

# Land Near Old Mill House, Bolney Haywards Heath, RH17 5SE

## Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



**EHM Ltd**

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**AUTHOR, QUALITY ASSURANCE & VALIDITY**

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Project Reference:	PEA – Old Mill House			
Report Type/Title:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal			
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This report and survey data remains valid for 12 months from date of issue. The report, conclusions and recommendations are valid for current development plans only. Should these change, the report should be reviewed and, if necessary, further survey work and desk study review undertaken.				



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EHM Ltd has been commissioned to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of a parcel of land near Old Mill House, Bolney Haywards Heath, RH17 5SE. This report will provide an assessment of the site reporting on the current conditions of the habitats present and their potential to support protected and notable species.

The site is roughly rectangular in shape, covering an area of approximately 0.08ha. It comprises an area of open horse grazed grassland, three stables and an access track and hardstanding. The site is currently access from an unnamed road that runs from Cowfold Road to the south.

The site is located to the west of the village of Bolney and is immediately adjacent to the residential property called Old Mill House.

The local landscape is best described as rural in nature, with agricultural fields and pockets of woodland dominating the landscape. The local landscape has some good connectivity between habitats in the form of hedgerows, woodland edges and grassland although, roads do separate habitats.

Species	Sites potential to support
Bat roosts- buildings.	Negligible
Bat roosts- mature trees	Negligible
Bat foraging/ commuting areas	Moderate
Badgers	Negligible
Dormice	Negligible
Riparian Mammals	Negligible
Other Mammals	Negligible
Reptiles	Negligible
Common Amphibians	Negligible
Great Crested Newts	Negligible
Breeding birds	Negligible
Plants	Negligible
Invertebrates	Negligible
Invasive Species	Negligible

Recommendation	Action
General Recommendation	Proceed with care and attention to wildlife and contact a qualified ecologist should the need arise.



# 1 INTRODUCTION

EHM Ltd has been commissioned to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of a parcel of land near Old Mill House, Bolney Haywards Heath, RH17 5SE, which is hereafter referred to as the 'site'. This report will provide an assessment of the site reporting on the current conditions of the habitats present and their potential to support protected and notable species.

## 1.1 Project Outline

At the time of the site visit and report write-up, EHM Ltd understand that the development will involve the creation of a single residential dwelling with associated landscaping and access.

## 1.2 Site Location and Description

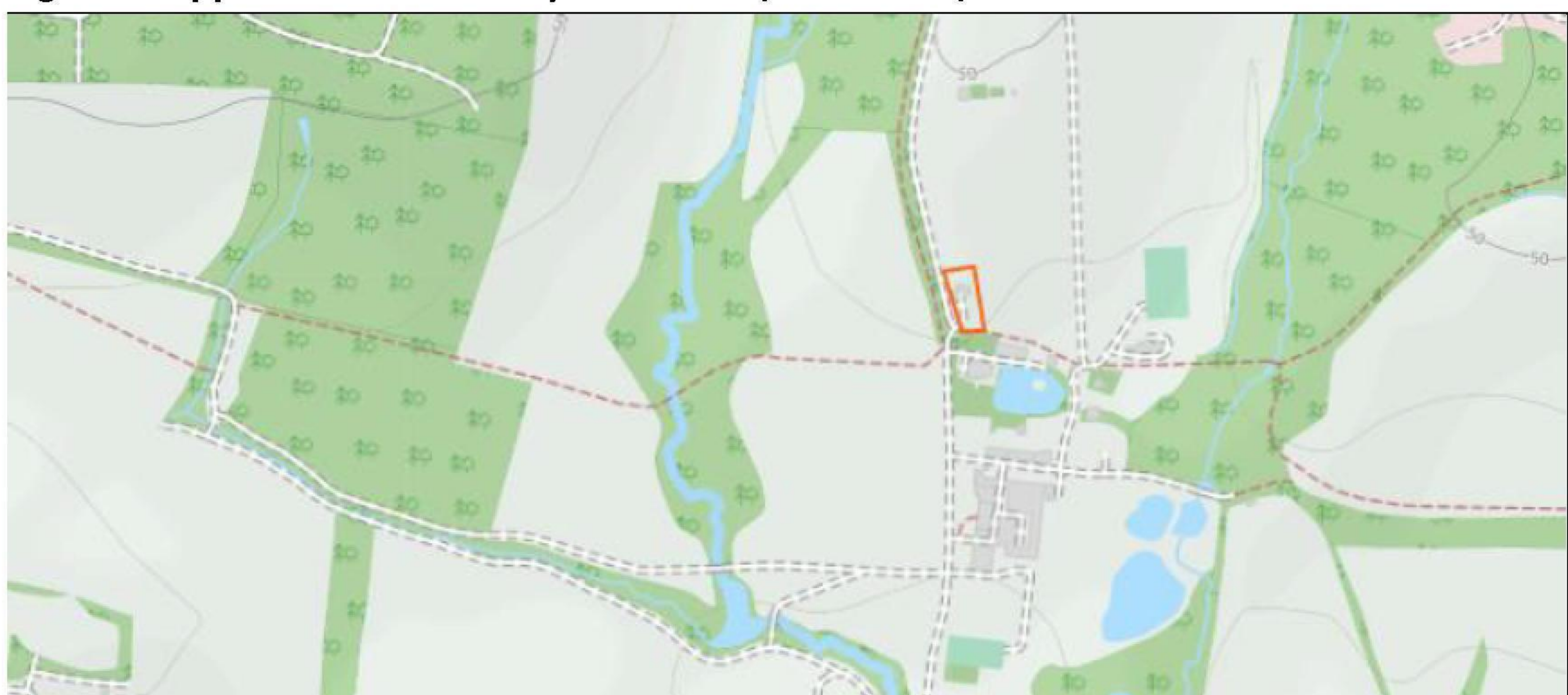
The site is roughly rectangular in shape, covering an area of approximately 0.08ha. It comprises an area of open horse grazed grassland, three stables and an access track and hardstanding. The site is currently access from an unnamed road that runs from Cowfold Road to the south.

