

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Beeches Farm, Drayton Beauchamp, Buckinghamshire



Southeast and southwest elevations of Building 1

March 2021

**Carried out on behalf of
Archaylen Property Limited**

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Beeches Farm, Drayton Beauchamp Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A preliminary ecological appraisal was carried out at Beeches Farm, which is subject to a planning application for redevelopment to a flexible office scheme that will involve the demolition of the former agricultural buildings. The survey involved carrying out an internal and external inspection of the affected buildings for bats and nesting birds, and a general habitat and species survey of the land, with an assessment of the habitats and the potential for protected species to be present.

No evidence of bats was found in any of the buildings, which are all of negligible or no potential to support roosting bats due to their construction, the predominantly timber, breeze block and concrete panel walls and corrugated and profiled steel sheeting roofs providing no suitable roosting crevices and having poor insulation properties, with most of them very draughty internally. Building 2 has been converted to offices and a warehouse with the associated disturbance from these uses also deterring roosting bats. The demolition of the buildings would not require a licence from Natural England, though as the possibility of finding roosting bats can never be completely discounted, it is recommended that a schedule of precautionary measures is adopted during initial demolition work as outlined in the mitigation section at the end of the report.

None of the trees at the property are mature enough to contain any significant deadwood features able to support roosting bats, though the hedgerow and row of trees along the northeast boundary of the property will have potential to be used as foraging and commuting habitat by bats, and any new external lighting should be kept to a minimum and directed away from these features.

No evidence of nesting birds was found in the buildings, though a check for nesting birds will need to be undertaken prior to demolition work and the clearance of any woody vegetation, which should ideally avoid the bird nesting season.

No evidence of badgers or any reptiles and amphibians were recorded, with the mown amenity grassland and hard surfacing surrounding the buildings providing poor terrestrial habitat for these species. The property is within a green impact zone for great crested newts identified as part of the South Midlands District Licensing Scheme, which means there is only a moderate probability of great crested newts being present in the area, with no nearby records of newts, or ponds on or adjacent to the property that could support them. A great crested newt licence would not be required for the development, with appropriate timing of work and the implementation of avoidance measures minimising the risk of any other species in the area being harmed during site clearance and construction work.

The habitats at the property are of little biodiversity interest, consisting of regularly mown species-poor amenity grassland and unvegetated hardstanding, with planted conifers and other semi-mature ornamental trees. A hedge along the northeast boundary of the property is very gappy with a row of semi-mature planted trees alongside it on the adjacent land.

As many of the existing trees and the northeast hedge will be retained in the development, and any planting scheme will use a high proportion of indigenous or berry bearing tree and shrub species as they have a higher value for local wildlife. A new area of meadow grassland will be created and maintained on the amenity grassland at the southwest end of the property to provide a gain for biodiversity in the development as required by the NPPF, and the proposed green roofs on the new office buildings could also be seeded with a flowering lawn or wildflower meadow mixture, with bat roosting and bird nesting opportunities such as swift boxes provided in the new buildings.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Surveyor Experience and Competence

The survey was carried out by Philip Irving MCIEEM, who has worked for over twenty years as a Senior Ecologist for a Countryside Management Trust based in Bedfordshire, providing ecological advice on the management of Trust sites and writing management plans etc.

He also undertakes consultancy work including surveys for bats, great crested newts and other protected species, and holds a Natural England Bat Survey Class Licence CL18 (licence registration no: 2015-12411-CLS-CLS), and a great crested newt class licence CL08 (licence registration no: 2015-17174-CLS-CLS).

1.2 Site Description

Beeches Farm is located on the north side of Icknield Way c. 1km to the southeast of Drayton Beauchamp and c. 150m from the western edge of Tring at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SP908114. The buildings subject to the survey occupy c. 0.6ha of the c. 1.4ha property. The underlying geology is chalk.

The property is mostly surrounded by small, hedged fields of mixed farmland though there is a narrow field of unmanaged grassland and ruderal vegetation containing a couple of dilapidated sheds directly to the northeast, with an area of woodland c. 100m to the north. Much of the land to the southeast of Icknield Way opposite the property is currently being developed for housing with an industrial estate c. 150m to the east and the extensive existing housing estates of Tring beyond it. There are scattered agricultural and residential buildings c. 250m to the west, and the A41 dual carriageway is c. 300m to the southwest.

