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PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

Appleby, 3 Greenhill Road, Otford, Kent
Report Reference: BG21.258
September 2021



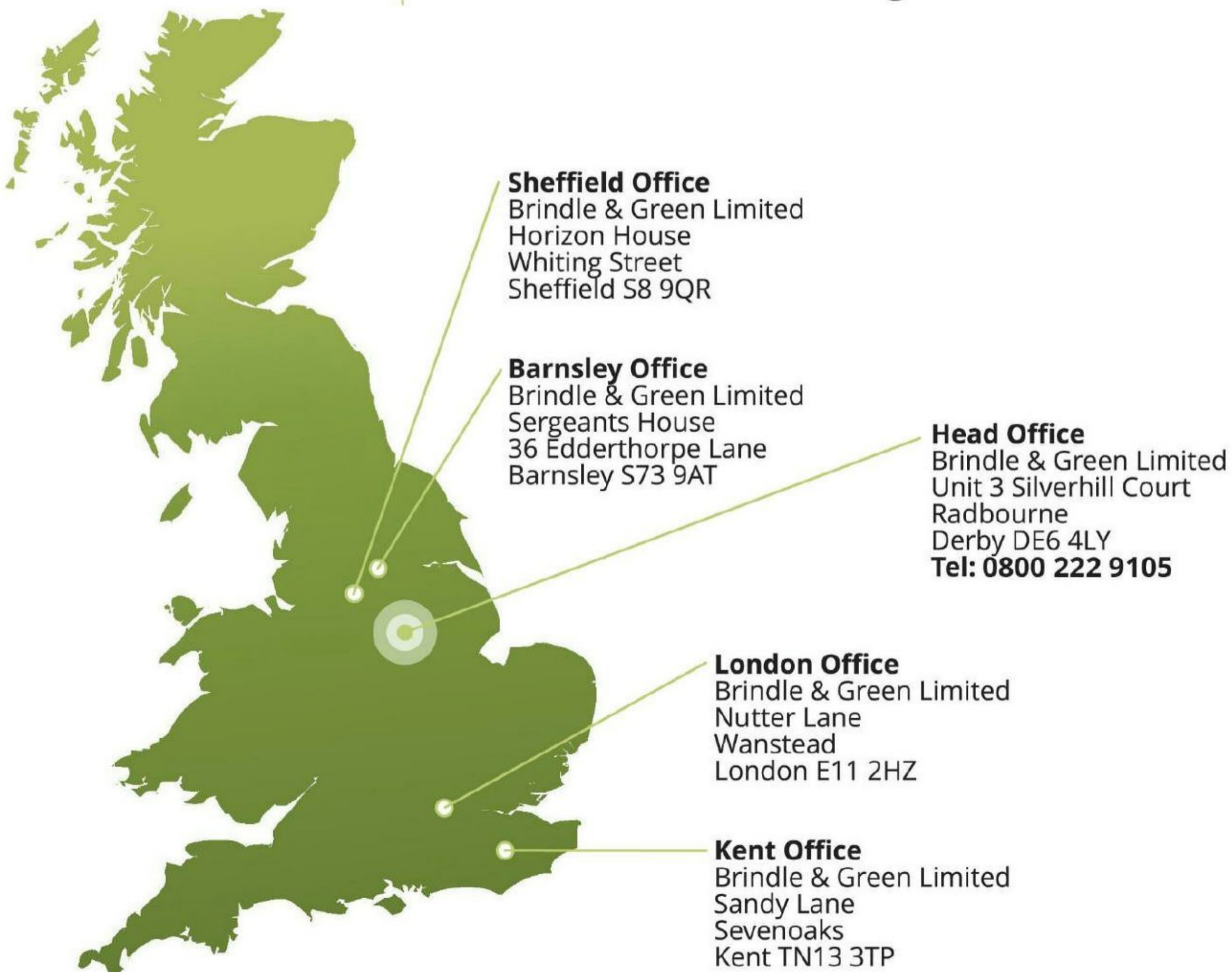
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1 Summary

- 1.1 Brindle & Green Ltd were commissioned by Mr Ian West to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal incorporating a Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment at Appleby, 3 Greenhill Road, Otford, Kent. This report summarises the potential ecological constraints to the outline planning application for site clearance and demolition of the existing dwelling to facilitate the development of two detached residential dwellings. Design plans are provided within Appendix 6 of this report. The survey was carried out on the 24th August 2021.
- 1.2 The red line boundary is approximately 0.24ha in extent and comprises a residential dwelling, amenity grassland, ornamental shrub and scattered trees. Species poor hedgerows defines the north, west and southern boundaries. The site was evaluated to support 'site' value on a regional scale.
- 1.3 The habitats described within this report have the potential to support protected and/or notable species. As such, this report outlines important measures to protect species during site clearance, and recommendations to improve the biodiversity status of the site post development. A full description of the recommendations can be found within Chapter 7, the table below is a summary of the ecological issues recommended for further consideration as a result of our initial investigations:

Ecological Consideration	Recommendations (e.g. further survey, mitigation)	Timing
Breeding birds	Works should be sympathetic to this group of species, with vegetation clearance undertaken following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) outlined in chapter 7.	During Site Clearance (Optimal timing between October -March outside of breeding bird season)
Roosting bats	Building 1 to be subjected to at least one presence/likely absence survey. As outlined in Chapter 7.	May – September
Reptiles	Works should be sympathetic to this group of species, with vegetation clearance undertaken following RAMS outlined in chapter 7.	During Site Clearance and Construction.
MSPI – West European Hedgehog	Works should be sympathetic to this group of species, with vegetation clearance undertaken following RAMS outlined in chapter 7.	During Site Clearance and Construction.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 The purpose of this assessment was to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site incorporating a Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Assessment to establish the likelihood of the site supporting protected species. The survey provides detail on the need for any additional, more detailed protected species surveys, likely mitigation and any opportunities for enhancement.
- 2.2 The red line boundary is approximately 0.24ha, located to the north of Otford village, Kent and relates to a residential dwelling and gardens. The site is located within a semi-rural location, bordered by residential development; the wider landscape is dominated by agricultural land and areas of woodland including Greenhill wood located 650m to the east and Rowdow wood located 750m to the south-east. The site is the subject of an outline planning application for site clearance and demolition of existing dwelling to facilitate the development of two detached residential dwellings. Design plans are provided within Appendix 6 of this report
- 2.3 The legislation relevant to protected species within the United Kingdom is summarised within Appendix 4.
- 2.4 Results and recommendations contained within this report have been prepared by an experienced ecologist and are therefore the view of Brindle & Green Limited. The survey is based on information provided by our client, the development proposals, results of the desk study, and our survey of the site. This report pertains to this information only.

3 Methodology

3.1 Desk Study

Table 1 below lists organisations and/or resources used as part of the desk study process. Data regarding any known statutory or non-statutory sites, in addition to any records for protected species, were requested from the following sources:

Table 1. Ecological Data Resources

Consultant	Requested Data	Search Radius	Date Requested
MAGIC Maps	National and International Site Designations Granted EPS Development Licences	2km	02/08/2021

3.2 Surveyors

Survey carried out by Tom Hough MSc, QualCIEEM, Natural England Bat Licence Class 1 (2020-50050-CLS-CLS), Consultant Ecologist. The survey was overseen by Kinzie Watts MSc (Hons), Natural England Hazel Dormouse Licence Class 1 (2021-53219-CLS-CLS) Natural England Great Crested Newt licence (2021-53259-CLS-CLS), Senior Ecologist.

3.3 Survey Conditions

The survey was undertaken at 4pm on the 24th August 2021.

The outside temperature was recorded as 20°C, with dry, sunny conditions, and 1/8 cloud cover.

3.4 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

3.4.1 A Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken following survey guidance (JNCC 2007) to establish the presence and distribution of habitat types within the site and potential ecological constraints to development. A Phase 1 Habitat Map was produced (Appendix 1) and where additional details were required Target Notes have been provided (Appendix 2). A plant species list (Appendix 2) summarising all plants identified on site was produced during the survey and all scientific nomenclature was produced according to Stace (2010).