The site is located to the west of the village of Bolney and is immediately adjacent to the residential property called Old Mill House.

The local landscape is best described as rural in nature, with agricultural fields and pockets of woodland dominating the landscape. The local landscape has some good connectivity between habitats in the form of hedgerows, woodland edges and grassland although, roads do separate habitats.

The site (as shown on figure 1) is in centred on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference TQ 25037 23384.

**Figure 1. Approximate Boundary of the site (red outline)**





## 2 METHODOLOGY & LIMITATIONS

### 2.1 Scope and Assessment

#### 2.1.1 Zone of Influence

The 'zone of influence' of a project is the area within which ecological features may be impacted by the proposed works. This may often extend beyond the site boundary due to the distance that certain species travel, the nature of the potentially affected habitats and the site's location in relation to important ecological sites.

For this assessment the following zones have been considered:

- 5km surrounding Statutory Conservation Designations relating to bats (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)).
- 1km surrounding other Statutory Conservation Designations and Non-Statutory sites of importance to biodiversity (e.g. Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI).
- 1km surrounding known records of protected and notable species.
- The site and its immediate surroundings.

#### 2.1.2 Impact Assessment

Impact assessment has been conducted based on the outline proposals provided (detailed in Section 1.1) using the findings of the desk study and field survey.

Ecological features have been scoped in and out as appropriate based on the baseline conditions of the site, i.e. what ecological features the site is likely to support, and as appropriate to the scale of the proposals.

An assessment of the potential project impacts on each ecological receptor (i.e. designated sites, protected and notable habitats and species) is provided, including the magnitude, duration and significance of the anticipated effects to each receptor. An assessment of significance has been undertaken considering the local, national and international value to ecological features as informed by the desk study.

Table 1 below includes details on how the significance has been determined.



**Table 1 – General criteria for significance**

Significance	Criteria
<b>Major</b>	Change resulting in breaches of legislation or exceeding statutory objectives.
	Likely to impact on sites designated for national or international importance.
	Likely to affect a large-scale area or a large number of species or populations on frequent or permanent basis.
	May result in an irreversible decline or rise.
<b>Moderate</b>	Unlikely to cause a breach of legislation but likely to impact on a site of regional or local importance.
	Likely to affect a small number of species or populations on a permanent basis.
<b>Minor</b>	Likely to impact an area or feature of local interest or importance.
	Likely to have a temporary impact on a small number of species or populations or be a recoverable impact.
<b>Negligible</b>	Indiscernible impact predicted.

Where possible significant ecological effects will be avoided through careful design and application of the mitigation hierarchy:

- **Avoidance**  
Seek options that avoid harm to ecological features.
- **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. Mitigation is relevant for negative impacts assessed as being potentially significant (before mitigation) or where required to ensure compliance with legislation.
- **Compensation**  
Where there are significant adverse ecological effects despite the mitigation proposed, these should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures. Compensation is relevant for negative impacts assessed as being significant or where required to ensure compliance with legislation.
- **Enhancements**  
Seek to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above requirements for avoidance, mitigation or compensation.

## 2.2 Desk Study

Biological records from the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SBRC) were obtained comprising protected and notable species records and Statutory and Non-Statutory Nature Conservation Designations within a 1km radius of the site.

