



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Pots and Pithoi, Crawley

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Report	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
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Executive Summary

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Mr David Dodd to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of land associated to Pots and Pithoi Crawley, West Sussex, (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). This was required in order to identify any potentially important ecological features that may be affected by the proposed development. As part of this assessment, the following surveys were undertaken:

- Data request submitted to the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (SxBRC)
- Walkover survey assigning UK Habs habitats types

The following important ecological features were identified on site following the conclusion of the above survey work and may be subject to adverse impacts in the absence of suitable mitigation / compensation:

- Moderate Potential for breeding and nesting birds
- Potential for foraging and commuting Badgers

In the absence of any mitigation measures, the proposed development is anticipated to result in, **minor adverse impacts**. In addition to this, measures are outlined within **Section 6.0** of this document to mitigate where impacts have been identified as well as to provide targeted ecological enhancements.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Brief

Ecosupport Ltd was instructed by Mr David Dodd to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of land associated to Pots and Pithoi Crawley, West Sussex, (hereafter referred to as 'the site'). The purpose of this survey was to assess any ecological impacts that may arise as a result of the proposed development. The objectives of the survey were as follows:

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

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

1.2 Site Description & Location

The site comprises of the land behind Pots and Pithoi located off East street, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 4QA (centred on OS grid reference TQ352360). The wider landscape consists of predominantly open fields to the west and south-east of the site with woodlands to the north, south and east as well as residential properties interspersed between the wooded areas to the north. There are also commercial units directly west of the site (**Fig 1**).

Figure 1. Google satellite aerial image of the site with approximate redline boundary.



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

1.3 Proposed Development

At this stage, the development consists of the construction of a single storage barn (**Fig 2**).

Figure 2. View of the proposed plans (As supplied by Outdoor barns).



2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND POLICY

2.1 Legislation

2.1.1 *The Environment Act (2021)*

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

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

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

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

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

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (EU Exit) makes changes to the three existing instruments which transpose the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives so that they continue to work (are operable) upon the UK's exit from the European Union (EU). These include The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and The Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. This instrument also amends section 27 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to ensure existing protections continue. The intention is to ensure habitat and species protection and standards as set out under the Nature Directives are implemented in the same way or an equivalent way when the UK exits the EU.

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

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

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

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

2.1.4 *The Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)*

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

2.1.5 *Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)*

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

2.1.6 *Protection of Badgers Act*

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

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

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

2.2 Policy

2.2.1 National

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

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

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

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

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

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a SSSI, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of SSSIs;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists;
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

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

2.2.2 Local – Crawley Borough local Plan 2020-2035

Any growing urban area will place additional stress on the natural environment, including the aquatic environment. Crawley's multi-functional green infrastructure network will be conserved and enhanced through the following measures:

Strategic Policy GI1: Green Infrastructure

- i. Development which protects and enhances green infrastructure will be supported;
- ii. Development proposals should take a positive approach to designing green infrastructure, utilising the council's supplementary planning documents to integrate and enhance the green infrastructure network;
- iii. Proposals which reduce, block or harm the functions of green infrastructure should be avoided. Any loss will be required to be adequately justified, minimised, mitigate against any loss or impact or as a last resort compensate to ensure the integrity of the green and blue infrastructure network is maintained;
- iv. The strategic green infrastructure network is afforded the highest protection due to its high value from existing or identified potential multiple functions, for example as recreation, routeways, access to the countryside, wildlife and climate mitigation;
- v. Proposals should maximise the opportunity to maintain and extend green infrastructure links to form a multi-functional network of open space, providing opportunities for walking and cycling, and connecting to the urban/rural fringe and the wider countryside beyond;
- vi. Cross Boundary matters relating to Green Infrastructure should be considered and incorporated at the early stage of an application;
- vii. Large proposals will be required to provide new and/or create links to green infrastructure as well as take into consideration the use of SuDS and methods that incorporate blue infrastructure into development designs to improve the visual amenity of the development, to account for Policy EP1 and to aid in reducing surface water run-off.
- viii. Householder developments and small non-residential extensions should take into account Policy EP2 and innovative solutions that incorporate green and blue infrastructure into designs at an early stage.

