



Project: 25_PEA_BNG_06_25
Site: 18 Glebe View, Oldlands Ave, Balcombe, Haywards Heath RH17 6NB
Client: Andrew Lambour



[Supplementary Document - Survey Methodology PRA.](#)

[Supplementary Document - Potential Roosting Features.](#)

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Project Number:	25_PEA_BNG_06_25
Report Type:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment
Site Address:	18 Glebe View, Oldlands Ave, Balcombe, Haywards Heath RH17 6NB

Role:	Name:	Date:
Customer	Andrew Lambour	N/A
Surveyor	Antony Aslam	17/06/25
Consultant	Antony Aslam	23/06/25

Revision History		
Date:	Version number:	Summary of changes:
25/06/25	1.0	First Review (Internal)
26/06/25	1.0	First Issue

Summary:	
Report Number	25_PEA_BNG_06_25
Site Surveyed	Land at Robin Shaw, Haywards Heath Road, Balcombe, Haywards Heath RH17 6NB National Grid Reference: TQ31443000
Purpose & Brief	Preliminary ecological appraisal commissioned by Andrew Lambour
Development Proposals	The proposed development comprises the construction of two detached residential dwellings, each with associated hard and soft landscaping. This includes the formation of access driveways, on-site parking provisions, and the establishment of private garden areas incorporating ornamental planting and lawn.
Methods	Desk Study UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey of the site. Assessment of likely significant effects as far as can be reasonably and proportionally known
Confirmed Ecological Constraints	None
Potential Ecological Constraints	Roosting bats Nesting birds
Recommendations For Further Survey Works	Pre-works nesting bird check Production of wildlife sensitive lighting scheme
Opportunities For Ecological Enhancements	Bat boxes Bird boxes Native species planting

With the assumption that the existing conditions on-site remain unchanged. The results of this report are likely to remain valid for 12-months inline with the guidance published by CIEEM and the Bat Conservation Trust.

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Appendix 1: Site Location and Assessment Boundary

Appendix 2: Desktop Study

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Acknowledgements:

Data referred to within this report was sourced from Natural England Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (DEFRA MAGIC) database and NBN Atlas.

Client Documents:

This report has been completed on assumption that the plans provided by the client at the time of issue of this report remain the same. A list of the documents provided by the client can be found in the table below.

Table: Documents provided by the client as of 04/12/24

Plans provided by client as of 04/12/24
20024-Wayside_DAS_02.pdf
20024-PA-001 - Block and Site Location Plan.pdf
20024-PA-006 - Site Sections AA and BB.pdf
20024-PA-005 - Proposed Site and Landscape Plan.pdf
2024_Houses_Type_B-AL-PDFLocatorPlan(2)-419950.pdf

1 Introduction

- 1.1 ROAVR Group were commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) at Robin Shaw, Haywards Heath Road, Balcombe, Haywards Heath RH17 6NB.
- 1.2 The survey was comprised of a desktop study, which was undertaken in June and a site survey, which was carried out by Antony Aslam.
- 1.3 The methodology and results are outlined within the report. Where applicable, recommendations for suitable mitigation and ecological enhancements are provided.
- 1.4 The report is to be submitted to support a planning application. Full details of the proposals can be found on the planning portal.
- 1.5 The information and recommendations within this report have been prepared and provided in accordance with CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct (CIEEM, 2022).

SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.6 The survey site covers an area of approximately 0.44 hectares and is centred on grid reference 'TQ31443000'.
- 1.7 The site is situated in Balcombe in the Mid Sussex District Council control area. The site is located on the south side of the town and is accessed via the rear of number 18.
- 1.8 The site comprises the residential property known as Robin Shaw, located off Haywards Heath Road in Balcombe, West Sussex. It consists of a detached single-storey dwelling (Building 1, B1) constructed from brick with a pitched clay-tile roof and a rear extension. The building is set within a fenced, vegetated garden that includes areas of modified grassland, ornamental hedgerows (including laurel and yew), and several mature trees such as pear, oak, and hazel in good structural condition. Ancillary structures include three small wooden sheds (Buildings 2–4, B2–B4), all in the rear garden and considered to offer negligible ecological potential. Access to the property is via a private driveway off the main road, which transitions into a compacted earth track running alongside the bungalow's vegetated garden.

Beyond the residential curtilage, the rear portion of the site is subject to recent ground disturbance and is currently undergoing landscaping. This area largely comprises bare soil with sparse ruderal vegetation colonisation. The site is enclosed along its eastern and western boundaries by bands of broadleaved woodland dominated by native species such as pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), with understorey elements and evidence of ivy (*Hedera helix*) coverage on trees. These peripheral woodlands are outside the site boundary but provide connectivity to the wider rural landscape. Dense scrub and ruderal vegetation are present along parts of the perimeter, offering minimal ecological diversity.

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

- 1.9 The proposed development comprises the construction of two detached residential dwellings, each with associated hard and soft landscaping. This includes the formation of access driveways, on-site parking provisions, and the establishment of private garden areas incorporating ornamental planting and lawn.

SCOPE OF WORKS

- 1.10 The aims of this assessment were to:
- identify the likely ecological constraints associated with the proposed development;
 - identify suitable mitigation measures (if required);
 - determine whether further surveys are necessary;
 - identify opportunities for ecological enhancement;

2 Methodology

DESKTOP STUDY

- 2.1 Site-specific information in relation to land designations, protected species and protected habitats within a 2km search area was sourced from DEFRA MAGIC.
- 2.2 In order to ensure that ecological data searches were up to date, species data was screened and all data records pre-2012 was omitted from the results.
- 2.3 Results of the desktop study should be considered to be indicative only.

UKHAB SURVEY

- 2.4 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, comprised of a site walkover and mapping was undertaken by Antony Aslam on 17/06/25. The PEA was undertaken in line with CIEEM's 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal' (CIEEM, 2017). Antony Aslam has been completing preliminary ecological appraisals for a number of years and regularly undertakes surveys of this scale. They have received professional training in all aspects covered in this report.
- 2.5 The survey was conducted from the ground. Habitats and features of importance were mapped using a GPS enabled handset.
- 2.6 A Site Habitat Map was produced in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification Manual (Butcher et al., 2020). (Appendix 3).