1.3 Proposed Works

Beeches Farm is subject to a planning application for redevelopment to a flexible office scheme that will involve the demolition of the former agricultural buildings. Given that the presence of protected species is a material consideration in the planning process (NPPF), a survey is required to provide information to the local planning authority (Buckinghamshire Council) on any impact the proposal is likely to have on any species present. Any impact identified on protected species will need mitigation proposals to be put forward to the planning authority to ensure any populations in the area are maintained at a favourable conservation status.

1.4 Aims of Survey

The aims of the survey are to:

- Assess the current use of the buildings by bats and other protected species.
- Conduct an ecological survey of the land to identify habitats and species present and assess their importance for biodiversity.
- Determine the impact of the proposed development on any protected species using the site.
- Produce a mitigation plan for any impact on the protected species to ensure the population is maintained at a favourable conservation status in the local area.
- Propose biodiversity enhancements to include within the development.

2. LEGISLATION RELEVANT TO PROTECTED SPECIES

2.1 Bats

Throughout Europe in the last 30 years there has been an awareness that bat populations are declining considerably. This decline combined with their special roosting requirements has led to them being given special protection by law. All bats and their roosts are protected by law under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), through inclusion in schedule 5, section 9. From 1st April 2010, a new version of the Habitats Regulations came into force in England and Wales to become the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations. This version of the legislation updates and consolidates all the amendments to the Regulations since they were first made in 1994 and effectively makes any disturbance of bats an offence. In summary, taken together the legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or capture bats;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats while they are occupying a structure used for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to areas used by bats for shelter or protection.

Structures used by bats for shelter are commonly known as bat roosts. Because bats tend to re-use the same roosts, legal opinion is that, the roost is protected whether or not the bats are present at the time. The appropriate Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (SNCO) must be consulted of any work that may affect bats, or their roosts. In England, the appropriate SNCO is Natural England who will advise as to whether work can be carried out, and if so, the methods to be used.

Developments that would contravene the protection afforded to bats under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 require a Habitat Regulations Licence issued by Natural England before any works can commence. Three tests must be satisfied before Natural England can issue a licence or permit otherwise prohibited acts. The Local Planning Authority will need to ensure that tests 1 and 2 have been satisfied and Natural England will need to be consulted regarding test 3. The three tests are:

1. That the development is 'in the interests of public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment' (Regulation 44 (2) (e)).
2. That there is no satisfactory alternative (Regulation 44 (3) (a)).
3. That the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species at a favourable conservation status in their natural range (Regulation 44 (3) (b)).

The legislation means that the developer will need to have a clearly documented compensation strategy to maintain the numbers of bats in the local area.

2.2 Nesting Birds

Nesting birds are protected by law under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which makes it an offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird, and take, damage or destroy any nest in use or being built or any egg.

2.3 Badgers

The main legislation protecting badgers in England and Wales is the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This act consolidates all previous legislation including the Badgers Act 1973 and the Badgers (Further Protection) Act 1991. Under the 1992 Act it is an offence to:

- wilfully kill, injure, take or attempt to kill, injure or take a badger;
- possess a dead badger or any part of a badger;
- cruelly ill-treat a badger;
- use badger tongs in the course of killing, taking or attempting to kill a badger;
- dig for a badger;
- sell or offer for sale or control any live badger;
- mark, tag or ring a badger;
- interfere with a badger sett by:
 - damaging a sett or any part thereof;
 - destroying a sett;
 - obstructing access to a sett;
 - causing a dog to enter a sett;
 - disturbing a badger while occupying a sett.

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

Badger setts can be disturbed inadvertently by earth moving operations, excavation and coring and any work that disturbs badgers whilst occupying a sett is illegal without a licence from Natural England. It is emphasised that badgers can be disturbed by work near a sett even if there is no direct interference or damage to the sett. For this reason, Natural England has provided guidelines on the types of activity which it considers should be licensed within certain distances of sett entrances. For example the following may require a licence:

- using very heavy machinery (generally tracked vehicles) within 30 m of any entrance to an active sett;
- using lighter machinery (generally wheeled vehicles), particularly any digging operation, within 20 m;
- light work such as hand digging or scrub clearance within 10 m.

2.4 Great Crested Newts

Great Crested Newt is listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), receiving protection for the animal and its habitat.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act it is illegal to undertake the following:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture great crested newt;
- deliberately disturb great crested newt;
- damage, destroy or obstruct access to and any structure or place used for shelter or protection by great crested newt;
- possess or transport a great crested newt or any parts of a great crested newt unless acquired legally;

- sell, barter or exchange great crested newt or any parts of great crested newts.

In order for otherwise illegal acts to proceed lawfully, the appropriate licence must be sought.

