

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Wyndcote Cottage, Knowsgate, Northumberland, NE19 2SH



Client: Rosemary Walton

Date: 6th May 2022

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DISCLAIMER

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The evidence which we have prepared and provided is true and in accordance with the guidance of The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

Checking surveys may be required if the results of this report are to be used to inform a planning or management decision more than 12 months after the date of this survey¹ (25/04/2022).

¹ <https://cieem.net/resource/advice-note-on-the-lifespan-of-ecological-reports-and-surveys/>

SUMMARY

Purpose

Tyne Ecology was commissioned by Rosemary Walton (the client) to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of Wyndcote Cottage, Knowsgate, Northumberland, NE19 2SH, to ascertain the ecological impacts of the demolition of an existing building and erection of a new dwelling.

Methodology

A PEA was undertaken consisting of a desk study and field survey undertaken in April 2022 following the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2018) guidelines and standard Phase 1 Habitat Survey protocol (JNCC, 2010).

Key Issues

Habitats

- The proposed development will lead to a loss of approx. 8m² of amenity grassland, a widespread and common habitat of low ecological value.

Protected/priority species

- The building being demolished has an ivy-cover corner that provides potential habitat for nesting birds.
- Compost heaps, brash and log piles are located at the north of the site and if cleared during could disturb wildlife e.g. hedgehogs.
- The porch of the existing building has potential for roosting bats.
- Trenches dug during construction could trap mammals e.g. hedgehog.

Pollution

- Light pollution could result from introduced artificial light.

Recommendations

1. One bat emergence/re-entry survey is required during the active bat season to confirm presence/likely-absence of a bat roost in the building. The survey must be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive. One surveyor is required to provide full coverage of the potential roost features in the porch.

Reason: Bats and their roosts are protected by law.

2. Biodiversity mitigation/enhancements must be undertaken to deliver net gains for biodiversity.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty of 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity', under the NPPF (July 2021).

Mitigation/enhancements opportunities:

- Plant mixed native species hedging along boundaries where possible.
 - Existing brash and log piles to be left as habitat piles for wildlife. The already decaying deadwood holds high ecological habitual value.
 - Retain compost heap.
 - Install an integrated bat box in the new build.
3. To avoid disturbance to wildlife, any artificial lighting must follow guidelines set by the Institute of Lighting Professionals (<https://theilp.org.uk/ilp-guidance-note-1-the-reduction-of-obtrusive-light-has-been-updated/>) and be directed away from nearby vegetation e.g., hedgerows, trees.
4. Works must be undertaken outside the bird nesting season March to August inclusive. If this period cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building and vegetation must be undertaken immediately prior to the commencement of works. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.

Reason: All wild bird species, their eggs and nests are protected by law.

5. Any pits or holes dug during construction phase must be covered at night and or a rough plank left in trenches positioned with the bottom of the plank against and parallel with the side of the trench, at an angle no greater than 30 degrees, to allow animals to escape.

Conclusions

Following required bat survey, and agreement with the client on biodiversity mitigation and enhancements, an Ecological Impact Assessment Report must be prepared for submission to the local planning authority.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Tyne Ecology was commissioned by Rosemary Walton (the client) to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of Wyndcote Cottage, Knowsgate, Northumberland, NE19 2SH, to ascertain the ecological impacts of the demolition of an existing building and erection of a new dwelling, centred at grid reference NY 9881 8574.
- 1.2 The principal author of this report is Rachel Galler, who holds a BSc Honours degree in Biological Sciences, and accredited agent against Bat Survey Licence Level 2 (Class Licence) 2020-44753-CLS-CLS.

Site description

- 1.3 The site is surrounded by open farmland in rural Northumberland. The site is immediately west of the A696, in between the villages of Otterburn and Belsay.
- 1.4 The site surveyed is approximately 0.07ha containing grassland and an existing corrugated metal building with concrete paving at the front and rear. The boundaries contain trees, a stonewall, and fencing.
- 1.5 The aerial image of the site (Figure 1) shows the site is surrounded by open farmland, pockets of coniferous plantations and deciduous woodlands, and the River Wansbeck runs south of the site.



Figure 1: Aerial image of the site (red line denotes site boundary). Image used under licence (Google 2022). Imagery date 27/04/2022.

Proposed development

- 1.6 The proposed development is to demolish the existing building and erect a new two-storey house on the same footprint. An access track for vehicles to turnaround on is to be created on the current grassland area at the southeast of the building.

Purpose of this report

- 1.7 The purpose of the preliminary ecological appraisal and report is to provide sufficient information for the local planning authority to fully assess the potential ecological impacts of the proposed development, or to identify what further information is required before a full assessment can be made.
- 1.8 The result of the PEA has been used to inform whether further surveys are required, or to establish the need for, and extent of, any mitigation or compensation measures required as part of the proposed development.

2 METHODOLOGY

Desk study

2.1 The sources consulted, and the type of information obtained are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Sources of biodiversity and ecological records.

Source	Information requested (search buffer from site centre/boundary)
Environmental Records Centre North East (ERIC NE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Protected and Priority species (1km)Local Wildlife Sites (1km)
Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) ²	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Designated Sites (1km)Priority Habitats (1km)EPSMLs (2km)
NBN Gateway	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Protected/Priority species (1km)

2.2 The search buffers are considered to be sufficient to cover the potential zone of influence (Zoi)³ of the proposed development.

2.3 The impact of the proposed development on the biological integrity of any nearby designated protected sites has been fully considered.

