



REPORTS 4 PLANNING

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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

**PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT OF THE DAIRY, ROADS HILL
CATHERINGTON, WATERLOOVILLE, PO8 0TG**

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1.0 BACKGROUND AND SITE DESCRIPTION

This report relates to the proposed redevelopment of a former dairy on the south-western side of the junction of Roads Hill and Catherington Lane, Catherington. The proposals include:

- i. demolition of all existing buildings in the former dairy site (Area A, Figure 2) and their replacement with 9 (no.) new dwellings;
- ii. construction of a new Scout hut and associated parking on an area of existing associated paddock (Area B, Figure 2).

A satellite image of the site location can be found at Figure 1, plan showing the boundaries of the two Areas at Figure 2, plan of Area A at Figure 3, plan of Area B and Figure 4 and photographs at Figure 5.

Area A

Area A includes two brick/tin/fibre-concrete workshops, a mobile home and various other small outbuildings and/or storage containers together with associated gravel or hard yards. Also present are a sand ménage, various small areas of improved pasture, two soil/rubble mounds/bunds covered in tall ruderal vegetation and a group of tall, spindly ash trees.

The south and west boundaries of Area A are open or marked by stock-fencing beyond which are paddocks of horse-grazed improved pasture. The east boundary is marked by uneven line of tall, spindly trees (mostly Sycamore) with a single-carriage way road beyond. The north boundary is marked by an intermittent hedgerow/bank supporting various sections of overgrown conifer hedgerow, shrubs or small trees with a country lane beyond.

Area B

Area B consists of the southwest corner of an associated field of improved (horse-grazed) pasture.

The northern and north part of the eastern boundaries of Area B are open to the rest of the field. The south part of the eastern boundary is marked by a stock fence and defunct mixed hedgerow with the garden of a neighbouring dwelling beyond. The south and west boundaries are marked by field boundary hedgerows, part sprouting but mostly managed at around 2-2.5 m in height, with a country lane and or driveways beyond.

Of note is a single mature Ash tree in the western boundary hedgerow.

2.0 SURVEY METHOD

A walkover survey of the site and accessible immediately adjacent land was carried out during fair weather by day on the 24th November 2019. The intent of the survey was to identify:

- i. the presence of any habitats of conservation importance or other features of ecological interest likely to be directly or indirectly affected by the proposed works;
- ii. the presence or possible presence of protected species likely to be affected;
- iii. any need for further ecological survey to inform the proposed works.

The survey covered:

- i. Areas A and B as indicated on Figure 2;
- ii. immediately surrounding areas of accessible land;
- iii. any other accessible adjacent land or features thought to be of potential relevance.

Habitats

Habitat survey followed the guidelines given in the Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey (JNCC 1993). Detailed botanical species lists were not compiled.

Protected species

Bats

Buildings were thoroughly searched, by day, inside and out, for any sign of use by bats including:

- the presence of free-hanging bats or bats within crevices;
- bat droppings, urine stains or feeding remains on horizontal and vertical surfaces (eg floors, walls, foliage) within and around them;
- the presence of potential access routes for bats into likely roosting sites and indications (where accessible for survey - such as scattered droppings or urine staining around or within entrances) of use of such potential access points by bats;
- any other sign of use by bats.

Trees were scanned for the presence of locations potentially suitable for use as roosts by bats including knot, rot or woodpecker holes, splits, or other material cavities/crevices. Where accessible, such locations were checked for any sign of use by bats including the presence of bats within them or bat droppings, urine-staining or smoothing within or around them.

Where appropriate, survey was aided by the use of binoculars, a powerful hand torch, an endoscope, a mechanics mirror, a penlight torch and a 5 m ladder.

Notwithstanding the above, and with reference to the Bat Conservation Trusts 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists - Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition' (the Bat

Survey Guidelines), a subjective assessment was made of the potential suitability of the various buildings and trees for use (as roosts) by bats.