PRELIMINARY BAT ROOST ASSESSMENT (PRA)

- 2.7 A Preliminary Roost Assessment, comprised of a preliminary ground level roost assessment was undertaken during the site survey on 17/06/25. The PRA was undertaken in line with the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023).
- 2.8 The survey included an active search for evidence of bats (such as droppings, feeding remains, urine splatters, oil staining, bat fur and/or scratch marks) and potential roosting features (PRFs). PRFs of trees are listed in Table 2.10.1. PRFs of built structures are listed in Table 2.10.1. The lists are not exhaustive but show examples of the most commonly used roosting features of built structures and trees.

Table 2.8.1: Potential roosting features (PRFs) in built structures listed in Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023).

Potential roosting features (PRFs) in built structures	
External	Internal
- Access/egress through windowsills, window panes and walls; - Behind peeling paintwork or lifted rendering; - Behind hanging tiles; - Weatherboarding; - Eaves; - Soffit boxes; - Fascias; - Lead flashing; - Gaps under felt (even including those of flats roofs); - Under tiles/slates; - Existing bat boxes; - Gaps in brickwork or stonework which provide access/egress to cavity or rubble-filled walls	- Behind wooden panelling; - In lintels above doors and windows; - Behind window shutters and curtains; - Behind pictures, posters, furniture, peeling paintwork, peeling wallpaper, lifted plaster and boarded windows; - Inside cupboards and in chimneys accessible from fireplaces; - Within attic roof voids; - The top of gable end or dividing walls; - The top of chimney breasts; - Ridge and hip beams and other roof beams; - Mortise and tenon joints; - All beams; - The junction of roof timbers, especially where ridge and hip beams meet; - Behind purlins; - Between tiles and the roof lining; - Under flat felt roofs

GROUND LEVEL TREE ASSESSMENT (GLTA)

- 2.9 A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment, comprised of a preliminary ground level roost assessment was undertaken by Antony Aslam during the site survey on 17/06/25. The GLTA was undertaken in line with the Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023).
- 2.10 The survey included an active search for evidence of bats (such as droppings, feeding remains, urine splatters, oil staining, bat fur and/or scratch marks) and potential roosting features (PRFs). PRFs of trees are listed in Table 2.10.1. The lists are not exhaustive but show examples of the most commonly used roosting features of trees.

Table 2.10.1: Potential roosting features (PRFs) in trees listed in Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023) Table 6.6.

Table 2.10.1. PRF types that can be exploited by bats and how they form (adapted from Bat Roosts in Trees, BTHK, 2018) reproduced from Table 6.6. (Collins, 2023.)		
PRFs formed by disease and decay	PRFs formed by damage	PRFs formed by association
• Woodpecker holes • Squirrel holes • Knot holes • Pruning cuts • Tear outs • Wounds • Cankers • Compression forks • Butt rots	• Lightning strikes • Hazard beams • Subsidence • Cracks • Shearing cracks • Transverse snaps • Welds • Lifting bark • Desiccation • Fissures • Frost cracks	• Fluting • Ivy

Table 2.10.2. Guidelines for assessing the suitability of trees on proposed development sites for bats, to be applied using professional judgement.reproduced from Table 6.6. (Collins, 2023.)	
Suitability	Description
NONE	Either no PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present

2.11 A Site PRF Map was produced to show the location of built structures, trees and potential roosting features (PRFs). Habitats and features of importance were mapped using a GPS enabled handset.

SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

2.12 The likelihood of occurrence of protected ecological features and species was ranked in accordance with the criteria listed in Tables 2.12.1 and 2.12.2. Likelihood of occurrence was assessed using data collected during the desk study and after evaluation of the habitats on-site (during the site survey) as to their likelihood to provide suitability for protected species (i.e. presence of breeding, nesting, roosting, foraging, commuting and/or refuge habitat for example).

Table 2.12.1: Criteria used to assess the likelihood of occurrence for protected ecological features and species on-site (excl. bats).

Likelihood of occurrence	Criteria
Present	Confirmed as present during the site survey or by confirmed historical records.
High	Species are known to be present within close proximity to the site (records present). Habitats on-site are of high quality for the species and/or likely to support a large population. The site is well connected to good quality habitat within the local area.
Moderate	Species are known to be present within the local area (records present). Habitats on-site are of moderate quality for the species and/or likely to support a moderate population. The site and connected habitats provide all of the ecological requirements of the species. Suitability of habitats on-site may be limited due to disconnectivity to the wider landscape, poor to moderate habitat available within the wider locality, and/or due to the presence of only a small area of suitable habitat.
Low	Few or no records of the species within the local area. Habitats on-site are of poor quality for the species and/or likely to support just a few individuals. The suitability of habitats may be limited due to disturbance, isolation and/or poor quality habitat available within the wider locality. However, species presence cannot be discounted due to the national distribution of the species or the nature of on-site and surrounding habitats (if all required ecological requirements for the species are present).
Negligible	While presence cannot be absolutely discounted, the site includes very limited or poor quality habitat for a particular species. Connected habitats do not fulfil the ecological requirements of the species. There are no local records and/or the site is outside the known national range of the species.

Table 2.12.2: Criteria used to assess the likelihood of occurrence (site's suitability) for bats, from Bat Conservation Trust's 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Best Practice Guidelines' (Collins, 2023) (Table 4.1.)

Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting bats	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e a complete absence of crevices / suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).	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 for foraging bats).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	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	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation). A tree of sufficient size and age to contain PRFs but with none seen from the ground or features seen with only very limited roosting potential.	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats 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 bats for foraging such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only - with respect to roost type only).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used for bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitats. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation sites.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS AND MITIGATION

- 2.13 An evaluation of the potential ecological constraints to the proposed development and appropriate mitigation strategies was made following CIEEM's 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM, 2018).

LIMITATIONS

- 2.14 Only one site visit was undertaken, therefore, a full evaluation of species present throughout the year could not be made. Therefore, there were seasonal constraints to species identification. However, the data collected during the site survey was sufficient to make an appropriate assessment of the site.
- 2.15 The site maps shown in Appendix 3 were produced from an Ordnance Survey Tile purchased from our mapping supplier. A site walkover with a GPS enabled handset was used to inform the location and extent of existing habitats shown on the appended mapping and is as accurate as possible but some error must be allowed for without a full topographical survey.