2.5 Reptiles

All common native reptile species (grass snake, adder, common lizard and slow-worm) are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it illegal to intentionally kill or injure a common reptile.

3. METHODOLOGY

A thorough internal and external inspection of the buildings was made on the 2nd March 2021 by Philip Irving MCIEEM, and evidence of use by bats and other protected species was looked for, for example droppings, urine streaks, nesting/roosting sites, feeding remains or live animals.

Bats may roost in a variety of situations including within the hollows of timbers, within gaps in brickwork, or below the ridge beam inside buildings. Buildings can be considered as potential roosts if cracks or holes in excess of 8mm x 12mm are present. Such gaps are large enough to allow the smallest species of bats to gain access. It is usual for bats to select roosting areas that are sheltered and warm, avoiding exposed draughty conditions.

Constraints - Bat roosts are of a transient nature and bats may move from roost to roost. A single bat may use a large number and wide variety of roosts during the year. This behaviour may result in some roosting sites not being encountered during the dates of the survey.

Following the inspection survey, a walkover survey of the land was made to identify habitats and species present. The survey also included a list of bird species seen or heard within or in close proximity to the site: a search for potential bat roosting opportunities in trees, looking for deadwood features such as holes, hollows and loose bark that could support roosting bats; evidence of badger activity, either setts or signs of foraging behaviour such as paths and dung pits; and an assessment of the potential for reptiles and amphibians to be present.

The weather at the time of the survey was cloudy with a light north-easterly breeze and a temperature of 5°C.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Desk Study

The property lies within the Chilterns AONB, and the nearest statutory protected site to the property is Wilstone Reservoir c. 1km to the north, which is part of Tring Reservoirs SSSI. This consists of built reservoirs for the Grand Union Canal containing open water and other wetland habitats including swamp, reedbed and wet woodland/scrub, and supporting good populations of wetland birds, dragonflies and other aquatic fauna. The other reservoirs in the SSSI are more than 1.5km to the northeast. Tring Woodlands SSSI is c. 1.3km to the southeast, which is also part of the Chilterns Beechwoods SAC, and consists of ancient semi-natural and secondary deciduous woodland. There are other extensive areas of ancient semi-natural and replanted woodland further to the southeast and southwest, many of them also SSSI. Closer to the property are occasional small areas of secondary deciduous woodland, the nearest c. 100m to the north and c. 0.5km to the west, with an area of lowland meadow priority habitat on the edge of Wilstone Reservoir c. 1.2km to the northwest.

There are frequent bat records from the area, mainly associated with Tring Reservoirs, including common and soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared, natterer's, brandt's, noctule, leisler's and Daubenton's, with a brown long-eared bat roost at Bucklands Wharf c. 1km to the west of the property. The majority of these are more than 2km from the property, with nearer records of noctule recorded to the south of Wilstone Reservoir c. 1km to the north, and a record of whiskered bat from Tring town centre c. 1.5km to the west. Other mammal records from the area include occasional hedgehog and badger. There are numerous records of amber and red listed and other protected birds from the area, many of them wetland species recorded from Tring Reservoirs including teal, pochard, shoveler, goosander, gadwall, marsh harrier, oystercatcher, and golden plover with other birds including skylark, meadow pipit, swift, house martin, swallow, yellowhammer, reed bunting, kestrel, linnets, house sparrow, grey partridge, dunnock, bullfinch, starling, song thrush, tawny owl, barn owl and lapwing. There are no records of reptiles within 1km of the property, with the nearest record of great crested newt c. 1.7km to the southwest near Dancersend.

4.2 Description

The buildings are as described below and numbered as shown on the plan at the end of the report:

Building 1 – Large redundant and dilapidated chick rearing shed, timber framed on a brick plinth, and clad externally with timber with internal plywood panelling. The low pitched corrugated sheeting roof is lined with plastic membrane and has numerous open roof vents. The building is undivided internally and contains a suspended mesh ceiling topped with insulation, and there is a large opening at the southeast end of the building, which combined with the roof vents, makes it very draughty internally. Two small side sections attached to the southwest elevation of the shed have mono-pitched felt and corrugated sheeting roofs with the felted roofed section covered in dense ivy (*Hedera helix*). Ivy is also present on the southeast corner and part of the northeast elevation of the main building.