Data search results only give an indication of species presence in a location. The absence of recent records for certain species in an area may be due to low levels of biological recording or the non-submission of records, rather than absence. Many species records are also at low



geographical resolution and do not indicate their exact location and often provide little detail about abundance.

Web-based DEFRA resource Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) was consulted to identify Statutory Nature Conservation Designations within a 1km radius of the site surveyed, and for Statutory sites designated for bats within a 10km radius of the site. A search for granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) within a 1km radius relating to great crested newts *Triturus cristatus*, 2km radius relating to hazel dormice *Muscardinus avellanarius* and 5km radius relating to bats was also undertaken.

### 2.3 Extended UK Habitat Classification Survey

A field survey identifying the habitats, legally protected and notable species and the site's potential for supporting these species was undertaken. The potential for habitats to support legally protected species is important as legal protection of some species extends to the habitats they depend on, as well as the individuals themselves.

The field survey used UK Habitat Classifications (UKHab, 2023) combined with species specific field observation techniques. The UKHab Professional edition was used with a Minimum Mapping Unit (MMU) of 25m<sup>2</sup> and habitats were classified to level 5 where possible with all secondary codes reported as necessary. Where given, habitat measurements are appropriate and based on satellite/georeferenced maps.

The nature conservation value of ecological features that may be affected by development (ecological receptors) is adapted from the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).

This report records the habitats, flora and fauna evident on the day of the site visit. It does not record any flora or fauna that may appear at other times of the year, and as such, were not evident at the time of the field survey. The process is not intended to produce a comprehensive list of plants and animals but to evaluate the ecological resources within the site and thus identify potential issues of ecological relevance to the proposed works.

### 2.4 Personnel

The site survey was undertaken by on 05 September 2025.

Adam Robbins, Ecologist, MCIEEM, Natural England Bat Class Licence CL18 (Level 2) 2016-24143-CLS-CLS, Natural England Great Crested Newt Class Licence CL08 (Level 1) 2015-3839-CLS-CLS.

### 2.5 Limitations

The contents of this report are based on a single site visit and a search of the local records centre and available online resources. Though the survey and interpretations of the data were conducted by a competent assessor there may be things that have been overlooked, missed, or not present at the time of the visit.



### 3 BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

#### 3.1 Designated Sites

##### 3.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is located c.600m to the north of the project.

##### 3.1.2 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

There is one non-statutory designated sites within a 1km radius of the site. Colwood Lane, road verge, is located c.800m to the northeast of the project.

A map, provided by SBRC, of the Non-Statutory Nature Conservation Designations in relation to the site is shown at Appendix E.

#### 3.2 Habitats

The site is approximately 0.10ha in size and comprises 3 UK Habitat Classification types (secondary codes have been added where applicable):

g4, 103	- Modified grassland, horse grazed
g4, 839	- Track
u1	- Buildings

A map of the habitats within the site and associated Target Notes (TN) are provided in Figure 2, Appendix B.

##### 3.2.1 u1 - Buildings

Three wooden buildings are located to the centre of the site each used for housing horses and associated equipment.

- Building 1 (TN1) is a wood frame and structure building with a clay tile roof and earth floor, measuring c.5m by c.7m. This is used as a stable and hay store.
- Building 2 (TN2) is a wood frame and structure building with black corrugated roof and rubber floor, measuring c.4m by c.5m. This is used as a stable.
- Building 3 (TN3) is a wood frame and building with black corrugated roof and rubber floor, measuring c.4m by c.5m. This is used as a stable. On the north face is a lean-to structure covering a small tractor.



### 3.2.2 g4 - Track

Leading from the main gate into the field, up to and around the stable blocks is a compacted gravel track. This has been colonised by vegetation like that found in the grassland.

### 3.2.3 g4, 103 - Modified grassland, horse grazed

Access by a field gate to the southwest of the site the grassland is tightly grazed with low species diversity. Species include Birds foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, Cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, Common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, Common nettle *Urtica dioica*, Common ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, Creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, Daisy *Bellis perennis*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, Self-heal *Prunella vulgaris*, Timothy *Phleum pratense*, White clover *Trifolium repens*, Yarrow *Achillea millefolium* and Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*.

This same grassland forms the north and east boundary of the site.

The south and west boundary of the site comprises post and wire fencing that separates the site from a public footpath and trackway respectively.

## 3.3 Flora and Invertebrates

A total of 16 records of notable invertebrate species were identified within a 1km radius of the site.

No notable invertebrate or plant species were identified within the site. The site is considered to support common and widespread flora and invertebrate species.

## 3.4 Amphibians – including Great Crested Newt

A total of 5 records of great crested newt (GCN) were identified within a 1km radius of the site; the closest of which is located c.600m to the south. No EPSLs for great crested newt were identified within 1km radius of the site.