3 Policy and Legislative Context

- 3.1 This section includes the legislative context of those protected species or other notable species that are recorded on-site, or have the potential to be present on-site. Details on specific legislation for other protected or notable species that have not been identified as being present, or having the potential to be present, are not included below.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 3.2 The introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied in the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system, only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so and is a material consideration for local planning authorities in determining applications.
- 3.3 Planning Practise Guidance is relevant covering the Natural Environment alongside the NPPF. Therefore features of ecological value should be considered in the context of conserving and enhancing the natural environment.
- 3.4 The Government's objectives for planning are to promote sustainable development, to conserve, enhance and restore the diversity of England's wildlife and geology and to contribute to rural renewal and urban renaissance.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- 3.5 This report has been commissioned in order to comply with policy:

DP38: Biodiversity

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATION

- 3.6 Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1982)
- 3.7 Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1983)
- 3.8 Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)
- 3.9 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949)
- 3.10 Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- 3.11 Protection of Badgers Act (1992)
- 3.12 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)
- 3.13 The Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1975)
- 3.14 The Hedgerows Regulations (1997)
- 3.15 UK Biodiversity Action Plan (1994)
- 3.16 Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)
- 3.17 Wild Mammals (Protection) Act (1996)

4 Desktop Study

SITE DESIGNATIONS

4.1 There are 2 designated sites within the 2km search area.

Table 4.1.1: Designated sites recorded within a 2km radius of the survey site.

Site Name	Grid Reference	Area (ha)	Approx. Closest Distance from Site (km)
Wakehurst & Chiddingly Woods SSSI	TQ 336 321	155.86	1.6km
Ardingly Reservoir LNR	TQ 329 294	74.54	0.4km

*Data from DEFRA MAGIC

LOCAL HABITAT

4.2 There were more than 130 priority habitats that were formerly mapped within the 2km search area.

Table 4.2.1: Priority habitats formerly mapped within a 2km radius of the survey site.

Habitat	Approx. Closest Distance from Site (km)
Deciduous Woodland	0km
Deciduous Woodland	0.14km
Deciduous Woodland	0.25km
Deciduous Woodland	0.25km
Deciduous Woodland	0.4km
Deciduous Woodland	0.5km
Good quality semi improved grassland	1.5km
Lowland Meadows	1.7km

*Data from DEFRA MAGIC

4.3 There were 12 standing water bodies situated within a 500m radius of the survey site.

HISTORICAL SPECIES RECORDS

- 4.4 Protected species records relating to the site and 2km search area were obtained from the LERC as part of the desktop study. The data search contains confidential information that is not suitable for public release. Therefore, the data has not been included in the report.
- 4.5 A full list of identified species recorded within the 2km search area can be requested from LERC.
- 4.6 The absence of identified records does not discount the presence of a species. An absence of identified records is primarily a result of a lack of survey or the non-submission of records. Furthermore, historical records of species do not confirm their current presence within an area.
- 4.7 There were 145 records of bat, 5 records of amphibians, 366 for Hazel Dormouse, 94 for hedgehog, 87 for rabbit, 16 for badger, 4 for water vole and 4 for reptiles when searching within 2km of the site.

5 Site Survey

- 5.1 The site survey was undertaken on 17/06/25. The weather conditions were considered to be appropriate to survey (Table 5.1.1).

Table 5.1.1: Weather conditions at the time of survey.

Date of site survey: 17/06/25	
Weather Conditions:	Weather conditions during the survey were warm and dry, with a temperature of 23°C, no precipitation, and light winds originating from the west-southwest.

*Data from BBC Weather.

UK HABITAT SURVEY

5.2 Site and building description:

The site comprises the residential property known as Robin Shaw, located off Haywards Heath Road in Balcombe, West Sussex. It consists of a detached single-storey dwelling (Building 1, B1) constructed from brick with a pitched clay-tile roof and a rear extension. The building is set within a fenced, vegetated garden that includes areas of modified grassland, ornamental hedgerows (including laurel and yew), and several mature trees such as pear, oak, and hazel in good structural condition. Ancillary structures include three small wooden sheds (Buildings 2–4, B2–B4), all in the rear garden and considered to offer negligible ecological potential. Access to the property is via a private driveway off the main road, which transitions into a compacted earth track running parallel to the bungalow's vegetated garden.

Beyond the residential curtilage, the rear portion of the site is subject to recent ground disturbance and is currently undergoing landscaping. This area largely comprises bare soil with sparse ruderal vegetation colonisation. The site is enclosed along its eastern and western boundaries by bands of broadleaved woodland dominated by native species such as pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), with understorey elements and evidence of ivy (*Hedera helix*) coverage on trees. These peripheral woodlands are outside the site boundary but provide connectivity to the wider rural landscape. Dense scrub and ruderal vegetation are present along parts of the perimeter, offering minimal ecological diversity.

The southern elevation of Building 1 (B1) comprises a well-maintained brick façade with intact windows and doorframes, and no visible gaps, cracks, or features suitable for roosting bats or nesting birds. The wall structure supports ornamental vegetation at ground level but offers negligible suitability for wildlife. Based on the external visual assessment and absence of any Priority Roosting Features (PRFs), this elevation is assessed as having negligible ecological value.

The northern (rear) elevation includes a more recently constructed extension, which presents a uniform brick surface and sealed joints. While roof tiles over this section are closely fitted, occasional minor gaps between flashing were noted at the wall interface. These features may offer limited potential as roost sites for crevice-dwelling bats such as common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), although structural integrity appears generally intact. Given the low bat suitability and no evidence of use, this elevation is assessed as having low bat roost potential and is unaffected by the proposed works.

The eastern gable end exhibits well-pointed brickwork with no observable PRFs. There is moderate ivy growth approaching

roof level which, although of potential interest to invertebrates and perching birds, is limited in extent and maintained below eaves. This elevation is therefore considered negligible in terms of ecological constraints, with no anticipated direct impact.

The western elevation shows minor lifting of a few clay roof tiles and small gaps beneath lead flashing at the junction with the roofline. While these features may theoretically support small numbers of roosting bats, no evidence such as droppings, staining, or feeding remains was identified during the inspection. PRFs are very limited in extent and offer low suitability for bats. As B1 lies outside the footprint of proposed development, no physical impact on this elevation is expected.

The roof is pitched and covered with traditional clay tiles arranged in linear courses. Several tiles on the western roof slope exhibit slight lifting, with some displaced edges offering minor PRFs. Although these may provide crevices for transient bat species, overall suitability is considered low due to the exposure and limited cavity depth. No nesting birds were observed, and no evidence of ingress was recorded. Given the structure's exclusion from the development area, any potential ecological receptors associated with the roof will be retained and undisturbed by the proposed works.

5.3 A description of habitat present along with target notes is shown in Table 5.3.1. The location of habitats is shown in the Site Habitat Map, Appendix 3.

Table 5.3.1: Description of habitats present on-site (please also see the Site Habitat Map, Appendix 3).