A subjective assessment was made of likely use of the site by bats for foraging/commuting.

Hazel dormouse

A subjective assessment was made of the risk of use of the boundary hedgerows by Hazel dormouse based on location, structure, diversity and connectivity.

Badger

The site and immediately adjacent accessible land were searched for evidence of use by badger including the present of setts, dung, tracks, foraging and any other sign.

Nesting birds

Habitats were assessed as to their potential for use as nest sites by birds though a thorough search for old birds nests was not carried out.

Reptiles

An assessment was made of the general suitability of the site for use by reptiles.

Great crested newts

An assessment was made of the likelihood of the site being used by great crested newts. This assessment was based upon:

- i. the apparent suitability of terrestrial habitats present within the site for use by great crested newts should they be otherwise present locally;
- ii. accessibility of the site from any local ponds apparently suitable for use by them.

Other

Any other sign of use by protected species and/or the presence of habitats with a reasonable potential to support protected species was noted.

Data search

The Magic website was checked for the local presence of any statutory or non-statutory wildlife sites.

Reference was made to the following historic survey reports covering Area A:

- i. *The Ecology Co-op (2014) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. The Dairy, Catherington.*
- ii. *Eco Urban Ltd (2015) Arboricultural Implications Assessment and Method Statement. The Dairy, Catherington Lane, Catherington.*

3.0 RESULTS

Habitats

The site consists of:

Area A: two brick/tin/fibre-concrete workshops, a mobile home and various other small outbuildings and/or storage containers together with associated gravel or hard yards, a sand ménage, various small areas of improved pasture, two soil/rubble mounds/bunds covered in tall ruderal vegetation and a group of tall, spindly ash trees. Site boundaries are unmarked or marked by defunct/intermittent hedgerows and/or lines of spindly trees.

Area B: part of a field of improved (horse-grazed) pasture. The northern and north part of the eastern site are open to the rest of the field. The south part of the eastern boundary is marked by a stock fence and defunct mixed hedgerow with the garden of a neighbouring dwelling beyond. The south and west boundaries are marked by field boundary hedgerows.

Further details of habitats present can be found at Figures 3 and 4. Photographs can be found at Figure 5.

Protected sites

According to the Magic website the site does not contain, fall within or lie adjacent to any statutory or non-statutory wildlife sites. The closest such sites are:

Site	Designation	Distance
Catherington Down	SSSI/LNR	30 m to W
Catherington Lith	LNR	500 m to E
Yeoll's Copse	LNR	950 m to S
Dell Piece West	LNR	1700 m to SE
Hazleton Common	LNR	1750 m to SE

We note that the Magic website does not necessarily hold records of all non-statutory wildlife sites. However given the character of the site (improved grassland and/or yard/buildings) and adjacent land (road, improved grassland, gardens) they are unlikely to be so designated.

Protected species

Bat roosts - buildings

No evidence as found for any use of buildings by bats.

Notwithstanding the above, the following Table summarises the potential suitability of each building for use (as a roost) by bats (in accordance with Table 4.1 of the Bat Survey Guidelines):

Building	Details	Potential suitability
B1a	Fully accessible for survey No flying access? Roof spaces both large and draughty Brick-work sound No fascias Roof single-skin fibre-concrete sheeting No ridge crevices	Negligible
B1b	Fully accessible for survey No flying access No sheltered internal voids (eg roof spaces) Brick-work sound No fascias Roof single-skin fibre-concrete or tin sheeting No ridge crevices	Negligible
B1c	Fully accessible for survey Flying access throughout No sheltered internal voids (eg roof spaces) Tin construction	Negligible
B2	Fully accessible for survey Tight flying access along eaves No sheltered internal voids (eg roof spaces) Walls single skin tin or fibre-concrete sheeting Roof single-skin fibre-concrete sheeting	Negligible
B3	Open-side shelter with tin roof	Negligible
B4	Timber stable Flying access throughout No sheltered internal voids (eg roof spaces) Mono-pitched timber roof Timber-work sound	Negligible
B5	Occupied mobile home	Negligible

The above assessment concurs with that of Eco Urban Ltd (2015).

