Land adjacent Lawn Farm House

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Ecological Assessment Report

Connected ECOLOGY

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Connected Ecology has been commissioned by Richard Abbott to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and ecological assessment in support of a new build adjacent to Lawn Farm House (Appendix A: Drawings). The proposal hereinafter be referred to as the proposed Scheme.

The proposal is located on the boundary of Lawn Farm House, Metfield Lane, Fressingfield, Suffolk, IP21 5SE and is adjacent to Landquip service site. The proposal centres on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference TM 28341 78404 (Appendix B: Figure 1. PEA overview).

The proposed new building will include a single garage and a car port for two cars on the ground floor, with a home office and two storerooms on the first floor. Associated works will include extension of existing driveway, landscaping and soak away (see Drawings 2288.1-6). The proposed Scheme will benefit from the existing access point off Metfield Lane.

On 23 September 2023, a walkover survey was undertaken of the proposed development site and the wider area to observe, assess, and record any ecological features present or potentially present that could be affected by the proposed Scheme.

The survey results determined that without mitigation, the proposed Scheme could result in disturbance, injury or killing of wildlife. In addition, pre-construction checks, and sensitive timing of works is recommended to reduce the risk of harm to any wildlife present.

The proposed Scheme will result in the loss of a single tree, i.e., a young apple tree and ornamental shrubs. It is recommended that this loss be compensated through the planting of three trees. It is recommended that these are planted to the east along the eastern boundary.

There will be an approximate loss of 200m^2 of grassland of low ecological value, which will be lost as a result of the proposed Scheme.

Amongst other proposed mitigation measures, installation of three bird boxes is recommended to mitigate the impact of the proposed Scheme due to the loss of a tree and vegetation. Once the newly planted trees have established, there will be an increase in nesting opportunities and foraging resources. The installation of three bird boxes should be installed to compensate for the temporary loss of suitable nesting habitat.

The walkover survey also recorded evidence of suitable habitats for amphibians, bats, hedgehog, and reptiles within or immediately adjacent to the proposed Scheme. Pre-construction checks and sensitive timing of works is recommended to reduce the risk of harm to any wildlife present. It is recommended that construction materials are stored off the ground on pallets and waste materials in skips. Further surveys are also recommended to confirm the likely absence of bats on site or status of any bat roosts present so that the impacts of the proposed Scheme can be fully assessed.

Due to presence of suitable terrestrial habitat for great crested newt within the footprint of the proposed Scheme and the confirmed population approximately 85m to the north, the works have to be covered by the Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS) as detailed within this report.

Provided that the recommendations are fulfilled, it is considered there will be no net loss in conservation as a result of the proposed Scheme.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the PEA are these:

- Identify the likely ecological constraints associated with the proposed Scheme; and
- Identify any mitigation measures required, following the mitigation hierarchy; and
- Identify any additional surveys required to inform an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA); and

- Identify the opportunities offered by the project to deliver ecological enhancement.

2. Methodology

2.1 Zone of Influence

The Zone of Influence (ZoI) is defined by the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment[1] as: "area(s) over which ecological features may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by the proposed project and associated activities." The ZoI of the proposed activities may be different from the boundary of the proposed Scheme.

2.2 Desk Study

Initial scoping was carried out to assess buildings and habitats present and their potential to support species of conservation importance within the ZoI, and to identify likely impacts the proposed Scheme would have on them. The exercise was conducted using a combination of aerial imagery, Ordnance Survey (OS) maps and Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to identify suitable features.

The purpose of a desktop study is to identify any statutory designated sites within 2km of the proposed Scheme, using Defra Magic Map Application[2].

A review of the Defra Magic Map Application was also completed to identify any other previously issued Natural England European Protected Species (EPS) Licences and priority habitats within 2km of the proposed Scheme.

2.3 Surveyor's Experience

Lee Rudd is a principal ecologist with over 14 years of ecology consultancy experience. He is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and a full member of the Association of Environmental & Ecological Clerk of Works (MEECW). Lee holds Natural England licences for bats (2023-65470-SCI-SCI), barn owl (2023-11488-CL29-OWL), great crested newt (2021-53591-CLS-CLS) and water vole (CL31/2017/00017). He has also been an accredited agent on various development licences for great crested newt, water vole and badger.

2.4 Field Surveys

On 23 September 2023, Lee Rudd carried out a walkover survey of the proposed Scheme to observe, assess and record any habitats or species of conservation importance within the ZoI and to identify likely impacts the proposed Scheme would have on them. The results are set out in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) in accordance with the latest professional guidance published by the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM)[3]. Habitats on site were recorded in line with the UK habitat classification system[4]. Habitats and species recorded or species potentially present on site were checked against the list of priority habitats and species under the NERC Act 2006[5].

2.5 Survey Timing

The walkover survey took place on 23 September 2023. The weather conditions were 16°C, no precipitation with sunny intervals and light wind from the west. There had been light rain within the previous 24 hours.

[1] CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland. https://cieem.net/resource/guidelines-for-ecological-impact-assessment-ecia/ (*Accessed on 26 Sept. 2023*).
[2] Defra Magic Map Application: https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx (*Accessed on 26 Sept. 2023*).
[3] CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal in the UK and Ireland. Guidelines-for-Preliminary-Ecological-Appraisal-Jan2018-typo-edit.pdf (cieem.net) (*Accessed on 26 Sept. 2023*).
[4] UK Habitat Classification System. ukhab – UK Habitat Classification (*Accessed on 26 Sept. 2023*).
[5] NERC Act 2006 Habitats and Species of principal importance in England. Habitats and species of principal importance in England - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) (*Accessed on 26 Sept. 2023*).

2.6 Deviations, Constraints and Limitations

There are no known deviations, constraints or limitations recorded within this PEA and ecological assessment. The walkover was carried out in line with the latest professional guidance. There was full access to the footprint of the proposed Scheme and wider site, which allowed data gathering as per survey guidance.

The exceptions are:

1) no internal access to building 3, which is immediately adjacent to the proposed Scheme. A precautionary assessment of moderate suitability for bats has been made.

2) only two great crested newt survey visits have been undertaken on the ponds within 100m of the proposed Scheme. These were undertaken as part of another proposal, in close proximity to this proposed Scheme. A precautionary approach has been adopted and a precautionary working method statement produced to cover works.

3. Results

3.1 Local Context

The survey covered the extent of the proposed Scheme and wider area within the boundary of the land ownership, as shown in Figure 2 & 3.

The proposed Scheme currently has access from Metfield Lane – a single-lane country road that is lined by hedgerows. A small number of residential and farm properties are located in the near vicinity set within an agricultural setting with occasional blocks of woodland.

3.2 Desktop Survey Results

3.2.1 Protected Sites

There are no statutory designated sites of ecological interest within 2km of the proposed Scheme.

Therefore, the proposed Scheme will not influence any designated sites, and will not be considered any further within this report.

3.2.2 Habitats

There are no priority habitats identified on Magic Map within the extent of the PEA walkover or immediately adjacent to the walkover.

3.2.3 Species

There are no case references for any European Protected Species (EPS) Licence within 2km of the proposed Scheme within the past 10 years.

There are three great crested newt (GCN) survey returns with positive results from 2014 within 2km of the proposed Scheme. There are no case results for GCN from the Natural England Pond Surveys 2017-2019 initiative.

A moderate population of great crested newts were recorded during spring 2023 approximately 85m to the north of the proposed Scheme (see Figure 1, pond 3)[6]. These were identified as part of the proposed stable conservation on the adjacent land.

3.3 Field Results

Figure 1 & 2 outline the habitats that were recorded during the walkover on 23 September 2023, while photographs are provided within Appendix C. Photographs are also provided from the spring 2023 survey, which covered the same areas.