The data search also returned 12 records of Common Frog *Rana temporaria*; the closest of which is located c.600m to the north. There are no water bodies on site.

The site is not considered likely to support GCN due to a lack of waterbodies on site and the poor quality of the habitat on site.

## 3.5 Reptiles

There are no records of reptiles within a 1km radius of the site.

The site is not considered likely to support reptiles due to the quality of the habitat on site.



### 3.6 Birds

A total of 31 records of birds was identified within a 1km radius of the site.

The buildings and grassland on site are not suitable for nesting birds, and no signs of nesting were found within the three buildings on site.

The site is not considered of low suitability for birds.

### 3.8 Hazel Dormice

No records of hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* were identified within a 1km radius of the site.

No suitable habitats are present on site and no direct evidence of dormice was identified within the site.

### 3.9 Otters

No records of otter *Lutra lutra* were recorded within 1km of the site.

The site does not contain suitable habitat for otters, and no evidence of otters was identified during the survey undertaken.

### 3.10 Water Voles

No records of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* were identified within a 1km radius of the site.

The site does not contain suitable habitat for water vole, and no evidence of water vole was identified during the survey undertaken.

### 3.11 Bats

A total of 23 records of bats were identified within a 1km radius of the site. Species recorded include brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctule* and Leisler's *Nyctalus leisleri*.

A further 15 records of granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSLs) for bats were identified within a 5km radius including brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*, whiskered *Myotis mystacinus* and Brandt's *Myotis brandti*.



There are no features on site or within the immediate boundaries of the site for roosting bats.

### **3.12 Other Notable Mammals**

No records of other notable mammals were recorded within 1km of the site.

### **3.13 Invasive Species**

A total of 6 records of invasive species were identified within a 1km radius of the site. Species recorded include Canada Goose *Branta canadensis*, Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurorcerasus* and *Rhododendron sp.*

No invasive species were found on site.



## 4 ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS, MITIGATION AND COMPENSATION MEASURES

The mitigation and compensation recommendations provided are based on the principles of established best practice guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM), the local planning authority and other relevant organisations. Where applicable, the cumulative effects potentially arising from other developments are discussed in this section.

### 4.1 *Designated Sites*

Site proposal is not considered likely to impact nearby designated sites due to the small scale and nature of the development.

### 4.2 *Habitats*

Site proposal is not considered likely to impact habitats of significant ecological value.

### 4.3 *Flora and Invertebrates*

The site is considered likely to support common and widespread flora and invertebrate species. There are no anticipated impacts to these species.

### 4.4 *Amphibians (including Great Crested Newt)*

Proposals are not anticipated to impact great crested newts or other common and widespread amphibian species.

### 4.5 *Reptiles*

Proposals are not anticipated to impact reptiles.

### 4.6 *Birds*

Proposals are not anticipated to impact birds.

### 4.8 *Bats*

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon bats.

### 4.9 *Hazel Dormice*

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon dormice.



#### **4.10 Otters**

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon otters.

#### **4.11 Water Voles**

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon water voles.

#### **4.12 Other Notable Mammals**

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact upon other notable mammals.

#### **4.13 Invasive Species**

Development proposal is not anticipated to impact or support spread of Invasive species.



## 5 CONCLUSIONS TABLE

**Table 2. Summary of ecological mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures for the site: Old Mill House.**

Ecological Feature	Potential Effect	Significance in the absence of mitigation	Mitigation/Compensation and Enhancement	Residual Effect
Statutory Designated Sites	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Non-Statutory Designated Sites	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Habitats	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Flora and Invertebrates	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Amphibians (including GCN)	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Reptiles	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Birds	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Badgers	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Bats	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Hazel Dormice	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Otters	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Water Voles	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Other Notable Mammals	None.	-	-	Negligible.
Invasive Species	None.	-	-	Negligible.



