

Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Ground Level Tree Assessment Down Park Place, Crawley Down

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Executive Summary

Contents	Summary
Site Location	The site is situated at Down Park Place, Crawley Down.
Proposal	Demolish pre-existing outbuilding and then build new an ancillary building that includes garage, storage, gym, home office, shower room and garden store workshop.
Scope of Survey	The aim of this report is to: • Ascertain habitats present on site. • Potential for protected/notable species to be on site. • Recommendation for any further surveys to determine level of potential impact. • Recommendations for any further assessments for designation impact.
Results and Evaluation	The site has priority habitat (lowland deciduous woodland) within the site boundary and is within 177m of an Ancient and Semi Natural Woodland. Though the designation of the priority habitat on site isn't accurate as this was done likely done from aerial photography, which couldn't pick up the presence of the large amount of rhododendron. Old nesting found on site, indicating the site is used by birds. No other evidence of protected or notable species was recorded on site, though there is a likelihood of protected/notable species like badger, hedgehogs and bats foraging in and around site.
Recommendations	As no additional habitat is being removed to instigate the development of the site, except for the demolition of the building and if recommendations of sensible lighting along with construction methodology, there is no anticipated impacts. Therefore no further survey effort is recommended. Enhancement inline with the placement of two bat boxes and two bird boxes in the surrounding habitat will provide suitable enhancement, along with the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Echological Ltd (Echological) was commissioned by Mark Tuppen to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Assessment (PEA) and Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) of Down Park Place, Crawley Down, hereafter referred to as “the site”.

This report has been prepared by Principal Ecologist Dave Byett MSc BSc (Hons) MCIEEM and the conditions pertinent to it are included within Appendix A.

1.2 Site Description

The site is located just north of Crawley Down, RH10 4HQ and is centred at British Grid Reference TQ 33903 38515. The site is a small area that had a large amount of rhododendron around a disused dilapidated outbuilding. Two ash trees were removed due to ash die back, with the timber still on site. The wider landscape of the site is heavily wooded and lots of trees as well as pastures, with the Town of Crawley Down to the south. See Figure 1 for site boundary.

1.3 Development Proposals

The current proposed plans are to demolish an old corrugated metal shed, then build new an ancillary building that includes garage, storage, gym, home office, shower room and garden store workshop.

1.4 Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to:

- Undertake a desk study to obtain existing information on statutory and non-statutory sites of nature conservation interest and relevant records of protected / notable species within the site and its zone of influence.
- Present the results of an extended Habitat Classification Survey, involving a walkover of the site to record habitat types and dominant vegetation, including any invasive species.
- Evidence of protected fauna or habitats capable of supporting such species.
- Evaluate potential ecological receptors on site and within the zone of influence;
- Identify any constraints to the site's development and make any recommendations for further surveys, mitigation or enhancement.

Scientific names are provided at the first mention of each species and common names (where appropriate) are then used throughout the rest of the report for ease of reading.

1.4.1 Validity

The details of this report will remain valid for a period of eighteen months from the date of the survey, (until July 2026), after which the validity of this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether further updates are necessary. The recommendations within this report should be reviewed (and reassessed if necessary) should there be any changes to the red line boundary or development proposals which this report was based on.

1.5 Legislation

Environmental surveys are required to meet Local and National Environment and Planning Policy with regards to biodiversity and development (Appendix B).



2. Methodology

2.1 Historic Surveys

A survey of the structure on site under a Preliminary Roost Assessment (Plan Ecology Ltd, February 2023). The results from the assessment are included within section 3.3.1.

2.2 Desk Study

Online databases including Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)¹ and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC)² were consulted to identify and locate any qualifying features of interest (such as statutory designated sites).

The following survey areas for this assessment have been used to gather information on the ecological features with the potential to be affected by the scheme:

- Two kilometres from the boundary of the scheme for internationally designated and nationally designated nature conservation sites (and 'potential' designated sites), including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Ramsar Sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest SSSI.
- Ten kilometres from the boundary of the proposed scheme for SACs designated for bat populations in line with CIEEM.
- One kilometre from the boundary of the proposed scheme for nationally and locally designated nature conservation sites, including National Nature Reserves (NNRs), Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ), Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) and RSPB Reserves. This study area has been defined by professional judgement to ensure that all potential effects are identified within the Zone of Influence (Zoi)
- One kilometre for SSSI impact risk zones³ (IRZ).
- Two hundred metres from the boundary of the proposed scheme for ancient woodland, ancient semi-natural woodlands (ASNW) and ancient replanted woodland (ARW) and any other priority habitats.

MAGIC was also used to identify development licences granted in the last 5 years for bats and great crested newts (GCN) within 2 kilometre of the scheme to gain a better understanding if there are any species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act present within the area. This search was undertaken on 31/03/2025.

The current guidance on ecological assessments recommends that all ecological features that occur within a Zoi for a scheme are investigated as follows⁴:

- Areas to be directly affected within the land take for the proposed scheme and access.
- Areas that would be temporarily affected during construction.
- Areas likely to be impacted by hydrological disruption.

The data search did not cover Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs); or Conservation Areas designated for their special architectural and historic interest.

Further information on relevant species / environmental legislation and planning policy can be found in Appendix B.

¹ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk>

² <https://jncc.gov.uk>

³ Natural England Open Data (2020) SSSI Impact Risk Zones (England) [online] available at: https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/dd6ff0bd464e42fea19f289423a1d22a_0?geometry=0.119%2C51.711%2C0.177%2C51.720

⁴ CIEEM (2018) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.



2.3 Field Surveys

The following methodologies have been used to identify the ecological receptors present on or near the site and which are relevant to the proposed development. Survey didn't extend beyond the landownership of the site.

2.4 Habitats

An extended Habitat Classification Survey was undertaken on the 19/01/2025 by Dave Byett MSc BSc (Hons) MCIEEM. The weather conditions were clear and dry.

The habitats present on site were mapped in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification Professional Edition – Version 2.0 (UK Hab Ltd., 2023), hereafter referred to as 'UKHab'. The habitats have been classified to a minimum of 'Level 3' (in accordance with UKHab), to identify the presence of any Habitats of Principal Importance (HPIs) listed under the NERC Act 2006. Where habitats occur in multiple areas of the site or are of different condition, additional polygons of the same habitat have been mapped so that their condition may be assessed independently.