Building 2 – Redundant chick rearing shed of similar construction to Building 1, though the northwest half of the building was converted to offices in the early 1990's with the southeast half used as a warehouse. New timber cladding was placed on the walls at this time and a profiled steel sheeting roof added, which is unlined internally. The offices have suspended ceilings which enclose a roof space above them, while the warehouse is undivided internally and open to the roof, though more enclosed offices have been recently constructed at the northwest end of the warehouse. A flat-roofed corrugated steel side section is attached to the northwest end of the northeast elevation.

Metal silos are present next to Buildings 1 and 2.

Building 3 – Former site office to the southwest of Building 2 of Nissan hut type construction, the north elevation constructed of breeze block with brick on the south elevation, and a corrugated sheeting roof, unlined internally. Dense ivy covers most of the south and east elevations and part of the west elevation, and there is an ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) sapling next to the southeast corner. The ivy is growing into the interior of the building, which contains small, enclosed rooms with plasterboard walls at the north and south end, the northern room used as an office, and the two at the south end used as a toilet and meter room. The interior of the building contains frequent cobwebs, the paint is flaking off the ceiling due to damp, and it is quite light internally due to numerous windows.

Building 4 – Small store to the west of Building 3, constructed of breeze block with a flat, corrugated sheeting roof, mostly open on the west elevation with ivy covering the southern half of the building.

Building 5 – Shed to the north of Building 1 constructed of timber on a breeze block plinth with a pitched corrugated sheeting roof and double wooden doors on the west elevation. The interior of the walls and roof are lined with plywood panelling, and the shed is partly divided internally into two

sections by a timber partition. A number of windows in the western room make it much lighter internally than the eastern room, which has no windows.

Building 6 – Shed to the north of Building 5 constructed of concrete panels with a metal framed, corrugated sheeting roof, unlined internally. The south end of the roof is missing and part of the roof frame and walls at this end are collapsing, making the undivided interior of the building very light and draughty. Dense ivy is present on the external and internal walls of the north and west elevations.

To the southwest of the buildings and not covered by the survey is an unaffected rendered brick bungalow with a pitched tiled roof containing hanging tiles on the gables. Adjacent to the northeast of the bungalow is a prefabricated concrete panel garage.

High wooden panel fencing borders the area containing the buildings, which are mostly surrounded by regularly mown amenity grassland, with similar amenity grassland to the northwest and southeast of the buildings, and to the southwest of the bungalow. All the areas of grassland are typical of a species-poor MG7-Lolium community dominated by perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*) with frequent fescue sp. (*Festuca* sp.) and occasional other grasses such as cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Mosses are also often abundant in the sward, especially among sparse grassland which has partly covered concrete and tarmac bases to the northwest of the buildings, and on a tarmac track along the northwest edge of the southwest area of grassland. The few herbs recorded included locally frequent daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) and occasional white clover (*Trifolium repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinalis*), germander speedwell (*Veronica chamaedrys*), common ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), dovesfoot cranesbill (*Geranium molle*) and common mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*). The disturbed margins also contain occasional weed species such as red dead nettle (*Lamium purpureum*), common groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), smooth sow-thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), hairy bittercress (*Cardamine hirsuta*) and welshed thistle (*Carduus crispus*). A small area of unmanaged ruderal vegetation is present along the northeast edge of the property around Buildings 5 and 6, and is, most of it typical of an OV24-Urtica-Galium community typical by nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) with locally frequent cleavers and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) and occasional other coarse species such as broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), ground ivy and mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*). There is also occasional young regeneration of elder (*Sambucus nigra*), dog rose (*Rosa canina*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*).

Four young Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) and a cherry sp. (*Prunus* sp.) are present on the edge of the amenity grassland alongside the wooden fence to the southeast of the buildings, with scattered conifers and two larger cherry trees along the southeast roadside boundary of the property and the entrance drive.

There is a relatively new post and rail fence along the northeast boundary of the property, with a hedge and row of semi-mature trees alongside it on the adjacent land. The hedge has been heavily cut back and is very gappy with long sections missing, and consists of frequent ivy-covered elders and occasional hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*) and dog rose, with the adjacent row of trees mostly consisting of ash and occasional cherry.

Occasional scattered hawthorn, buckthorn, dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and ash saplings are present alongside a post and wire on the northwest boundary of the southwest grassland, with the fence continuing along the whole length of this boundary, and a post and rail fence along the southeast, roadside boundary of the property. In the southwest corner of the property next to a gated entrance is a small stand of mature elders covered in dense ivy and occasional wild clematis (*Clematis vitalba*), and one young ash, with bramble (*Rubus* agg.) and ivy covering the ground.

4.3 Species Surveys

No evidence of bats or nesting birds was found in any of the buildings. None of the trees at the property are mature enough to contain significant deadwood features able to support roosting bats though the larger conifers would be likely to support nesting birds.