2.4 Maps related to the desk study are shown in Appendix III.

2.5 A search was undertaken for previous ecological survey information for the site using the local planning portal⁴.

2.6 A preliminary roost assessment (PRA) was made of trees and structures on-site.

Field survey

2.7 A field survey was undertaken on the 25/04/2022.

2.8 All habitats present within the site with the potential to support rare, protected, or otherwise notable species of flora or fauna (together with any direct signs) were noted.

2.9 In the context of this report, rare, protected, invasive, or otherwise notable species of flora or fauna were those considered to meet any of the following criteria:

- Species protected by UK or European legislation (see Appendix VI).
- UK Post 2010 UK Biodiversity Framework priority species or Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) species.
- Nationally rare or nationally scarce species.
- Species of Conservation Concern (e.g. JNCC Red List, RSPB/BTO Red or Amber Lists).
- NERC Act 2006. Section 41: Species of Principal Importance in England.

² <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

³ <https://www.biodiversityinplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/BDS-Guidance-final.pdf>

⁴ <https://publicaccess.northumberland.gov.uk/online-applications/>

- 2.10 A Phase 1 habitat map was drawn up, incorporating target notes, used to highlight features of ecological interest (see Appendix I).
- 2.11 The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended), makes it an offence to release or allow to escape into the wild, any animal, plant, or micro-organism not ordinarily resident in the UK (as listed in Schedule 9 of the Act). Plant species listed in Schedule 9 were searched for during the survey. Examples include species such as Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*).

Habitat Loss

- 2.12 Any habitat loss area was calculated using QGIS, based on current development plans shown in Appendix II.

Survey information

- 2.13 The field survey was undertaken on the 25/04/2022 by Rachel Galler, who holds a BSc Honours degree in Biological Sciences, an accredited agent against Bat Survey Licence Level 2 (Class Licence) 2020-44753-CLS-CLS. Rachel has two years' experience undertaking ecological field surveys.

Limitations and assumptions

- 2.14 The desk study and field survey will not produce a comprehensive list of plants and animals as this will be limited by factors that influence their presence (e.g. activity and dormancy periods). An assessment can however be made of the habitats within the survey area, their nature conservation value and potential to support protected or priority species.
- 2.15 The development plans supplied do not define the exact measurements.
- 2.16 The roof inside of the porch area could only be viewed externally.
- 2.17 No other limitations were encountered, or assumptions made, during either the desk study or the field survey and it is considered that with the access gained and recording undertaken an accurate assessment of the site's ecological value has been made.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Desk study

Designated sites - Statutory

3.2 Statutory sites have statutory protection, and the local authority has a duty to consult the relevant statutory nature conservation agency if they permit activities that could affect a site.

3.3 There were no statutory designations found within 1km (see Table 2).

Designated sites - Non-statutory

3.4 Non-statutory sites do not have statutory protection, but local authorities are expected to take account of the need to protect them in deciding their planning and development policies

3.5 There is one non-statutory designations within 1km of the site (see Table 2).

Table 2: Summary of designated sites within 1km of the site (magic.gov.uk).

Site name	Designation	Description/ reason for designation	Distance & direction (approx.)
Ottercops Burn and Mosses	Local Wildlife Site	Important environment for fauna and flora. It has protected natural features and heritage that is preserved.	750m NW.

Priority Habitats

3.6 A search of the magic.gov.uk database for priority habitats within a 1km radius of the site was made (see Table 3).

Table 3: Priority Habitats with 1km (magic.gov.uk)

Habitat	Distance & direction (approx.)
Deciduous woodland	490m S
Blanket bog	650m N
Upland heath	870m NW
Lowland meadows	880m SW

Priority and protected species

3.7 Table 4 summarises records received from the Local Environmental Records Centre (LERC) of priority and protected species within 1km of the site.

Table 4: Summary of records from LERC.

Protected & priority		# of records			Further details
Groups	Species	Onsite	<500m	>500m	
Mammals (excluding bats)	Badger	0	4	2	1 sett with 15 active holes within 1km of the site
	Red Squirrel	0	1	3	Most recent recording is 2012
	Hedgehog	0	0	0	

	Otter	0	0	0	
	Water vole	0	0	0	
Bats	Soprano pipistrelle	0	0	3	
	Common pipistrelle	0	0	11	
Birds	Farmland birds	Curlew and lapwings were recorded within 1km and are included within the UK BAP. Both of which are within the Northumberland BAP and also in addition are the golden plover and redshank, all of which are of conservation concern (red status)			
	Barn owl	0	0	0	
Reptiles	Grass snake	0	0	2	Most recent record from 1954
Invertebrates	Wall butterfly	0	0	0	
	Dingy Skipper	0	0	0	
Amphibians	No priority species recorded.				
Crustacean	White-clawed crayfish	0	0	4	Most recent record from 1999
Plants	No priority/protected species recorded.				

3.8 A search of the magic.gov.uk database found no European Protected Species Licences have been issued within 2km of the site (see Table 5).

Table 5: Granted EPSMLs within 2km of the site

Case reference of granted application	Distance & direction (approx.)	Species effected	Licence start date:	Licence end date:	Impacts allowed by licence
-	-	-	-	-	-

3.10 White-clawed crayfish have been recorded in Rayburn and Horncastle (https://neenp.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/White_Clawed_Crayfish.pdf).

Field Survey

Timing and conditions

3.11 Prevailing weather conditions during the field survey are summarised within Table 7.

Table 7: Summary of weather conditions during the field survey

Date	Weather conditions			
	Temp [°C]	Cloud cover [Oktas]	Wind speed [Beaufort scale]	Precipitation
25/04/22	9	5	2	None

3.12 The distribution and extent of habitats observed within the site is illustrated in the PEA plan (see Appendix I). An accompanying species list (including scientific names) can be found in Appendix V.