3.4.2 This survey was extended to note the potential for habitats on site to support protected and/or notable species and for evidence of any such species. The habitats on site were assessed for their suitability to support protected species in relation to the habitat type found at the site. Any incidental sightings or field signs were noted at the time of survey. Where evidence of, or the confirmed presence of a protected species was identified, further species specific surveys may be recommended to ensure that the presence or otherwise of a legally protected species is fully considered prior to the determination of any planning approval or to guide an EPS development licence.

3.4.3 Hedgerows on site were assessed following the Hedgerow Survey Handbook (DEFRA 2007), and defined as species-rich if the structural species making up a surveyed 30m section of hedgerow included at least four native woody species. Results were compiled and assessed against qualifying criteria within the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) and also the UK Biodiversity Action Plan / NERC Act 2006.

3.4.4 Legislation, guidance and methodology for species relevant to this site are presented in full within Appendices 4 and 5 of this report.

3.4.5 Site Evaluation

Following the ecological appraisal the site was classified into one of six groups (Table 2), to indicate whether the site is considered to hold ecological value on a local, national or international scale. This evaluation is intended as a guide and only targeted survey work can establish the significance of protected species populations onsite.

Table 2. Definitions of each of the six evaluation brackets, indicating the importance of each habitat type and an example of their possible habitat status. (Table constructed following The CIEEM EclA Guidelines, Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal (2016) pages 16-17).

Evaluation Value	Comparable example
International	An internationally designated site or candidate site, including habitat or species included within Special Protection Areas (SPA) / Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar Sites, listed under Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive.
National	<p>Sites designated at UK level, e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), supporting species considered nationally threatened or rare.</p> <p>A regularly occurring regionally or county significant population/number of any nationally important species</p> <p>A feature identified as of critical importance within Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).</p>
Regional	Key Habitat type included within the National Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) /NERC Habitat of Principle Importance (HPI). A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a regionally important species.
County	Designated sites, such as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) or viable habitat / species populations of value at a county level (LBAP).
District	<p>District level designated sites, such as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) or habitats / species populations of value at a district (Which have features qualifying for LWS status).</p> <p>Sites/features that are scarce within the district or which appreciably enrich the district habitat resource.</p>
Local / Site	<p>Habitats or species populations of value in a local (i.e. within ~ 5km of the site) context.</p> <p>Habitats of poor to moderate biological diversity e.g. established conifer plantations, species poor hedgerows and un-intensively managed grassland which supports species which are common to the local area and whose loss can be easily mitigated.</p>

3.5 Limitations

3.5.1 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. The protected and notable species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of these species occurring on site, based upon the suitability of the habitats, known distribution of the species in the local area and any direct evidence on site. It should not be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group.

3.6 Report Lifespan

Given the transient nature of the subject we would consider the survey results contained to be accurate for 2 years.

4 Site Context

4.1 Site Description

The application site can be found at TQ 53023 59991, positioned within a residential street to the east of the A225, to the north-west of Otford village. The site comprises a single dwelling (Building 1), two outbuildings, comprising a shed and a greenhouse, and associated garden. The site is bordered primarily by residential development supporting large vegetated gardens with mature scattered trees and hedgerows providing connectivity to the wider landscape. Beyond the A225 and Railway 160m west, and to the north of the site, the landscape is dominated by extensive arable and pasture with woodland recorded beyond residential development to the east and southeast (Rowdow wood and Great wood located approximately 1km and 1.3km east) Notably, the site is vegetatively connected to Otford to Shoreham Downs SSSI located 162m to the north-east via mature tree lines present to the north of the site.



Figure 1. OS map of the project site and surrounding area.

Red line boundary depicts application site.

4.2 **Zone of Influence**

The zone of influence describes the geographic extent of potential impacts of a proposed development. The small scale of the proposed development reduces the likelihood of impact to the surrounding area, however suitable connective vegetation could influence the presence of protected species within the application boundary. The zone of influence was considered to be 250 metres from the application boundary for amphibians and reptiles, 30 metres for terrestrial mammals such as badgers, and within the area of impact for breeding birds and bats.

5 Results

5.1 Desk Study

5.1.1 Designated Sites

The site was subjected to a search for designated sites within a 2km radius of the site using data from the online desk-based resource MAGIC (Appendix 7).

5.1.2 A search of the online resource Magic Maps found two sites with Statutory designations within the 2km radius search, pertaining to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Table 3. Summary of Designated Sites within a 2km radius of the application site.

Site Name	Grid Ref	Status	Reason for Designation	Distance from site
Otford to Shoreham Downs SSSI	TQ 53765 60077	SSSI	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland with diverse grassland	160m NE
Magpie Bottom SSSI	TQ 54531 60420	SSSI	Diverse grassland with notable species.	1.5km NE

5.1.3 Protected Species Assessment

5.1.3.2 Magic maps revealed a single granted EPS licence located 1,17km south-east of the site, for the destruction of a brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) resting place, granted in 2011 which expired in 2013.

5.2 Habitats

- 5.2.1 The habitat types recorded on site are summarised below, and the frequency and distribution of habitat types is displayed within a Phase 1 Habitat Survey Map (Appendix 1).
- 5.2.2 Table 5 provides a list of habitat types present on site along with their inclusion (or otherwise) as a National and / or Local Habitat of Principle Importance (HPI) (Previously referred to as Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)) (*It should be noted that additional information is included within the text where a classification under Phase 1 survey methodology does not mirror habitat types considered to be conservation priorities*).

Table 5. JNCC Habitat Types found on site and inclusion within UK BAP/HPI habitats.

Habitat Type	N HPI	L HPI	N/A
Amenity grassland			✓
Species-poor native hedgerow		✓	
Species-poor non-native hedgerow			✓
Buildings			✓
Ornamental shrub			✓
Hardstanding			
Scattered trees			✓

5.2.3 Amenity Grassland

The site was dominated by amenity grassland covering approximately 0.2ha of the application boundary (Figure 2). The sward was managed to an approximate height of 15cm and comprised dominant perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) with abundant white clover (*Trifolium repens*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and occasional ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and soft brome (*Bromus hordeaceus*).



Figure 2. Area of amenity grassland.

5.2.4 Species-poor native hedgerow

5.2.4.1 Intact linear hedgerows were prevalent along the application's site boundaries and defined the eastern, northern and southern boundaries (Appendix 1). All hedgerows were subject to regular management and maintained to approximately 2m in height and 1m width. Hedgerows were labelled H1 to H4 and locations are shown within Appendix 1.

5.2.4.3 Species composition was similar across hedgerows H2 to H4 and supported dominant hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with frequent bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and ivy (*Hedera helix*). The understories primarily comprised cleavers (*Galium aparine*) and cinquefoil (*Potentilla recta*). H3 presented a gap of approximately 3m to allow access into site.

5.2.5 Species-poor non-native hedgerow

5.2.4.2 Hedgerow H1 defined the northern boundary of the site and comprised privet (*Ligustrum spp.*). Hedgerow was managed to and approximate height of 2m and 1m width.

5.2.6 Buildings

5.2.7 Two buildings were recorded on site, a residential dwelling (Building 1) and a wooden shed (Building 2). A full description of each building and their suitability to support protected species is provided within Table 6 (Section 5.3.2).

5.2.8 Ornamental shrub

Small areas of ornamental shrub were recorded surrounding the building and along the drive. Shrubs comprised fuchsia sp., geranium sp. and other non-native ornamental species.