Birds recorded in and around the property consisted of woodpigeon, jackdaw, blackbird, robin and goldfinch.

No evidence of badgers was found and no reptiles or amphibians were recorded.

5. ASSESSMENT

5.1 Bats

No evidence of bats was found in any of the buildings, which are all of negligible or no potential to support roosting bats due to their construction, the predominantly timber, breeze block and concrete panel walls and corrugated and profiled steel sheeting roofs providing no suitable roosting crevices and having poor insulation properties, with most of them very draughty internally. Building 2 has been converted to offices and a warehouse with the associated disturbance from these uses also deterring roosting bats. In spite of the results of the survey, the presence of bats cannot be completely dismissed, and there is always the potential for direct disturbance of any hidden roosting bats that may be present during demolition work.

None of the trees at the property are mature enough to contain any significant deadwood features able to support roosting bats, though the hedgerow and row of trees along the northeast boundary of the property will have potential to be used as foraging and commuting habitat by bats, and any new external lighting should be kept to a minimum and directed away from these features. The property will only be a very small part of any bats foraging area so the impact on bats in this respect would be low.

5.2 Nesting Birds

No evidence of nesting birds was found in the buildings, though a check for nesting birds will need to be undertaken prior to demolition work and the clearance of any woody vegetation, which should ideally avoid the bird nesting season.

5.3 Great Crested Newts and Reptiles

No reptiles and amphibians were recorded, with the mown amenity grassland and hard surfacing surrounding the buildings providing poor terrestrial habitat for these species. The property is within a green impact zone for great crested newts identified as part of the South Midlands District Licensing Scheme, which means there is only a moderate probability of great crested newts being present in the area, with no nearby records of newts, or ponds on or adjacent to the property that could support them. A great crested newt licence would not be required for the development, with appropriate timing of work and the implementation of avoidance measures minimising the risk of any other species in the area being harmed during site clearance and construction work.

5.4 Habitats and Vegetation

The habitats at the property are of little biodiversity interest, consisting of regularly mown species-poor amenity grassland and unvegetated hardstanding, with planted conifers and other semi-mature ornamental trees. A hedge along the northeast boundary of the property is very gappy with a row of semi-mature planted trees alongside it on the adjacent land.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS AND MITIGATION

6.1 Bats

Bats and their roosts are protected by law under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and a European Protected Species license to derogate from this protection would be required to allow demolition work to be undertaken if a roost was present and the proposed activity is likely to result in an offence, such as significant alterations to or loss of bat roosts.

As there is no evidence of roosting bats in any of the buildings and they are all of negligible or no potential to support them, an EPS licence would not be required to demolish them, though it would be wise to proceed with work in a way that will enable any bats that may be hidden to be detected and dealt with appropriately. The following measures will be implemented to reduce the impact of disturbance to bats as a result of the proposed work:

- Preliminary demolition work will be undertaken with care, with all roof coverings and ivy removed by hand. In the unlikely event that any bats or evidence of them is discovered, work will stop and Natural England contacted for advice, and if necessary, a licence will be obtained before work proceeds.
- All people working on the site will be made aware of the potential presence of bats, the protection afforded them and the methods of working required to avoid harm to bats.

New roosting opportunities for bats could be included within the development by incorporating one or two artificial roosting cavities such as Habitat bat boxes into the replacement buildings to provide a net gain for biodiversity as required by the NPPF.

Any external lighting in the development will be low level and directed away from the hedgerow and row of trees along the northeast boundary of the property and any new bat roost features, to minimise any impact on foraging, commuting and roosting bats. Where external lighting proves necessary it should consist of LED light sources or be fitted with directional accessories (i.e. hoods, cowls, shields, louvres) to minimise light spillage and direct light away from sensitive areas.

6.2 Nesting Birds

As nesting birds are protected by law under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, initial demolition work, and any clearance of woody vegetation, will ideally be timed to avoid the bird nesting season (which is generally from March to September). If this isn't possible, a check for nesting birds will be undertaken prior to works commencing. If an active nest is found, work must cease and an appropriate sized buffer established around the nest. The buffer must remain intact until it has been confirmed that the young have fledged and the nest is no longer in use.

New nesting opportunities for birds such as artificial swift boxes and house sparrow terraces could also be considered for incorporation into the new buildings to provide a further gain for biodiversity.