3.13 The habitats present onsite are described in detail in Table 8, using the standard Phase 1 Survey Habitat Classification hierarchical alphanumeric reference codes (JNCC, 2010).

3.14 The site was classified according to the following habitat types; A1.3.2 mixed woodland plantation, A3.2 scattered coniferous trees, J1.2 amenity grassland, J2.5.1 derelict wall, concrete/paving.

Table 8: On-site habitats and linear features.

Habitat type / Linear feature	Species present	Other observations
A1.3.2 mixed woodland plantation	Sitka spruce (<i>Picea sitchensis</i>), sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>), elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>), beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>), foxgloves (<i>Digitalis</i>), green alkanet (<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>), common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>)	The understorey of this woodland contained foxglove, green alkanet and nettles.
A3 scattered coniferous trees	Sitka spruce	These trees lined the west boundary
J1.2. Amenity grassland	White clover (<i>Trifolium repens</i>), creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>), bitter dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>), lesser celandine (<i>Ficaria verna</i>), stinging nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), dandelion (<i>Taraxacum</i>), cleaver (<i>Galium aparine</i>), wood forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>), fringed willowherb (<i>Epilobium ciliatum</i>), green alkanet (<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>), Daisy (<i>Bellis perennis</i>), spiny sowthistle (<i>Sonchus asper</i>), spear thistle (<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>), snowdrops (<i>Galanthus</i>)	Arisings present suggest that it has recently been mowed. The small grassed area next to the porch on B1 was denser and contained willowherb. A Japanese quince is planted on the southern boundary at the access gate.
J2.5.1 Derelict wall	Common nettle (<i>Urtica dioica</i>), wood forget-me-not (<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>)	
Concrete/paving	Cracks contained spiny sowthistle (<i>Sonchus asper</i>), dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>) and fringed willowherb (<i>Epilobium ciliatum</i>).	Moss covered the concrete path on the east boundary.

Invasive/Non-native species

3.15 None.

Onsite fauna/birds

3.16 The following species were recorded during the survey; European rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*), white-tailed bumblebee (*Bombus lucorum*), bullfinch (*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*), carrion crow (*Corvus corone*), great tit (*Parus major*), chaffinch (*Fringilla coelebs*), blackbird (*Turdus merula*), rook (*Corvus frugilegus*).

Preliminary Roost Assessment

A description of the structures/trees inspected during the PRA can be seen in Table 9. The building is referred to as B1.

Table 9 - Description of buildings

Building/Tree Reference	Building/Tree type/section	Description	Development plans
B1	Detached building	<p>Pitched metal corrugated building, timber fascia, and a combination of single and double glazed windows.</p> <p>Internally, the loft space was partially boarded, mineral wool insulation, and no roof lining.</p>	Demolish.

3.17 The results of the Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) can be seen in Table 10.

Table 10 - PRA Results

Building/Tree Reference	Evidence of use by bats	Bat signs and internal and external Potential Roost features (PRFs) & access points	Evidence of birds
B1	None.	<p>Small gaps were found that would allow access by crevice roosting bats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaps under the eaves of both the east and west elevations of the porch 	None.

Links to surrounding habitat

3.18 The site has good connectivity with the wider landscape, with trees immediately north and west of the building, neighbouring open farmland, and a river 500m south.

4 INTERPRETATION AND ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 This section concerns an assessment of ecological impacts resulting from the proposed development.

Designated sites

- 4.2 Local Wildlife Site, Ottercops Burn and Mosses is within 1km NW, however, the development will not impact this site.

Priority Habitats

- 4.3 Deciduous woodland is mapped (on MAGIC) within 500m south of the site boundary. It will not be directly impacted by the development.
- 4.4 Blanket bogs are protected in the regional BAP as these habitats occur over a layer of peat that covers extensive areas; formed over the past 1,500 - 9,000 years. An active blanket bog, which supports a significant area of peat-forming vegetation means that its conservation is considered to be of the highest priority. The habitat is 650m north of the site and will not be impacted.
- 4.5 Lowland meadow habitat is included within the regional BAP as a species-rich wet grassland inundated with water/permanently moist, and are particularly important for breeding wading birds. This priority habitat is 880m SW of the site and will not be impacted.

Habitats

- 4.6 A small area, approx. 8m² of amenity grassland will be lost. This is a widespread and locally common habitat of low ecological value.

Priority and protected species

Bats

- 4.7 2 species of bat have been recorded locally. All records are of bats commuting or foraging and no roosts were located on a search on the Local Environmental Records Centre (LERC) within 1km.
- 4.8 No linear features will be lost through the development.
- 4.9 The porch area of the existing building, which is to be demolished, cannot be ruled out of potential roosts as internally the structure was limited for observing. If roosts are present, they will be impacted by the development.
- 4.10 The habitat locally is excellent for foraging and commuting habitat with woodland, linear features and water courses.
- 4.11 It is considered that the building has low suitability for roosting bats.

Reptiles

- 4.12 There is record of grass snake and common lizard within 1km of this site (LERC).
- 4.13 There is a suboptimal habitat within the crevices of the stonewall on the northern boundary.
- 4.14 There is no risk to reptiles during development of the site.

European otter

- 4.15 There are no records of otters within 1km of the site.

- 4.16 Otters could be present in the nearby River Wansbeck but the development is of a scale and nature that it is considered highly unlikely that there will be any impact on otters as a result of the proposed development.

- 4.17 There is no suitable habitat within the site's boundary, but otters could traverse the site.

Great crested newt (GCN)/amphibians

- 4.18 There is one local record of common toad within 1km of the site recorded on NBN atlas.