Habitats and Target Notes	Description	Supporting Photo
Habitat 1: u1b - developed land; sealed surface	HAB 1 comprises built development and associated hardstanding located around the main dwelling (Building 1) and its immediate surroundings. This includes driveway and patio areas surfaced with concrete and paving slabs, alongside compacted granular material forming an access track that extends southward from Haywards Heath Road. The built structures are typical of domestic residential plots, characterised by impermeable ground surfaces and high levels of human activity. Vegetation within this unit is minimal, limited to planter borders and ornamental pots. Occasional ruderal species occur at the margins of hardstanding areas where soil accumulation permits, including common groundsel (<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>), cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>), dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.) and herb-robert (<i>Geranium robertianum</i>), although cover is sparse and patchy. No Priority Habitats are present, and the habitat is of negligible ecological value. The area does not support any features suitable for protected species and poses no constraints to the proposed development.	 Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

Habitat 2: 828 - vegetated garden

HAB 2 comprises the associated garden to the bungalow consisting of modified grassland forming part of the garden lawn located immediately to the rear and sides of the residential dwelling, as well as a Cherry Laurel and Yew hedgerow at the front. The sward is regularly mown and largely dominated by common lawn species indicative of nutrient-enriched, intensively managed conditions. Grass species present include perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), with accompanying herbs such as white clover (*Trifolium repens*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*), and ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*).

The habitat lacks structural diversity and botanical interest due to frequent cutting, and no evidence of anthill activity or notable ecological niches was observed. The area functions primarily as amenity land within the domestic curtilage and supports a limited assemblage of common invertebrates. While occasionally used by foraging garden birds such as blackbird (*Turdus merula*) and robin (*Erithacus rubecula*), the habitat is not suitable for ground-nesting birds or protected mammal species. In its current state, the grassland is considered to hold negligible ecological value and presents no constraint to the proposed development.



Photo 8



Photo 9

		 Photo 10
Habitat 3: wlg - broadleaved woodland	HAB 3 comprises a linear belt of broadleaved woodland situated along the southeastern and western boundaries of the site, consistent with native mixed secondary woodland of local provenance. This habitat is largely offsite but encroaches onto site in some areas. The canopy is dominated by mature pedunculate oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>) and silver birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>), with occasional ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) and sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>). Understorey vegetation includes hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) and regenerating holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>), forming a moderately dense shrub layer. Field layer flora is locally patchy, comprising bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.), ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>), lords-and-ladies (<i>Arum maculatum</i>), and cow parsley (<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>), all typical of semi-shaded, base-rich soils. Deadwood and leaf litter are present, creating microhabitats of value	 Photo 11

for saproxylic invertebrates and ground-dwelling fauna. Tree features such as knot holes and lifting bark provide limited potential for roosting bats and nesting birds. While situated outside the immediate development footprint, this habitat provides foraging and commuting corridors of moderate local ecological value and contributes to green infrastructure connectivity within the wider landscape. Care should be taken to protect root zones during construction activities to avoid indirect impacts.



Photo 12



Photo 13



Photo 14



Photo 15

		 Photo 16
Habitat 4: h3h - mixed scrub	Habitat 4 comprises dense, continuous scrub and ruderal vegetation colonising the edges of the site, particularly beyond the residential curtilage. The scrub is well-established and dominated by bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.) interspersed with common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), mugwort (<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>), and rosebay willowherb (<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>), indicative of early successional ruderal species transitioning into a more stable scrub community. Woody encroachment is evident with scattered immature and semi-mature specimens of hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>) and elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), contributing to a structurally diverse edge habitat. The habitat exhibits a typical unmanaged successional trajectory from disturbed bare ground to scrub and provides shelter, nesting opportunities, and forage for a range of bird species and invertebrates. While moderately	 Photo 17

species-poor in composition, the physicochemical conditions and vegetation structure offer value for common bird species of urban fringes and generalist mammals such as the European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), a priority species in the UK. The presence of climbing or fruiting shrubs such as bramble and elder supports invertebrate biodiversity and seasonal bird foraging, particularly during the summer and autumn months.



Photo 18

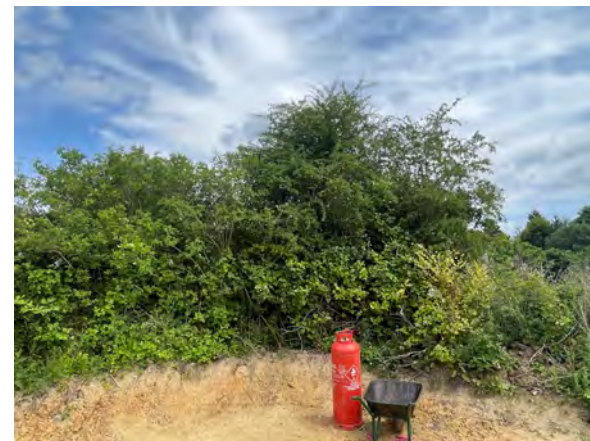


Photo 19



Photo 20



Photo 21

Habitat 5: u1f - sparsely vegetated urban land	Habitat 5 consists of a large area of sparsely vegetated ground, largely comprising compacted bare earth and sealed substrate typical of previously developed or landscaped land. Vegetative cover is patchy and limited, with establishment of early colonising ruderal and disturbance-tolerant species. These include broad-leaved plantain (<i>Plantago major</i>), dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.), common mouse-ear (<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>), and occasional patches of annual meadow-grass (<i>Poa annua</i>). Some sections show early signs of natural succession from hardstanding to ephemeral vegetation, particularly along cracks and edges between disturbed surfaces. The habitat is of low ecological value in its current form, offering limited structure or species richness. However, its open nature and sparse vegetation may provide transient foraging habitat for some invertebrates and opportunistic bird species such as pied wagtail (<i>Motacilla alba</i>) or starling (<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>), particularly where invertebrates are present on exposed substrates. With continued lack of management, the area has the potential to develop into more complex ruderal communities or eventually into pioneer scrub typical of urban-fringe succession.	 Photo 22  Photo 23
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Photo 24