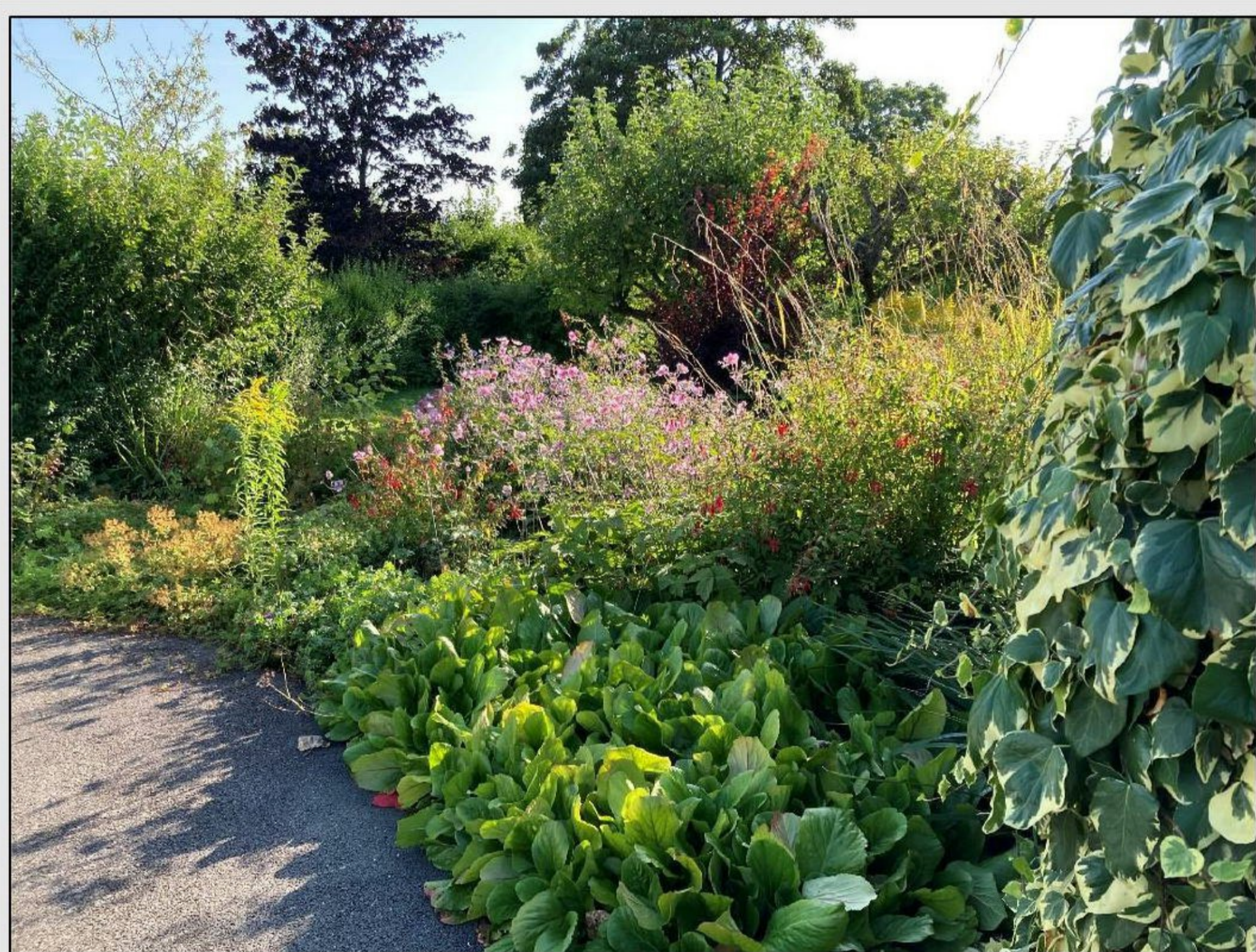


Figure 3. Area of ornamental shrub along access track.

5.2.9 Hardstanding

A paved, non-permeable access track is present to the south of the site providing access to the house and a small car park through hedgerow H3.

5.2.10 Scattered trees

Scattered trees were present within areas of amenity grassland. At least 8 trees were recorded, the majority of which were apple (*Malus domestica*) and juniper (*Juniperus sp.*).

5.2.11 Invasive Weeds Assessment

An assessment of the site was made to establish the presence of invasive weeds included on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). No recordings of invasive weed species were found within, or adjacent to the application area.

5.3 Fauna

5.3.1 Breeding Birds

5.3.1.1 Hedgerows, scattered trees and shrubs on site provide suitable nesting habitat for common bird species. Building 1 supported suitable features that might be utilised by nesting birds, including hanging eaves and lifted tiles. No current evidence of breeding birds was recorded at the time of the survey.

5.3.2 Bats

5.3.2.1 *Roosting Bats*

Approximately 13 scattered trees were present within areas of amenity grassland. Visible trees were assessed and categorised based upon Bat Conservation Trust guidance (Appendix 5). The trees were assessed to have negligible suitability to support roosting bats. Despite the trees being mature in nature, they did not support suitable cracks, fissures or holes to support roosting bats.

5.3.2.2 Building 1 was assessed to have low suitability to support roosting bats. The extent of the suitability pertained to the external features where loose tiles and lifted lead flashing provided crevices for individual bats to use on an intermittent basis. The internal roof void of the building offered features to support roosting bats, however, no potential access points were recorded. The internal lining was in good condition and well-sealed reducing the likelihood of bats entering the roof void under lifted tiles. The main structural features of the building, and their suitability for supporting roosting bats are summarised below (Table 6).

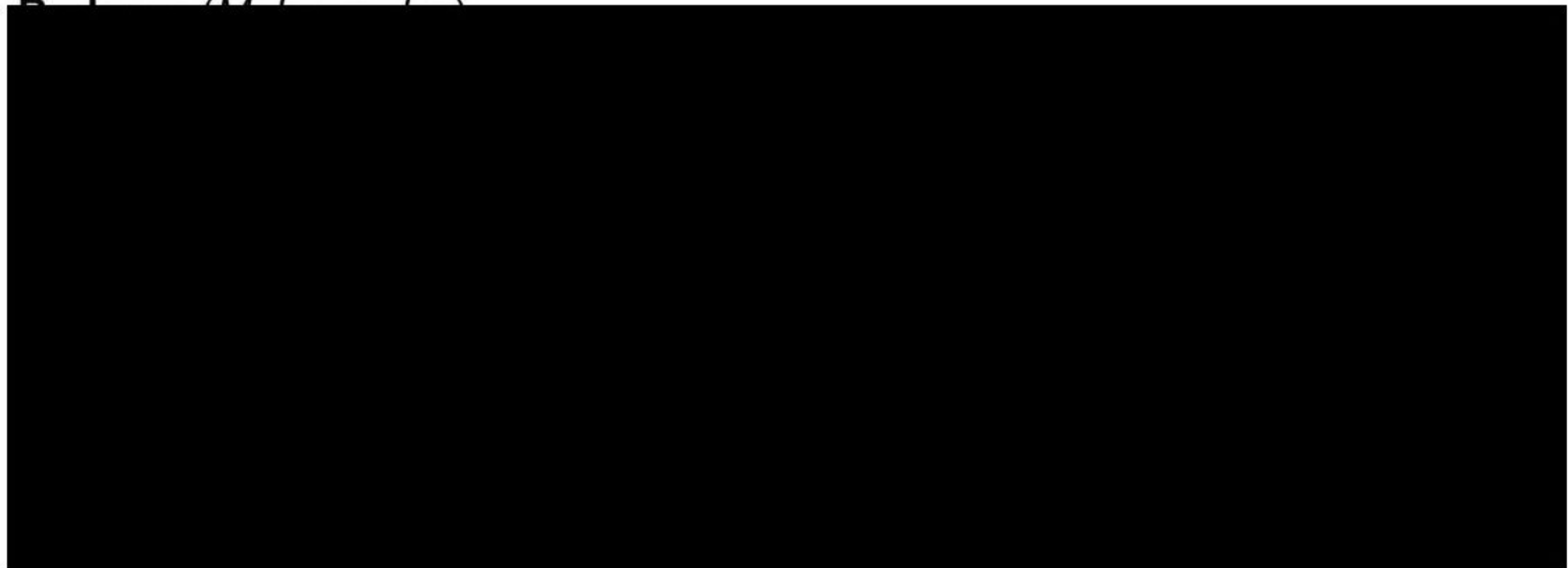
Table 6. Summary of Bat Roost potential and evidence found within each of the buildings/structures on site (Supporting Figures within Appendix 8).