## 6 REFERENCES

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## 7 SITE PHOTOS



Plate 1. Site Access



Plate 2. Site, facing north

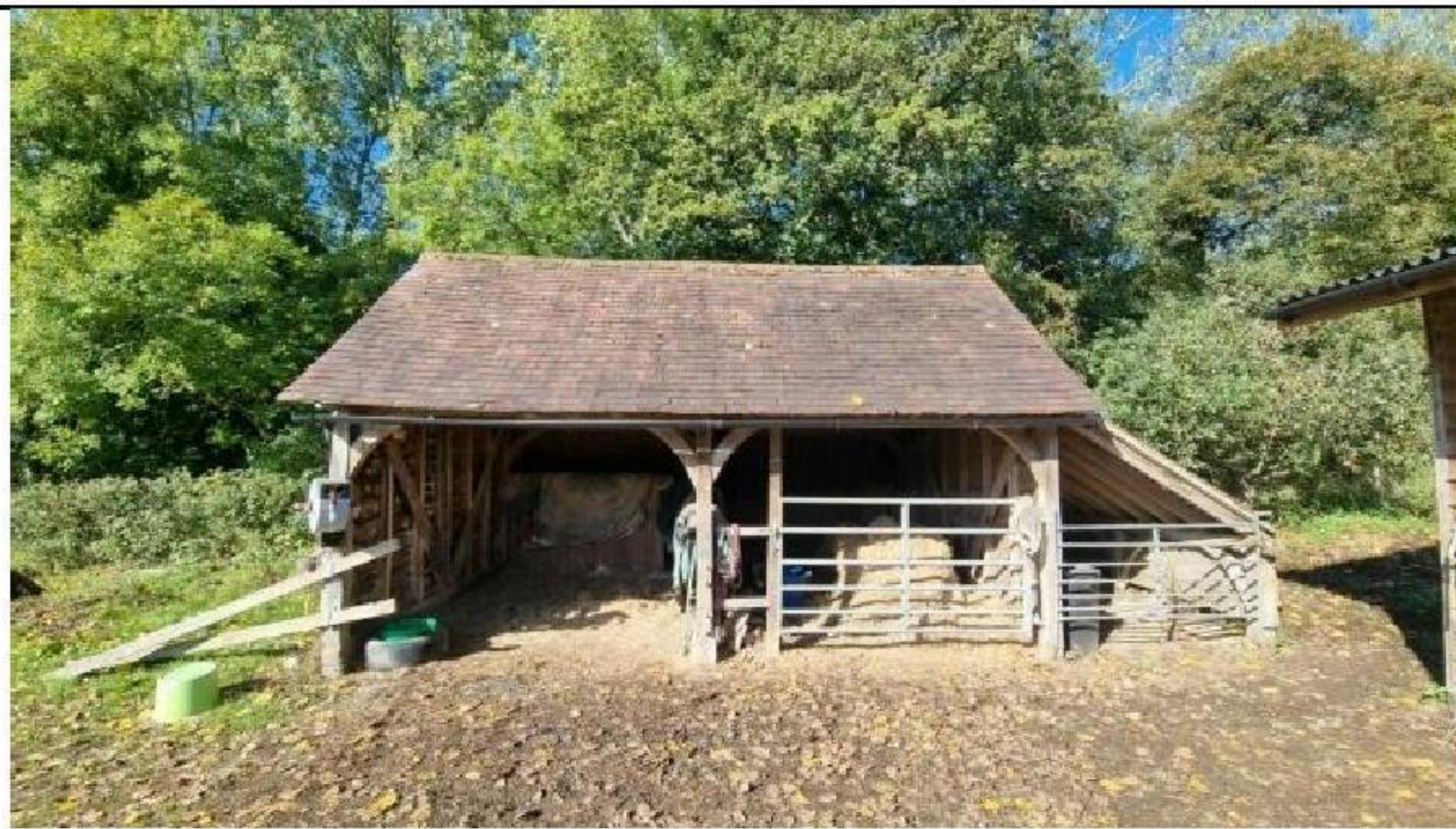


Plate 3. Building 1 (TN1)



Plate 4. Roof of building 1



Plate 5. Buildings 2 (TN2) and 3 (TN3)



Plate 6. Inside building 2



## APPENDIX A - RELEVANT WILDLIFE LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Ecological Feature	Legislation / Policy
Great crested newts	Great crested newts are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure great crested newts or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of great crested newts which could affect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive, or breed may also result in an offence.
Reptiles	Reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill or injure reptiles.
Birds	Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) it is illegal to take, damage or destroy the nests of wild birds whilst being built or in use. Bird species also listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) receive additional protection including protection from intentional or reckless disturbance when they are nesting or rearing dependant young.
Bats	British bat species are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure bats or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of bats which could affect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young may also result in an offence.
Hazel Dormice	Dormice are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure dormice or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection used by this species. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of dormice which could affect the ability of any significant group of animals to survive, or breed may also result in an offence.