The minimum recording unit for habitat is 25 m² or 5 m length for linear habitats (such as hedgerows or watercourses). Dominant plant species were recorded for each habitat present using standard nomenclature (Stace, 2019).

2.5 Protected and Notable Species

The site was inspected for evidence or its potential to support protected or notable species, especially those listed under the Schedule 2 of the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended), Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (W&CA) 1981 (as amended), the Countryside Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000, those given extra protection under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and species included in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for Waverley Borough Council Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan⁵ and Biodiversity & Planning in Surrey⁶

The presence of some species was determined using standard best practice guidance and are listed below.

2.5.1 Bats

2.5.1.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

A Preliminary Roosting Assessment (PRA) (Plan Ecology Ltd, February 2023) found the building to be negligible potential.

2.5.1.2 Ground Level Tree Assessment

All trees within the survey area had a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) for their suitability to support breeding, resting and hibernating bats using survey methods based on the BCT Guidelines.

All trees were inspected from the ground using close-focusing binoculars during daylight hours and any potential roosting features (PRFs) for bats were noted, examples include: tear-outs, knot holes, transverse snaps, basal cavities and lifting bark. All terms provided in the report are consistent with those used in the arboricultural profession and all descriptions of features are consistent with Bat Roosts in Trees - Bat Tree Habitat Key (Andrews, 2018).

Any potential bat access points or roost areas were identified and inspected for signs of bats such as:

- Bat droppings on the ground outside the feature or stuck to the tree.
- Other evidence of bats such as feeding remains.
- Oily marks (from fur) or localised clean spots around possible access points and roost areas.

⁵ <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=Src4BGL8nbc%3D&portalid=0>

⁶ https://surreynaturepartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/biodiversity-planning-in-surrey-revised_post-revision-nppf_mar-2019.pdf



Any PRFs were recorded during the Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW) of the site during the PEA, which gave an indicative categorisation of the trees as noted in Table 1. Professional judgement was used to identify trees where features could be obscured by foliage or other branches. If a feature was identified on the tree, it was then categorised as PRF as the tree had at least 1 potential roost feature (PRF) present.

Table 1: Categorisation of Trees (BCT Guidelines).

Suitability	Description
None	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any.
FAR	Further assessment required (FAR) to establish if PRFs are present in the tree.
PRF	A tree with at least one potential roost feature (PRF) present.

All trees following the initial assessment were given a final GLTA categorisation to highlight whether additional assessment is required referring to the categories in Table 2.

Table 2: Guidelines for classifying the potential suitability of PRFs on a proposed development site for bats, to be applied using professional judgement (BCT Guidelines).

Suitability	Description
Negligible	No PRFs identified.
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

2.5.1.3 *Habitat Suitability*

An assessment of the site's suitability to support commuting and foraging for bats was categorised in Table 3. A professional judgement was made taking into account of the site's location, the features present on site, possible roosting locations, immediate surrounding landscape and landscape further afield.

Table 3: Categorisation of Site's Potential Flight-Paths and Foraging Habitats (BCT Guidelines).

Potential Suitability	Feature for Flight-Paths and Foraging Potential
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.



Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

2.5.2 Badger

The site was surveyed for evidence of badger *Meles meles* setts or other badger activity such as paths, latrines or signs of foraging. Methodologies used and any setts recorded were classified according to published criteria (Harris, Cresswell, & Jefferies, 1989).

2.5.3 Birds

Bird species identified at the time of survey were noted and nesting birds recorded as seen. An assessment of habitats was undertaken to determine the likely value to breeding and foraging birds.

2.5.4 Great Crested Newt & Common Amphibians

The site was appraised for its suitability to support great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* based on guidance outlined in the Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (Gent & Gibson, 2003) and the *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook* (Langton, Beckett, & Foster, 2001). Each waterbody was assessed using the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) (Oldham, Keeble, Swan, & Jeffcote, 2000) which assigns a value to the pond calculated from 10 pre-identified features. The HSI value gives a correlation of likely use by GCN and below 0.46 the waterbody is considered to have less likelihood of GCN presence however this metric is a guide and should be assessed on a site-by-site basis as waterbodies with low HSI have been known to support GCN.

Habitat suitability and evidence of other common amphibians was recorded on site where relevant.

2.5.5 Hazel Dormouse

The site was surveyed for its suitability to support hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* based on best practice guidance (Bright, Morris, & Mitchell-Jones, 2006).

2.5.6 Otter

The site was assessed for its suitability to support otter *Lutra lutra* using industry standard survey advice (Chanin, 2003).

2.5.7 Reptiles

The site was appraised for its suitability to support reptiles using guidance outlined in the Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (Gent & Gibson, 2003).

2.5.8 Invertebrates

The site's habitats were appraised for suitability to support assemblages of invertebrates and commented on in the report as appropriate.

2.5.9 Water Vole

Waterbodies within or adjacent to the site were assessed for their suitability to support water vole *Arvicola amphibius* using the industry standard survey advice (Dean, 2016).



2.5.10 Other Species

The site was also appraised for its suitability to support other protected or notable fauna with regard to the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017) and BS42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development (BSI, 2013). Evidence of any current or historical presence of such species was recorded.

2.5.11 Invasive Species

Evidence of species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 (as amended) were recorded as seen.

2.6 Limitations

The optimal period to undertake an extended UKHab survey is April-September, inclusive. The survey was undertaken in January, which is outside the optimal survey window, however the dominant species of the respective vegetation types were visible and identifiable at the time of the survey. Therefore, this is not considered to be a limitation.

Access was possible to all areas of the site.

To determine presence or likely absence of protected species usually requires multiple visits at suitable times of the year. This survey focuses on assessing the potential of the site to support species of note, which are considered to be of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity with reference to those given protection under UK or European wildlife legislation, from only a single visit. This report cannot, therefore, be considered a comprehensive assessment of the ecological interest of the site. However, it does provide an assessment of the ecological interest present on the day the site was visited and highlights areas where further survey work may be recommended.



3. Results

3.1 Desktop Assessment

3.1.1 Designated Sites

Table 4 below shows what designations are within buffers as set out in section 2.2 of the site boundary.

Table 4: Statutory and non-Statutory Designated Sites Identified During the Desk Study.