Bat roosts - trees

No evidence was found for use of any tree as a roost by bats.

Notwithstanding the above:

- i. the large Ash tree in the western boundary hedgerow of Area B (Target note 2, Figure 4) is in poor condition with various dead spars and woodpecker or other rot or knot holes. This tree was judged to be of 'High' potential suitability for use (as a roost) by bats (with reference to Table 4.1 in the Bat Survey Guidelines);
- ii. all other trees are relatively small and sound and were judged to be of 'Negligible' bat roosting potential (with reference to Table 4.1 in the Bat Survey Guidelines).

Bats – foraging/commuting activity

Neither the main body of Area A (buildings and yards) or the main body of Area B (short, improved pasture) appear suitable for material use by bats for foraging or commuting. However, bats of various species are likely to forage and/or commute along the various vegetated boundary hedgerows/features, namely those along the north and east sides of Area A and the west and south sides of Area B.

Hazel dormouse

The site boundary hedgerows do not appear suitable for material use by Hazel dormouse, lacking in suitable stature, structure and/or connectivity.

Badger

No evidence as found for use of the site by badgers.

Nesting/breeding birds

An old swallows nest was found in one of the roof spaces of building B1a (most likely accessed via the workshop below).

No other evidence was found for birds having nested recently within or upon any of the buildings.

There is a high risk of common 'garden' birds nesting within taller/denser vegetation (trees, hedgerow, scrub) along various of the site boundaries during the spring and summer months. Areas of grass appear currently grazed too short for birds to nest within.

Reptiles

Parts of the site (namely small areas of tall ruderal vegetation) appear nominally suitable for use by common reptiles if accessible to them. However, suitable habitat is limited and isolated and not substantive enough to support reptiles in its own right. Areas of grass appear currently grazed too short for material use by reptiles.

Great crested newts

Parts of the site (hedgerow, scrub, tall ruderal vegetation) appear suitable for use by terrestrial great crested newts if accessible to them. However, there are no ponds present upon the site, apparent in the near vicinity or marked on the OS 1:25000 map within 500 m.

Other

No other evidence was found for use or likely material use of the site or adjoining land by protected species. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Area A carried out by others in 2014 did not establish any other material use of that part of the site by protected species.

4.0 INTERPRETATION AND RECOMENDATION

Habitats and protected sites

Native hedgerow is a Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat. There are no other such habitats or other habitats of particular ecological interest or conservation concern either within or adjoining the site.

While part of Catherington Down SSSI/LNR comes to within approximately 30 m of the site the majority is much further away and the two are separated by a road and yard.

Given the above we recommend that:

- i. all existing hedgerows are retained;**
- ii. serious consideration be given to:**
 - a) reinforcing any gappy/weak sections of existing hedgerows with supplementary planting of appropriate native shrubs;**
 - b) planting new sections of native hedgerow along some or all site boundaries from where they are currently absent.**

Bats - roosts

No evidence was found for use of any building or tree as a roost by bats.

The potential suitability for use by bats of all buildings and all trees (other than the large Ash at Target note 2, Figure 4) was judged to be 'Negligible'. With reference to Tables 7.1-7.3 in the Bat Survey Guidelines, no further bat survey of such buildings or trees is warranted.