Strategic Policy GI2:

Biodiversity and Net Gain All development proposals will be expected to incorporate features to encourage biodiversity and enhance existing features of nature conservation value within and around the development. Development will be required to demonstrate how it will meet the

government's requirement for securing a 'net gain' in biodiversity. As a minimum, all development proposals will need to achieve a net gain for biodiversity in accordance with government expectations 118 currently a 10% increase in habitat value for wildlife compared with the pre-development baseline.

In the first instance, net gain for biodiversity will be expected to achieve a minimum 10% net increase on site. Only where it is clearly justified this is not practicable to achieve, and where it is shown to have been considered and sought from the early stages of the design and layout of the development, will off-site provision, in the form of equivalent financial contributions, be agreed.

Applications should include consideration to securing benefits for the purposes of pollination and biodiversity as part of their on-site landscaping schemes. This can include consideration for green roofs and green walls, where soft landscaping at ground level is limited. Discussions with Gatwick Airport Limited in relation to planting and management to minimise, as far as possible, the risk of bird strike should be held at an early stage of landscape design, in accordance with Policy DD6.

Proposals which would result in significant harm to biodiversity will be refused unless:

- this can be avoided by locating on an alternative site with less harmful impact;
- or ii. the harm can be adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for.

Compensation should consider losses of all the benefits provided by the natural environment.

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

Developers may be required to commit to providing an Ecological Management Plan/Biodiversity Offset Management Plan for the development site. This will usually apply to larger developments or where a development site is close to an LWS. The developer and/or site manager must ensure the relevant management plan is handed over and explained to any maintenance company or staff responsible for maintaining landscaping and/or gardens and buildings. A simplified version should also be provided for householders and other occupiers, explaining how biodiversity is being protected and encouraged on the site. This commitment will form part of the obligations on a planning permission and will be secured by way of a S106 legal agreement and/or planning condition.

Strategic Policy GI3:

Biodiversity Sites Up-to-date habitat and species surveys and associated reports will be required to accompany planning applications which may affect the areas listed below or sites showing likely ecological value based on past ecological surveys.

Hierarchy of Biodiversity Sites

To ensure a net gain in biodiversity, the following areas and their supporting and connecting habitat will be conserved and enhanced and the council will support their designation and management through Management Plans.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Data Request

A data request was submitted to the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SBRC) to ascertain any records held of nature conservation designations and protected species within 1km of the boundary of the site.

The data search covered:

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

3.1.2 Waterbodies

Any ponds located within 250 m of the proposed development were searched for using Ordnance Survey maps and available aerial images.

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 Habitats

The updated field survey work which forms the basis of the findings of this report was carried out by Ashley James BSc (Hons) ACIEEM Project Ecologist on the 29th January 2025.

Habitats on site pre-development were identified in accordance with the categories specified for a UK Habitats survey, using Habitat Definitions Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd., 2023). UKHab represents a method for classifying habitats which has been produced to provide an up-to-date replacement for the current industry standard phase 1 survey method.

3.2.2 Badger

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

3.3 Assessment Methodology

3.3.1 Introduction

The methodology for the assessment of the likely ecological effects of the proposed development is based on CIEEM's *Guidelines for Ecological Assessment in the UK* (CIEEM 2018). Although this assessment does not constitute a formal Ecological/ Environmental Impact Assessment, the CIEEM guidelines provide a useful framework for assessing ecological impacts at any level.

3.3.2 Valuation

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

3.4 Limitations

The updated habitat assessment was complete during January 2025 which is outside of the period when vascular plants are flowering. Notwithstanding this, it was not considered that this would have posed a constraint when assigning of habitat types.