Site Name	Designation	Distance and Direction from Site	Qualifying Features
Hedgecourt	SSSI	1844m NE	Hedgecourt is the most important wetland site remaining in south-east Surrey. Situated in the upper Eden Brook Valley on alluvial soils overlying Tunbridge Wells sandstones, the site incorporates a range of habitats including woodland, grassland and fen-marginated open water. Hedgecourt lake itself is an ancient mill pond resulting from the damming of the river. These habitats support a wide variety of animal life including several locally distributed beetles (Coleoptera) and a large breeding-bird fauna.

3.1.2 SSSI Impact Risk Zones

The site falls within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ), for Hedgecourt SSSI. Following high level assessment⁷ on the 31/03/2025, it was deemed Natural England is not needed to be consulted regarding this development (see Appendix C).

3.1.3 Ancient Woodland and Priority Habitats

A single Ancient and Semi-natural woodland (ASNW) parcels within 200m, 177m north of the site. There are eight Priority Habitat Inventory parcels, all deciduous woodland within 200m of the site, with the whole site being designated as deciduous woodland. No other Priority Habitats on site or within 200m.

It is noted that following site visit, that this classification was based solely upon aerial imagery, as a large section of this was rhododendron, which is a non-native invasive species, which greatly alters the value of the site.

Due to the limited nature of the development it is not anticipated that there would be impact upon the ASNW or priority habitat as long as standard construction practises are adhered to, such as dust suppression and turn off machinery not in use.

3.1.4 Development Licences

There is only one development licences that have been granted within the last 5 years within 2km of the site:

- GCN – 1,690m SE, Started 21/08/2020, end 31/12/2030, damage and destroy resting place.

3.2 Habitats

The following habitats, as outlined in Table 5, have been identified through the field assessment, a UKHab map can be found in Figure 2, with detailed Target Notes (TN) in Appendix D and Site Photos in Appendix E.

⁷ [https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0101305532042¬es=&location=534364,138736%20%20\(IRZ%20polygon%20centre\)](https://irz.geodata.org.uk/IRZ/step2.html?irzcode=0101305532042¬es=&location=534364,138736%20%20(IRZ%20polygon%20centre))

Table 5. Habitats Present on Site.

Habitat	Result	Importance Assessment
w1f Lowland mixed Deciduous woodland Secondary Codes: 30, 206, 211, 217	Mature pedunculate oak <i>Quercus robur</i> , silver birch <i>Betula pendula</i> , hazel, holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> as well as rhododendron <i>Rhododendron ponticum</i> . Ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> was present, but was removed due to ash die back (Target Note 2).	Priority Habitat, UK BAP. Regional Importance.
H3g Rhododendron scrub	Rhododendron scrub which has been cut back, though there is a lot of regrowth within a year already (Target Note 1).	N/a
Bare ground	Bare ground, which has gravel spread across and is churned up from vehicle movement.	N/a
u1b5 Building	Old disused building.	N/a

3.3 Protected and Notable Species

3.3.1 Bats

3.3.1.1 Preliminary Roost Assessment

The building based upon BCT Guidelines does not show suitability for summer roosting bats due it being constructed of corrugated metal sheeting. No incidental evidence of bat presence was observed when inspected internally and thus its status still the same at negligible.

3.3.1.2 Ground Level Tree Assessment

There are several mature trees around the edge of the site though did not have any PRFs present. See Appendix E for photos of trees recorded on site. As no trees supporting PRFs, roosting bats within trees is not considered any further within this report.

3.3.1.3 Habitat Suitability

The site and its surroundings is deemed to have high suitability for foraging and commuting bats. This is due to the Priority woodland surrounding the site and immediately adjacent, offering good foraging and roosting potential (increasing likelihood of use by bats).

3.3.2 Badger

There was no evidence of badgers, such as latrines, snuffle holes or footprints. The site does offer foraging potential, though limited, as there is little scrub trees on site providing suitable food sources (fruits, insects etc.). There is suitable sett building potential, but it's limited as the ground is not steep enough for classic sett construction, so would likely only support outliers.

3.3.3 Birds

During the site walk over an incomplete old bird's nest was present on a young silver birch *Betula pendula* (Target Note 3), given its messy structure it is likely that of a wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*.

During the site walk the following common and widespread species were recorded wrens *Troglodytes troglodytes*, black bird *Turdus merula* and robins *Erithacus rubecula* were recorded on site. The edge of

the site offers good foraging for woodland species particularly with the small woodland block to the northeast of the site, which could support night species such as tawney owls *Strix aluco*.

3.3.4 Great Crested Newt & Common Amphibians

The site does not offer suitable waterbodies suitable for great crested newts, with the only suitable feature on site, small drain, had an HIS carried out and was given a score of 0.45 (poor) (see Appendix F). There are over 13+ waterbodies that are within 1km of the site that are connected terrestrially, with the nearest one being 206m east. Though no waterbody is present on site, there could be GCN dispersing across the land and hibernating in tree root systems. Though the area of the site which will be impacted, offers no suitability to GCN and common amphibians due to the lack of vegetation/features.

3.3.5 Hazel Dormouse

There is low suitable habitat present, though a coppiced hazel stand is present (which is not to be removed), this is limited. There are large trees present such as oaks, which dormice would utilise, though due to the lack of suitable understory, dormouse presence would be considered incidental. There is no vegetation removal as part of this development.

It is assumed dormice are likely absent from site and not considered any further.

3.3.6 Otter

No suitable waterbodies are present on site or adjacent to support otters.

Therefore, otters are not considered further within this report.

3.3.7 Reptiles

The site doesn't offer suitability to reptiles, due to the lack of suitable habitat such as grassland and the large amount of shading created by the surrounding trees. There could be hibernation potential in the surrounding trees of the site, in and around root systems, though there are no trees in the foot print of impact within the site boundary.

Therefore, reptiles are not considered further within this report.

3.3.8 Invertebrates

The habitat in the surroundings of the site offers different habitat for inverts from some standing deadwood in couple of the trees and mature oak trees known to support a wide range of inverts.

The site itself mainly offers little suitability due to the lack of vegetation.

3.3.9 Water Vole

No suitable waterbodies are present on site or adjacent to support water voles.

Therefore, water voles are not considered further within this report.

3.3.10 Other Species

The site is not considered suitable for other species of note, as the habitat present, is not of high quality, diversity or distinctiveness compared to the woodland block to the near east. But there could get incidental hedgehogs passing through and doing foraging.

3.3.11 Invasive Species

Rhododendron ponticum was recorded on site, which has had recent management to reduce its prevalence. No other non-native invasive species were recorded.