- 4.19 It is considered highly unlikely that there will be any impact on GCNs and/or amphibians as a result of the proposed development.

Birds

- 4.20 Within 1km of the site, the NBN atlas presents 7 species of birds that were recorded that are on the regional BAP, and are of conservational concern (red status), and 1 species of bird listed as schedule 1.

- 4.21 Local Environmental Records Centre findings show that there are 4 species of birds recorded that are on the regional BAP, including curlew, lapwing, redshank and golden plover. Both curlew and lapwing are protected within the UK BAP.

- 4.22 There is potential for nesting of garden birds within the ivy on the SE corner of the building to be demolished, however, no active bird nests were observed during the assessment. Nesting season is March and August (inclusive).

- 4.23 There are habitats suitable for nesting birds around the northern boundary of the site but these will not be impacted by the development plans as no vegetation or trees are being removed or disturbed.

Red squirrel

- 4.28 There are 4 records for red squirrel within 1km, only 1 was recorded <500m.

- 4.29 A mixture of sitka spruce, sycamore, beech, and elder line the northern boundary of the site. Red squirrels are unlikely to be impacted by the development as no woodland is planned to be removed or disturbed.

Western European hedgehog

- 4.30 Hedgehogs were not observed onsite during the field survey; however, it is likely that hedgehogs are present within the local area.

- 4.31 There were 2 records of hedgehogs found within 2km on the NBN local atlas, however none found within 1km from neither NBN or LERC records.

- 4.32 Any trenches dug during the development could trap hedgehogs.

White -clawed crayfish

- 4.33 There were four records of white-clawed crayfish within 1km on the NBN atlas data and LERC, with the most recent from 1999 at a burn 500m south of the site.
- 4.34 This species is protected and listed within the regional BAP due to huge decline in population.
- 4.35 There is no risk of pollution into nearby watercourses that may impact this species as there is no sewage systems being installed.
- 4.36 The development will not impact crayfish.

Invertebrates

- 4.37 Due to the low species diversity in the mowed grassland on site it is not considered that invertebrates will be significantly impacted by the development.

Plants

- 4.38 There were no priority or protected plant species found on site.

Impacts of the proposed development

- 4.39 Table 8 summarises the impacts of the proposed development on protected species that are or may be present onsite in the absence of mitigation and habitat enhancements.

Table 11: Impacts of the proposed development on protected species.

Species	Negative impact* (plus scale and nature)
Bats	Low - potential within the building that is to be demolished.
European otter	None.
Great crested newt/amphibians	None.
Reptiles	Low.
White-clawed crayfish	None.
Birds	None.
European badger	None
Red squirrel	None.
Western European hedgehog	Low.
Invertebrates	None.
Plants	None.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Designated sites

5.1 There is one designated site within 1km, however, this will not be impacted by the development.

Priority habitats

5.2 Priority habitats will not be impacted by the development plans.

Habitats

5.3 A small area of amenity grassland will be lost. This is a widespread and common habitat of low ecological value.

Protected Species

Bats

5.4 One emergence/re-entry survey of the porch of the building that is to be demolished will be required to confirm presence/absence.

Reptiles

5.5 No further surveys required.

European otter/badger/hedgehog

5.6 No further surveys required.

Red squirrels

5.7 No further surveys.

Great crested newt/Amphibians

5.8 No further surveys required.

White -clawed crayfish

5.9 No further surveys required.

Birds

5.10 No further surveys required.

Plants

5.11 No further surveys required.

Invertebrates

5.12 No further surveys required.

Recommendations

- 5.13 One bat emergence/re-entry survey is required during the active bat season to confirm presence/likely-absence of a bat roost in the building. The survey must be completed during the optimal survey period mid-May to August inclusive.

One surveyor is required to provide full coverage of the potential roost features in the porch.

Reason: Bats and their roosts are protected by law.

- 5.14 Biodiversity mitigation/enhancements must be undertaken to deliver net gains for biodiversity.

Reason: The Local Planning Authority has a statutory duty of 'minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity', under the NPPF (July 2021).

- 5.15 Mitigation/enhancements opportunities:

- Plant mixed native species hedging along boundaries where possible.
- Existing brash and log piles to be left as habitat piles for wildlife. The already decaying deadwood holds high ecological habitual value.
- Retain compost heap.
- Install an integrated bat box in the new build.

- 5.16 To avoid disturbance to wildlife, any artificial lighting must follow guidelines set by the Institute of Lighting Professionals (<https://theilp.org.uk/ilp-guidance-note-1-the-reduction-of-obtrusive-light-has-been-updated/>) and be directed away from nearby vegetation e.g., hedgerows, trees.

- 5.17 Works must be undertaken outside the bird nesting season March to August inclusive. If this period cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the building and vegetation must be undertaken immediately prior to the commencement of works. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.

Reason: All wild bird species, their eggs and nests are protected by law.

- 5.18 Any pits or holes dug during construction phase must be covered at night and or a rough plank left in trenches positioned with the bottom of the plank against and parallel with the side of the trench, at an angle no greater than 30 degrees, to allow animals to escape.

Overall Conclusions

- 5.19 Following a further bat survey, and agreement with the client on biodiversity mitigation and enhancements, an Ecological Impact Assessment Report can be prepared for submission to the local planning authority.

6 REFERENCES

Collins, J. (ed.) (2016) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (April, 2018) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. CIEEM, Winchester.

Institute for Environmental Assessment (1995). Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment. E & FN Spon, Hong Kong.

Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey; A technique for environmental audit. Reprinted by JNCC, Peterborough.