The large Ash at Target note 2, Figure 4 was judged to be of 'High' potential suitability for use by bats. With reference to Tables 7.1-7.3 in the Bat Survey Guidelines we therefore recommend that:

- i. should any material works (including felling) be proposed to the large Ash at Target note 2, Figure 4, the presence/absence of bat roosts within it is first more reasonably established by further survey. Such survey could include a climbing inspection (at any time of year) and/or 2-3 watches for bats coming/going from the tree over dusk and/or dawn (normally only possible sometime between May and August, possibly September, inclusive).**

Bats – foraging/commuting activity

Bats are likely to forage and/or commute along the various boundary hedgerows/tree-lines. Provided such features are retained and retained suitable for such use then we judge it unlikely that the proposed works will have a material impact on local bat foraging/commuting activity. With this in mind we refer to the recommendations at paragraph 4.3 above and further recommend that:

- i. an external lighting be such as not to spill significantly onto boundary hedgerows or trees.**

Hazel dormouse

We are of the opinion that the risk of use of the site by Hazel dormice is low enough not to warrant any further survey.

Badger

No evidence was found for use of the site by badgers.

Nesting birds

It is an offence to damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is being built or in use. We therefore recommend that:

- i. **any significant removal of taller/denser vegetation (including trees, hedgerow and scrub) be carried out between October and February inclusive (so as to avoid the nominal bird nesting season) or otherwise only following a thorough check to confirm that no active birds nests are present at the time. Should birds commence nesting within or upon buildings at any time then all works liable to disturb such nests should be delayed until the nests are no longer occupied.**

Reptiles

We are of the opinion that the risk of use of the site by reptiles is low enough not to warrant any further survey.

Great crested newts

We are of the opinion that the risk of use of the site by Great crested newts is low enough not to warrant any further survey.

Other

No evidence was found for use, or likely material use, of the site or immediately adjacent land by any other protected species.

Other than any of the above, we see no need for any further ecological survey in relation to the proposed development of the site.

Disclaimer. All reasonable effort was taken to ensure an accurate assessment of the situation at the time of the survey. However, the absence of recorded sign should not be taken as an absolute guarantee that the site was not being used by a particular species. There is also no guarantee that any particular species will not use the site at any time in the future. Survey results may be weather or seasonally dependent.

Figure 1. Site Plan



Figure 2. Boundaries of the two areas proposed for development.