4.0 ECOLOGICAL BASELINE

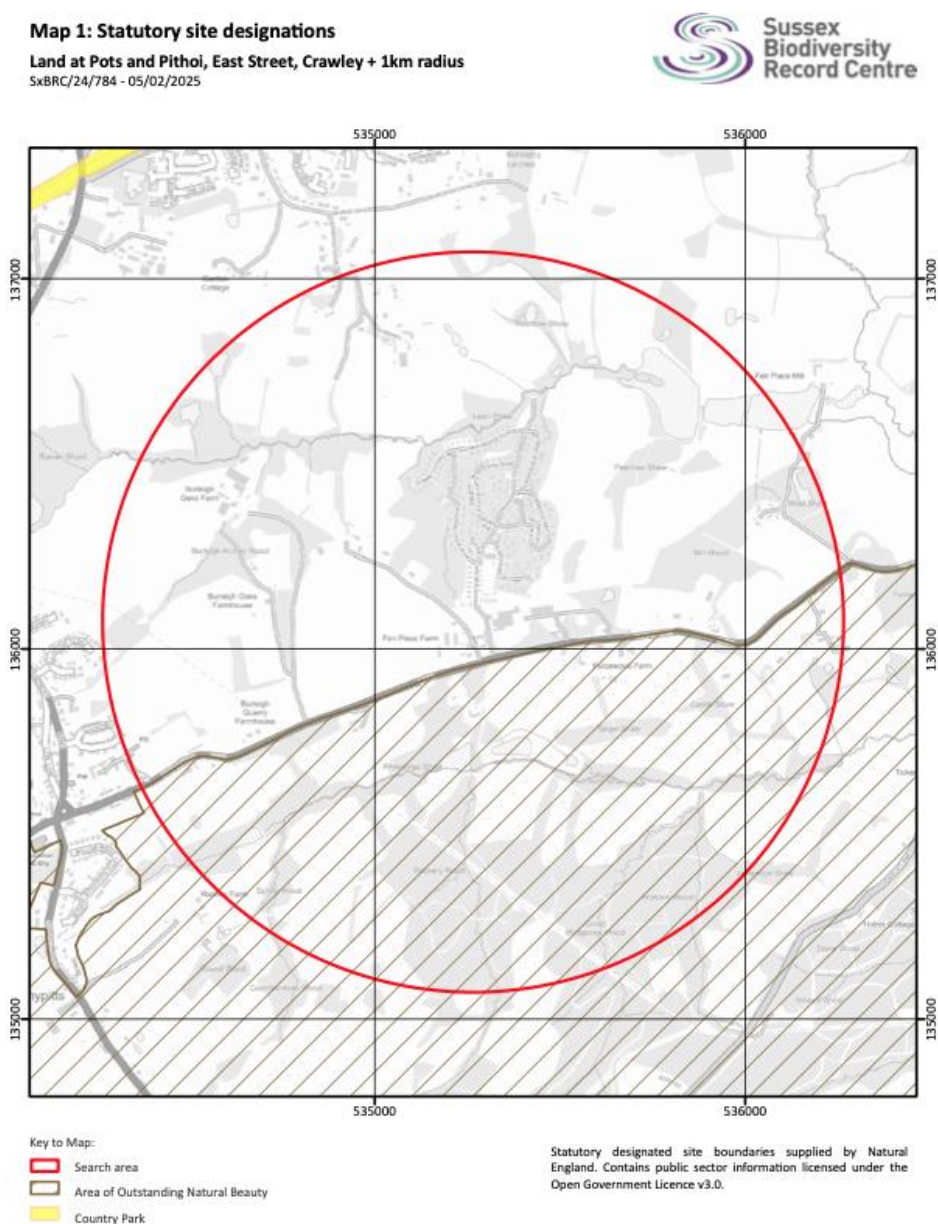
4.1 Designated Sites

4.1.1 Internationally Designated Sites

Fig 2 below displays the map provided by SxBRC with the statutory designated sites located within 1km of the site. The data has returned one statutory designated sites within 1km of the site.

- High Weald AONB which is located roughly 150m south of the site.

Figure 2. Map provided by SxBRC which indicates there is one statutory designation located within the 1 km search radius.