Habitats

Habitats are presented within Figure 2 & 3: PEA habitats. The primary habitats recorded on site are presented below along with their UK Habitat Classification code[4].

3.3.1 Buildings (u1b5)

Adjacent to the proposed Scheme are the original stables on site which are currently being converted into a two-storey building comprising of offices and training facilities and is referenced on the PEA walkover as Building 1. Building 1 was a single-storey building constructed with concrete block work and corrugated roofing. In its current form, the roof has been removed, and the building extended out in line with the Drawings. It is currently not weather-tight and is open to the elements.

There are five other buildings, which include a residential dwelling, Lawn House Farm. These are buildings 2-5 and they will not be affected by the proposed works and none of them were internally inspected. They are all, with the exception of Building 5, commercial units used for agricultural

[6] Connected Ecology 2023. Lawn Farm Great Crested Newt Survey Report and Ecological Assessment Report.

machinery. Building 2 is a single-storey building constructed of concrete blockwork and corrugated roofing. Building 3 is a larger building and is of blockwork construction, with timber cladding on the upper half of the building. It has a corrugated roof. Building 4 is a barn of brick construction, with external timber cladding covering most of it. It has a pantile roof and appears to be open to the rafters with a large door at the front to allow for machinery access. Building 5 is Lawn Farm House and is of brick construction with a clay pantile roof.

Finally, building 6, is a small brick-built building, which serves as an electrical unit. It is a single brick wall with no cavity. It has a clay pantile roof. It is approximately 1m long, 1m wide and 2m high.

3.3.2 Other developed land (u1b6)

There are significant areas of land laid to compacted gravel and concrete, which form the service area, driveways, pathways and parking areas. Immediately north and east of the proposed Scheme is compacted gravel and hard standing.

There are two greenhouses within the rear garden, which are present by the orchard and raised beds.

3.3.3 Built linear features (u1e)

Most of the boundaries on site are natural in form, with the exception of the 6 ft fence along part of the northern and western boundary of the service area alongside the verge of Metfield Lane.

There are two lengths of the brick wall approximately 30cm in height to the east of the proposed Scheme. They demark the driveway and parking areas.

There are two gated access points to Lawn Farm House, which provide access to the front and rear of property.

3.3.4 Modified grassland (g4) – managed and unmanaged amenity grassland

The front gardens of Lawn Farm House are mainly laid down to lawn (ref G1 & G2). Some of grassland area 1 is maintained as short sward (≤5cm), while unmanaged areas are of longer sward height (≤30-50cm). The northern part of the grassland area within proposed Scheme includes the longer sward height of 30-50cm. This area was surveyed in spring and was mostly sparse. It appears as if it has not been cut since the spring survey.

Grassland area 2 is less intensively managed. The vegetation height in the unmanaged areas is ≤20cm. During the previous survey in spring, this area was maintained at a short-sward height (≤5cm).

The side and rear gardens of Lawn Farm House are mainly laid down to lawn (ref G3 & G4), which is maintained at a short-sward height (≤5cm).

There is a further area of grassland to the east (ref G5) at the rear of the garden, which has reduced management compared to the rest of the lawned areas. It has a sward height of approximately 15cm. This area also has a significant number of scattered trees and backs onto an arable field.

The grassland area within the proposed Scheme is grassland area (ref G1), the main species of which include cock's foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and annual meadow grasses (*Poa annua*) with broadleaf species; bristle oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), red dead nettle (*Lamium purpureum*), broadleaf dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), common chickweed (*Stellaria media*), spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), Geranium sp, and ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*). There are also occasional daffodils (*Narcissus sp.)* and common mallow (*Malva sylvestris*).

The front garden of Lawn Farm House (ref G2) species composition includes Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) and cock's foot grass species along with broadleaf species; common cleavers (*Galium aparine*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), cowslip (*Primula veris*), ground-ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*) and daffodils. Similar species composition is present between the laurel hedge (ref H2) and driveway. Along the base of the hedge (ref H1) the species also includes cuckoopint (*Arum maculatum*),

common ivy (*Hedera helix*) and cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*). Towards the north eastern corner of the lawn area by pond 1 is a significant covering of butterbur (*Petasites hybridus*).

Grassland areas 3, 4 and 5 are very similar in composition to grassland area 2. Additional species of note within the less intensively managed grassland area (ref G5) included common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg.*).

There will be an approximate loss of 200m^2 of grassland (ref G1) to accommodate the proposed Scheme. In addition to this, there will be some temporary disturbance to grassland to accommodate the soak away.

None of the grassland areas are considered habitats of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

3.3.5 Scattered trees (secondary code 11)

There is one tree within the footprint of the proposed Scheme (ref T1), which is a young apple tree (*Malus sp.).* This tree will be lost as a result of the proposed works as it falls within the area of a proposed building and extended driveway. No other trees will be affected by the proposed works.

There is a young common ash tree (*Fraxinus excelsior*, ref T2) which will remain unaffected by the proposed works.

There is a significant number of young trees within the grassland area (ref G5) which includes common ash, hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), cherry (*Prunus sp.*) and birch (*Betula pendula*).

Within the rear of the garden there are scattered mature trees, which include common ash, maple (*Acer campestre*) and birch.

There is a single young monkey puzzle tree (*Aracaria araucana*) and a Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*) within the side garden (ref G3).

There is a small orchard of fruit trees within the grassland area 4.

3.3.6 Hedgerows (priority h2a and other h2b)

There are no hedges within the footprint of the proposed Scheme.

Along the eastern boundary of the PEA walkover along Metfield Road there is an overgrown hedge (ref H1), which includes hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hornbeam and common ash.

There are two relatively recently planted hedgerows, which are made up of common laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*). These are present to the east of the proposed Scheme (ref H2) and alongside Metfield Lane by the driveway entrance to Lawn Farm House (ref H3).

There is a large conifer hedge (*Leylandii sp*.) that borders the northern boundary of pond 2 in the rear garden of Lawn Farm House (ref H4).

There is a hedgerow in the rear garden of Lawn Farm House (ref H5) alongside the rear driveway to the property. The species composition is similar to hedgerow 1 but also includes common ash standards. Common ivy and bramble are also present.

Along the boundary of grassland area 5 is a relatively mature laurel hedge (ref H6).

It is considered that hedgerows H1 and H5 are habitats of Principal Importance under section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. H2, H3 and H4 are species-poor and of low ecological value and are not considered priority habitats.

3.3.7 Road verge (431)

There will be no verge lost as a result of the proposed Scheme, as the proposal benefits from an existing point of access.

3.3.8 Freshwater – man-made (r1 secondary code 39)

There are four ponds and five watercourses located on site (see Figure 2 & 3). None of the ponds or watercourses will be affected by the proposed Scheme.

Pond 1 is approximately 10m to the south of the proposed Scheme. The pond has limited shade and is relatively deep (>1m) with very little shallow water. There is a concrete wall along the northern and eastern boundary, so bankside plants are limited and only present along the western and southern boundary. Plant species along the water's edge and bankside include yellow flag iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), cow parsley, common ivy, curled dock (*Rumex crispus*), red dead nettle, greater willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), common nettle, common mallow, daffodils, bramble and occasional hawthorn. The pond is approximately 8m by 23m. The pond has a population of carp.

Pond 2 is approximately 40m to the east of the proposed Scheme. It has a timber edge around the western perimeter of the pond and there are large conifers on the eastern boundary. The pond is relatively deep (>1m) with very little shallow water. There is yellow flag iris along the eastern and southern boundary of the pond. The pond also has a significant amount of duckweed covering the water's surface. The approximate size is 8m by 28m.