Figure 3. Area A. Site Plan



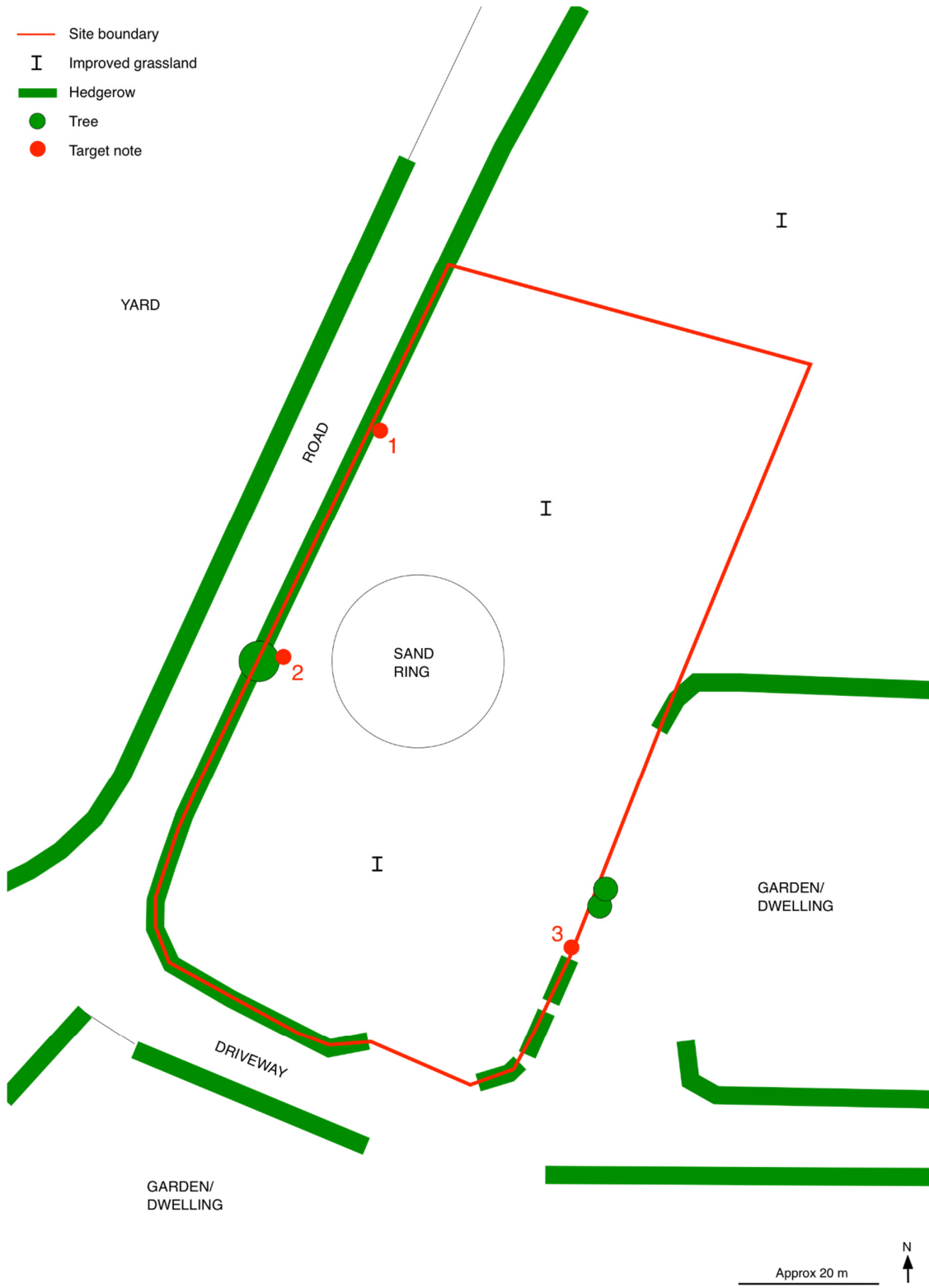
Buildings

- B1 Single-storey workshop/store divisible into the following sections:
- B1a Single-storey workshop with pitched roof fitted with pre-formed fibre-concrete sheeting with no underlay. Two-roof spaces present each of around 2.5 m in height at the ridge. Used as workshop/vehicle store.
- B1b Single-storey brick addition. Open to the roof which is gently pitched and fitted with pre-formed fibre-concrete sheeting on the north face and corrugated tin sheeting on the south, both lacking any underlay. Used for vehicle storage.
- B1c Ramshackle corrugated tin lean-to. Open to the roof which is mono-pitched and also fitted with tin. Used as builders store/workshop.
- B2 Single-storey workshop constructed from pre-formed fibre-concrete sheeting and/or corrugated tin. Open to the roof which is mono-pitched and fitted with pre-formed fibre-concrete sheeting with no underlay. Used as workshop/store.
- B3 Open-sided shelter with a mono-pitched roof fitted with corrugated tin sheeting.
- B4 Occupied mobile home.
- B5 Timber stable block (3 stalls) with a mono-pitched timber roof.
- B6 Ramshackle stable/animal shelter constructed primarily from tin sheeting. Off-site.

Target notes

- 1 Low, dense Bramble scrub (*Rubus fruticosus*).
- 2 Row of small trees/tall shrubs along site boundary including Field maple (*Acer campestre*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).
- 3 Mound of soil/compacted rubble along boundary. Covered in tall ruderal vegetation including Common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), Common mallow (*Malva neglecta*), Old man's beard (*Clematis vitalba*), great lettuce (*Lactuca virosa*), Mugwort (*Artemis vulgaris*), Sow thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), Bristly ox-tongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), Willowherb (*Epilobium* spp) etc.
- 4 Section of over-grown conifer hedgerow (*Cupressus x leylandii*).
- 5 Section of defunct mixed hedgerow/shrubbery including Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), *Buddleja*, garden shrubs.
- 6 Line of tall, spindly young Ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*).
- 7 Section of over-grown conifer hedgerow (*Cupressus x leylandii*).
- 8 Site boundary marked by low bank supporting row of tall shrubs and/or tall, spindly trees including Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Field maple (*Acer campestre*) etc
- 9 Soil bund covered in tall ruderal vegetation dominated by Common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) with Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), Teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), Broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolium*), Hedge bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*) etc