Photo 25



Photo 26



Photo 27

Habitat 6: Scattered Trees	Habitat 6 comprises scattered trees located both within a maintained garden area and in the wider development site. Within the garden, three trees were recorded: a mature pear (<i>Pyrus communis</i>) with extensive ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>) coverage on the trunk, a hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), and a pedunculate oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>). These trees exhibit good structural health and are typical of ornamental or semi-natural garden planting. The ivy cover on the pear tree may provide potential roosting habitats for invertebrates and shelter or nesting materials for passerine birds; however, no visible active nests or cavities were noted during the survey. On the parcel proposed for development, one large redwood (<i>Sequoiadendron giganteum</i>) is present which features cut branches and crevices in the bark around the basal area of previous limb removal, which may offer potential sheltering opportunities for bats or other small mammals, though no definitive roost features (PRFs) were observed during the survey. This tree contributes to the site's ecological structure by offering vertical diversity, microhabitats for epiphytic species, and seasonal resources such as mast production and shelter, particularly for birds and invertebrates. T1 - pear, medium, moderate condition T2 - Hazel, small, moderate T3 - Oak, medium, moderate T4 - redwood, TQ31442998, 84cm DBH, good condition	 Photo 28 - T1
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Photo 29 - T2



Photo 30 - T3



Photo 31 - T4



Photo 32

Target Notes	The site survey identified one target note relating to notable ecological features located along the site boundaries. These features fall outside the proposed development footprint but are relevant in terms of ecological considerations due to their potential suitability for protected species. TN1 Several mature trees located within the offsite boundary woodland exhibit Potential Roost Features (PRFs), including split limbs, lifted bark, and historic pruning wounds. These trees are primarily pedunculate oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>), with occasional ash (<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>) and silver birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>). Many are partially cloaked in dense ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>), which may also provide cover for roosting bats and nesting birds. Although these trees lie outside the red line boundary and will not be impacted by the proposed development, their presence contributes to the overall ecological connectivity and should be afforded standard protection measures during construction, including avoidance of artificial lighting spill and root zone encroachment.	 Photo 33  Photo 34
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Photo 35



Photo 36

6 Evaluation and Assessment

- 6.1 Results from the desktop study and site survey were evaluated to assess the likelihood of occurrence for protected ecological features and species potential (as per Table 2.12.1). An evaluation of the potential impacts due to the proposed development and recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures are provided in Table 6.1.1.

Protected Species Likelihood:

Protected feature or species: Bats (roosting)

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Low

Comments and justifications: Building 1 exhibits minor crevice features beneath lifted tiles and lead flashing, primarily on the western roof slope; however, no evidence of bat use was observed, and overall structural suitability is limited and well-sealed.

Impacts due to the proposed development: No direct impacts predicted, as B1 lies outside the development footprint.

Required mitigation measures: No mitigation required; retain existing structure in situ. Maintain dark corridors with directional lighting away from treelines.

Protected feature or species: Bats (foraging and commuting)

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Moderate

Comments and justifications: The woodland edge and linear tree belt along the eastern and western boundaries provide moderate-quality commuting and foraging habitat for common bat species.

Impacts due to the proposed development: Potential indirect impact through increased lighting or noise disturbance during construction and residential use.

Required mitigation measures: Implement a sensitive lighting strategy to prevent light-spill onto boundary vegetation; retain treelines. No further survey effort required based on current layout.

Protected feature or species: Badgers (*Meles meles*)

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Negligible

Comments and justifications: No evidence of sett entrances, latrines, foraging signs or pathways present on site or within accessible boundary zones.

Impacts due to the proposed development: None anticipated.

Required mitigation measures: No mitigation required.

Protected feature or species: Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Low

Comments and justifications: Modified grassland and vegetated garden areas offer limited, albeit suitable, habitat for commuting and foraging. No hibernation features recorded.

Impacts due to the proposed development: Risk of harm during vegetation clearance and construction-phase ground disturbance.

Required mitigation measures: Implement precautionary clearance methods, maintain permeable boundaries, and include hedgehog-friendly fencing design.

Protected feature or species: Amphibians (including great crested newt, *Triturus cristatus*)

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Negligible

Comments and justifications: No ponds or seasonally wet features on site or within 250 m. Surrounding woodland and gardens provide low terrestrial suitability.

Impacts due to the proposed development: No impacts anticipated.

Required mitigation measures: No mitigation or further assessment required.

Protected feature or species: Reptiles

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Low

Comments and justifications: Although some south-facing woodland edges and occasional scrub patches may support basking, the dominant habitat on-site is managed grassland and hardstanding, which offer limited suitability.

Impacts due to the proposed development: Possible incidental risk during site clearance.

Required mitigation measures: Undertake precautionary method statement during ground works. Create habitat piles or wildlife refuge within retained green areas.

Protected feature or species: Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*)

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Negligible

Comments and justifications: Limited hazel (*Corylus avellana*) in boundary woodland only; main habitat is offsite, fragmented, and outside known strongholds in southern England.

Impacts due to the proposed development: No direct impact; suitable habitat is retained and offsite.

Required mitigation measures: No mitigation or further survey required.

Protected feature or species: Birds

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Moderate

Comments and justifications: Mature trees and dense ivy, both on and offsite, offer nesting opportunities for a range of common bird species; foraging use of modified grassland by garden birds recorded.

Impacts due to the proposed development: Risk of disturbance or nest destruction if vegetation removal occurs during breeding season.

Required mitigation measures: Clear vegetation outside of nesting bird season (March–August inclusive) or conduct pre-clearance checks. Retain trees where possible.

Protected feature or species: Invertebrates

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Low

Comments and justifications: Floral diversity across the site is limited. Some value associated with mature trees and ivy-covered trunks; otherwise, habitat is poor structurally.

Impacts due to the proposed development: Minor impact from removal of ornamental vegetation and soil disturbance.

Required mitigation measures: Retain mature trees; incorporate native planting and pollinator-friendly species in landscaping.

Protected feature or species: Invasive species (plant or animal)

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Negligible

Comments and justifications: No Schedule 9 invasive plant species (e.g. Japanese knotweed or Himalayan balsam) or evidence of invasive fauna observed during site survey.

Impacts due to the proposed development: None predicted.

Required mitigation measures: No mitigation required.

Protected feature or species: Terrestrial mammals (other than those listed)

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Low

Comments and justifications: Occasional presence of fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) and grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*) is possible within the woodland edge.

Impacts due to the proposed development: Negligible impact given development's domestic scale.

Required mitigation measures: No mitigation required.

Protected feature or species: Common and widespread mammals

Likelihood of occurrence or suitability: Low

Comments and justifications: Habitat supports generalist species such as rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) and small rodents (e.g. *Apodemus* spp.); no significant activity observed.

Impacts due to the proposed development: Negligible.