Pond 3 is approximately 85m to the north of the proposed Scheme. Along with Metfield Lane, there is a significant amount of hardstanding between the pond and the proposed works. This pond is set in the corner of a field and is bordered by hawthorn, willow (*Salix sp*), bramble and common nettle. The water depth is less than one metre. It is very shaded. Within the pond and damp margins, water mint (*Mentha aquatica*) dominates. The approximate size is 10m by 35m.

Pond 4 is approximately 55m to the east of the proposed Scheme. The pond has a liner and is very shallow with no open water. It is heavily silted up with leaf litter and branches. Around the perimeter is a mixture of timber and bricks/concrete edging. It is under the canopy of a tree and therefore is almost 100% shaded. The approximate size is 3m by 4m.

There were five lengths of watercourses recorded during the PEA walkover, most of which are alongside Metfield Road (ref W1 – W3) and Metfield Lane (ref W3 & W5). The watercourses are generally very shallow with very little water. Watercourse 1 is mostly dry with only shallow water to the western end, of about 10cm. They have soft banks suitable for burrowing animals and are along the base of a hedgerow.

3.3.9 Other habitats and features

There are numerous shrubs and small plants alongside an ornamental wall, which include flowering currant (*Ribes sanguineum*), *Forsythia x intermedia*, rosemary (*Salvia rosmarinus*), grape hyacinth (*Muscari sp*.) and climbing roses (*Rosa sp*). There was also a small stand of butterbur. These will be lost as a result of the proposed Scheme.

There are other areas of shrubs along the southern boundary of grassland area 3 and alongside the western boundary of pond 2. Species include red-tip photinia (*Photiina x fraseri 'Red Robin'*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) and magnolia (*Magnolia sp*.). There is also a significant ground covering of butterbur within the border.

To the southwestern corner of the grassland area 2, there are two stands of pampas grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) and a pine tree (*Pinus sp*., TN3).

There is a line of rosemary and lavender (*Lavandula sp.)* bushes alongside the southern side of the main driveway to Lawn Farm House.

There is a swimming pool located between pond 1 and pond 2.

To the rear of Lawn Farm House is a patio area (TN1).

3.3.10 Amphibians including great crested newt

The site falls within the Amber risk zone[7] for the likely presence of great crested newt (GCN, *Triturus cristatus*), which is classified as "containing main population centres for GCN and comprise important connecting habitat that aids natural dispersal." There are GCN licence returns within 2km of the proposed Scheme, albeit they date back to 2014.

There were four ponds identified during the PEA walkover (see Figure 2). These ponds have suitability for amphibians including GCN. As part of another proposal (ref Building 1 Figure 2) on the adjacent land, all four ponds were surveyed for the presence of GCN during spring 2023. A total of two visits were undertaken. A moderate population of GCN was recorded within pond 3. GCN were not recorded across the other three ponds[6].

Suitable terrestrial habitat was also identified during the walkover that could support amphibians including GCN and common toad (*Bufo bufo*).

GCN and common toad are Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

There is grassland (ref G1) within the footprint of the proposed Scheme, and whilst it is sub-optimal, it could support commuting individuals and this risk is increased by presence of ponds within close proximity to the proposed Scheme (i.e. pond 1 is within approximately 10m of the proposed Scheme).

Therefore, works within the proposed Scheme pose a risk of potential harm to amphibians on site that could be killed, injured or disturbed if no mitigation measures were in place prior to works. Recommendations are provided in Section 4 to manage the risks of causing harm.

3.3.11 Bats

Any works within 10m of roosting features or confirmed bat roosts could cause loss of a roost and/or disturbance to bats.

There was no evidence of bats recorded within building 1 and no features suitable to support bats were identified. The building in its current state is exposed and open to the elements.

The south gable of building 2, has suitable access and egress points for bats. These features were associated with the lifted cladding on the southern gable, which is immediately adjacent to the proposed Scheme. Other suitable access points on building 2 include above the roller doors and under the barge board. Recommendations are provided in Section 4 to manage the risks of causing harm.

There were no trees with suitable roosting features within 10m of the proposed Scheme.

The buildings are set within good quality habitat that is well connected with the wider landscape. The site provides high suitability for commuting and foraging bats on account of the hedgerows, ponds and trees on site.

Other buildings on site are likely to provide suitable features for roosting bats (ref B3-B5).

Due to the location of building 2 and suitability to support roosting bats, recommendations are provided in Section 4 to manage the risks of causing harm.

3.3.12 Birds

There is suitable habitat for breeding birds within or immediately adjacent to the proposed Scheme in the form of grassland, shrubs, hedgerows, trees and buildings.

[7] Great crested newts risk zones Norfolk and Suffolk. ArcGIS - My Map (*accessed on 17 Sept. 2023*).

Black bird (*Turdus merula*), wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*) and house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) were the only birds recorded during the walkover survey on the day. House sparrow is Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

No evidence of barn owl (*Tyto alba*) or any active nests was recorded on site that day. However, a barn owl box was recorded approximately 100m northeast of the proposed Scheme (TN2). It is not known if the box is occupied. That said, the box is not within the sight line of the proposed Scheme on account of the buildings recorded (i.e. B3 & B5).

Overall, there is a risk of causing disturbance or destruction of a nest due to the proposed works. Recommendations on how to mitigate the risks posed to bird nests on site are provided in Section 4 of this report.

3.3.13 Reptiles

There are suitable areas of habitat on site for reptiles, which include the areas of grassland with cover (≥15cm) that are primarily to the south and east within the less intensively managed grassland, base of hedgerows and along the grass verges. The site may support the occasional grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) but is unlikely to support any of the other common species, including adder *(Viper berus*), common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) or slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*).

Due to presence of suitable vegetation cover within the footprint of the proposed Scheme, albeit suboptimal and limited in extent, there is a risk of grass snake being present.

All species of reptiles are listed as Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Considerations on the storage of materials for works are outlined as recommendations in Section 4 and will be required to ensure that reptiles are not affected.

The habitats on site are not suitable for either of the rarer reptiles, which include sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*) and smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*). Therefore, no further surveys or a mitigation strategy is recommended as part of the proposed Scheme.

3.3.14 Other mammals - priority species

There is suitable habitat on site for hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), at the base of hedgerows and trees, but none of these suitable features will be directly affected. They could also inhabit within and under building materials if stored directly on the ground. Considerations will be required for hedgehog as outlined in the recommendations of Section 4.

Hedgehog is a Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Whilst suitable habitat for badgers (*Meles meles*) was identified during the walkover, there was no evidence recorded on site or directly adjacent to it on the day of the survey. It is also considered that the suitability of habitats within the proposed Scheme and 30m of it is not suitable for badger. Therefore, badger is not considered any further within this report.

No evidence of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) was recorded on site, despite checking the ponds and watercourses. However, water vole could be present within the watercourses and ponds. Albeit no ground breaking works will take place within 5m from the top bank of any waterbody. Therefore, water vole would not be impacted by the proposed Scheme and are not considered any further within this report.

3.3.15 Other

The habitats on site were not suitable for otter (*Lutra lutra*) or white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) at that time. Therefore, no further surveys or need for mitigation is detailed within this report.

4. Discussions and Recommendations

4.1.1 Habitats

The proposed Scheme and associated works will involve the clearance of a single young apple tree (ref T1) and ornamental shrubs.

The loss of the tree will be compensated through the planting of three tree species along the eastern boundary by the arable field adjacent to grassland area 5. Therefore, there will be no net loss of trees as a result of the proposed Scheme.