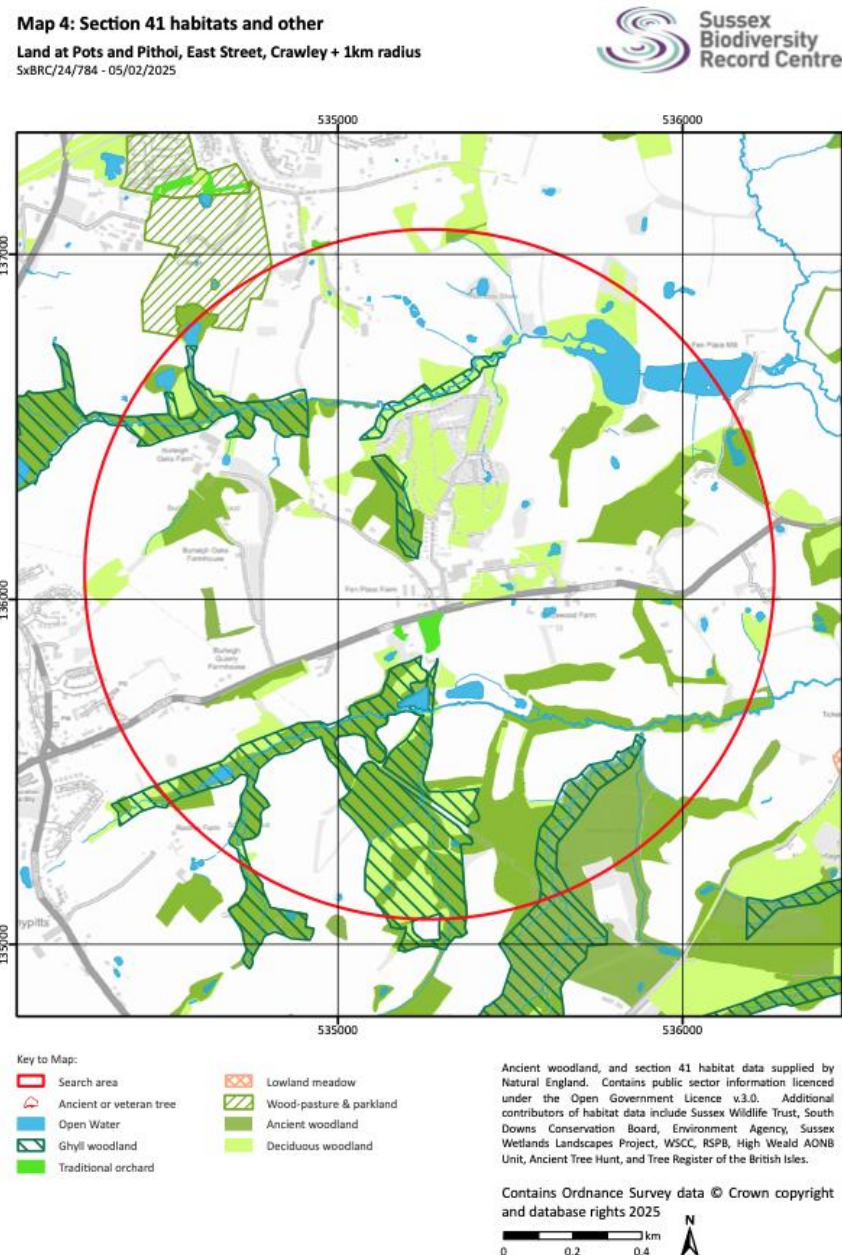
4.1.2 Locally / Non-statutory Designated Sites

No non-statutory sites have been identified within 1km, of the site.

4.1.3 Locally / Non-statutory Designated Sites

As per the returned SxBRC data request, the site does not support priority habitat, however, ancient woodland and Ghyll woodland is immediately adjacent to the north of the site. Other priority habitats noted within 1km include traditional orchard, open water, an ancient/veteran tree, wood-pasture & parkland and deciduous woodland (**Fig 3**).

Figure 3. shows the priority habitats within 1km of the site as provided by SxBRC.



4.2 Vegetation Survey Results

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

- Modified grassland (g4) (Secondary code: 16 Tall Forbs, 32 Scattered Trees)
- Artificial Unvegetated; Unsealed Surface (u1c)
- Bramble Scrub (h3d)
- Non-Native and Ornamental Hedgerow (h2b)
- Buildings (u1b5)
- Built linear features (u1e)

4.2.1 Modified Grassland (g4) with Tall Forbs (16) and Scattered Trees (32)

The northern area of the site was comprised of modified grassland (**Fig 4**). The species composition at the time of the initial walkover in 2020 included Clover (*Trifolium spp*), Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), Dandelion (*Taraxacum*), Ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), Cocksfoot (*Dactylis*), Annual Meadow Grass (*Poa annua*), Spear Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Cinquefoil (*Potentilla spp*), Bristly Ox tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), Common Vetch (*Vicia sativa*) and Oxeye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*).

Additionally, a section of tall forbs was present towards the north-eastern section. Species noted included Greater Burdock (*Arctium lappa*), Broad Leaved Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*) and Nettles (*Urtica dioica*) (**Fig 5**).

Figure 4. View of the Modified Grassland (g4) on site (Taken October 2020).