Schedule 1 bird list, <https://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/advice/wildlife-and-the-law/wildlife-and-countryside-act/>

Northumberland and UK BAP, Red and Amber listed species as listed in 'The Population Status of Birds in the UK - Birds of Conservation Concern: 2002-2007'

APPENDIX I: PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP



Figure 2: Phase 1 habitat map.

APPENDIX II: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN

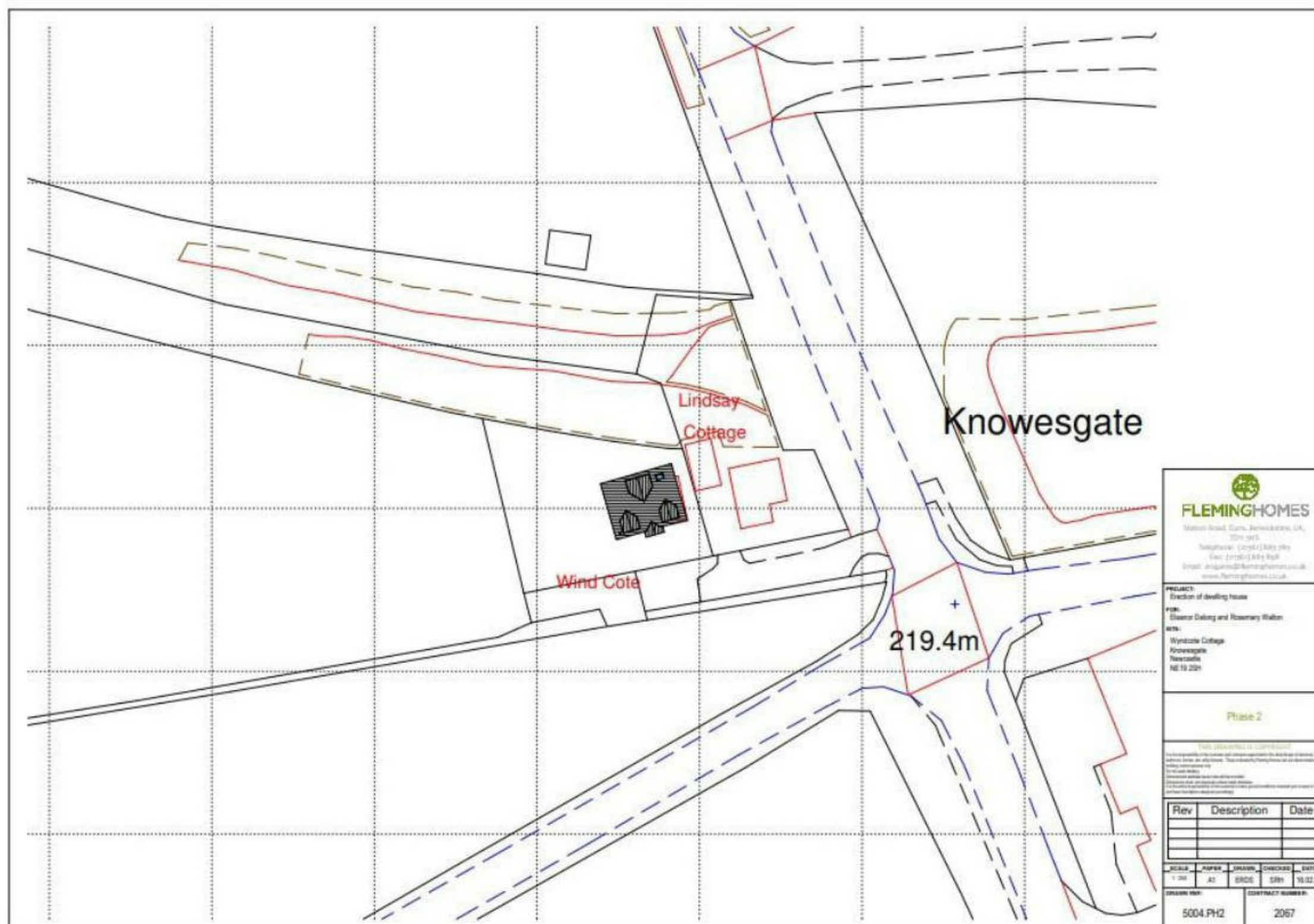


Figure 3: Proposed development plan.