6.3 Badgers

No evidence of badgers was found at the site, though any excavations which are necessary will either be covered at night or fitted with suitable ramps in order to prevent any foraging badgers or other mammals such as hedgehogs from becoming trapped. These will be in the form of branches or boards placed on the bottom of the trench, with their upper ends above ground level and touching the sides, or sloping ends left in trenches. Any pipes that need to be left overnight on site will also be capped to avoid animals becoming trapped.

6.4 Amphibians and Reptiles

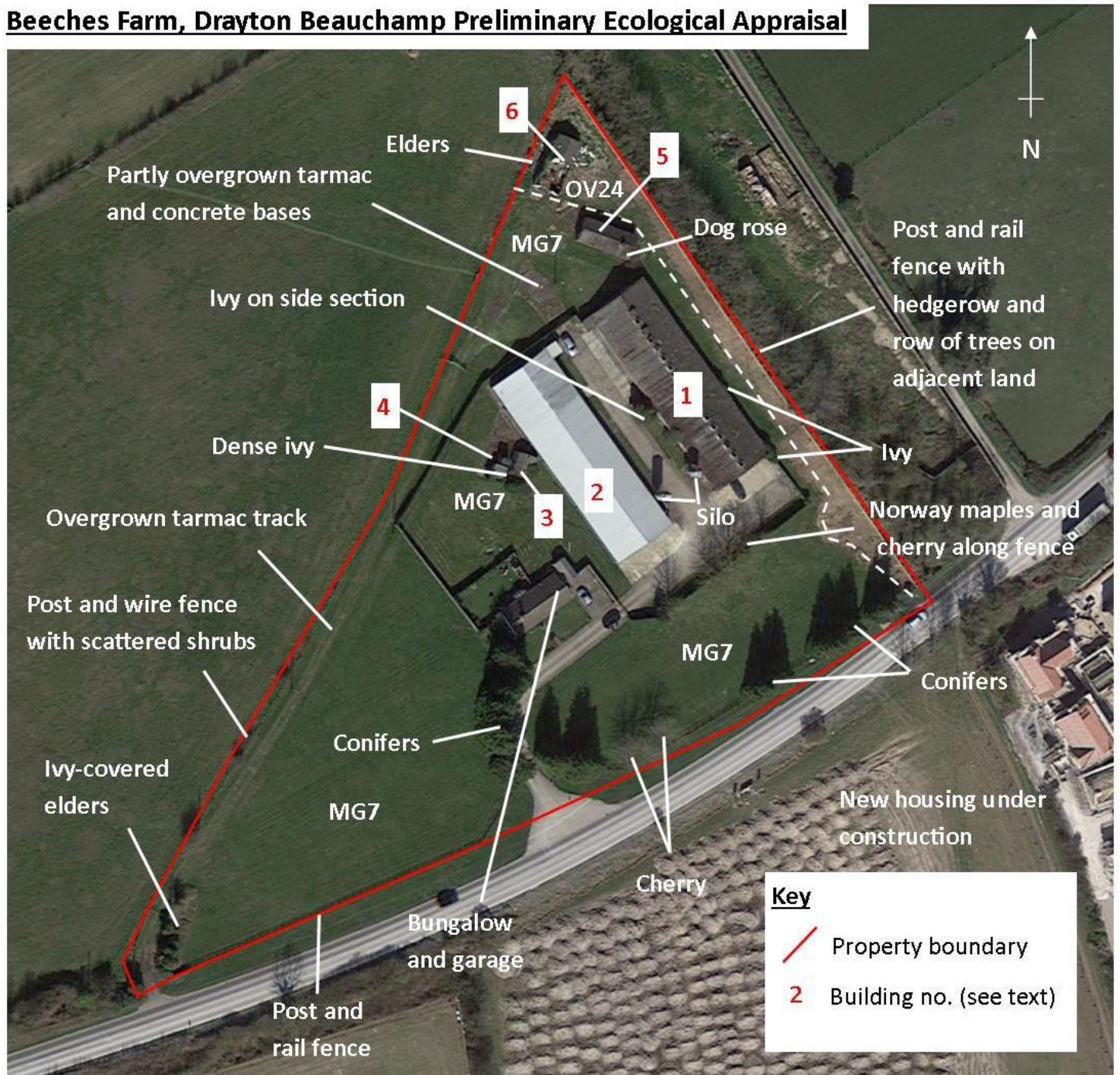
It is recommended that the following avoidance measures are implemented to reduce the impact of disturbance to any reptile or amphibian species that may be present in the area:

