's-broom	*Ruscus aculeatus*
Cowberry	*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*
Cross-leaved heath	*Erica tetralix*
New Zealand holly	*Olearia macrodonta*
Daphne	*Daphne odora*
Dogwood	*Cornus sanguinea*
Field rose	*Rosa arvensis*
Firethorn	*Pyracanthus angustifolia*
Flowering Currant	*Ribes sanguineum*
Gooseberry	*Ribes uva-crispa*
Hebe 'Midsummer Beauty'	*Hebe* sp.
Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*
Japanese quince	*Chaenomeles japonica*
Lilac	*Syringa vulgaris*
Mexican orange	*Choisya ternata*

Mezereon	*Daphne mezereum*
Midland hawthorn	*Crataegus laevigata*
Oregon grape	*Mahonia aquifolium*
Osier	*Salix viminalis*
Portugal laurel	*Prunus lusitanica*
Privet	*Ligustrum ovalifolium*
Purple willow	*Salix purpurea*
Snowy mespilus	*Amelanchier canadensis*, *Amelanchier lamarckii*
Spindle	*Euonymus europaeus*
Spurge laurel	*Daphne laureola*
Sweet briar	*Rosa rubiginosa*
Wild privet	*Ligustrum vulgare*

Wildlife-friendly trees and shrubs for hedgerows and scrub planting

Hawthorn	*Crataegus monogyna*
Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*
Wych elm	*Ulmus glabra*
Guelder rose	*Viburnum opulus*
Rowan	*Sorbus aucuparia*
Spindle	*Euonymus europaea*
Holly	*Ilex europaeus*
Bird cherry	*Prunus padus*
Common alder	*Alnus glutinosa*
Crab apple	*Malus sylvestris*
Hazel	*Coryllus avellana*
Beech	*Fagus sylvatica*
Field maple	*Acer campestre*
Hornbeam	*Carpinus betulus*
Wild cherry	*Prunus avium*
Dog rose	*Rosa canina*
Elder	*Sambucus nigra*
Yew	*Taxus baccata*

Appendix D- Refugia Specification

Log pile refugia should be incorporated into the design plan for the Site and created should any reptiles or amphibians be found during site clearance (see **Figure 5**). This would provide a suitable refuge for species such as amphibians, reptiles and hedgehog which may all be present within the wider area. In addition, invertebrates, particularly dead wood consuming species, would benefit. It is recommended that the log pile is located in an undisturbed area of the grounds such as close to hedgerows or near the southern boundary of the Site.

In order to construct the log pile, branches at least 10cm thick should be used and these are stacked to create a pile at least 50cm tall. Where possible, a range of different sized logs and sticks should be used. To ensure the log pile remains stable, stakes or sticks will be inserted into the ground to prevent the logs from rolling.

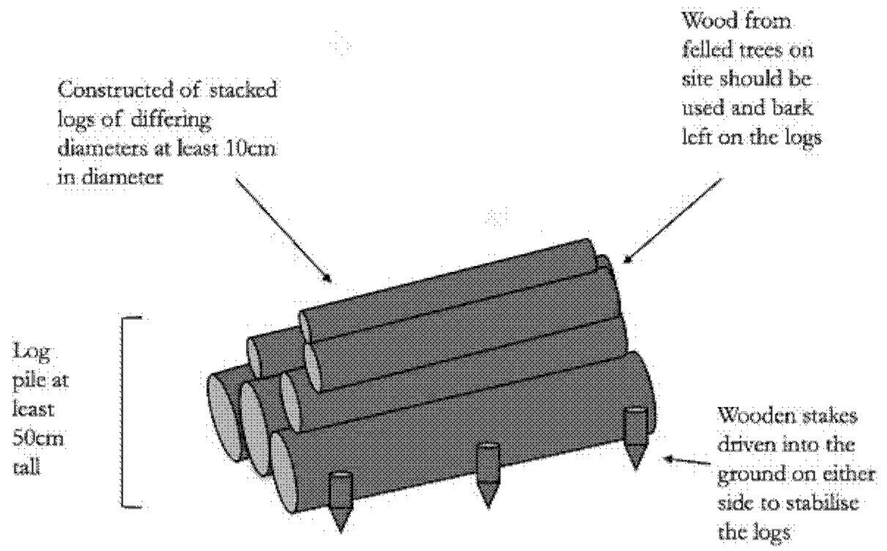


Figure 5: Example of a log pile that could be created as an enhancement on Site.