Required mitigation measures: No specific mitigation required beyond good practice construction measures

Potential Impacts & Mitigation Recommendations:

The proposed development at Robin Shaw, Balcombe, involves the construction of two detached dwellings within the existing residential curtilage and associated garden areas. The site is primarily composed of hardstanding, modified grassland, and landscaped ground with boundary features that include linear woodland and mature trees situated offsite. Habitats within the red line boundary are of negligible to low ecological value. However, the site is adjacent to woodland features that offer moderate habitat connectivity and potential suitability for protected species, particularly bats and nesting birds. In accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidelines and standing advice from Natural England, mitigation has been identified to ensure compliance with relevant legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

- *Existing buildings (B1) and structures will be retained and remain unaffected by the proposals, avoiding impacts on features with low potential for bat use.*
- *Eastern and western boundary woodlands, which provide moderate bat foraging potential and limited bird nesting opportunities, should be protected during construction through the use of tree protection fencing in accordance with BS 5837:2012.*
- *Lighting during both construction and operational phases should be managed through a sensitive lighting strategy to maintain dark corridors along woodland edges, following Bat Conservation Trust guidance.*
- *Vegetation clearance, including any works to ruderal or scrub habitats, should be timed to avoid the main bird nesting season (March–August inclusive); if not possible, a pre-clearance check by a suitably qualified ecologist should be undertaken no more than 48 hours before the works.*
- *Landscaping should incorporate locally native flowering species beneficial to pollinators, as recommended by Buglife and the RHS Plants for Pollinators list, to enhance ecological value post-construction.*
- *Any clearance of ground vegetation where low reptile or hedgehog presence has been assessed should follow a precautionary method statement, with staged cuts and hand searching where appropriate.*
- *All contractors should be briefed on ecological sensitivities via a toolbox talk prior to works commencing, with ongoing adherence to site-specific ecological protection measures.*
- *No further surveys are considered necessary at this stage, provided the above recommendations are adopted and implemented within the construction environmental management planning.*

Table 6.1.1: Likelihood of occurrence of protected ecological features and species on-site, potential impacts due to the proposed development and recommendations for appropriate mitigation measures.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
Protected sites	Negligible	The site is not situated within, or adjacent to, any known protected sites. The site is not considered to be well connected to any known protected sites.	None	None required.
Protected habitats	Negligible	There were no protected habitats on, or adjacent to, the site. Habitats on-site were not considered to be unique or of high quality within the wider locality.	None	None required.
Protected plant species	Low	There are no known records of protected plant species within 2km of the site. No protected plant species were observed during the site survey. Habitats on-site are not considered to be unique or of high quality to support protected plant species. However, their presence cannot be entirely discounted.	The site does not appear to support protected plant species, thus, the proposed development is unlikely to impact upon protected plant species.	None required.

Protected feature / species	Likelihood of occurrence / suitability	Comments / Justification	Impact due to Proposed Development	Required Mitigation Measures
Invasive plant species	Low	No invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were found during the survey. As there were seasonal constraints to plant identification, it is possible that invasive plant species are present and have yet to be identified.	Invasive plant species have the potential to impact protected species and habitats	If invasive plant species are found, it is recommended to consider appropriate methods of removal.

7 Biodiversity Enhancements

- 7.1 The development should be used as an opportunity for biodiversity net gain, by creating new opportunities for wildlife.

BATS

- 7.2 It is recommended to install two bat boxes on-site. Bat boxes should be positioned in areas of low human disturbance, in spaces that are unshaded for most of the day.
- 7.3 Chambered bat boxes should be positioned 3-5 metres above ground level, orientated southwards. There should be a clear path between the entrance and suitable habitat.
- 7.4 A crevice bat box is suitable for smaller bat species. These boxes should also be positioned 3-5 metres above ground level, orientated southwards.

BIRDS

- 7.5 It is recommended to place two new bird boxes on-site.
- 7.6 A traditional nest box should be placed 3 metres above ground level in an area of low disturbance. The box should be sheltered away from prevalent weather conditions, commonly associated within the UK, such as strong sunlight, prevailing winds and rain.
- 7.7 It is recommended that open-nest boxes be placed in areas of low/tolerable human disturbance, which will deter predators.

INVERTEBRATES

- 7.8 It is recommended to install invertebrate boxes on-site. The boxes should be suitable for solitary bees.
- 7.8 Nectar-rich wildflowers should be planted within close proximity to the bee bricks/invertebrates boxes to create new opportunities for pollinators.
- 7.9 Fruit trees make ideal habitat for many invertebrate species. Thus, it is recommended to plant new garden ornamental fruit trees on-site. For example, Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*), Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*) and Common Pear (*Pyrus communis*).

TERRESTRIAL MAMMALS

- 7.10 It is recommended to plant native species-rich hedgerows on-site, which will enhance connectivity and provide refuge for small mammals. Suitable

species would include Common Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Common Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and Crab Apple (*Malus sylvestris*) for example.

TREES

- 7.11 New tree planting would be a welcomed addition to development. New tree planting should be considered carefully, with consideration to species, location and future management. New trees should be robust and of high quality. Where possible, native species should be used. However, considerations should be given to climate change and potential pathogens.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 The site at Robin Shaw, Haywards Heath Road, Balcombe, Haywards Heath RH17 6NB is to be redeveloped with the construction of two detached residential dwellings, each with associated hard and soft landscaping. This includes the formation of access driveways, on-site parking provisions, and the establishment of private garden areas incorporating ornamental planting and lawn.
- 8.2 The development will result in a loss of sparsely vegetated urban land and scrub.

ECOLOGICAL CONSTRAINTS

- 8.3 Development proposals must have regard for protected species identified as potentially occurring on, or near to, the site (e.g., amphibians, birds, terrestrial mammals, and reptiles). Mitigation measures to protect these species have been produced within this report to ensure that the proposed works comply with relevant UK legislation.
- 8.4 Buildings B1 was considered to have low potential for roosting bats but are unaffected by the development proposals and so no further bat surveys will be required.
- 8.6 Further mitigation measures have been outlined within the report to ensure that protected species are not impacted by the development.

MITIGATION STRATEGIES

- 8.7 A tool box talk should be given to all relevant personnel by a suitable qualified ecologist before any works commence on-site to outline ecological constraints and the required mitigation measures.
- 8.8 Construction works should be limited to daylight hours (excl. dawn and dusk) in order to prevent disturbance to nighttime foraging activity.