MAGiC

Statutory sites

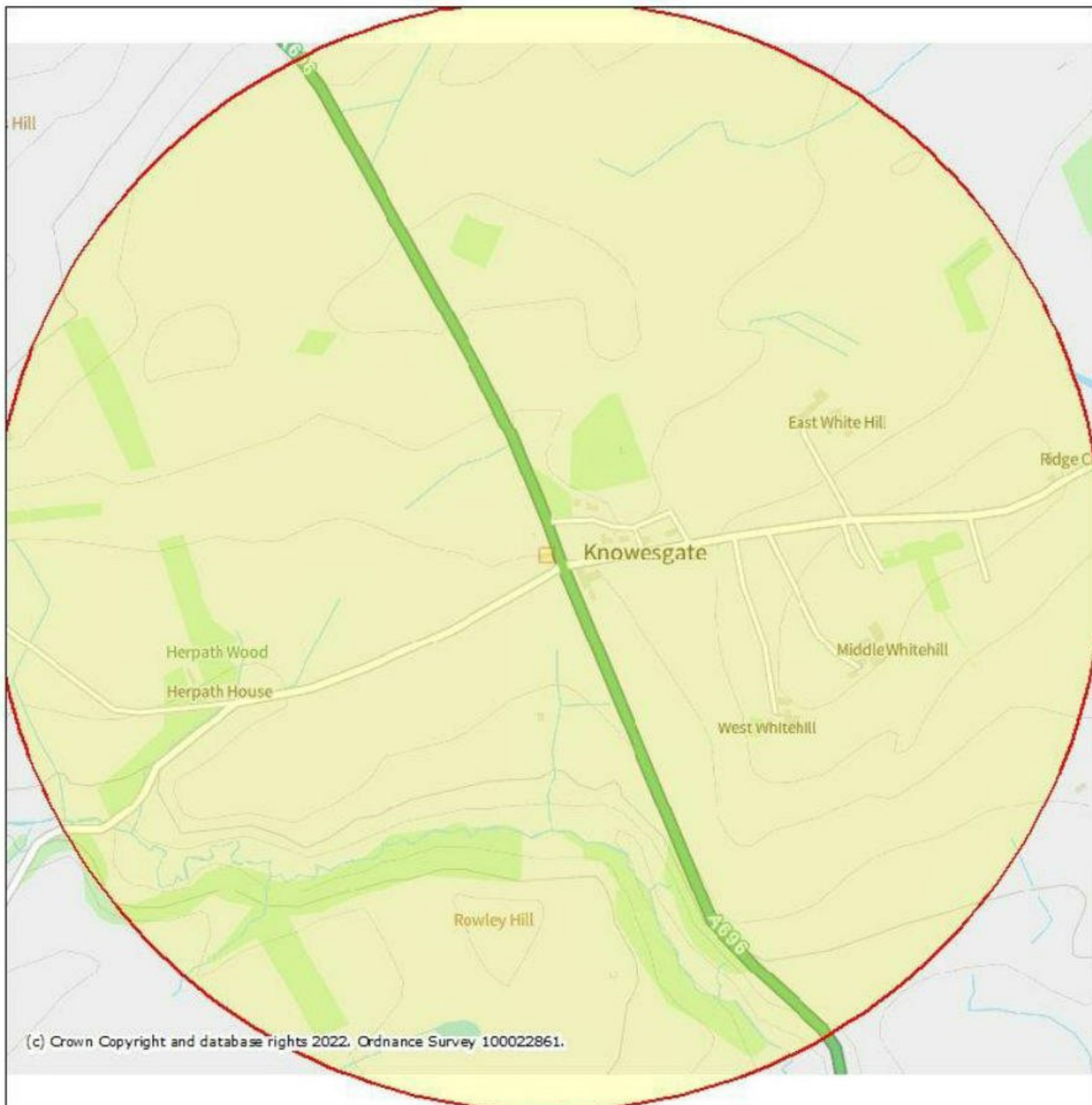


Figure 4: Statutory designated sites.