Figure 5. View of the Tall Forbs (secondary code 16) on-site (Taken October 2020).



A number of scattered trees were also present within the modified grassland. The species identified consist of Fir spp and Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) trees (**Fig 7**).

4.2.2 Artificial Unvegetated; Unsealed Surface (u1c)

A large area of the site consists of a large gravel yard which appears to be used as some form of storage for Pots and Pithoi (**Fig 6**).

Figure 6. View of the artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface (Taken January 2025)



4.2.3 Bramble Scrub (h3d)

A small area of low-lying bramble scrub is present within the scattered trees in the eastern corner of the site (**Fig 7**).

Figure 7. View of the bramble scrub and scattered trees on the eastern corner of the site (taken January 2025).



4.2.4 Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow (h2b)

An ornamental hedgerow is present separating the car park from the storage yard and consists of an ornamental hedgerow (**Fig 8**).

Figure 8. View of the Non-Native and Ornamental hedgerow (Taken January, 2025)



4.2.5 Buildings (u1b5)

Two buildings are currently present at the south of the site, associated with Pots and Pithoi Pottery Shop which is understood that they will not be impacted.

4.2.6 Built linear features (u1e)

Deer fencing is present around the northern eastern and western boundaries denoting the site boundaries. Any habitat beyond these fence lines is to be retained (**Fig 9**).

Figure 9. View of the deer fencing along the western boundary (Taken January, 2025).



4.3 Bat Survey Results

4.3.1 Pre-existing Data

The data request from SxBRC returned the following bat records within 1 km of the site (**Table 1**).

Table 1. List of bat records within 1km of the site provided by SxBRC.

Taxon Name	Species Name	Number of Records	Further Information
<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	Common Pipistrelle	2	Latest record: 2016
<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	Brown Long-eared Bat	1	Latest record: 1985

4.3.2 Preliminary Roost Assessment (trees)

A PRA of the trees has not been completed currently due to the large number of trees present on-site. An assessment of the trees for PRF'S will be completed once a tree removal plan has been produced which will outline the trees that will need to be removed as part of the proposals.

4.3.3 Foraging & Commuting Habitat Assessment

The boundary along the northern boundary is the only area that would be provide sufficient foraging along the treeline via the woodland. The rest of the site predominantly consists of a gravel yard and ornamental hedgerow. The proposals are over 50m away from the northern boundary therefore providing enough of a buffer to ensure it is kept as a dark corridor. The data request also provided extremely low records of bats within 1km of the site. The site therefore has **extremely low potential** for commuting and foraging bats.

4.4 Badgers

4.4.1 Pre-existing Information

SxBRC returned zero records of Badgers (*Meles meles*) within 1km of the site.

4.4.2 On site Habitat Assessment

During the walkover survey on site, no evidence of Badgers was noted. However, given the range of suitable habitats in the wider landscape, there is **potential** for transient foraging and commuting Badgers on site.

4.5 Reptiles

4.5.1 Pre-existing Information

SxBRC returned 1 record of Slow Worms (*Anguis fragilis*) within 1km of the site.

4.5.2 On site Habitat Assessment

The site consists of solely hardstanding in the form of a gravel yard which does not have the structural heterogeneity suitable for reptiles. The site therefore has **negligible potential** to support reptiles.

4.6 Great Crested Newts

4.6.1 Pre-existing Information

SxBRC hold 2 records of Great Crested Newts within 1km of the site. Both of these records fall within the village of Crawley Down 1.3km to the north.

4.6.2 Water Bodies Within 250m

There are two waterbodies present within 250m of the site both of which are roughly 240m from site (Fig 10).

Figure 10. Waterbody location plan (Magic Maps, 2025).



4.6.3 On site Habitat Assessment

Similarly, to reptiles, it can be considered that the habitats present within site are not suitable for GCN as it consists of solely hardstanding. Therefore the site holds **negligible potential** to support GCN.

4.7 Hazel Dormouse

4.7.1 Pre-existing Information

SxBRC returned zero records of Dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) presence within 1 km of the site.

4.7.2 On site Habitat Assessment

The ornamental hedgerow (*area where the storage barn is going*) on-site is not suitable for Dormice as it is isolated from the wider landscape and doesn't provide the berry producing species which would act as a protracted food source for Dormice throughout the year.