High	Moderate	Low	Negligible	None
Building Number	Description	Bat evidence / Potential Roosting Features (PRFs)		Roost Suitability
B1	<p>Single storey bungalow comprising red brick walls and hipped concrete tiled roof.</p> <p>Lead flashing was noted around chimney and overhanging eaves with wooden soffit boxes and plastic guttering were recorded throughout all elevations.</p> <p>The internal roof void was boarded throughout, lined with bitumen felt and was supported by modern timber frames. The loft space was empty and included the full extent of the building</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loose roof tiling. • Lifted lead flashing. <p>No evidence of previous bat activity was recorded during the assessment.</p>		Low
B2	<p>Small shed located to the north-eastern elevation of B1.</p> <p>Supporting timber walls and pitched felted roof with a lean-to extension.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No potential roosting features (PRF) recorded. <p>No evidence of previous bat activity was recorded during the assessment.</p>		Negligible
B3	Greenhouse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No potential roosting features (PRF) recorded. • No evidence of previous bat activity was recorded during the assessment. 		Negligible

5.3.2.2 Foraging and Commuting Bats

The site supported vegetative features considered suitable to support commuting and foraging bats. The scattered trees and hedgerows along the site boundaries provide connectivity to further suitable habitat features within the wider environment. The application site sits within a rural environment, dominated by agricultural land use, and vegetative features provide connectivity to Otford to Shoreham Downs SSSI located 162m to the north-east, which provide high suitability for foraging and commuting bats. The site itself is considered to support 'Low' suitability for foraging and commuting bats due to linear boundary features onsite connecting to areas of woodland within the wider landscape, but being limited in extent.

5.3.3 Ponds (Mystus sp.)



5.3.4 Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*)

Habitats on site, such as hedgerows and shrub, were considered suitable to support the terrestrial phase for this species. However, no ponds were recorded on site and a single pond was located within 500m of the application site, located approximately 480m north-east. Hedgerows on site provide potential commuting habitat for amphibians, however, the absence of ponds within the sites' boundary and its surroundings reduces the likelihood of encountering this species on site.

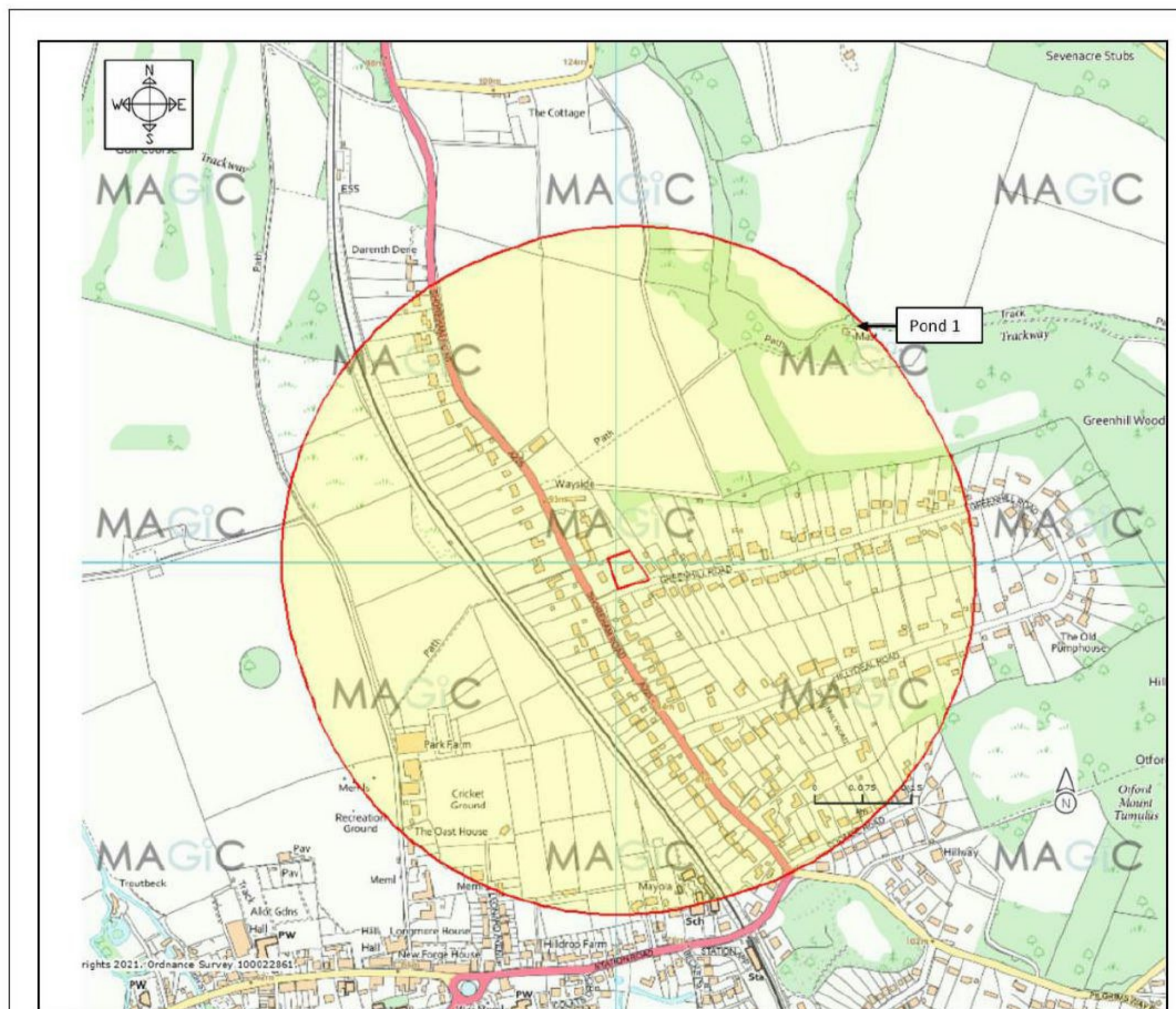


Figure 4. OS Map showing pond locations within a 500 metre radius of the site,

5.3.5 Reptiles

No evidence of reptiles was recorded during the survey. Suitable refugia is provided by hedgerows and ornamental shrubs. The area of amenity grassland could also be utilised for basking purposes. Linear features such as hedgerows provide suitable commuting habitat to the wider landscape. However, the habitats on site are considered to be sub-optimal due to the highly managed condition of the amenity grassland and introduced shrub.

5.3.6 Mammal Species of Principle Importance

5.3.6.1 The NERC Act 2006, Section 41 highlights 17 species of principle importance within England. Although these species were not surveyed directly as a result of their distribution and habitat preferences, evidence for activity by these species was searched for during the initial survey.

5.3.6.2 West European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

No evidence of this species was noted during the assessment. The ornamental shrubs and hedgerows offered suitable refuge and foraging areas. The site provides connectivity with suitable foraging habitats within the wider landscape via grassland and hedgerows.

6 Evaluation

6.1 Development Proposals

The site is the subject of an outline application for site clearance and demolition of the existing dwelling to facilitate the development of two detached dwellings. Design proposals for the site are presented in Appendix 6 of this report.

6.2 Desk Study Impacts

Direct impacts on nearby designated sites as a result of the proposed development are considered unlikely. The application site is positioned 160m from Otford to Shoreham Downs SSSI. Connectivity to this SSSI is provided by a network of gardens and tree lines. However, the initial proposals set out for the site (Appendix 6) show that the extent of the development is contained within the site boundary, and impacts on locally designated sites are considered unlikely.

6.3 Habitats

6.3.1 The habitats on site have been evaluated as having site value in relation to the immediate surroundings and a regional context. Native hedgerows (H2 and H3) are habitats listed within the NHPI and UKBAP, however it is understood that these features will be retained within the development plans.

6.3.2 The site was dominated by amenity grassland and ornamental shrubs surrounding Building 1. These habitats were considered to be of a low ecological value, therefore any proposed vegetation removal of the grassland and ornamental shrub to facilitate access and the development are not considered detrimental to the overall biodiversity within the local area.

6.4 Breeding Birds

6.4.1 All wild birds, their eggs and nests are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird whilst nesting, or take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird while in use or being built. In addition, species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 or their dependant young are afforded additional protection from disturbance whilst they are at their nests.

6.4.2 The vegetation and Building 1 on site were considered to provide suitable nesting habitat for common bird species and have the potential to support populations of birds of local and national interest such as house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*). Any clearance works proposed on site should be timed to prevent direct or indirect impacts on individual birds, their young, eggs and habitats. Chapter 7 sets out important guidance on measures to avoid impacts on this species.

6.5 **Bats**

All bats in the United Kingdom and their habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). It is an offence to damage or destroy any bat roost, intentionally or recklessly obstruct a bat roost, deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat or intentionally kill, injure or take any bat.

6.5.1 *Roosting bats*

Scattered trees on site were not considered suitable to support roosting bats. Building 1 was identified as having 'low' suitability to support roosting bats due to the presence of potential roosting features within the building's external roof features. Building 1 is proposed for demolition, which may lead to the destruction of a roosting site of a protected species, and increased disturbance, injury or harm to individual bats and/or their young. The recommendations section of this report sets out important guidance on measures to avoid impacts on this species and measures to support its conservation status through ecological enhancement.