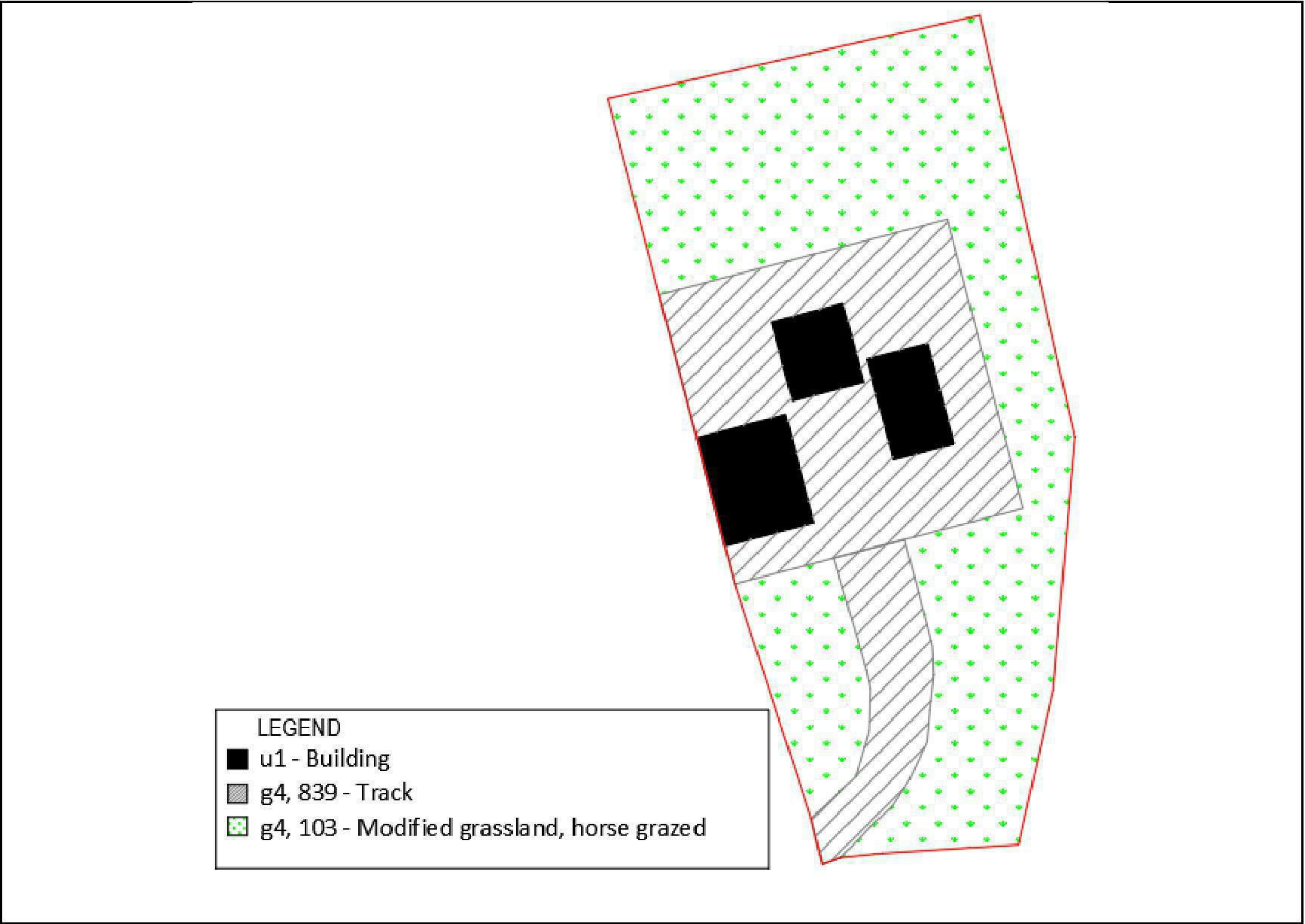


Ecological Feature	Legislation / Policy
Otters	Otters are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to kill or injure otters or damage or destroy a place of shelter or protection. Deliberate or reckless disturbance of otters which could affect the ability of animals to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young may also result in an offence.
Water voles	Water voles are protected on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to kill or injure a water vole, intentionally or recklessly disturb, destroy or obstruct a water voles place of shelter or protection.
Invasive non-native species	Invasive, non-native species are those listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to plant or cause the spread of these species in the wild.
UK Priority Species/Habitats	UK Priority Species/Habitats are those that have been identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action.
Biodiversity Net Gain	The Environment Act 2022 and the National Planning Policy Framework require all developments to show a net gain for biodiversity.