4. Recommendations

All of the works outlined below should be assumed as likely requirements for the pre-planning stage to inform a planning application, unless otherwise stated.

4.1 Habitats

It is recommended that management of rhododendron be carried on and increased to remove as much as possible to allow native species to flourish and support wildlife.

4.2 Bats

Though the site and its immediate surroundings have bat suitability, as there is no vegetation removal as part of the application and that external lighting is to be minimal. It is recommended lighting follows Guidance Note GN08/23 for bats and lighting (Institution of Lighting Professionals, 2023), such as low level bollard lighting, external lighting on motion detection, UV emitting lacking LED bulbs, warm light (27000Kelvin or lower) hooded cowl and downward facing. This will reduce impacts upon foraging to commuting bats to navigatory impact.

As long as a suitable method of working is followed in a Construction Management Plan (CMP) (no lighting over-night and timing) there would be no disturbance to foraging or commuting bats. Therefore, no further surveys relating to bat habitat suitability is required.

4.3 Birds

It is noted that nesting birds are present on site, though not active at time of the survey. Should works start within the nesting bird season of March-September, inspection of the building and immediate habitat surrounding the site should be carried out prior to works. This pre nesting site check should be carried out 48hrs prior to works starting. Should any active nests be present, the ecologist will cordon of 5m radius minimum (extending pending on species sensitivity). Once the chicks have fledged or the nest has been abandoned, works can resume in that cordoned off area.

4.4 Protected Notable Species

Though there is potential for other protected or notable species to be potentially present on site such as badger foraging or hedgehogs, as noted in section 3.3, though limited to most likely nesting birds and foraging bats.

It is recommended that general practises to reduce potential impacts upon fauna and the development be undertaken such as:

- Pits/trenches left open over night have a small access ramp to allow egress of small mammals such as badgers and hedgehogs.
- Soil piles, duration be minimised to prevent badgers digging and sett creation.
- No overnight lighting, impacting nocturnal species such as bats and owls.
- Time works of most disturbance at noncritical times.
- Toolbox talk on bats, birds, badgers and hedgehogs

If sensible construction methodology is followed, with correct precautions and recommendations, then impacts would be negligible.

4.5 Enhancements

Under the National Planning Policy Framework⁸ a development must provide enhancement for biodiversity. To support this, it is recommended that two bat boxes (general multipurpose one such as Schwegler 2f/1FF) and two bird boxes (one small hole entrance and one open sided entrance) be

⁸ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf>

installed. Any mitigation relating to possible bat roosts with the house would be additional to these recommendations.

Further enhancements can be undertaken, by using ash timber that has been cut up from the ash die back removal, be used to create hibernacula for invertebrates and small mammals such as hedgehogs.

5. Conclusion

The development proposals are considered to have a negligible impact on the statutory and non-statutory designated sites due to the limited scope and duration of works. Though the site is covered with priority habitat deciduous woodland, this is considered not correct and as such is not assessed as within this report being present on site.

The site has the potential to support protected species utilising it, such as foraging bats and birds, as well as nesting. As no vegetation removal is required as part of this development, it is considered that following recommendations (such as lighting and construction methods) there would be negligible impact upon wildlife. And following construction, there will be an increase from Biodiversity Net Gain, so the development there would have a positive output.



6. References

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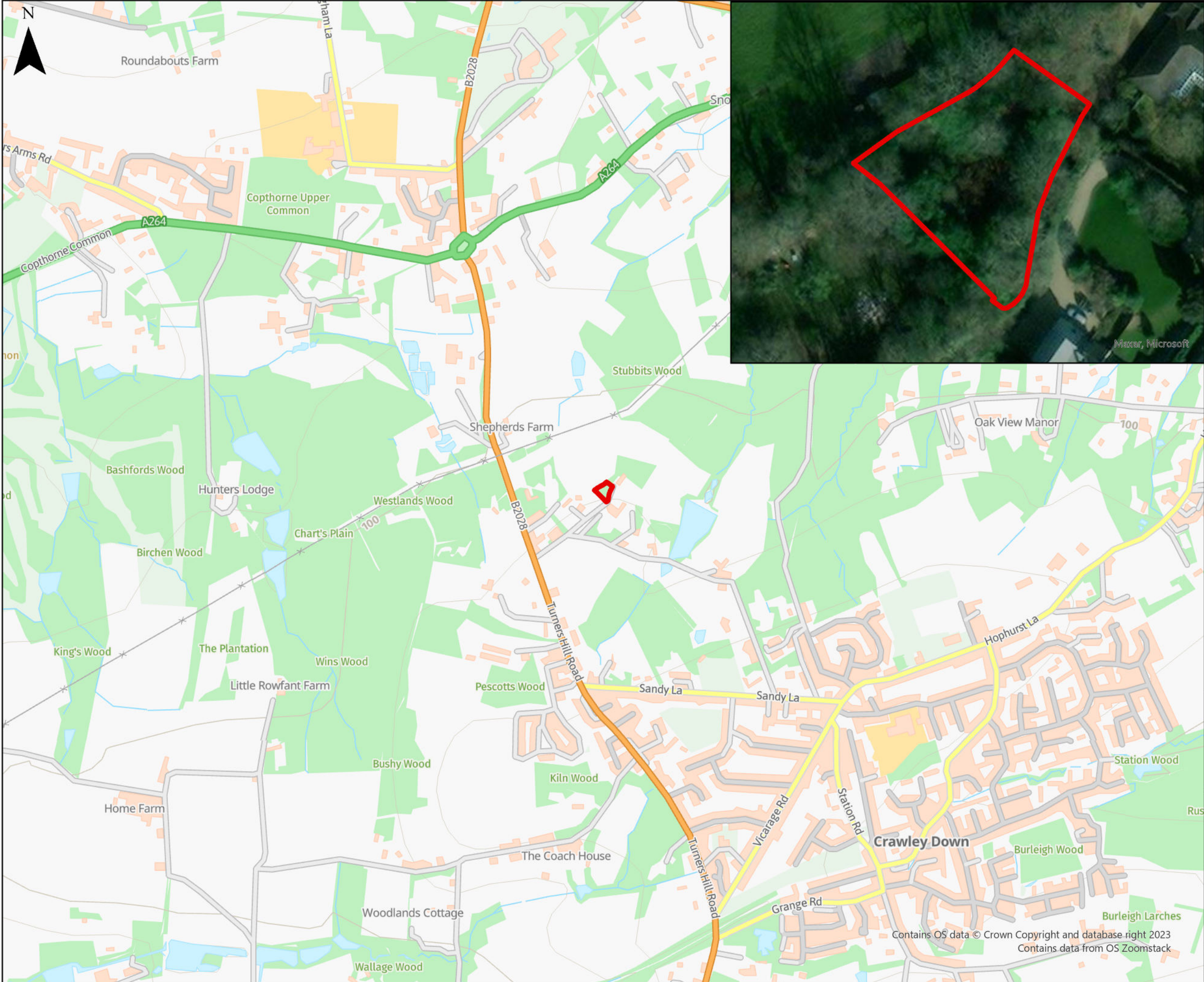