6.5.2 *Foraging and Commuting Bats*

Habitats within the application boundary support 'Low' suitability for foraging and commuting bats following BCT assessment guidelines. Linear features such as hedgerows and scattered trees on site provide suitable commuting routes connecting the site with the wider landscape, which is dominated by agricultural land and areas of woodland which provide high value for foraging and commuting bats. Although no areas of commuting habitat are proposed for removal as part of the development, mitigation of impacts on retained habitats would be desirable for the continued success of bats in the surrounding area.

Chapter 7 of this document sets out important recommendations to safeguard habitats used by bats upon completion of the works.

6.6 **Badgers**

6.6.1 Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992, in England and Wales it is an offence to wilfully kill, injure, disturb, or take any badger, or intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy, or obstruct access to any part of a badger sett.

6.6.2 There was no evidence of badger activity within zone of influence, however the rural location of the site and data records suggest that badgers may be present in the wider environment and could forage and commute through the red line boundary on an intermittent basis. Chapter 7 sets out important guidance on measures to avoid impacts on this species and measures to support its conservation status.

6.7 **Great Crested Newts**

Given the small scale of the proposed development, restricted to within the redline boundary, and the terrestrial habitat on site considered sub-optimal, GCN are not thought to be present within the redline boundary and it is deemed unlikely that GCN will be impacted by the development. Moreover, the high distance between the site and the nearest waterbody, located 480m from the application site means is less likely that individuals would commute through the site. As such GCN are not considered further within this report. However, if any evidence of this species presence is uncovered during development works, then works should cease and the advice of an ecologist sought.

6.8 **Reptiles**

Reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) making it illegal to intentionally kill or injure reptiles. No evidence of reptiles was recorded during the survey. However, the site supports suitable refugia within ornamental shrubs and hedgerows, as well as suitable basking areas within open areas of grassland, and as such there is a risk that harm or injury could be sustained to this group of species during the pre-construction clearing of the site Chapter 7 sets out a series of reasonable avoidance measures for this species.

6.9 **Mammal Species of Principle Importance**

6.9.1 West European Hedgehog

The NERC Act 2006, Section 41 highlights 17 species of principle importance within England. No evidence of West European Hedgehog was recorded during the survey. However, suitable habitats for this species were abundant within the wider area and the site supports suitable foraging habitats for this species including grassland, ornamental shrubs and hedgerow. Therefore, should foraging individuals be located on site, development works could result in injury or death of this species of principle importance during ground clearance works. Chapter 7 provides recommendations aimed at safeguarding this species during ongoing development works.

7 Recommendations

The site should be the subject of further ecological survey works and/or consideration to produce an species survey report, where the following indices should be assessed and evaluated further to establish the extent of impact to the ecological value of the application site.

This survey can be used to guide the Master Plan to ensure that mitigation is employed to retain and enhance local biodiversity. As with all development sites; efforts should be made to support National and Local Biodiversity Action Plans, and seek opportunities to incorporate ecological enhancement schemes within the proposed development. Such site enhancements are viewed positively in light of the NPPF (2019) which seeks biodiversity enhancements and net gain through the planning process.

7.1 Breeding Birds

Breeding Birds	Timing
Recommendations	
<p>Vegetation and buildings on site provide suitable habitat for breeding birds.</p> <p>Given their protection, development must be sympathetic to the value of this habitat and potential impacts on breeding birds, their eggs, nests and young. The breeding bird season is generally accepted as being between March and September. Consideration and implementation must be given to the following options most appropriate to the scheme.</p> <p>a) Undertake vegetation clearance between the months of October and February where possible.</p> <p>b) Any proposed clearance between the months of March and September should be subjected to a search for active birds' nests 24 hours prior to commencement of works. This should confirm whether all or some clearance is achievable.</p> <p>c) In addition to a pre-works check the clearance of vegetation between the months of March and September should be supervised by a suitably experienced ecologist.</p>	<p>Prior to and during site clearance.</p> <p>Optimal timing outside of the breeding season (Oct-Feb)</p> <p>If unachievable, follow steps in recommendation.</p>
Enhancement Prescriptions	

1 x Schwegler 1B bird box 26mm hole, 1 x Schwegler 1B bird box 32mm hole (all or similar approved) to be installed on the eastern face of trees on site at a height of at least 3 metres with an unobstructed flight path.	
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7.2 Roosting Bats

Roosting Bats	Timing
Recommendations	
<p>Building 1 was assessed as holding 'Low' suitability to support roosting bats. As such, at least one presence / likely absence survey should be undertaken at dusk in order to establish the presence or likely absence of bats within the building.</p> <p>Should evidence of roosting bats be found during the surveys, the number of surveys will be increased to three to allow roost characterisation.</p>	<p>May – September (In weather conditions conducive to finding bats)</p>
Enhancement Prescriptions	
Design proposals may require amendment following the results of further survey work.	

7.3 Foraging & Commuting Bats

Foraging & Commuting Bats	Timing
Recommendations	
<p>Scattered trees and hedgerows on site provide suitability to foraging and commuting bats and considered to have low stability for foraging and commuting bats according to BCT guidelines. It is anticipated that the majority of these habitats will be retained. However, the extent of disturbance to foraging and commuting bats within the area should be reduced where possible by employing a sensitive lighting scheme during construction works, and artificial security lighting should not be installed in a way which directs lighting at these boundary features or identified bat roost access points and commuting lines.</p> <p>If changes to lighting are required, a scheme should be devised and positioned to have minimal disturbance following the guidance of an ecologist. Any lighting used during the development should be directed away from the woodland habitat with overspill less than 1lux (ideally 0) onto suitable habitats.</p>	<p>During and post development</p> <p>Secured as a condition of planning</p>

7.4 [REDACTED]

Badgers	Timing
Recommendations	
It fo fo A e s e a	[REDACTED]

7.5 Reptiles

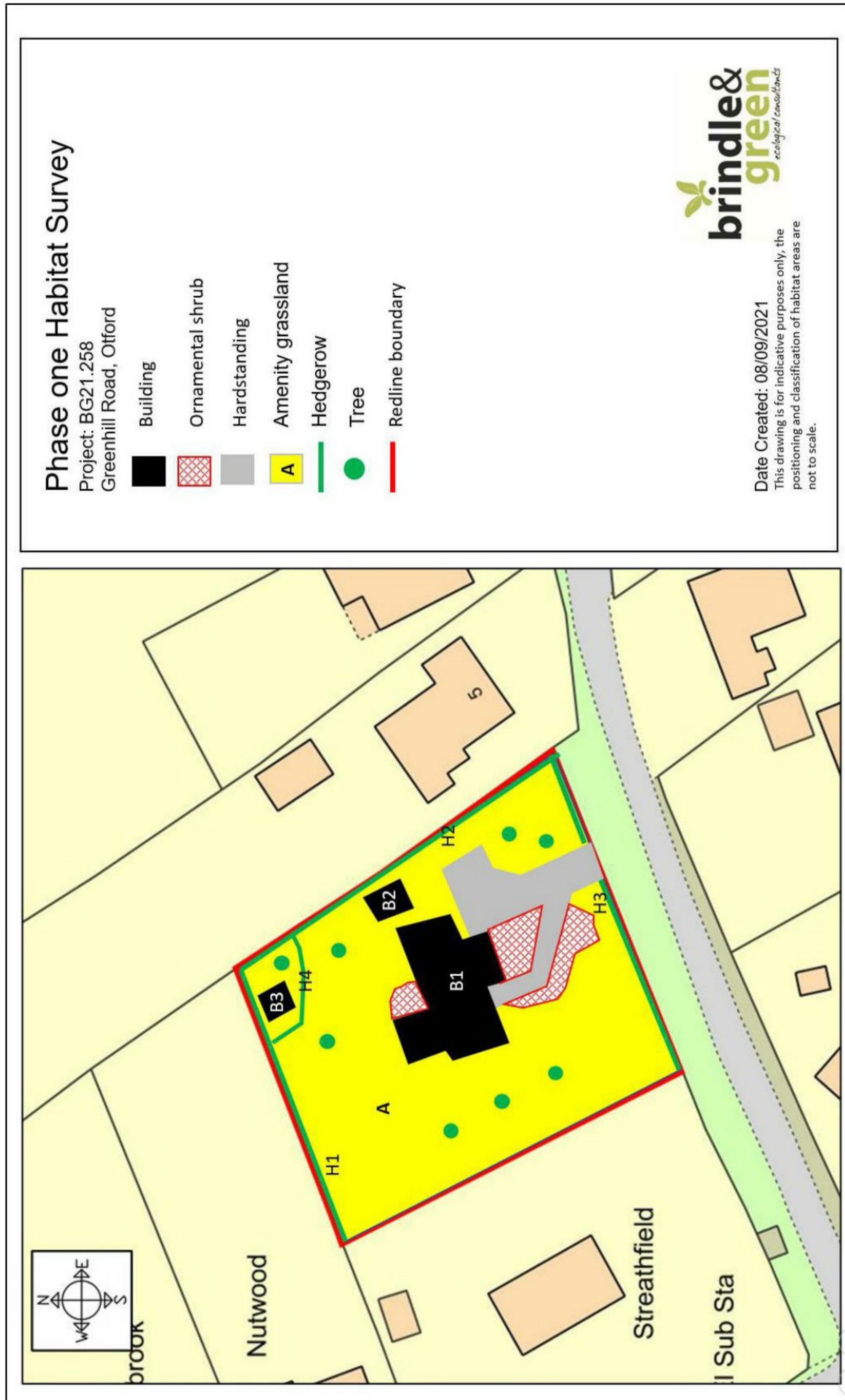
Reptiles	Timing
Recommendations	
<p>Habitat features such as amenity grassland were considered conducive to finding this species on site.</p> <p>As such, RAMS have been recommended which aim to mitigate any impacts to reptiles, in the event that they are found onsite.</p> <p>Clearance works of any suitable onsite habitat should be carried out by hand and supervised by a suitably experienced ecologist.</p> <p>If present, any vegetation cuttings, piles of wood and brash piles etc. should be dismantled by hand and removed from site. This should be done outside of the hibernation period (November to March) and when herptiles are likely to be active.</p>	During Site Clearance and Construction.