The tree species should be native and species that provide flowers and fruits for insects and birds, i.e., crab apple (*Malus sylvestris*), cherries (*Prunus avium* or *P. padus*) and cherry plum trees (*Prunus cerasifera*).

There will be a permanent loss of grassland due to the proposed Scheme, which will amount to approximately 200m^2. This area of grassland is of low ecological value.

There will be no loss of habitats that are of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

4.1.2 Reptiles and Amphibians

Previous surveys from spring 2023 identified a moderate population of great crested newt present within 100m of the proposed Scheme (i.e. pond 3, 85m to north of proposed Scheme)[6]. Therefore, there is a risk of disturbance, injury or killing of great crested newt as a result of the proposed Scheme due to the presence of suitable habitat within the proposed Scheme and the proximity of additional suitable ponds within very close proximity to the works (i.e. pond 1, which is approximately 10m to the south). Whilst no great crested newt were identified in pond 1 during the spring surveys, only two visits were undertaken which is below best practice survey effort of four visits to confirm likely absence. Although, there is suitable habitat within the footprint of the proposed Scheme, it is considered suboptimal. The works are considered to be of low impact in nature in respect to great crested newt (i.e. involve the removal of very small areas of terrestrial habitat at >75m from the nearest known GCN ponds). In conclusion, due to the suboptimal habitat within the proposed Scheme, location of nearest confirmed great crested newt population and the proximity of additional ponds that could support great crested newt, it is recommended that works are undertaken under a Precautionary Working Method Statement (PWMS).

There is suitable habitat for grass snake and terrestrial amphibians, which will require consideration before any works take place as they could cause injury or death.

Presence of suitable habitats on site suggests that reptiles and amphibians could be present within the footprint of the proposed Scheme.

Therefore, a precautionary approach will be undertaken, which will be described within the PWMS.

4.1.3 Bats

No evidence of bats was recorded during the survey. However, there are suitable access and egress points on the southern gable of building 3 due to the lifted cladding. Building 3 will not be directly affected by the proposed Scheme, but the construction of the building could affect its use by bats. If a bat roost is present, the new building could restrict their access to the building on account of affecting flight paths. Due to lack of access, the building cannot be fully assessed for its suitability for bats. A precautionary approach has therefore been adopted, with an assessment of moderate suitability for bats in line with

best practice[8]. Therefore, two bat surveys are recommended to confirm presence or likely absence of bats. Surveys should be undertaken in line with best practice between May and September, inclusive.

Building 6, the electrical unit provides negligible suitability for bats. It was fully explored and no evidence of bats was recorded.

There were no other suitable features for bats recorded within any buildings or trees within 10m of the proposed Scheme.

The buildings are set within good quality habitat that is well connected with the wider landscape. The site provides high suitability for commuting and foraging bats on account of the hedgerows, ponds and trees identified during the walkover.

Foraging and commuting bats in the local vicinity need to be considered. Light pollution can significantly affect the way bats use the space. All lighting should be installed in accordance with Bats and Lighting in the UK, Bats and the Built Environment Series[9]. Temporary lighting associated with construction works should be sensitively designed. Lighting should be of the lowest luminosity necessary for safe delivery of works and on-site security. It should be designed, positioned, and directed to reduce the intrusion into adjacent habitats. The same approach should be incorporated into the design of any lighting as part of the proposed Scheme. As a minimum, any external security lighting should be set on motion-sensors and short (1min) timers. The inclusion of baffles, hoods or louvres should be used to reduce light spill and direct it only to where it is needed.

4.1.4 Birds

If unmitigated there would be a permanent loss of suitable nesting habitat for birds on site due to the loss of a single apple tree (ref T1), loss of ornamental shrubs and the electrical unit (ref Building 6). An old nest was recorded within the ornamental shrubs and electrical unit, which was likely of pigeon and robin. This will be replaced by three trees, and these are recommended to be planted along the eastern boundary of the PEA walkover between the grassland area (ref G5) and the arable field.

Other habitats on site will also be lost as part of the works, which include the grassland (200m^2) that will be permanently lost due to the building and extension of the driveway.

Without mitigation, a nest could be disturbed or destroyed during works. Vegetation clearance should be undertaken outside of the main bird nesting season, which is March - August inclusive, where possible.

If clearance works are undertaken during the nesting period, a check by a competent person will be required to undertake a nesting bird check in advance of the electrical unit (ref building 6), tree (ref T1), shrubs and grassland removal. If an active nest is recorded, all works must cease within 5m of the nest, until the young have fledged.

It is advised to remove any cut vegetation from the area of proposed works as this could provide suitable nesting bird habitat, as well as suitable habitat for other species, including hedgehog. The recommendation is to either chip the woody material or cut it to manageable lengths and create habitat piles in the wider site where animals will not be disturbed. The least disturbed area is that in the proximity of grassland area 5.

The installation of three bird boxes would compensate for the temporary loss of suitable nesting habitat. Boxes should be installed 1-3m from the ground in a sheltered position away from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight (avoid south facing). The ideal location would be on the mature trees. Make sure

[8] Collins. Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd Edition. Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines 3rd edition - Guidance for professionals - Bat Conservation Trust (*Accessed on 26 Sept. 2023*).

[9] Bat Conservation Trust. Guidance Note. Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK. Bats and the Built Environment Series. https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/ (*Accessed on 26 Sept. 2023*).

cats cannot enter the box. At least one of the boxes should be suitable for swifts and should be installed approximately 5m from the ground. This could be on the building 3 or 5.

4.1.5 Hedgehog

Hedgehog is likely to be present on site and within proximity to the proposed works. Without care, potential harm could come to these animals.

All excavations should be covered up overnight or means of escape provided. Means of escape could include the provision of an earth ramp or the placement of a plank of rough-sawn timber. Night lighting should be minimised as far as possible in line with that identified for bats above.

Construction materials must be stored off the ground on pallets and waste materials in skips.

An enhancement could include the provision of a hedgehog box. This should be placed in a sheltered position where disturbance will be minimal. A suitable location would be within the base of a hedgerow near grassland area 5.

4.2 Conclusions

The proposed Scheme will not affect any statutory designated sites.

The loss of a single young apple tree will be compensated through the planting of three trees. These will be planted along the eastern boundary by the arable field. Ornamental shrubs of low ecological value will also be lost.

Approximately 200m^2 of grassland, of low ecological value will be lost to facilitate the works.

All excavations should be covered up overnight or means of escape provided. Means of escape could include the provision of an earth ramp or the placement of a plank of rough-sawn timber.

If clearance works are undertaken during the nesting period, a check by a competent person will be required to undertake a nesting bird check in advance of the electrical unit (ref building 6), tree (ref T1), ornamental shrubs and grassland removal. If an active nest is recorded, then works must cease within 5m of the nest, until the young have fledged.

The installation of three bird boxes would compensate for the temporary loss of suitable nesting habitat. One of these boxes should be suitable for swifts.

Material storage and construction waste management should be carried out in line with the recommendations above to avoid any harm to wildlife.

The risk of harm to birds, hedgehogs and other wildlife posed by the proposed works is negligible if the above recommendations are followed. If any wildlife is uncovered, it must be safely relocated to a suitable habitat that will not be disturbed.

Additional measures are required for great crested newt and bats. See Section 4.3.