7. Figures

Figure 1 - Site Location Plan

Figure 2 – Preliminary Ecological Assessment





Legend

Site Boundary

Notes

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Ordnance Survey
100024198



Ecological Ltd

Client

Mark Tuppen

Site

Down Park Place, Crawley Down

Title

Biodiversity Net Gain
Site Location

01	28/01/2025	DB	For Issue
Rev	Date	Drawn	Description
Drawing Number			
007-01a			

0170340680 Meters

Scale: 1:10,000

Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2023
Contains data from OS Zoomstack



Legend

Site Boundary

Habitat

h3g - Rhododendron scrub

u1b5 - Building

w1f - Low land mixed deciduous woodland

Bare ground

Rural tree

Target Note

Notes

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Ordnance Survey
100024198



Ecological Ltd

Client

Mark Tuppen

Site

Down Park Place, Crawley Down

Title

Preliminary Ecological Assessment

01	01/04/2025	DB	For Issue
Rev	Date	Drawn	Description

Drawing Number

007-04a

8. Appendices



Appendix A Conditions

This Report has been prepared using reasonable skill and care for the sole benefit of Mark Tuppen (“the Client”) for the proposed uses stated in the report by Echological Ltd (“Echological”). Echological exclude all liability for any other uses and to any other party. The report must not be relied on or reproduced in whole or in part by any other party without the copyright holder’s permission.

No liability is accepted or warranty given for; unconfirmed data, third party documents and information supplied to Echological or for the performance, reliability, standing etc. of any products, services, organisations or companies referred to in this report.

The report refers, within the limitations stated, to the environment of the site in the context of the surrounding area at the time of the inspections. Environmental conditions can vary and no warranty is given as to the possibility of changes in the environment of the site and surrounding area at differing times. No investigative method can eliminate the possibility of obtaining partially imprecise, incomplete or not fully representative information. Any monitoring or survey work undertaken as part of the commission will have been subject to limitations, including for example timescale, seasonal and weather-related conditions. Actual environmental conditions are typically more complex and variable than the investigative, predictive and modelling approaches indicate in practice, and the output of such approaches cannot be relied upon as a comprehensive or accurate indicator of future conditions. The “shelf life” of the Report will be determined by a number of factors including; its original purpose, the Client’s instructions, passage of time, advances in technology and techniques, changes in legislation etc. and therefore may require future re-assessment.

The whole of the report must be read as other sections of the report may contain information which puts into context the findings in any executive summary.

Echological reserves the right to share this Report and any related materials, survey data, surveys, drawings and/or documents at any time with the relevant Local Ecological Records Centre (LERC), any relevant statutory body or organisation as Echological may reasonably require from time-to-time.

The performance of environmental protection measures and of buildings and other structures in relation to acoustics, vibration, noise mitigation and other environmental issues is influenced to a large extent by the degree to which the relevant environmental considerations are incorporated into the final design and specifications and the quality of workmanship and compliance with the specifications on site during construction. Echological accepts no liability for issues with performance arising from such factors.



Appendix B Legislation

Habitats Directive

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, or the 'Habitats Directive', is a European Union directive adopted in 1992 in response to the Bern Convention. Its aims are to protect approximately 220 habitats and 1,000 species listed in its several Annexes.

In the UK, the Habitats Directive is transposed into national law via the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) in England and Wales, and via the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) in Northern Ireland.

Birds Directive

The EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) or 'Birds Directive' was introduced to achieve favourable conservation status of all wild bird species across their distribution range. In this context, the most important provision is the identification and classification of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex 1 of the Directive, as well as for all regularly occurring migratory species, paying particular attention to the protection of wetlands of international importance.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

Regulations place a duty on the Secretary of State to propose a list of sites which are important for either habitats or species (listed in Annexes I or II of the Habitats Directive respectively) to the European Commission. These sites, if ratified by Ministers, are then designated as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) within six years. Public bodies must also help preserve, maintain and re-establish habitats for wild birds.

The 2018 amendments mainly related to the impact of the *People Over Wind* decision and some implications arising for neighbourhood plan development and a range of other planning tools including Local Development Orders and Permission in Principle – see here for full details: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/1307/note/made>

The 2019 amendments related to the EU exit. Most of these changes involved transferring functions from the European Commission to the appropriate authorities in England and Wales. All other processes or terms in the 2017 Regulations remain unchanged and existing guidance is still relevant. The obligations of a competent authority in the 2017 Regulations for the protection of sites or species do not change.– see here for full details: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2019/9780111176573>

The Regulations make it an offence to deliberately capture, kill, disturb or trade in the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, uproot, destroy, or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 5.

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

This is the principal mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in the UK. This legislation is the chief means by which the 'Bern Convention' and the Birds Directive are implemented in the UK. Since it was first introduced, the Act has been amended several times. The Act makes it an offence to (with exception to species listed in Schedule 2) intentionally:

- kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use; or
- take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

Or to intentionally do the following to a wild bird listed in Schedule 1:

- disturbs any wild bird while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or
- disturbs dependent young of such a bird.

In addition, the Act makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to:



- intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5;
- interfere with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places; and
- The Act also prohibits certain methods of killing, injuring, or taking wild animals.

Finally, the Act also makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to: intentionally pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant listed in Schedule 8, or any seed or spore attached to any such wild plant; unless an authorised person, intentionally uproot any wild plant not included in Schedule 8; or sell, offer or expose for sale, or possess (for the purposes of trade), any live or dead wild plant included in Schedule 8, or any part of, or anything derived from, such a plant.