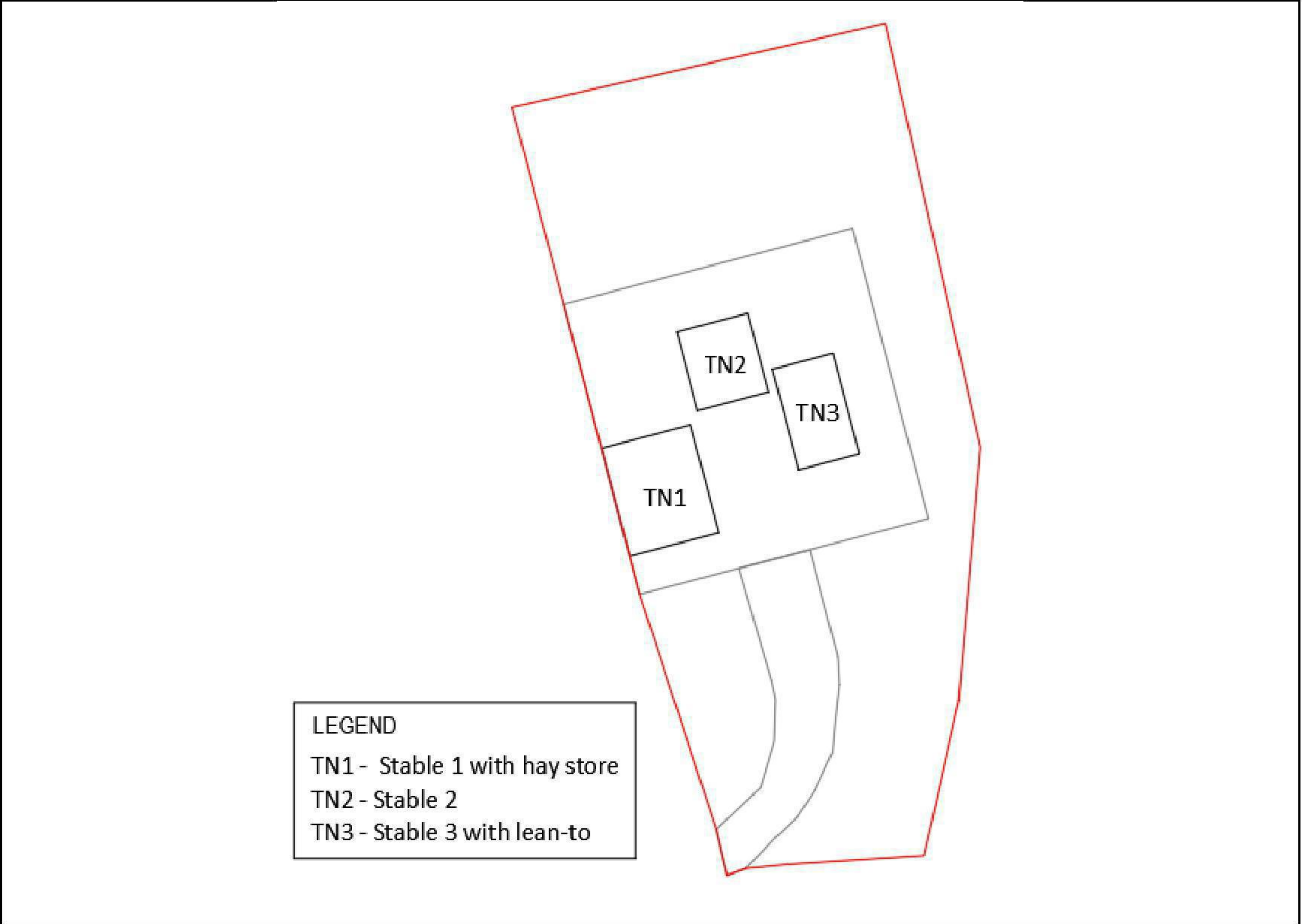
APPENDIX B – FIGURES

Figure B1 – Habitat Plan



Not to scale. North is page up

Figure B2 – Target Note Plan



Not to scale. North is page up



## APPENDIX C – PROPOSED PLANS

No plans available.



APPENDIX D - SURVEY DETAILS AND RESULTS DATA

Table D1. Details of the Personnel, Dates and Types of Survey Undertaken at the Site