4.3 Further surveys and mitigation advice required

4.3.1 Bats

Building 3 provides suitability for bats with suitable access and egress points on the southern gable end, immediately adjacent to the proposed Scheme. Due to lack of access to building 3, a precautionary assessment of moderate suitability has been given. Building 6, the electrical unit is considered to have negligible suitability. There are no other features with suitability for bats within 10m of the proposed Scheme. To confirm likely absence or status of any roosts present, the following is required to make a full assessment of likely impact:

- Two separate survey visits are required, which will include at least one dusk emergence and a further dusk emergence and/or a dawn re-entry survey.
- It is recommended that the survey visits are carried out between May and September to confirm the status of any roost present.
- An internal inspection of building 3 may allow for the building to be downgraded from moderate suitability to low suitability. Low suitability requires one night time survey, whilst moderate potential requires two night time surveys.
- If bats are recorded using the features on the south gable end of building 3, it is likely that a Natural England licence will be required. This would be either a European Protected Species licence (EPS) or a Low Impact Class License (LICL) depending on the findings of the surveys.

4.3.2 Amphibian and reptile Precautionary Working Method Statement

A PWMS approach is taken for works that are considered to be of low impact in nature in respect to GCN (i.e. involve the removal of very small areas of terrestrial habitat at >75m from the nearest known GCN ponds). Measures include:

- A check for reptiles and amphibians by a suitability qualified ecologist (i.e. licenced GCN ecologist) is required ahead of any vegetation clearance works and demolition works of electrical unit and ornamental wall.
- Should a great crested newt be identified during the works, all works **must stop** immediately, and Natural England must be consulted prior to works re-commencing.
- Following a check, confirming no great crested newt will be disturb and the removal of any other reptile or amphibian, above ground disturbance works including vegetation cutting and demolition works should take place within 48 hours.
- All areas within the proposed Scheme should be maintained as unsuitable with no stored materials on the ground or vegetation cover in excess of ≤5cm.
- Where vegetation is allowed to grow above 15cm a suitability qualified ecologist (i.e. licenced GCN ecologist) must undertake a check prior to any vegetation cutting.
- At least 48 hours should be allowed between vegetation clearance and the commencement of ground-breaking works for any reptiles or amphibians to disperse.
- Otherwise, following vegetation clearance, carrying out destructive searches under the supervision of a licenced great crested newt surveyor.
- If materials are temporarily stored on any adjacent areas of grassland, those areas must be maintained below ≤5cm sward height, to reduce their suitability for reptiles and/or amphibians. Where vegetation is above 15cm, the above approach should be undertaken.
- Construction materials will have to be stored off the ground on pallets and waste materials in skips.

- Should a great crested newts be identified during the works, all works suitability qualified ecologist (i.e. licenced GCN ecologist) immediately, and Natural England must be consulted prior to works re-commencing.

Appendix A. Drawings

BUILDINGS AT LANDQUIP LTD, LAWN FARM, FRESSINGFIELD IP21 5SD

N

0 50 Metres

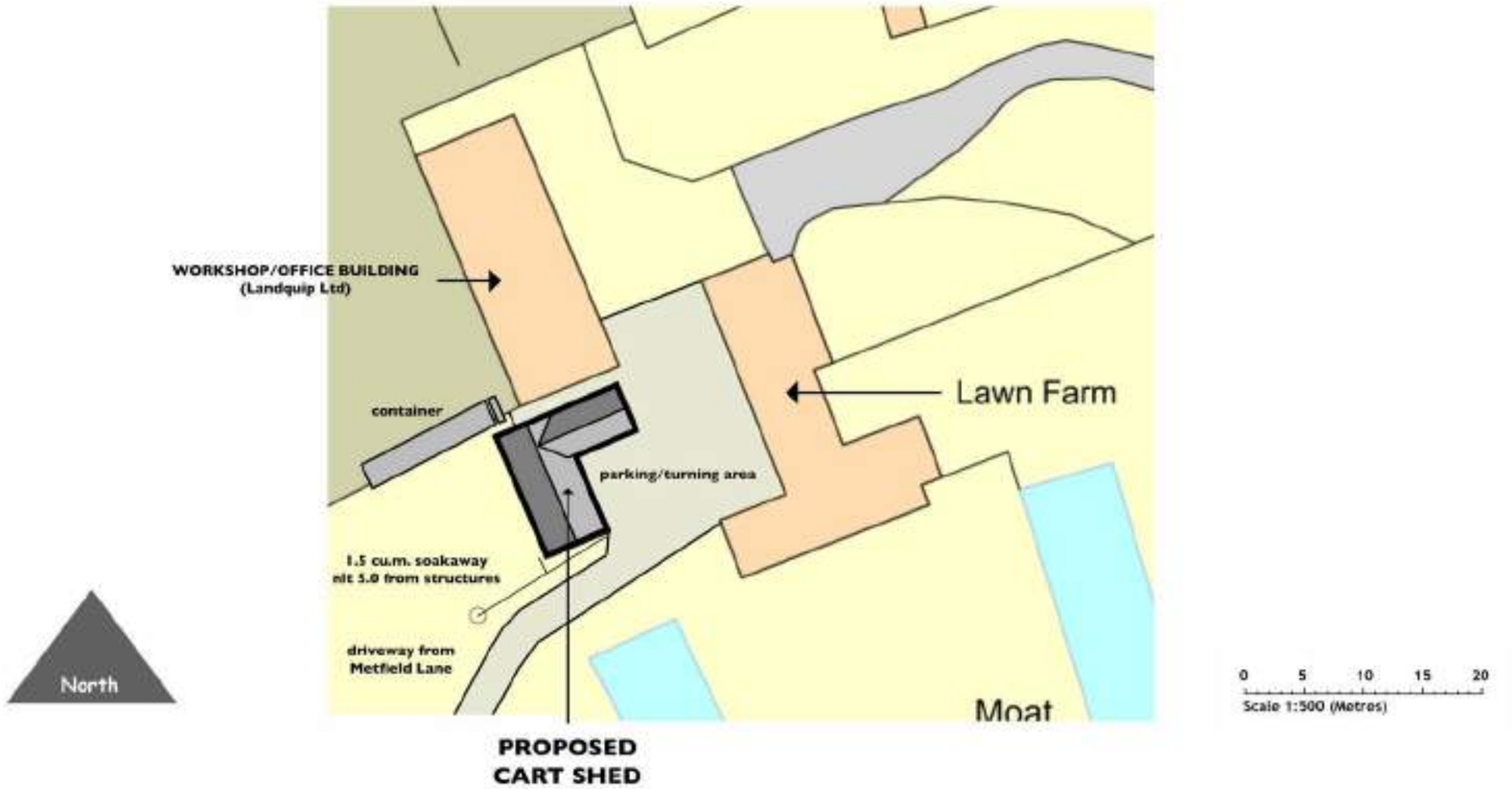
Plan Produced for: JENNY AND RICHARD ABBOTT
Date Produced: 11 Jan 2023
Plan Reference Number: TQRQM23011153249319
Scale: 1:1250 @ A4

ReQuestaPlan

Proposed Cart Shed
at Lawn Farm, Metfield Lane, Fressingfield
for Jenny and Richard Abbott

PUTMAN
NEW BUILD
THE HOLLIES STATION ROAD
EARSHAM BUNGAY NR35 2TS
T: 01986 892454 :: M: 07770 823164
© E: johnputman1@btconnect.com

Site Location Plan
Scale: 1:1250 at A3
Drg.No.2288.1



:: Block Plan :: 1:500 at A3 ::

Proposed Cart Shed
at Lawn Farm, Metfield Lane, Fressingfield
for Jenny and Richard Abbott