7.6 West European Hedgehog

Hedgehog	Timing
Recommendations	
The site contains some habitat suitable for the foraging of West European hedgehog. If individuals of this species are found during ground clearance works, works should cease until the individual has been	During Site clearance and construction

<p>moved away from the area of impact. Once removed, the area should be searched to confirm absence, and works can recommence.</p>	
<p>Enhancement Prescriptions</p>	
<p>If practical, any cleared vegetation can be stacked at a suitable location on site to provide habitat for this species post-development.</p>	

Appendix 1. Phase 1 Habitat Plan



Appendix 2. Phase 1 Target Notes

Plant Species List with DAFOR Scale

Scientific nomenclature follows Stace (2010) for vascular plant species and common names follow BSBI List of British & Irish Vascular Plants and Stoneworts.

Please note that this plant species list was generated as part of a Phase 1 Habitat survey, and does not constitute a full botanical survey.

Abundance was estimated using the DAFOR scale as follows: D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional, R = rare, LF = locally frequent

Common Name	Scientific Name	Estimated Abundance (DAFOR)
Apple	<i>Malus domestica</i>	O
Blackberry	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	A
Cinquefoil sp.	<i>Potentilla sp.</i>	A
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>	A
Creeping Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	A
dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	A
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	D
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>	F
Privet	<i>Ligustrum spp.</i>	D
Perennial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	D
Red Fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>	D
Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	A
Soft brome	<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	O
White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	F
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	O

Appendix 3. General References

- Bat Conservation Trust's 'Good Practice Survey Guidelines' (Rev 2012).
- Bell, S. McGillivray, D. (2006) *Environmental Law*. 6th ed. Oxford University Press.
- Byron, H (2000) *Biodiversity and Environmental Impact Assessment: A Good Practice Guide for Road Schemes*. The RSPB, WWF-UK, English Nature and the Wildlife Trusts, Sandy.
- Collins, J (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*, (3rd edition), Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Defra (2007) *Hedgerow Survey Handbook; A standard procedure for local surveys in the UK*. Defra, London.
- Gilbert G, Gibbons DW, Evans J. (1998) *Bird Monitoring Methods: Breeding Bird Survey* (pages 389-393). RSPB.
- Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989). *Surveying Badgers*.
- Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) *Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey* (2003). JNCC.
- Langton T, Beckett C and Foster J (2001) *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*. Froglife, Halesworth.
- Mitchell-Jones A.J. McLeish, A.P. (2004) *Bat Workers Manual* (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee.
- Mitchell-Jones A.J. *Bat Mitigation Guidelines* 2004. English Nature.
- Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*). *Herpetological Journal* 10 (4), 143-155.
- Rodwell, J.S. Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). *National Vegetation Classification: Users' handbook* (2006). JNCC.
- Rose, F. (2006). *The Wild Flower Key* (Revised edition). Penguin books Ltd, London
- Stace, C. (2010). *Field Flora of the British Isles*. Cambridge University Press
- Sutherland, W.J. (1996) *Ecological Census Techniques*. Cambridge University Press.
- Treweek, J. (1999) *Ecological Impact Assessment*. Blackwell Science.
- Williams, C. (2010) *Biodiversity for Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, A Technical Guide for New Build*. Riba Publishing.

Appendix 4. Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Articles of British wildlife and countryside legislation, policy guidance and both Local and National Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) are referred to. The articles of legislation are:

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Department for Communities and Local Government. National Planning Policy Framework. (2019)
- EC Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds 79/409/EEC
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Including National and Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP / HPI))
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997

Appendix 5. Legislation, Guidance and Methodology for Preliminary Ecological Appraisals.

Legislation, Guidance and Methodology

Breeding Birds

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. In addition, for species listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly cause disturbance at, on or near an 'active' nest.

The bird breeding season is typically accepted to start in February/March and continue through until September/October, however breeding birds can be found all year round depending on the given species and climatic conditions.

A sites habitat composition, locality, association to designated sites as well as current usage and management are all considered in the decision as to whether further bird related surveys are required. In addition, surveys may be recommended based on incidental bird records collected during a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, species identified within an ecological data search or target species listed within a local biodiversity action plan.

Bird surveys are carried out in accordance with:
Gilbert G, Gibbons DW, Evans J. (1998) *Bird Monitoring Methods*. RSPB.

Bats

Roosting Bats

All bats in the United Kingdom and their habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). It is an offence to damage or destroy any bat roost, intentionally or recklessly obstruct a bat roost, deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat or intentionally kill, injure or take any bat.

Areas of concern; can be encountered in many types of structure and care should therefore be taken when undertaking maintenance or demolition of suitable structures and trees.

Site assessments of buildings, commuting and foraging habitat and trees are undertaken in accordance with: Collins, J (2016) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines*, (3rd edition), Bat Conservation Trust, London. (Table 1 & 2 Below).

Preliminary Ecological Surveys look for evidence of bat presence such as feeding remains, bat droppings, roosting individuals and staining around potential access points. The suitability of site features are also assessed because absence of bat evidence, is not confirmation of a negative result.

Within trees, features searched for include; natural holes, woodpecker holes, cracks/splits in major limbs, loose bark, hollows, and dense cover of ivy over the tree. If evidence is found, or a building supports features conducive to supporting roosting bats then further presence / absence bat surveys and/or roost characterisation surveys will be recommended.

Foraging and Commuting bats

Habitat features on site are assessed for their suitability to support foraging and commuting bat populations. This assessment is independent from the suitability of the site to support roosting bats, and provides information on the likeliness of bat foraging activity within the local environment, and the dependence of individuals on these features for commuting to alternative roosting sites, foraging and migration.