The scattered trees along the eastern boundary are not ideal habitat for Dormice however they are connected to the wider landscape, notably the woodland to the north. The scattered trees are connected to the woodland to the north of the site, which is linked up to an extensive network of woodland in the wider landscape which is likely to support a population of Dormice. Vegetation removal is not proposed in this area and will be retained as part of the proposals. Therefore, the development area on-site is considered to be of **negligible potential** for supporting Dormice.

NB Please note if plans are to change and works are planned within the scattered trees on-site then further work may be necessary and a further site visit will be required to outline whether PWMS will be suitable due to the minor area of impact.

4.8 Notable and Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC)

4.8.1 Pre-existing Information

The data request from SxBRC returned a large number of bird records, the following snippet are a list of the relevant bird records within 1 km of the site (**Table 3**)

Table 3. List of bird records within 1km of the site provided by IWLRC.

Taxon Name	Species Name	Number of Records
<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	Chiff Chaff	76
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Dunnock	70
<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>	Firecrest	5

<i>Regulus regulus</i>	Goldcrest	64
<i>Sitta europaea</i>	Nuthatch	101
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Starling	58
<i>Curruca communis</i>	Whitethroat	32
<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	Blackcap	50
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Wren	114
<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Redwing	30
<i>Turdus merula</i>	Blackbird	134
<i>Picus viridis</i>	Green woodpecker	66

4.8.2 On site Habitat Assessment

The hedgerow and scrub boundaries present on site offer a range of suitable habitat for breeding and nesting birds to support a variety of species. Taking all of this into consideration, there is a **Moderate Potential** for breeding and nesting birds to still be present on site.

5.0 LIKELY ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS IN ABSENCE OF MITIGATION

5.1 Introduction

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

5.2 Site Preparation and Construction

5.2.1 Impacts to Habitats

The proposals will predominantly involve the loss of the areas of ornamental hedgerow which is only considered to be of value at the **Site** level of significance. The loss of habitats and potential indirect effects would have a **moderate adverse impact** to habitats of **Site value**.

5.2.2 Impacts to Wildlife

No new external lighting is proposed as a part of the proposals therefore the site is not expected to have an adverse impact to nocturnal wildlife.

5.3 Site Operation

5.3.1 Impacts to Wildlife

The development is anticipated to have a **minor** impact on nesting birds which may be present within the ornamental hedgerow.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

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

6.2 Badgers

Although no evidence of Badgers was previously recorded on site, or during the updated walkover, the site does have potential for transient commuting badgers.

Further to this, during the construction phase, any open excavations left overnight should either be covered to prevent commuting Badgers falling in or escape ladders should be used to prevent them from becoming trapped. Any open pipework should be checked and then capped nightly.

6.3 Avoidance to Breeding and Nesting Birds

In order to avoid disturbance of breeding and nesting birds or damage to their nests, works towards the trees or any hedgerow should avoid bird nesting season (typically March – August, dependent on weather). If this is not possible, the barn should be thoroughly checked by an ecologist immediately prior to works. If any active nests are found, they should be left undisturbed with a suitable buffer within which works cannot take place (ca. 5m) until nestlings have fledged.

6.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

A biodiversity net gain assessment will be undertaken for the site using the latest Defra metric. This will be provided as a separate document (the Excel workbook).

6.5 Enhancements

6.5.1 Bats

To act as biodiversity enhancement, two Schwegler 2F bat boxes (**Fig 11**), or similar should this be unavailable, will be erected on suitable trees within the site. The Schwegler 2F has been designed as a summer roosting space for bats and has a simple entrance hole at the front. It is manufactured from long-lasting Woodcrete, which is a blend of wood, concrete and clay which will not rot, leak, crack or warp, and will last for at least 20 - 25 years, making it suitable as a long-term enhancement feature.

Figure 11. Ibstock bat brick 'B' which will be integrated into the proposed buildings on site.



6.5.2 Birds

The erection of four nest boxes within the adjacent woodland will provide further enhancements. Where possible this nest box could be tailored to provide opportunities for red listed/BAP species known from the local area. A Vivara open fronted and circular fronted bird boxes will be used (**Fig 12**). This will provide suitable nesting opportunities for a variety of bird species and will increase the nesting opportunities for birds on site.

Figure 12. Vivara open fronted and circular fronted bird boxes to be installed (NHBS).



7.0 REFERENCES

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