- All vegetation due for clearance will be strimmed to approximately 100 mm high using hand tools only, or kept close cut from February onwards prior to work commencing, to deter any species from using it as cover, and to make it easier to find any that may be present. Any animals that are found will be collected and moved to suitable nearby areas of undisturbed vegetation, such as the adjacent land to the northeast or the nearby woodland. If great crested newts are found whilst works are on-going despite following good practise guidelines, all work will stop and the situation re-assessed and a mitigation licence applied for if necessary. Any handling of this species will only be carried out by someone with a great crested newt license.
- If work is carried out at a time of year when these species are likely to be active, the following precautions will be carried out:
 - any holes or trenches will be covered over at night to prevent animals falling into them;
 - any materials stored overnight will be raised above ground on pallets to prevent animals sheltering underneath them, and building waste will be put in skips and not be left lying around to prevent them taking refuge in it;
 - concrete will not be left unset overnight, or suitable barriers erected to prevent them accessing the concrete.

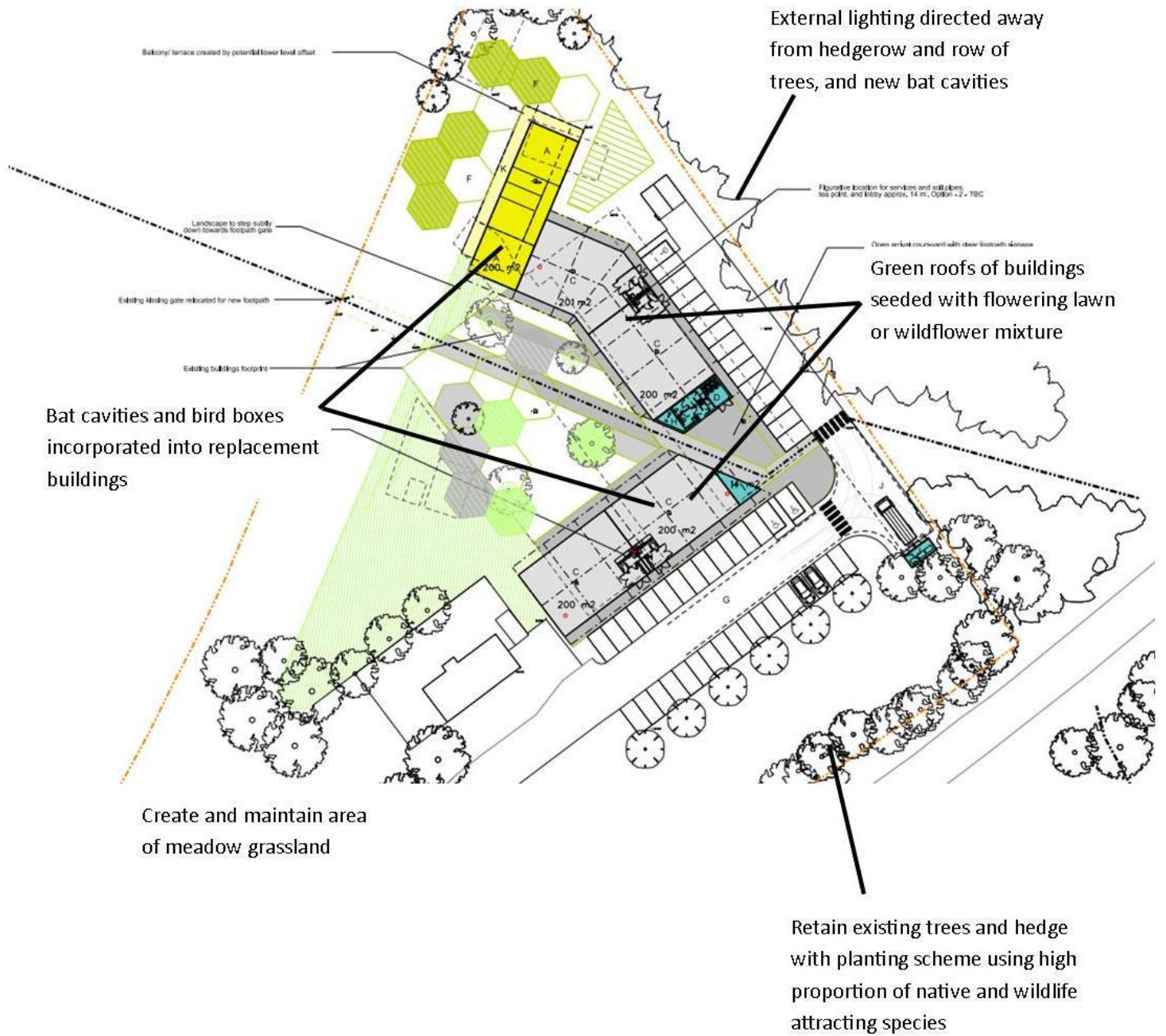
6.5 Habitats and Vegetation

As many of the existing trees and the northeast hedge will be retained in the development, and any planting scheme will use a high proportion of indigenous or berry bearing tree and shrub species as they have a higher value for local wildlife. A new area of meadow grassland will be created and maintained on the amenity grassland at the southwest end of the property to provide a gain for biodiversity in the development as required by the NPPF, and the proposed green roofs on the new office buildings could also be seeded with a flowering lawn or wildflower meadow mixture.