Table 1: Guideline for assessing the suitability of a structure to support roosting habitat (Buildings and Trees), amended from Collins, J (2016)

Category	Description of roosting habitat	Number of additional presence / absence surveys required
Negligible Suitability	Suitable cavities may exist, but these are less than ideal.	None
Low Suitability	<p>A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. The feature and surrounding habitat do not provide enough shelter, conditions* space for larger roost types such as a maternity or hibernation roost.</p> <p>A tree of sufficient size and age to support roosting bats, but with no features observed from the ground, or the features only have a limited potential to support roosting bats.</p>	<p>One survey between May and August</p> <p>Trees – No further surveys required</p>
Moderate Suitability	A structure or tree considered to have one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions* and surrounding habitat but are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (With regard to roost type only – assessments are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Two surveys between May and September (with at least one survey undertaken between May and August) One Dusk emergence and One Dawn re-entry survey to ideally be undertaken at least two weeks apart.
High Suitability	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 habitat.	Three surveys between May and September (with at least two surveys undertaken between May and August) One Dusk emergence and One Dawn re-entry survey to be undertaken. The third survey can be either Dusk or Dawn, undertaken at least two weeks apart.
Confirmed	This category is where positive evidence of bats has been recorded. For example, bats are found; bat droppings may be present at a suitable location for roosting bats; existing bat records may be associated with the structure.	

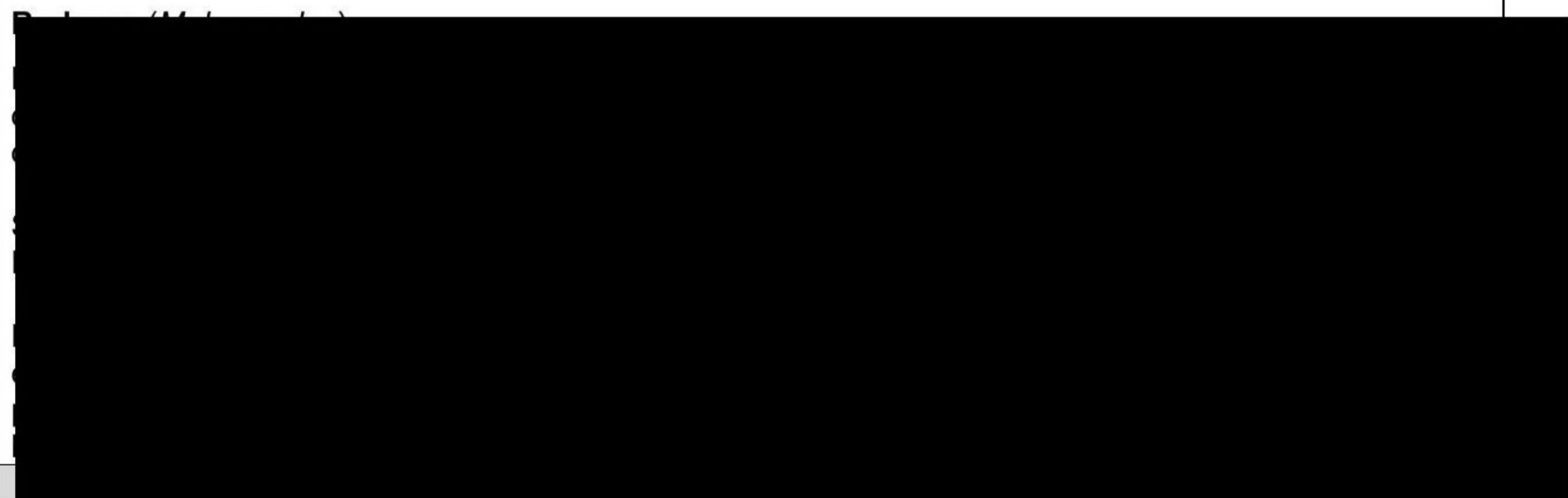
(* in this context conditions refers to the level of disturbance, light, height above ground, temperature, and humidity etc)

Table 2: Potential suitability of foraging and commuting habitat within an application boundary. Features should be assessed following this guide and professional judgement. Adapted from Collins J (2016)

Category	Description of commuting and foraging habitat	Survey effort to establish the value of commuting and foraging habitat**
Negligible Suitability	Negligible habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats.	None
Low Suitability	Habitat which could be used by low numbers of commuting bats such as an isolated gappy hedgerow, or an unvegetated stream unconnected to suitable habitat in the wider environment.	<p>Transect /spot count/ timed search survey: One survey visit per active season AND Static automated surveys: One location per transect, over a five-night period, per season.</p>

	Suitable, yet isolated habitat that could be used by foraging bats such as individual trees, or a patch of scrub.	
Moderate Suitability	<p>Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by commuting bats, notably tree lines, hedgerows or linked back gardens.</p> <p>Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape which could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, open water, scrub or grassland.</p>	<p>Transect /spot count/ timed search survey One survey visit per month At least one survey should comprise dusk and pre-dawn (or dusk to dawn) within one 24-hour period. AND Static automated surveys: Two locations per transect, over a five-night period, per month (April to October)</p>
High Suitability	<p>Continuous, High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape which is considered to be highly conducive to commuting bats including river valleys, stream, hedgerows, and woodland edge</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Site is close to and connected to known roosts.</p>	<p>Transect /spot count/ timed search survey Up to two survey visit per month (April to October)</p> <p>At least one survey should comprise dusk and pre-dawn (or dusk to dawn) within one 24-hour period. AND Static automated surveys: Three locations per transect, over a five-night period, per month (April to October)</p>

(** This is only a guide for survey effort required, the complexity of the site and the proposed disturbance / loss of features will determine the extent of works required on a site by site basis).



Amphibians

The great crested newt and natterjack toad are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the wildlife and countryside Act 1981. The legislation protects these amphibians and their place of shelter or protection which may extend 500m from the breeding pond.

Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*)

The great crested newt, is fully protected under the Conservation of Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended), making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, disturb or take great crested newts, intentionally or recklessly damage destroy or obstruct access to any place used by the animal for shelter or protection.

The legislation protects these amphibians and their place of shelter or protection which may extend 500m from the breeding pond. Sites should be considered suitable to support great crested newts if distribution and historical records suggest newts may be present, there is a pond within 500m of the development or the development site includes suitable terrestrial habitat refuges.

Great crested newt site assessments are undertaken in accordance with:
English Nature. (2001) *Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines*. English Nature, Peterborough. and
Langton T, Beckett C and Foster J (2001) *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*. Froglife, Halesworth.

Prior to a site visit, a desk study pond search is undertaken. When searching for ponds, Brindle & Green apply a total of 4 sources to establish their location. The following online sources are used:
OS MAPPING VIA PRO MAP, GOOGLE EARTH PRO, GOOGLE MAPS and MAGIC MAPS

Each identified pond (Access permitting) is subjected to a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment providing a score for each pond. This survey should be undertaken during the summer period to be fully accurate, however assumptions can be made out of season to guide survey recommendations.

Reptiles

Two species of reptile, the sand lizard and smooth snake, and their habitats are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. All other native British reptiles are protected against intentional killing and injury.

British reptiles are found in exposed, undisturbed areas, such as areas without cultivation with differing areas of grassland sward length. Suitable areas include abandoned sand quarries, fallow farmland land, heathland, post-industrial land, railway corridors etc. If these types of suitable features are found then further reptile surveys are recommended.

Edgar P, Foster J and Baker J (2010) *Reptile Habitat Management Handbook*. Amphibian and Reptile Conservation, Bournemouth.
Gent T and Gibson S (2003) *Herpetofauna Workers Manual*. JNCC, Peterborough.

Invasive non-native weeds

Plant species such as Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) are examples of invasive non-native weeds classified under Part II of Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside act 1981. Any person who causes these species to grow or spread in the wild by dumping or other means is guilty of an offence. The plant and the soil these species are found growing in are classified as waste material and should be treated as such.

A simple walk over survey of the site to determine if these species are present was carried out during the PEA. A full list of Schedule 9 species can be found at Plantlife.org

Botanical Value

There are 60 plant species listed under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 where it is an offence to intentionally pick or uproot or destroy any of these plant species.

During the PEA, a phase one habitat survey was undertaken following JNCC guidance. Further assessments are made to determine whether habitats comprise those identified as Habitats of principle Importance under S42 of NERC Act 2006.

Surveys can be undertaken year-round, however, if species or site conditions suggest higher botanical interest a full botanical survey will be recommended.

Ecological Enhancement

In March 2019 the Department for Communities and Local Government published the National Planning Policy Framework. This sets out planning policies on protection of biodiversity through the planning system. The document states - *opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments should be encouraged.*

For new buildings guidance such as in the following will be used:

Williams, C. (2010) *Biodiversity for Low and Zero Carbon Buildings, A Technical Guide for New Build.* Riba Publishing.