- 8.9 Vegetation removal must be undertaken using hand tools. Cut vegetative materials should be checked and removed from site immediately.
- 8.10 Any trenches or other excavations left open overnight should be well covered to deter Badgers from entering. If this is not possible, any trenches or other excavations left open overnight should either be provided with an escape ramp (comprised of a sloped side or wooden plank reaching up to ground level or slightly above), to allow any wildlife that falls in to escape.
- 8.11 During hibernation season (October to March), piles of leaf litter and logs should be retained to ensure hibernating hedgehogs are not harmed. If removal is unavoidable, the piles must be carefully checked before burning.
- 8.12 Post-construction, the use of artificial lighting should be limited where possible. Motion sensors on outside lighting will prevent prolonged disturbance. It is recommended that outside lighting be set on short-timers (1 minute) and that the sensitivity is set to large moving objects only.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN

- 8.13 The project is to be used as an opportunity for biodiversity net gain by creating new opportunities for wildlife. New habitat creation is to be implemented on-site and should be included within the final project design.

Site Baseline

- 8.14 The on-site baseline biodiversity is calculated at **2.26 habitat units**. The habitats consist of vegetated garden, developed land; sealed surface, woodland, sparsely vegetated land, bare ground, mixed scrub and individual trees. There were no hedgerow units on site.

Site As Proposed

- 8.15 Post-development, without intervention, the proposed plans will result in **2.13 habitat units** or a net loss of **-5.87%**.

Recommended Actions

- 8.16 Any habitat creation within a residential curtilage must be classed as vegetated garden, providing limited ecological value. Therefore, only 2 proposed trees planted outside of the gardens on the proposed grass patches, could be input into the metric. These trees were assumed to be small. If these trees were proposed to be large, it would bring the net loss to **-2.91%**.

To reach the mandatory 10% biodiversity net gain, it is recommended that the client pursue off-site habitat creation on land that has been baselined by a qualified Ecologist with potential for enhancement, such as a non-residential open field, or alternatively, habitat banks that offer services in the form of habitat creation for biodiversity offsetting purposes.

Alternatively, statutory credits may be purchased from the government as a last resort if no other options are available. These are to the tune of **0.73 AI tier** credits (if no changes are made to the design), or **0.32 AI tier** credits, if the 2 proposed trees were to be large.

SUMMARY

- 8.17 Subject to the implementation of the recommended mitigation measures, the proposed development is unlikely to have a significant ecological impact.

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10 Limitations

- 10.1 ROAVR Group has prepared this Report for the sole use of the above named Client/Agent in accordance with our terms of business, under which our services were performed. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this Report or any other services provided by us.
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Should you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time.

Antony Aslam
Ecologist

A Aslam



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Checked by: Gwennan Butler MSc

Appendix 1: Site Location and Assessment Boundary



Figure A1.1: Extract from Google Maps showing the site location. (Google, 2023).



Figure A1.2: Extract from DEFRA MAGIC showing the assessment boundary. (MAGIC, 2023.)

Appendix 2: Desktop Study

*Data from DEFRA.

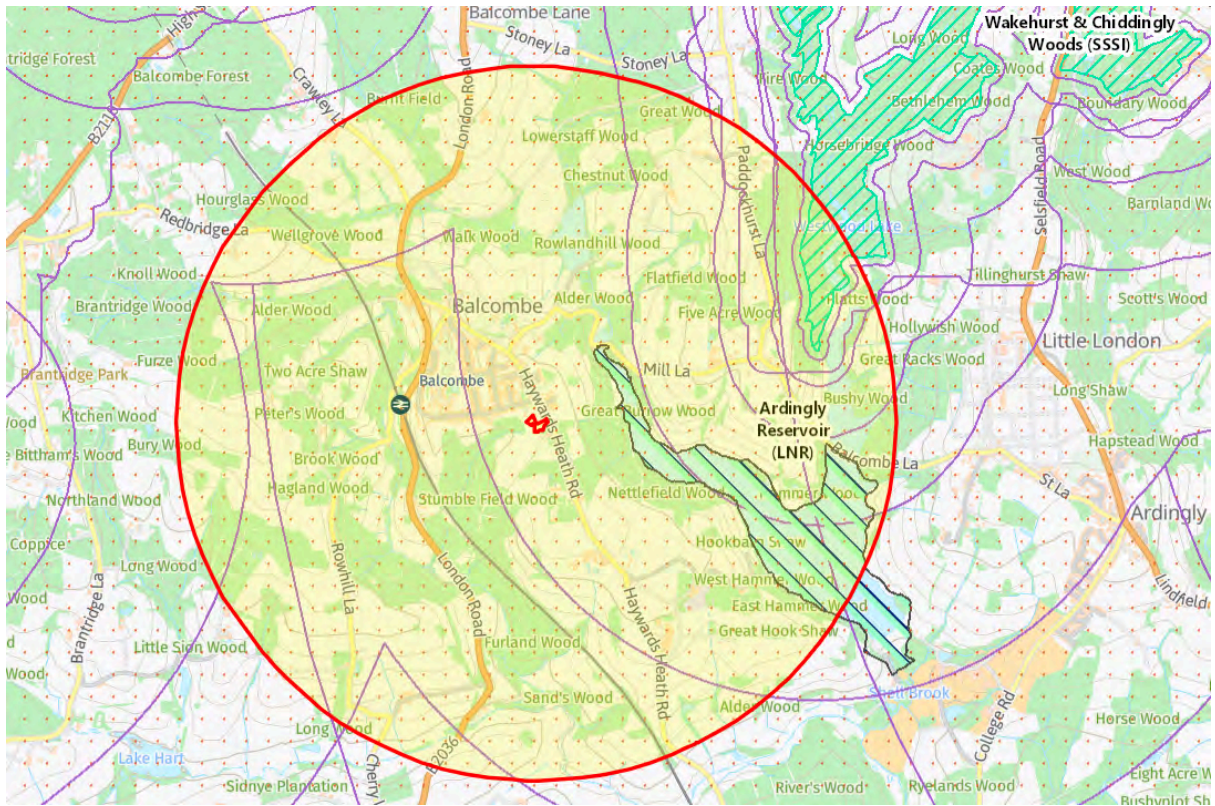


Figure A2.1: Location of Designated Sites situated within a 2km search radius of the site.

*Data from DEFRA.