Following all amendments to the Act, Schedule 5 'Animals which are Protected' contains a total of 154 species of animal, including several mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates. Schedule 8 'Plants which are Protected' of the Act, contains 185 species, including higher plants, bryophytes and fungi and lichens. A comprehensive and up-to-date list of these species can be obtained from the JNCC website.

Part 14 of the Act makes unlawful to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant which is listed in Part II of Schedule 9.

It is recommended that plant material of these species is disposed of as bio-hazardous waste, and these plants should not be used in planting schemes.

Environment Protection Act 1990

The Act imposes a classification of soil and other waste containing viable propagules of invasive non-native plant species as controlled waste. This has been applied to Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*, with the result that waste containing this species must be disposed of in accordance with the duty of care set out in section 34 of the Act.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

The main legislation protecting badgers in England and Wales is the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (the 1992 Act). Under the 1992 Act it is an offence to: wilfully kill, injure, take or attempt to kill, injure or take a badger; dig for a badger; interfere with a badger sett by, damaging a sett or any part thereof, destroying a sett, obstructing access to a sett, causing a dog to enter a sett or disturbing a badger while occupying a sett.

The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as: "any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger".

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 41 (S41) of this Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list (in consultation with Natural England) of Habitats and Species which are of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal (e.g. planning) functions. The S41 list includes 65 Habitats of Principal Importance and 1,150 Species of Principal Importance.

The Environment Act 2021

The Environment Act sets statutory targets biodiversity including a target to reverse the decline in species abundance by 2030. As well as confirming that public authorities have a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, and making provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England.

Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations were made under Section 97 of the Environment Act 1995 and came into force in 1997. They introduced new arrangements for local planning authorities in England and Wales to protect important hedgerows in the countryside, by controlling their removal through a system of notification. Important hedgerows are defined by complex assessment criteria, which draw on biodiversity features, historical context and the landscape value of the hedgerow.

The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order 2019 (as amended)



This Order is concerned with the prevention and management of the introduction and spread of invasive alien species.

Birds of Conservation Concern

This is a review of the status of all birds occurring regularly in the United Kingdom. It is regularly updated and is prepared by leading bird conservation organisations, including the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

The latest report was produced in 2021 (Eaton *et al*, 2021) and identified 70 red list species, 103 amber species, and 72 green species. The criteria are complex, but generally:

Red list species are those that have shown a decline of the breeding population, non-breeding population or breeding range of more than 50% in the last 25 years.

Amber list species are those that have shown a decline of the breeding population, non-breeding population or breeding range of between 25% and 50% in the last 25 years. Species that have a UK breeding population of less than 300 or a non-breeding population of less than 900 individuals are also included, together with those whose 50% of the population is localised in 10 sites or fewer and those whose 20% of the European population is found in the UK.

Green list species are all regularly occurring species that do not qualify under any of the red or amber criteria are green listed.

Global IUCN Red List

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Threatened Species was devised to provide a list of those species that are most at risk of becoming extinct globally. It provides taxonomic, conservation status and distribution information about threatened taxa around the globe.

The system catalogues threatened species into groups of varying levels of threat, which are: Extinct (EX), Extinct in the Wild (EW), Critically Endangered (CE), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), Near Threatened (NT), Least Concern (LC), Data Deficient (DD), Not Evaluated (NE). Criteria for designation into each of the categories is complex, and consider several principles.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP) identify habitat and species conservation priorities at a local level (typically at the County level), and are usually drawn up by a consortium of local Government organisations and conservation charities.

Some LBAP's may also include Habitat Action Plans (HAP) and/or Species Action Plans (SAP), which are used to guide and inform the local decision making process.

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

This Act offers protects a form of protection to all wild species of mammals, irrespective of other legislation, and focused on animal welfare, rather than conservation.

Unless covered by one of the exceptions, a person is guilty of an offence if he mutilates, kicks, beats, nails or otherwise impales, stabs, burns, stones, crushes, drowns, drags or asphyxiates any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

It's application is typically restricted to preventing deliberate harm to wildlife (in general) during construction works etc.



Appendix C Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest Letter





This letter has been automatically generated by the Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI IRZs). This letter should have been generated by the local planning authority (LPA) and is for their use only. It is the responsibility of the LPA to make sure the SSSI IRZs have been used correctly before making any decisions based on the advice within this letter.

Date: 31/03/2025

Our Ref: IRZ_33186

Your Ref: -

Coordinate: 534364,138736 (IRZ polygon centre)

Thank you for using Natural England's SSSI Impact Risk Zones on the above date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

You do not need to consult Natural England on the proposed development at this location.

The Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI IRZs) indicate that at the location selected, the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on terrestrial Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and those Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites that they underpin.

Therefore, you do not need to consult Natural England on the likely impacts of development on terrestrial SSSIs and the SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites that they underpin.

Discretionary Advice

Natural England may provide pre-application advice on other biodiversity or natural environment impacts or opportunities.

[Developers Get Environmental Advice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england/about-us/pre-application-discretionary-advice-service) provides information on Natural England's pre-application discretionary advice service (DAS).

Please Note

The SSSI IRZs seek to guide consultations relating to the likely impacts of development on terrestrial SSSIs

under Schedule 4 (w) of The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 and section 28I of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. They do not alter or remove any other statutory requirements to consult Natural England. The gov.uk website provides more information on when you must consult Natural England when considering development proposals.

The SSSI IRZs only indicate Natural England's assessment of likely risk to the notified features of terrestrial SSSIs and those SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites that they underpin. There are other sites designated for nature conservation in the coastal and marine environment that are not underpinned by terrestrial SSSIs. This includes SPAs, SACs, Ramsar sites and Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs). You should consult Natural England on any coastal or marine proposal that might impact those sites.

Where the SSSI IRZs indicate a risk is unlikely, this does not mean that there are no potential impacts on biodiversity or the wider natural environment and there may be a requirement to consult Natural England as a statutory consultee on other matters.

[Local Planning Authorities Get Environmental Advice - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-planning-authorities-get-environmental-advice) provides more information on when you must consult Natural England when considering development proposals including [Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/nationally-significant-infrastructure-projects) (NSIPs).

General advice on the natural environment

Further general advice on the consideration of protected species and other natural environment issues is provided in Annex A of this letter. Dependent upon the location and nature of the proposed development there may be a requirement to consult Natural England as a statutory consultee on other matters.