Designated Sites

Designated areas are Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) while others have been designated as having European protection status. Local authorities can also designate areas for nature conservation and in doing so may impose local authority byelaws to support local nature conservation objectives.

European designated status includes Special Protection Areas (SPAs) that preserve areas for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) which provides protection for habitats and the species which these habitats supports.

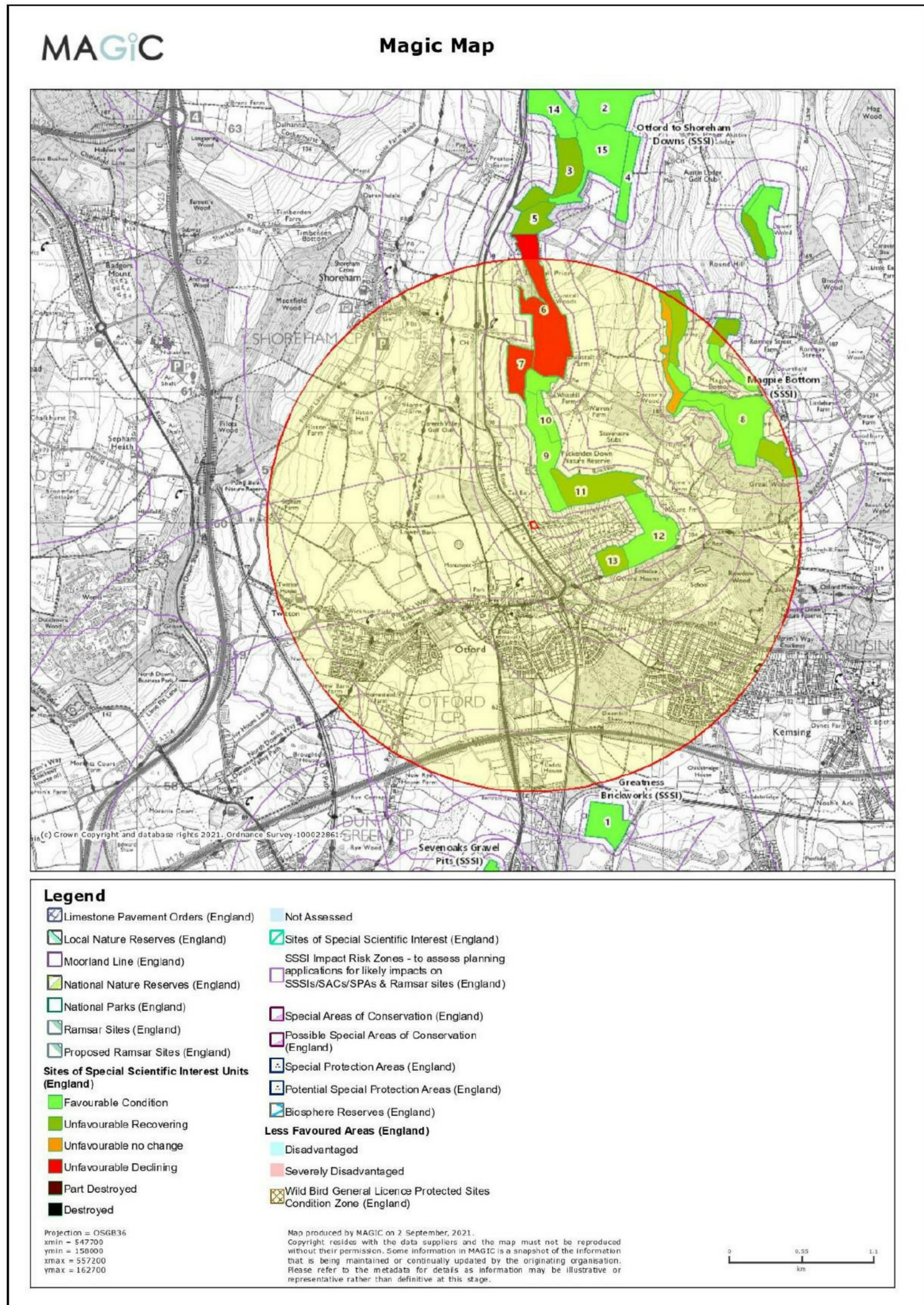
Information of Designated Protected Areas is received through Ecological Data Searches and Magic Map searches.

Appendix 6. Proposed Plans



Appendix 7. Magic Data

Two kilometre radius search of the project site.



Site Check Report Report generated on Thu Sep 02 2021
 You selected the location: Centroid Grid Ref: TQ53015998
 The following features have been found in your search area:

Granted European Protected Species Applications (England)

Case reference of granted application	EPSM2011-3117
Species group to which licence relates	Bat
Species on the licence	BLE
Site county of licence	Kent
Licence Start Date	25/08/2011
Licence End Date	30/09/2013
Does licence impact on a breeding site	N
Does licence allow damage of breeding site	
Does licence allow damage of a resting place	
Does licence allow destruction of breeding site	N
Does licence allow destruction of a resting place	Y
Does licence impact on a hibernation site	Unknown
NERC agreement reference	Unknown

Sites of Special Scientific Interest Units (England) - points

Name	MAGPIE BOTTOM
Reference	1062471
Site Unit Condition	UNFAVOURABLE RECOVERING
Citation	1006311
Hectares	5.58
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006311

Name	MAGPIE BOTTOM
Reference	1062472
Site Unit Condition	UNFAVOURABLE NO CHANGE
Citation	1006320
Hectares	4.25
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006320

Name	MAGPIE BOTTOM
Reference	1062473
Site Unit Condition	FAVOURABLE
Citation	1006321
Hectares	3.4
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006321

Name	MAGPIE BOTTOM
Reference	1062474
Site Unit Condition	FAVOURABLE
Citation	1006312
Hectares	2.12
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006312

Name	MAGPIE BOTTOM
Reference	1062475
Site Unit Condition	UNFAVOURABLE RECOVERING
Citation	1006315
Hectares	5
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006315

Name	OTFORD TO SHOREHAM DOWNS
Reference	1062552
Site Unit Condition	UNFAVOURABLE DECLINING
Citation	1006386
Hectares	22.37
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006386

Name	MAGPIE BOTTOM
Reference	1062477
Site Unit Condition	FAVOURABLE
Citation	1006317

Hectares	14.99
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006317
Name	OTFORD TO SHOREHAM DOWNS
Reference	1062554
Site Unit Condition	FAVOURABLE
Citation	1006375
Hectares	2.74
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006375
Name	OTFORD TO SHOREHAM DOWNS
Reference	1062553
Site Unit Condition	UNFAVOURABLE DECLINING
Citation	1006374
Hectares	5.9
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006374
Name	OTFORD TO SHOREHAM DOWNS
Reference	1062542
Site Unit Condition	FAVOURABLE
Citation	1006387
Hectares	2.9
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006387
Name	MAGPIE BOTTOM
Reference	1062478
Site Unit Condition	FAVOURABLE
Citation	1006322
Hectares	3.22
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006322
Name	OTFORD TO SHOREHAM DOWNS
Reference	1062555
Site Unit Condition	FAVOURABLE
Citation	1006376
Hectares	10.68
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006376
Name	OTFORD TO SHOREHAM DOWNS
Reference	1062545
Site Unit Condition	UNFAVOURABLE RECOVERING
Citation	1006381
Hectares	3.91
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006381
Name	OTFORD TO SHOREHAM DOWNS
Reference	1062544
Site Unit Condition	FAVOURABLE
Citation	1006388
Hectares	12.92
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006388
Name	OTFORD TO SHOREHAM DOWNS
Reference	1062543
Site Unit Condition	UNFAVOURABLE RECOVERING
Citation	1006377
Hectares	12.24
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006377
Sites of Special Scientific Interest Units (England)	
Name	MAGPIE BOTTOM
Reference	1062471
Site Unit Condition	UNFAVOURABLE RECOVERING
Citation	1006311
Hectares	5.58
Hyperlink	http://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/UnitDetail.aspx?UnitId=1006311

Appendix 8. Building Photographs

<p>Building 1</p> <p>Southern elevation</p>	
<p>Building 1</p> <p>Western elevation showing lifted roof tiles.</p>	
<p>Building 2</p> <p>Small wooden shed with pitched roof</p>	