Beeches Farm, Drayton Beauchamp Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



Beeches Farm, Drayton Beauchamp — Potential Biodiversity Enhancements in Development



APPENDIX

Photographs



Northeast elevation of Building 1



Interior of Building 1



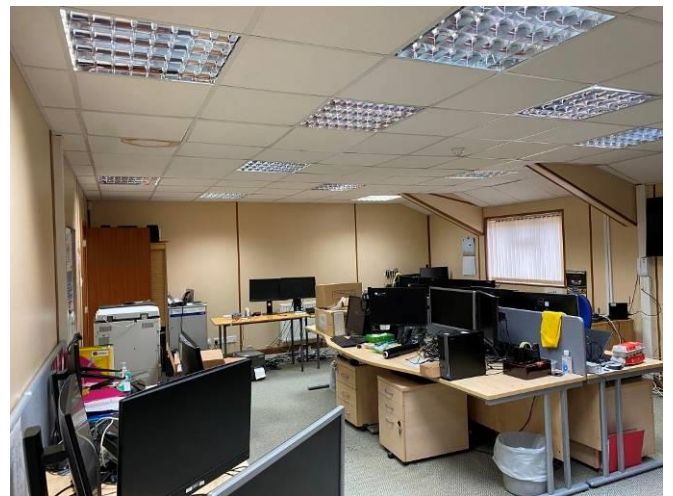
Side sections on southwest elevation of Building 1



Southeast and northeast elevations of Building 2



Southwest and southeast elevations of Building 2



Offices in northwest half of Building 2



Roof space above offices in Building 2



Interior of warehouse in southeast half of Building 2



South and east elevations of Building 3



North and west elevations of Building 3



Enclosed office at north end of Building 3



Enclosed rooms at south end of Building 3



North and west elevations of Building 4



Interior of Building 4



South and west elevations of Building 5



North and east elevations of Building 5



East room of Building 5



West room of Building 5



South and east elevations of Building 6



North and west elevations of Building 6



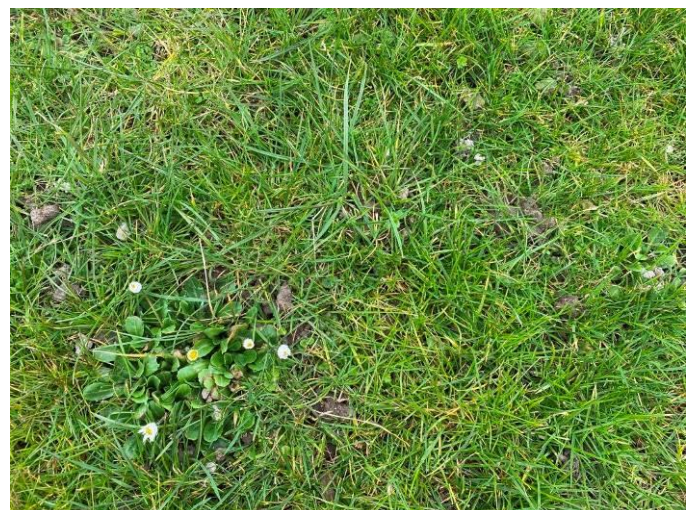
Interior of Building 6



Bungalow to southwest of buildings



Amenity grassland to southwest of Buildings 3 and 4



MG7 grassland to southwest of Buildings 3 and 4



Amenity grassland to southeast of buildings



Amenity grassland to southwest of bungalow



MG7 grassland to southwest of bungalow



Grass covered hard surfacing at north end of site



Ruderal vegetation to north of Building 5



Norway maples alongside southeast fence of yard



Conifers on southeast boundary



Conifers along entrance drive



Hedgerow and row of trees along northeast boundary



Ivy-covered elders in southwest corner of site



Northwest boundary of southwest grassland