Should the proposal change, please refer to the SSSI Impact Risk Zones again.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Yours faithfully

Natural England

Annex A - Natural England general advice

Protected Landscapes

Paragraph 182 of the [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/national-planning-policy-framework) (NPPF) requires great weight to be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty within Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (known as National Landscapes), National Parks, and the Broads and states that the scale and extent of development within all these areas should be limited. Paragraph 183 requires exceptional circumstances to be demonstrated to justify major development within a designated landscape and sets out criteria which should be applied in considering relevant development proposals. Section 245 of the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/1/section/245) places a duty on relevant authorities (including local planning authorities) to seek to further the statutory purposes of a National Park, the Broads or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in England in exercising their functions. This duty also applies to proposals outside the designated area but impacting on its natural beauty.

The local planning authority should carefully consider any impacts on the statutory purposes of protected landscapes and their settings in line with the NPPF, relevant development plan policies and the Section 245 duty. The relevant National Landscape Partnership or Conservation Board may be able to offer advice on the impacts of the proposal on the natural beauty of the area and the aims and objectives of the statutory management plan, as well as environmental enhancement opportunities. Where available, a local Landscape Character Assessment can also be a helpful guide to the landscape's sensitivity to development and its capacity to accommodate proposed development.

Wider Landscapes

Paragraph 180 of the NPPF highlights the need to protect and enhance valued landscapes through the planning system. This application may present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes, including any local landscape designations. You may want to consider whether any local landscape features or characteristics (such as ponds, woodland, or dry-stone walls) could be incorporated into the development to respond to and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness, in line with any local landscape character assessments. Where the impacts of development are likely to be significant, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should be provided with the proposal to inform decision making. We refer you to the [Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment \(GLVIA3\) - Landscape Institute](https://www.landscapelinstitute.org.uk/guidelines-for-landscape-and-visual-impact-assessment-glvia3/) for further guidance.

Biodiversity duty

Section 40 of the [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/11/section/40) places a duty on the local planning authority to conserve and enhance biodiversity as part of its decision making. We refer you to the [Complying with the biodiversity duty - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty) for further information.

Designated nature conservation sites

Paragraphs 186-188 of the NPPF set out the principles for determining applications impacting on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and habitats sites. Both the direct and indirect impacts of the development should be considered. A Habitats Regulations Assessment is needed where there is a likely significant effect on a habitats site and Natural England must be consulted on 'appropriate assessments'. We refer you to [Appropriate assessment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/appropriate-assessment) for more information. Natural England must also be consulted where development is in or likely to affect a SSSI and provides advice on potential impacts on SSSIs either via the [SSSI Impact Risk Zones \(England\) \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com) or as standard or bespoke consultation responses.

Protected Species

Natural England has produced [Protected species and development: advice for local planning authorities \(gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/protected-species-and-development-advice-for-local-planning-authorities) (standing advice) to help planning authorities understand the impact of particular developments on protected species. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on protected species where they

form part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest or in exceptional circumstances. A protected species licence may be required in certain cases. We refer you to [Wildlife licences: when you need to apply - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) for more information.

Local sites and priority habitats and species

The local planning authority should consider the impacts of the proposed development on any local wildlife or geodiversity site, in line with paragraphs 180, 181 and 185 of the NPPF and any relevant development plan policy. There may also be opportunities to enhance local sites and improve their connectivity to help nature's recovery. Natural England does not hold locally specific information on local sites and recommends further information is obtained from appropriate bodies such as the local records centre, wildlife trust, geoconservation groups or recording societies. Emerging [Local nature recovery strategies - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) may also provide further useful information.

Priority habitats and Species are of particular importance for nature conservation and are included in the England Biodiversity List published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Most priority habitats will be mapped either as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, on the Magic website or as Local Wildlife Sites. We refer you to [Habitats and species of principal importance in England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) for a list of priority habitats and species in England.

Natural England does not routinely hold species data. Such data should be collected when impacts on priority habitats or species are considered likely. Consideration should also be given to the potential environmental value of brownfield sites, often found in urban areas and former industrial land. We refer you to the [Brownfield Hub - Buglife](#) for more information and Natural England's [Open Mosaic Habitat \(Draft\) - data.gov.uk](#) (Open Mosaic Habitat inventory), which can be used as the starting point for detailed brownfield land assessments.

Biodiversity and wider environmental gains

Development should provide net gains for biodiversity in line with the NPPF paragraphs 180(d), 185 and 186. Major development (defined in the [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) glossary) is required by law to deliver a biodiversity gain of at least 10% from 12 February 2024 and this requirement is expected to be extended to smaller scale development in spring 2024. For nationally significant infrastructure projects (NSIPs), it is anticipated that the requirement for biodiversity net gain will be implemented from 2025.

For further information on the timetable for mandatory biodiversity net gain, we refer you to [Biodiversity Net Gain moves step closer with timetable set out - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). [Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) provides more information on biodiversity net gain and includes a link to the draft [Biodiversity net gain - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) Planning Practice Guidance.

The statutory biodiversity metric should be used to calculate biodiversity losses and gains for terrestrial and intertidal habitats and can be used to inform any development project. We refer you to [Calculate biodiversity value with the statutory biodiversity metric - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) for more information. For small development sites, the [Small Sites Metric - JP040 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#) may be used. This is a simplified version of the biodiversity metric and is designed for use where certain criteria are met.

The mitigation hierarchy as set out in paragraph 186 of the NPPF should be followed to firstly consider what existing habitats within the site can be retained or enhanced. Where on-site measures are not possible, provision off-site will need to be considered.

Development also provides opportunities to secure wider biodiversity enhancements and environmental gains, as outlined in the NPPF (paragraphs 8, 74, 108, 124, 180, 181 and 186). Opportunities for enhancement might include incorporating features to support specific species within the design of new buildings such as swift or bat boxes or designing lighting to encourage wildlife.

The [Environmental Benefits from Nature Tool - Beta Test Version - JP038 \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#) may be used to identify opportunities to enhance wider benefits from nature and to avoid and minimise any

negative impacts. It is designed to work alongside the statutory biodiversity metric.

[Natural environment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/natural-environment) provides further information on biodiversity net gain, the mitigation hierarchy and wider environmental net gain.

Ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees

You should consider any impacts on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees in line with paragraph 186 of the NPPF. The [Natural England Access to Evidence - Ancient woodlands Map](#) can help identify ancient woodland. Natural England and the Forestry Commission have produced [Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) (standing advice) for planning authorities. It should be considered when determining relevant planning applications. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees where they form part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest or in exceptional circumstances.