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NEW BUILD
THE HOLLIES STATION ROAD
EARSHAM BUNGAY NR35 2TS
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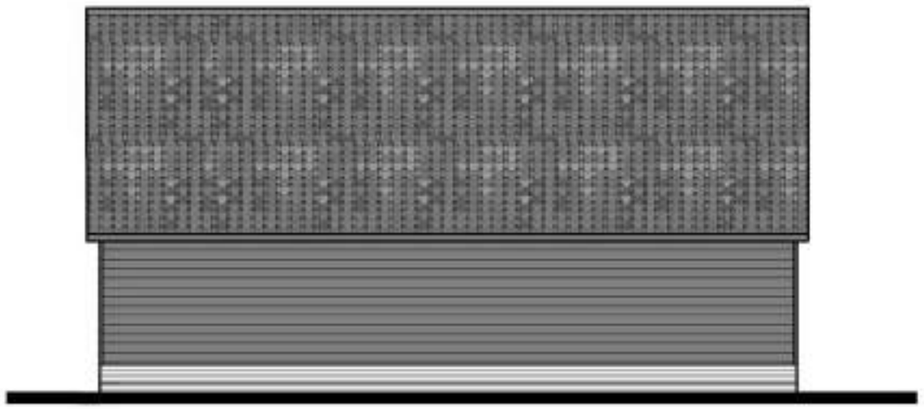
Block Plan
Scale: 1:500 at A3
Drg.No.2288.2

:: Front :: East :: 1:100 at A3 ::

:: Side :: North :: 1:100 at A3 ::



:: Rear :: West :: 1:100 at A3 ::

:: Side :: South :: 1:100 at A3 ::

Proposed Appearance:

Roof: Natural clay pantiles colour: red/brown
Walls: Cedral no maintenance weatherboard colour: black
Joinery: SW with painted finish

Scale 1:100 (metres)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Proposed Cart Shed
at Lawn Farm, Metfield Lane, Fressingfield
for Jenny and Richard Abbott

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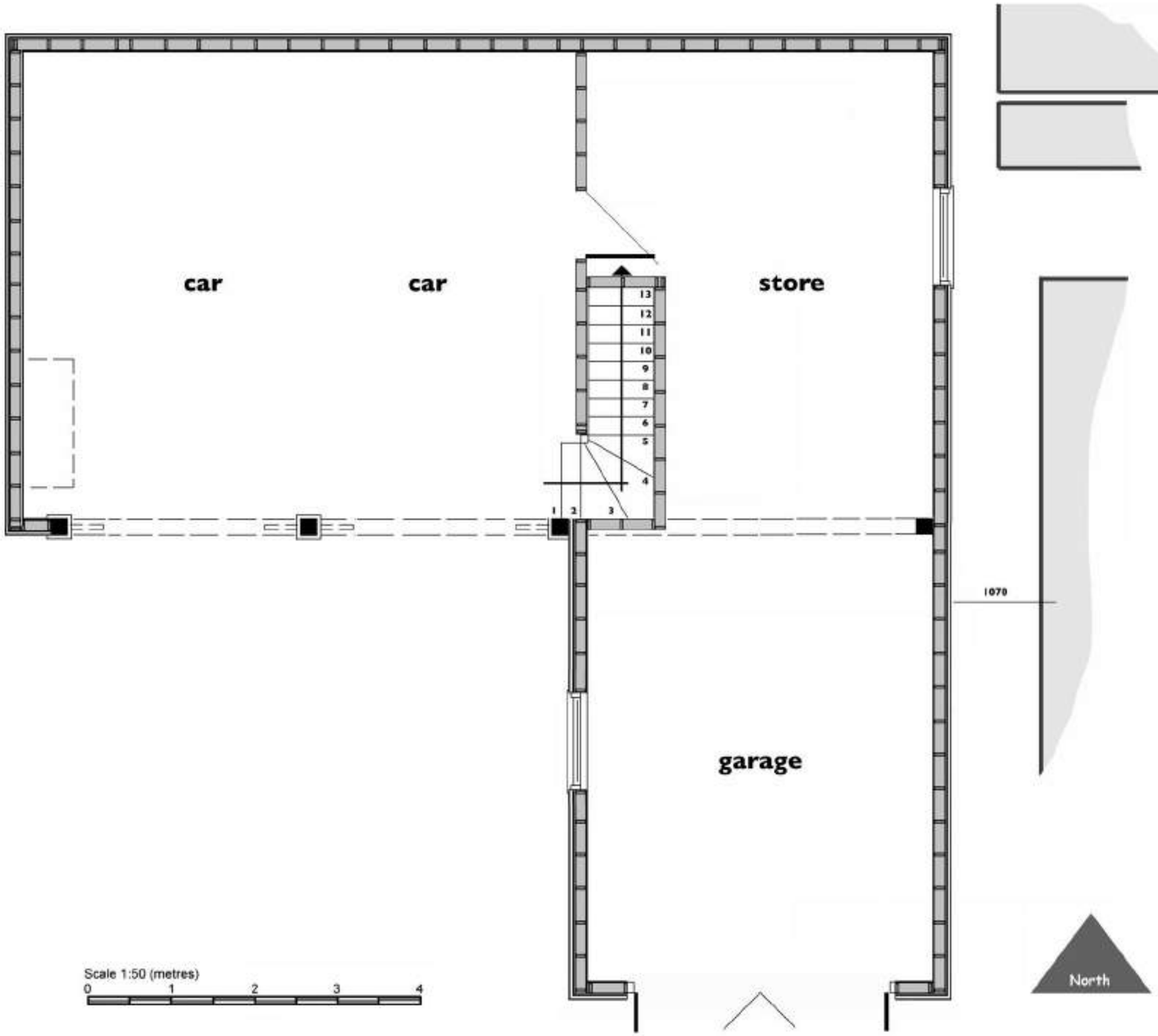
Elevations :: Proposed
Scale: 1:100 at A3
Drg.No.2288.3
15Jul23



:: Ground Floor Layout :: Proposed :: 1:50 ::

Proposed Cart Shed
at Lawn Farm,
Metfield Road,
Fressingfield
for
Jenny + Richard Abbott