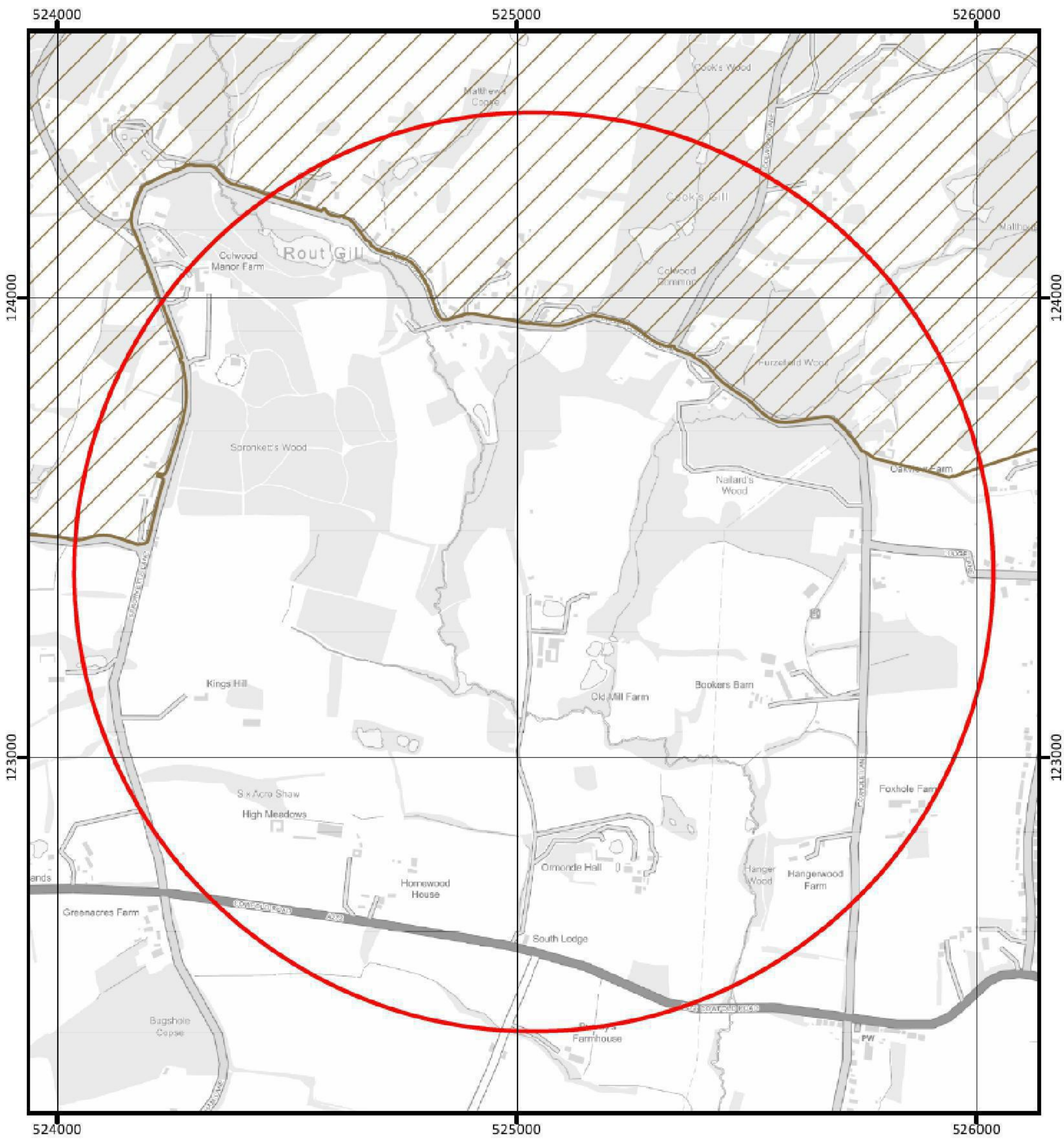
SURVEY	DATE	PERSONNEL
Extended UK Habitat Classification Survey & Daytime Bat Walkover Survey (DBW)	05 September 2025	Adam Robbins (Ecologist) MCIEEM, Natural England Bat Class Licence CL18 (Level 2) 2016-24143-CLS-CLS, Natural England Great Crested Newt Class Licence CL08 (Level 1) 2015-3839-CLS-CLS.



APPENDIX E – RECORD CENTRE MAPS

Map 1: Statutory site designations

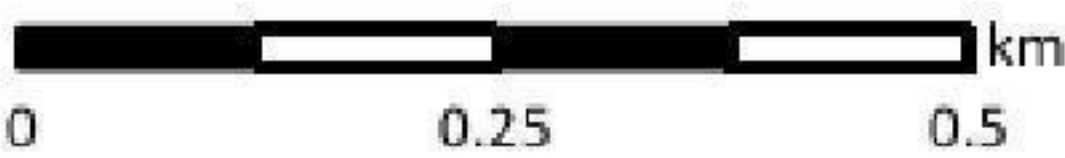
Old Mill House, Bolney + 1km radius  
SxBRC/25/520 - 24/09/2025



- Key to Map:
- |                                     |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Search area                         | Local Nature Reserve               |
| Special Area of Conservation        | National Park                      |
| Special Protection Area             | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty |
| Ramsar                              | Country Park                       |
| Site of Special Scientific Interest | Marine Conservation Zone           |
| National Nature Reserve             |                                    |

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Map 2: Non-statutory site designations

Old Mill House, Bolney + 1km radius  
SxBRC/25/520 - 24/09/2025