Figure 4. Area B. Site Plan



Target notes

- 1 Boundary marked by native hedgerow, mostly to around 2-2.5 m in height, occasionally sprouting to c 4 m in height. Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and Dog rose (*Rosa canina*) with some Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*).
- 2 Large Ash tree (*Fraxinus excelsior*) with significant dead sections
- 3 Boundary marked by stock fencing with defunct, overgrown garden hedgerow to the south and largely intact overgrown native hedgerow veering east to the north. Large central gap supports small Hawthorn tree (*Crataegus monogyna*).

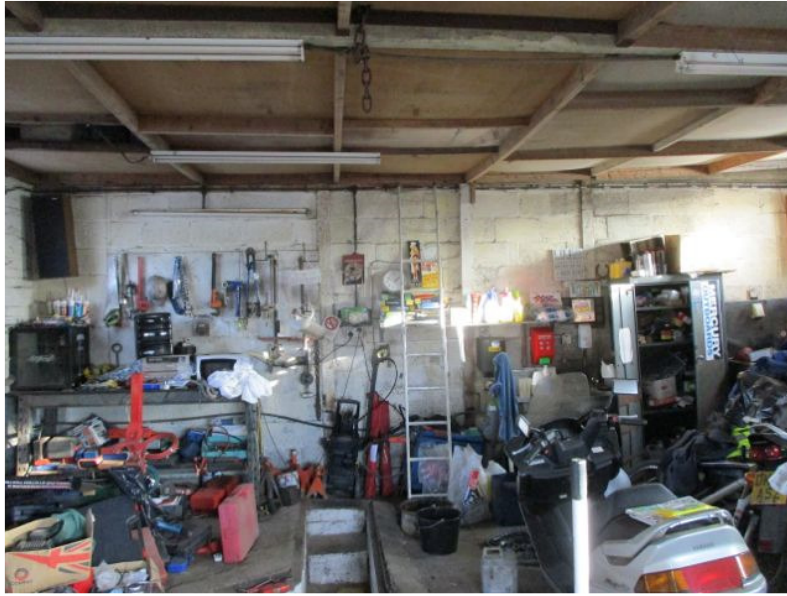
Appendix A – Photographs – Area A



Photograph 1: Building B1 as viewed from the northwest.



Photograph 2: Building B1 as viewed from the southeast.



Photograph 3: Typical views of the interior of B1 (ground floor).



Photograph 4: Typical views of the interior of B1 (roof space).



Photograph 5: Building B2 as viewed from the southeast



Photograph 6: Building B2 as viewed from the southwest.



Photograph 7: The interior of B2.



Photograph 8: Building B4 as viewed from the northwest.



Photograph 9: Building B5 as viewed from the northwest



Photograph 10: Looking north across the yard at the eastern end of Area A.



Photograph 11: Looking east across the yard at the western end of Area A.



Photograph 12: Looking east along the nettle-covered bund at Target note 9, Area A.



Photograph 13: Looking west along the outside of the north Boundary of Area A.



Photograph 14: Looking north along the outside of the east boundary of Area A.



Photograph 15: Looking east along the southern boundary of Area A.



Photograph 16: Looking north along the outside of the western boundary of Area A



Photograph 17: From the southwest corner of Area B looking east along the southern boundary. Note the large Ash tree in P18.



Photograph 18: From the southwest corner of Area B looking north along the western boundary respectively. Note the large Ash tree in P18.



Photograph 19: From the southeast corner of Area B looking north along the eastern boundary.



Photograph 20: Looking north across Area B.