This version of drawing is for planning purposes only

Ground Floor Layout
:: Proposed ::
Scale: 1:50 at A3
Drg.No.2288.4

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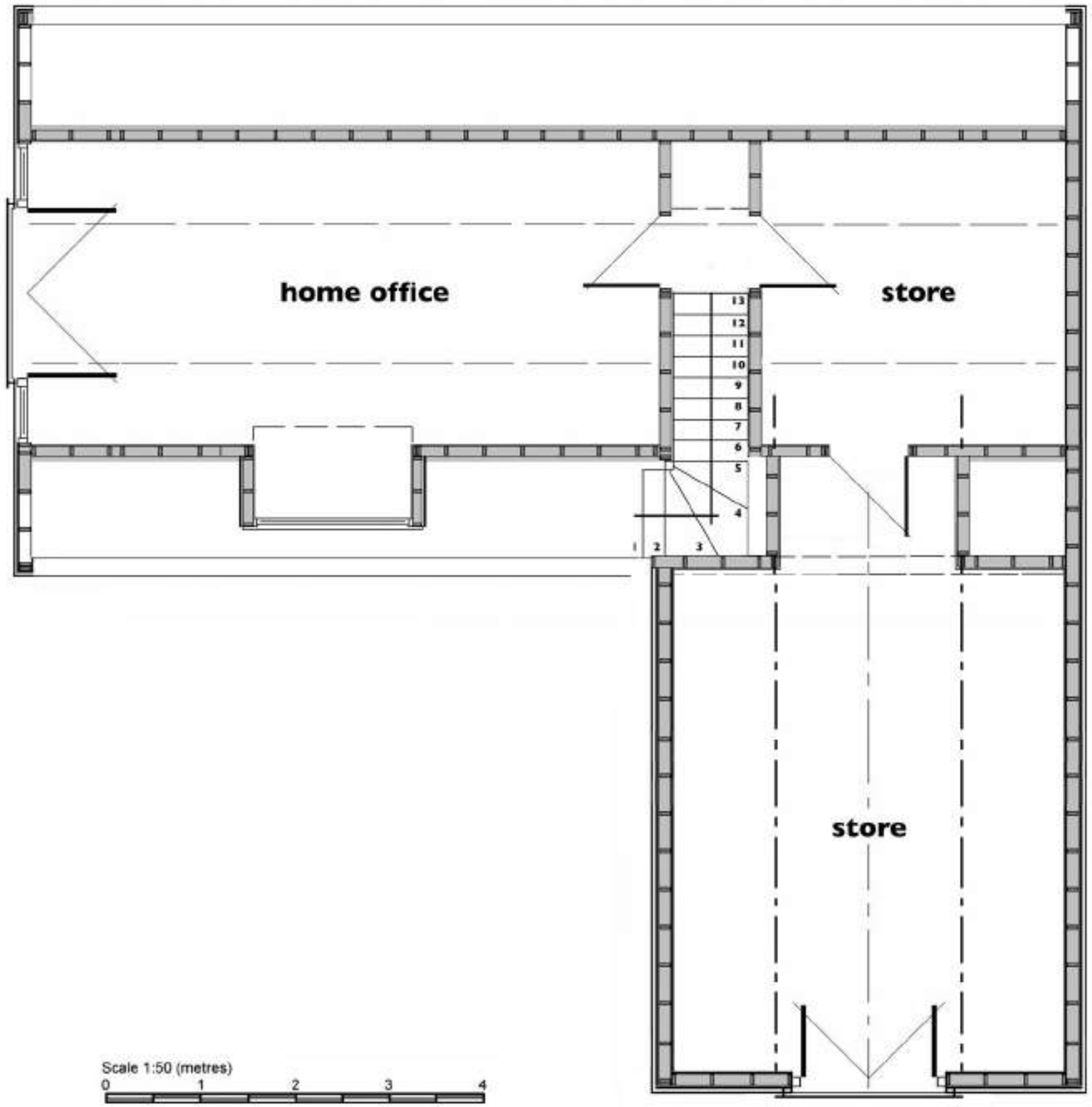

Scale 1:50 (metres)
0 1 2 3 4

:: Upper Floor Layout :: Proposed :: 1:50 at A3 ::

Proposed Cart Shed
at Lawn Farm,
Metfield Road,
Fressingfield
for
Jenny + Richard Abbott

This version of drawing is for planning purposes only

Upper Floor Layout
:: Proposed ::
Scale: 1:50 at A3
Drg.No.2288.5

PUTMAN
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THE HOLLIES STATION ROAD
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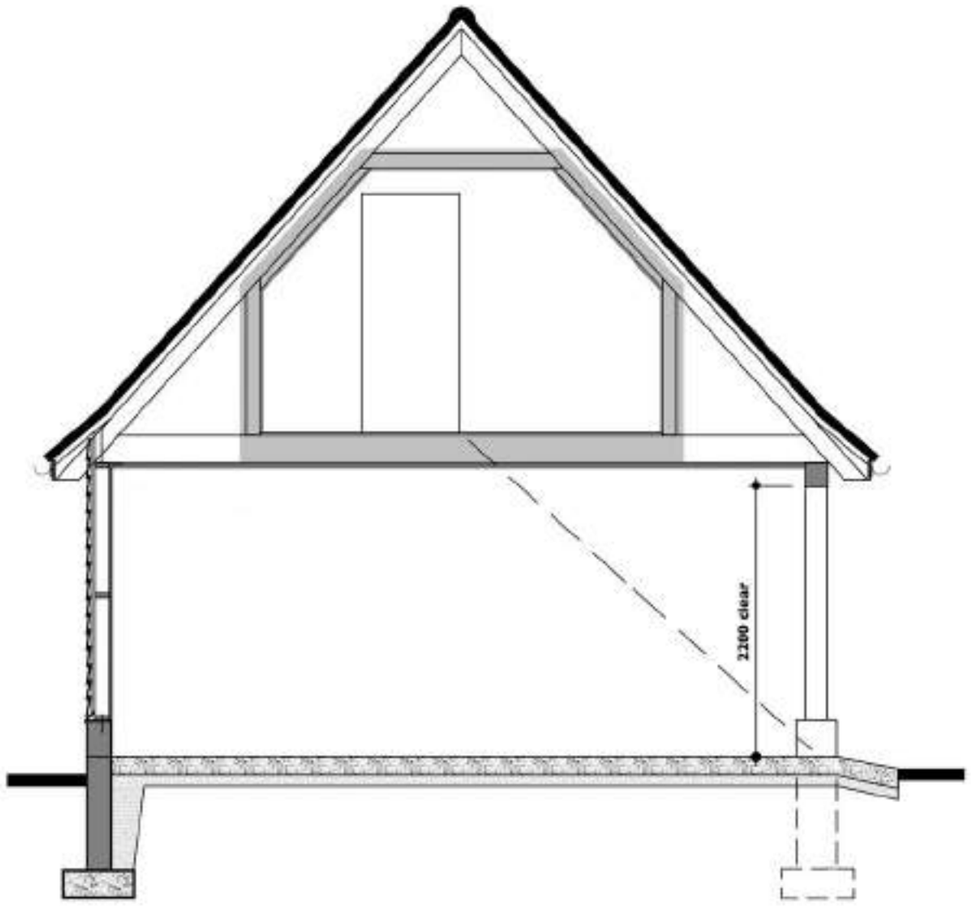

:: Section AA :: 1:50 at A3 ::

Scale 1:50 (metres)
0 1 2 3 4

Proposed Cart Shed
at Lawn Farm, Metfield Lane, Fressingfield
for Jenny and Richard Abbott

PUTMAN
NEW BUILD
THE HOLLIES STATION ROAD
EARSHAM BUNGAY NR35 2TS
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Section AA
Scale: 1:50 at A3
Drg.No.2288.6

Appendix B. Figures

Key

- PEA extent
- Redline boundary

Document title: PEA overview of land adjacent Lawn Farm, House Fressingfield, IP21 5SE

Revision: 1.1

Date: 25/09/2023

Client name: Richard Abbott

Originator: Ginta Daunoraviciute
Checker: Lee Rudd
Reviewer: Lee Rudd
Approved: Lee Rudd

Connected Ecology
24 Wilby Road
Norwich
NR1 2NJ
Email: lee.rudd@connected-ecology.com
Tel: 07368157215

Key

- PEA extent
- Redline boundary
- Building #
- Pergola
- Greenhouse and vegetable plot
- Gateway
- Ungated access point
- Wall
- 6 ft fence
- Grass area #
- Concrete/compacted gravel
- Coppiced Willow plantation
- Orchard
- Trees
- Ornamental shrubs
- Hedge #
- Other hedge
- Road verge
- Rosemary and lavender bushes
- Water body #
- Watercourse #
- Swimming pool
- Target Notes

Document title: PEA extent of land adjacent Lawn Farm, House Fressingfield, IP21 5SE

Revision: 1.1

Date: 25/09/2023

Client name: Richard Abbott

Originator: Ginta Daunoraviciute
Checker: Lee Rudd
Reviewer: Lee Rudd
Approved: Lee Rudd

Connected Ecology
24 Wilby Road
Norwich
NR1 2NJ
Email: lee.rudd@connected-ecology.com
Tel: 07368157215

0 25 50 m

Key

- PEA extent
- Redline boundary
- Building #
- Pergola
- Wall
- 6 ft fence
- Grass area #
- Concrete/compacted gravel
- Trees
- Ornamental shrubs
- Hedge #
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Document title: PEA extent of land adjacent Lawn Farm, House Fressingfield, IP21 5SE