Best and most versatile agricultural land and soils

Local planning authorities are responsible for ensuring that they have sufficient detailed agricultural land classification (ALC) information to apply NPPF policies (Paragraphs 180 and 181). This is the case regardless of whether the proposed development is sufficiently large to consult Natural England. Further information is contained in the [Guide to assessing development proposals on agricultural land - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#). [Find open data - data.gov.uk](#) on Agricultural Land Classification or use the information available on [MAGIC \(defra.gov.uk\)](#).

The Defra [Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#) provides guidance on soil protection, and we recommend its use in the design and construction of development, including any planning conditions. For mineral working and landfilling, we refer you to [Reclaim minerals extraction and landfill sites to agriculture - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#), which provides guidance on soil protection for site restoration and aftercare. The [Soils Guidance \(quarrying.org\)](#) provides detailed guidance on soil handling for mineral sites.

Green Infrastructure

For evidence-based advice and tools on how to design, deliver and manage green and blue infrastructure (GI) we refer you to [Green Infrastructure Home \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#) (the Green Infrastructure Framework). GI should create and maintain green liveable places that enable people to experience and connect with nature, and that offer everyone, wherever they live, access to good quality parks, greenspaces, recreational, walking and cycling routes that are inclusive, safe, welcoming, well-managed and accessible for all. GI provision should enhance ecological networks, support ecosystems services and connect as a living network at local, regional and national scales.

Development should be designed to meet the 15 [GI How Principles \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#). The Green Infrastructure Standards can be used to inform the quality, quantity and type of green infrastructure to be provided. Major development should have a GI plan including a long-term delivery and management plan. Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be delivered where appropriate.

The [Green Infrastructure Map \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#) and [GI Mapping Analysis \(naturalengland.org.uk\)](#) are GI mapping resources that can be used to help assess deficiencies in greenspace provision and identify priority locations for new GI provision.

Access and Recreation

Natural England encourages any proposal to incorporate measures to help improve people's access to the natural environment. Measures such as reinstating existing footpaths together with the creation of new footpaths and bridleways should be considered. Links to urban fringe areas should also be explored to strengthen access networks, reduce fragmentation, and promote wider green infrastructure.

Rights of Way, Access land, Coastal access and National Trails

Paragraphs 104 and 180 of the NPPF highlight the importance of public rights of way and access. Development should consider potential impacts on access land, common land, rights of way and coastal access routes in the vicinity of the development. Consideration should also be given to the potential impacts on any nearby National Trails. We refer you to [Find your perfect trail, and discover the land of myths and legend - National Trails](#) for information including contact details for the National Trail Officer. Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated for any adverse impacts.

Further information is set out in the [Planning Practice Guidance on the Natural environment - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

Appendix D Target Notes

Target Number	Description	Photo
1	Rapid regrowth of rhododendron following clearance.	
2	Large pile of ash trees, cut down over 2 years ago following presence of ash die back, so were removed to reduce/prevent further spread of the disease.	
3	An old bird's nest present within a silver birch.	

Appendix E Site Photos

Photo Number	Description	Photo
1	Wide angel view of the site from the gate at the southern point, showing large open area, following clearance of extensive rhododendron growth on site.	
2	The ground of the southern section, showing how the rhododendron has suppressed ground flora for so long, that following removal little has colonised.	
3	Box bush present in the north west corner of the site.	
4	Ditch which runs along the boundary of the site, adjacent to the long outbuilding.	

5	Mature coppiced hazel stand along site boundary.	
6	Old log storage building, made of corrugated metal.	

7

Mature trees present on site that were GLTA to determine bat roosting potential, all considered to have NONE potential.





Appendix F Habitat Suitability Index

AH1 AMPHIBIAN HSI								
Pond Ecology ID		Drain						
Surveyor(s)	D Byett		Date	19/01/2025	Easting (X)	533894	Northing (Y)	138529
Description of Water Body		Small drain						
HSI Factor	HSI Criteria/score				Field Survey Results		Suitability Index Score	
Geographic Location	All the route lies within Zone A (i.e. optimal location)				A		1.00	
Pond Area	Calculated based on surface area when water is at its highest level (m ²) N.B. In accordance with the 'ARG UK Advice Note 5: Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index' document area should be rounded to the nearest 50m ² .				<50		0.05	
Permanence	Never dries ; Rarely dries (no more than two years in ten or only in drought); Sometimes dries (between three years in ten to most years); Dries annually				Dries annually		0.10	
Water Quality	Good = abundant and diverse invertebrate community; Moderate = moderate invertebrate diversity; Poor = low invertebrate diversity, e.g. midge and mosquito larvae, and few submerged plants; Bad = clearly polluted. Only pollution-tolerant invertebrates, e.g. rat tailed maggot, and no submerged plants.				Poor		0.33	
Shade	Estimate percentage of pond perimeter shaded to at least 1m from the shore. Do not include shading from emergent pond vegetation.				80		0.60	
Waterfowl	Absent = no evidence of waterfowl impact (moorhen may be present); Minor = waterfowl present, but little evidence of impact on pond vegetation; Major = severe impact of waterfowl, little or no submerged plants, water turbid and banks showing patches where vegetation removed.				Absent		1.00	
Fish	Absent = no records of fish stocking and no evidence of presence during torching/netting; Possible = no evidence but local conditions suggest they may be present; Minor = small numbers of crucian carp, goldfish or stickleback known to be present; Major = dense populations of fish known to be present.				Absent		1.00	
Pond Count	Number of ponds occurring within 1km of survey pond and divide ponds by Pi (3.14). Exclude ponds where major barriers such as main roads exist.				13+		1.00	
Terrestrial Habitat	Good = habitat that offers good opportunities for foraging/shelter (covers more than 75% of available area); Moderate = habitat that offers opportunities for foraging/shelter but may not be extensive (25-75% of available area); Poor = habitat with poor structure that offers limited opportunities for foraging/shelter (less than 25% of available area); None = no suitable habitat around pond.				Good		1.00	
Macrophytes	Estimated percentage of pond surface area occupied by macrophyte cover. Includes emergent, floating (excluding duckweed) and submerged plants reaching the surface.				0		0.31	
Habitat Suitability Rating		Poor		Resulting HSI Score		0.45		
				Are further surveys needed?		No		