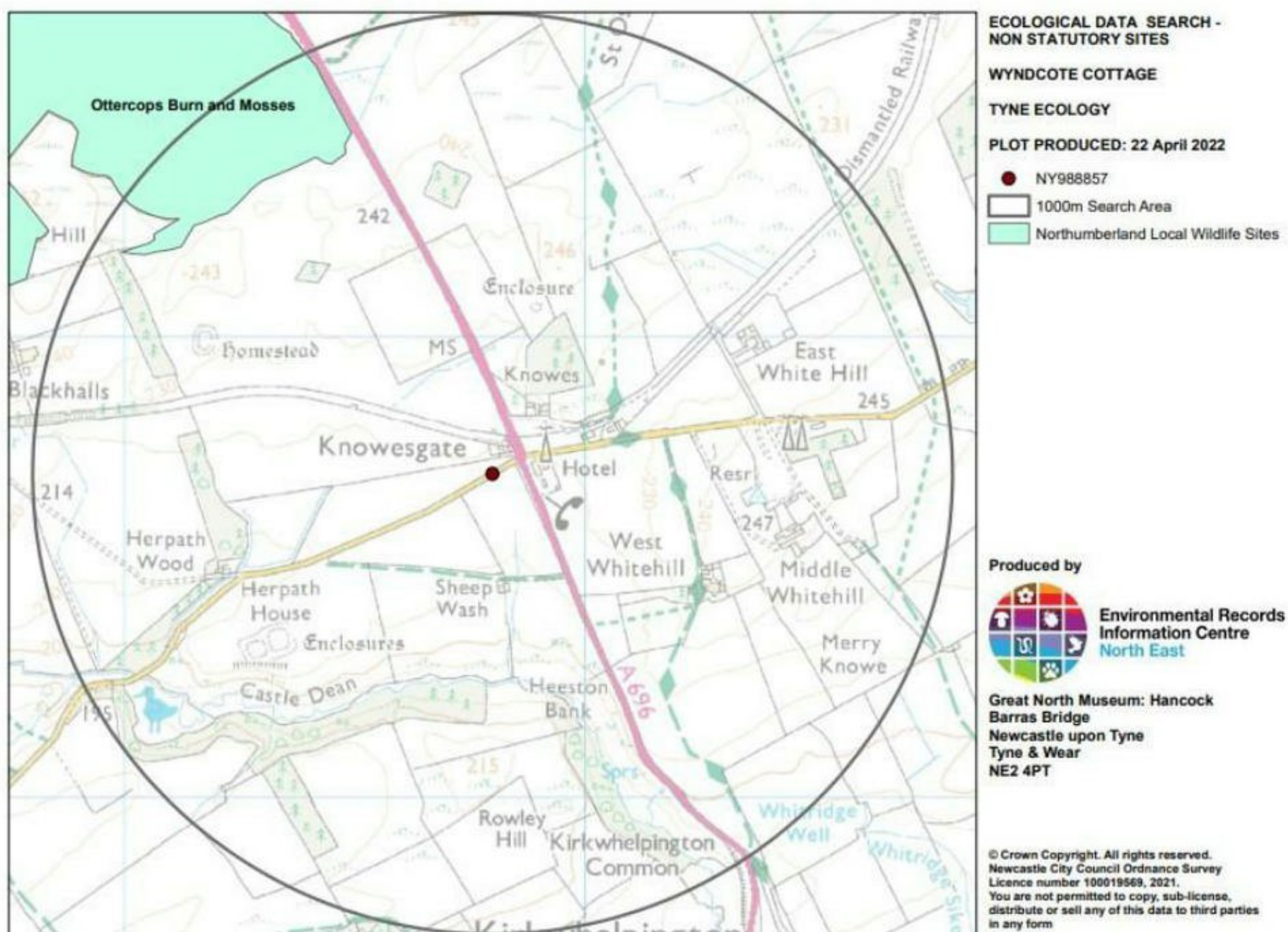


Figure 5: Non-statutory designated sites.

MAGiC

Priority habitats



Legend

- Priority Habitat Inventory - Lowland Meadows (England)
- Priority Habitat Inventory - Upland Heathland (England)
- Priority Habitat Inventory - Blanket Bog (England)
- Priority Habitat Inventory - Deciduous Woodland (England)

0 0.3 0.6
km

Projection = OSGB36

xmin = 396800

ymin = 584900

xmax = 400800

ymax = 586600

Map produced by MAGiC on 21 April, 2022.
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Figure 6: Priority habitats.

MAGiC

EPSMLs

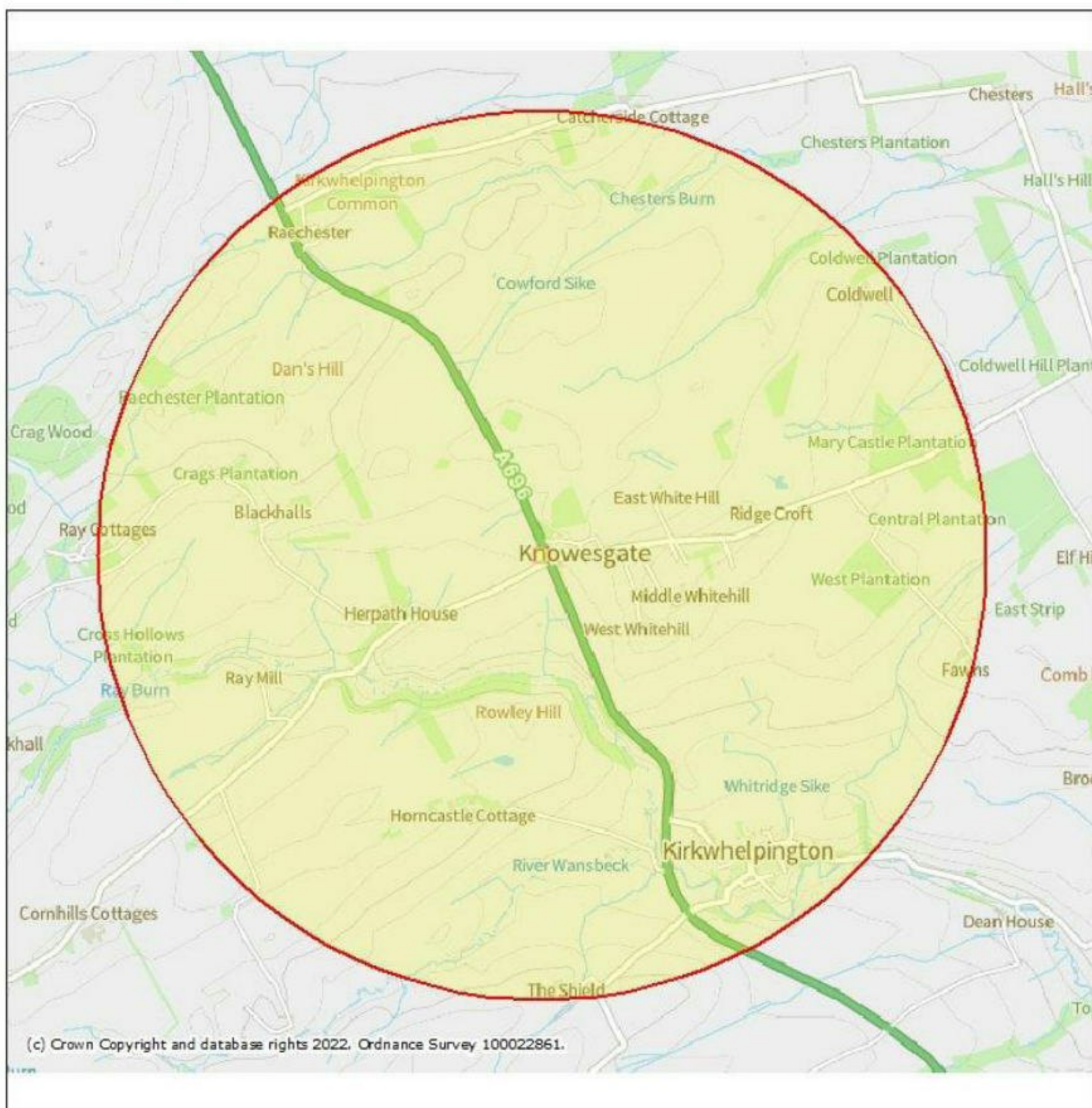


Figure 7: Granted EPSLs.