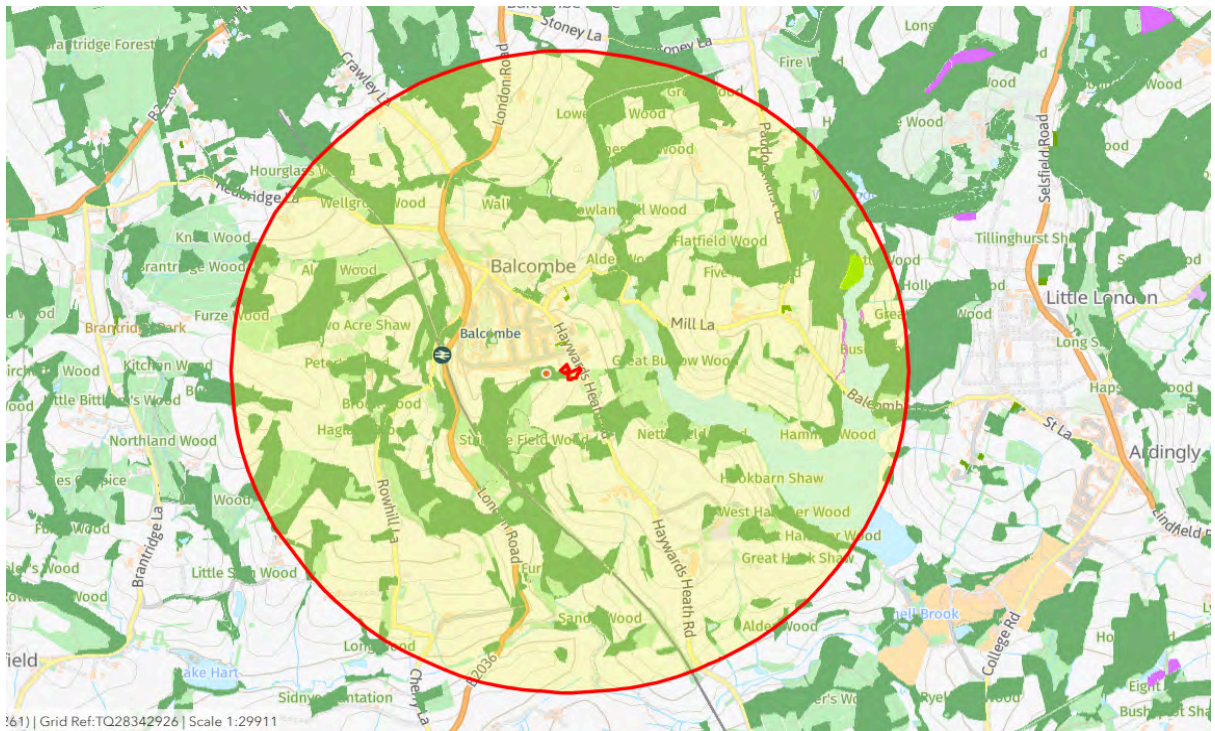


Figure A2.2: Priority habitats formerly mapped within a 2km search radius of the site.

*Data from Bing Maps

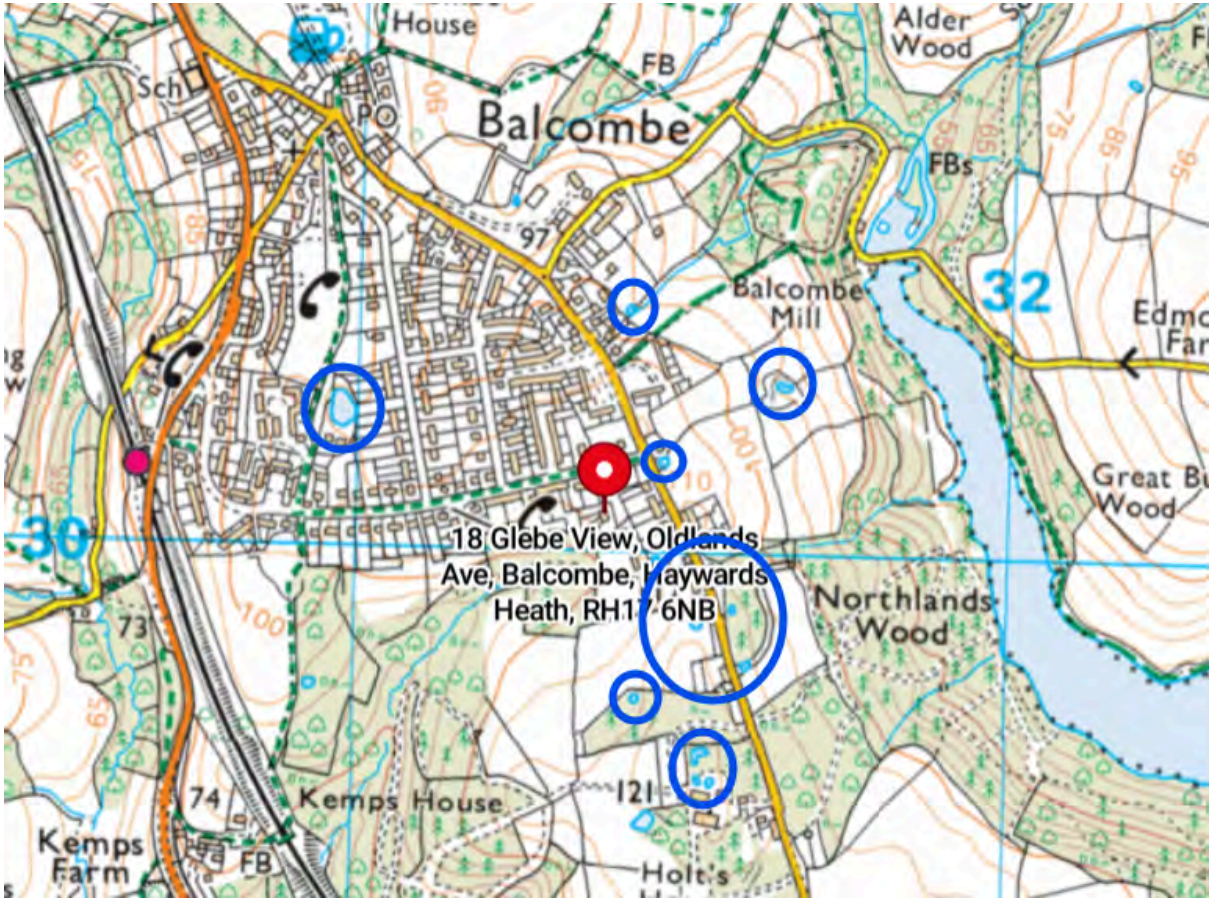


Figure A2.3: Standing water bodies formerly mapped within a 500m search radius of the site.

Appendix 3: Site Maps

A3.1 The Site Habitat Map was produced in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification Manual (Butcher et al., 2020).