APPENDIX IV: FIELD SURVEY PHOTOGRAPHS



Figure 8: North boundary, a mixture of coniferous and deciduous trees



Figure 9: East boundary, fence lined with Lawson cypress hedging in neighbouring garden



Figure 10: South boundary



Figure 11: West boundary



Figure 12: Amenity grassland



Figure 13: Paved area at the south of the site



Figure 14: Grassland and paving at the north of the site



Figure 15: Access track



Figure 16: Surroundings



Figure 17: B1 - north elevation



Figure 18: B1 - east elevation



Figure 19: B1 - south elevation



Figure 20: B1 - west elevation



Figure 21: B1 - internal



Figure 22: B1 - gaps under eaves of porch on the E and W elevations



Figure 23: B1 - porch internal



Figure 24: B1 - dense ivy cover on SE corner of the building, potential for nesting birds

APPENDIX V: SPECIES LIST

To be submitted to the Local Environmental Records Centre.

Site Name:	Wyndcote Cottage, Knowsgate, Northumberland, NE19 2SH	Submitted by:	Tyne Ecology
Grid Ref:	NY 9881 8574	Verified by:	Rachel Galler

Common name	Scientific Name (if known)	Comment
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>	
Spiny sowthistle	<i>Sonchus asper</i>	
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum</i>	
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	
Bitter dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	
Cleaver	<i>Galium aparine</i>	
Wood forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>	
Fringed willowherb	<i>Epilobium ciliatum</i>	
Green alkanet	<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>	
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	
Sitka spruce	<i>Picea sitchensis</i>	
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>	
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	
Japanese quince	<i>Chaenomeles japonica</i>	
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	
Snowdrops	<i>Galanthus</i>	
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>	
European rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	
White-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus lucorum</i>	
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	

APPENDIX VI: LEGISLATION

The following local and national planning policy and both primary and European legislation relating to nature conservation and biodiversity status are considered of relevance to the current proposal.

Planning and biodiversity

Local Authorities have a requirement to consider biodiversity and geological conservation issues when determining planning applications under the following planning policies.

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, 2021) states:

Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- (a) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- (b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services - including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- (c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- (d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- (e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- (f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.*

Legislation and biodiversity

Certain species of animals and plants found in the wild in the UK are legally protected from being harmed or disturbed. These species are listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) or are named as European Protected Species (EPS) in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. These two main pieces of legislation have been consulted when writing this report and are therefore described in detail within this section.

Other relevant legislation and policy documents that have been consulted include - The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006; The Hedgerow Regulations 1997; Biodiversity Action Plans, both UK-wide (UKBAP) and Local plans (LBAPs), and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

There is also legislation that legally protects certain animals - for example, the Protection of Badgers Act (1992) protects badgers and their setts, and the Deer Act (1991) places restrictions on actions that can be taken against deer species.

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [WCA] is the primary legislation for England and Wales for the protection of flora, fauna and the countryside. Part I within the Act deals with the protection of wildlife.

Most European Protected Species offences are now covered under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (see below), but some 'intentional' acts are still covered under the WCA, such as obstructing access to a bat roost.

The WCA prohibits the release to the wild of non-native animal species listed on Schedule 9 (e.g. Signal Crayfish and American Mink). It also prohibits planting in the wild of plants listed in Schedule 9 (e.g. Japanese Knotweed and *Rhododendron ponticum*) or otherwise deliberately causing them to grow in the wild. This is to prevent the release of invasive non-native species that could threaten our native wildlife.

The provisions relating to animals in the Act only apply to 'wild animals'; these are defined as those that are living wild or were living wild before being captured or killed. It does not apply to captive bred animals being held in captivity.

There are 'defences' provided by the WCA. These are cases where acts that would otherwise be prohibited by the legislation are permitted, such as the incidental result of a lawful operation which could not be reasonably avoided, or actions within the living areas of a dwelling house.

Licensing: certain prohibited actions under the Wildlife and Countryside Act may be undertaken under licence by the proper authority. For example, scientific study that requires capturing or disturbing protected animals can be allowed by obtaining a licence - e.g. bat surveys.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 came into force on the 01/01/2021 and are the principal means by which the EC Habitats Directive is transposed in England and Wales) update the legislation and consolidate all the many amendments which have been made to the Regulations since they were first made in 1994.

These regulations provide for the:

- protection of European Protected Species [EPS] (animals and plants listed in Annex IV Habitats Directive which are resident in the wild in Great Britain) including bats, dormice, great crested newts, and otters;
- designation and protection of domestic and European Sites - e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI] and Special Area of Conservation [SAC]; and
- adaptation of planning controls for the protection of such sites and species.

Public bodies (including the Local Planning Authority) have a duty to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive in exercising their function - i.e. when determining a planning application.

There is no defence that an act was the incidental and unavoidable result of a lawful activity.

Licensing: it is possible for actions which would otherwise be an offence under the Regulations to be undertaken under licence issued by the proper authority. For example, where a European Protected Species has been identified and the development risks deliberately affecting an EPS, then a 'development licence' may be required.

Species protection

The following protected species information is relevant to this report. Legislation is only discussed in relation to planning and development; other offences may exist.

Bats

All British bats are classed as European Protected Species and therefore receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, making it an offence *inter alia* to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.

In addition, all British bats are also listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

If proposed development work is likely to destroy or disturb bats or their roosts, then a licence will need to be obtained from Natural England, which would be subject to appropriate measures to safeguard bats.

Birds

In the UK, the provisions of the Birds Directive are implemented through the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected it an offence to:

- kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or
- take or destroying an egg of any such wild bird.

The law covers all species of wild birds including common, pest or opportunistic species.

Special protection against disturbance during the breeding season is also afforded to those species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act.