Revision: 1.1

Date: 25/09/2023

Client name: Richard Abbott

Originator: Ginta Daunoraviciute
Checker: Lee Rudd
Reviewer: Lee Rudd
Approved: Lee Rudd

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24 Wilby Road
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NR1 2NJ
Email: lee.rudd@connected-ecology.com
Tel: 07368157215

Appendix C. Photographs

Photo 1. View of existing habitats including shrubs and grassland area 1 within footprint of proposed Scheme. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 2. View of shrubs within footprint of proposed Scheme. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 3. View of grassland including unmanaged section within footprint of proposed Scheme. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 4. View of habitats within footprint of proposed Scheme. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 5. View of habitats including ornamental wall within footprint of proposed Scheme. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 6. View of pergola and electrical shed alongside ornamental wall. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 7. View of shrubs alongside ornamental wall. Looking west towards building 1. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 8. View of building 3 taken from within footprint of proposed Scheme. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 9. View of building 6, electrical unit. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 10. Close up of building 6, electrical unit. Shows gap between brickwork and timber as shown by red circle. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 11. Close up of building 6, electrical unit. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 12. Close up of building 6, electrical unit. Shows gap under eaves as shown by red circle. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 13. Internal view of building 6, electrical unit. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 14. View of south gable of building 3. Shows lifted cladding. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 15. View of south gable of building 3. Shows lifted cladding. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 16. View of south gable of building 3. Shows lifted cladding and gaps under roofing material. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 17. View of grassland area 1 to rear of building 1. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 18. View of willow plantation. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 19. View from along existing driveway to Lawn Farm house. Looking east. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 20. View of existing driveway towards gated access point off Metfield Lane. Looking west. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 21. View of pond 1. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 22. View of pond 1 and front garden (grassland area 2). Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 23. Taken from west side of pond 1, looking along mowed path towards proposed Scheme. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 24. Front garden, grassland area 2. Photograph taken on 23 September 2023.

Photo 25. Building 2. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 26. Building 2 alongside Metfield Lane. Shows grass verge and 6ft fence. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 27. Building 3. Also shows compacted gravel in service yard. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 28. Building 3 to left and Building 5 (Lawn Farm House) to right. Also shows compacted driveway. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 29. Building 4 along with compacted gravel and ground. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 30. Taken along Metfield Lane. Shows additional ungated access to service yard, common ash tree (T2) and building 4 in the background. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 31. Taken along Metfield Lane. Shows additional ungated access to service yard and common ash tree (T2). Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 32. Taken from centre of service area. Shows compacted gravel ground and areas of concrete. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 33. Shows material storage on compacted gravel ground. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 34. Shows Building, existing ungated access point and areas of proposed parking to right. Shows compacted gravel ground and 6ft fence along Metfield Lane. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 35. Shows hedgerows alongside Metfield Lane. Includes hedgerow two and three. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 36. Taken from driveway to Lawn Farm House. Shows grassland areas to left (G2) and right (G1). Also shows line of rosemary and lavender bushes to left with laurel hedge to right (H2). Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 37. Shows gated access point to rear of Lawn Farm House from Metfield Road. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 38. Shows compacted gravel driveway to rear of Lawn Farm House. Also shows 6ft fence and grassland area 4. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 39. Shows 6ft fence and verge along Metfield Lane by access point for proposed Scheme. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 40. Shows 6ft fence and verge along Metfield Lane from secondary access point to service area. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 41. Shows areas of shrubs along ornamental wall by side of driveway to Lawn Farm House. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 42. Shows areas of grassland (G1) to south of Building 1 extension. Laurel hedge (H2) is shown to right along with panthas grass and pine tree in backdrop. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 43. Grassland area one, extending towards Lawn House Farm. Shrubs and ornamental wall shown to right. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 44. View of grassland area two, alongside hedge one. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 45. Grassland area three taken from southern corner of pond 2. Also shows monkey puzzle tree and Japanese maple. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 46. Grassland area four. Also shows hedgerow four to the right with hedgerow five to left. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 47. Grassland area four along with green houses and orchard. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 48. Grassland area five. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 49. Grassland area five, with scattered trees and scrub. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 50. Grassland area five alongside arable field. Area of proposed tree planting. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 51. Shows verge, dry ditch (W1) and hedgerow (H1) alongside Metfield Road. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 52. Hedgerow two alongside driveway to Lawn House Farm. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 53. Shows hedgerow five to left. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 54. Hedgerow six along with barn owl box (TN2) alongside other hedgerow. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 55. Pond one. Taken from western bank. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 56. Pond two. Taken from northern bank. Shows confider hedge to left (H4) and area of shrubs behind piled edge. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 57. Pond three. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 58. Pond four. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 59. Watercourse 1 along Metfield Road. Extensive covering of butterbur and yellow flag iris. Water depth of approximately 10cm. Shows hedgerow 1. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 60. Eastern end of watercourse 1 along Metfield Road. Dry and shallow channel. Shows hedgerow 1. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 61. Watercourse 2 alongside Metfield Road. Shows dry and shallow watercourse. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 62. Watercourse 2 alongside Metfield Road, heading towards Fressingfield. Shows watercourse with water alongside hedgerow. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 63. Shows watercourse 3, alongside Metfield Lane. Butterbur is dominant. The watercourse holds water. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 64. Watercourse 5 alongside Metfield Lane. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 65. Watercourse 4 at the back of building 4 adjacent to willow plantation. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Photo 66. Swimming pool. Photograph taken in spring 2023.

Appendix D. Legislation

Statutory designated sites

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are protected areas in the UK, designated under:

- the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) in England and Wales (including the adjacent territorial sea), and
- the Conservation of Offshore Marine Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 in the UK offshore area.

Under these Regulations, the UK Government and devolved administrations are required to establish a network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the habitats and species identified in Annexes I and II, respectively, of European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, known as the Habitats Directive. The listed habitat types and species are those considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds). Of the Annex I habitat types, 78 are believed to occur in the UK. Of the Annex II species, 43 are native to, and normally resident in, the UK.

Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are protected areas for birds in the UK. They are protected through the same regulations as SACs as detailed above.

Ramsar Sites are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. Sites proposed for selection are advised by the relevant statutory nature conservation body (or bodies) within the UK. The designation of UK Ramsar Sites has generally been underpinned through prior notification of these areas as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). Accordingly, these receive statutory protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Government have also issued policy statements relating to Ramsar Sites which extend to them the same protection at a policy level as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

Protected species

All birds, their nests and eggs are protected by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, where it outlines it is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird. It is also against the law to damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built. It is also against the law to take, destroy the egg of any wild bird. There is additional protection for schedule 1 species, such as barn owl.

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) provides enhanced protection for **barn owls** and other schedule 1 species. The enhanced protection for schedule 1 species is that they can not be disturbed whilst nesting.

In Britain, **all bat species** and their roosts are legally protected by both domestic and international legislation. They are protected under both Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended).

Great crested newts are fully protected under the UK and European legislation. They are protected under both the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

White-clawed crayfish is listed under Annex II of the habitats directive, while the areas are designated as Special Areas of Conservation to protect this species. Outside of these, a licence is required to capture this species. It is listed as a priority species under the Biodiversity Action Plan and is a Species of Principal Importance under section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Reptiles, such as common lizard, slow worm, grass snake or adder, are protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981) as amended. The legislation makes it illegal to deliberately or recklessly kill or injure any native reptile. This protection therefore requires that reasonable effort be made to avoid harm to reptiles.

Otters are protected through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and revised by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2004, making it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take an otter; and/or
- Possess or control any (live or dead) otter, or any part of or anything derived from an otter; and/or
- Intentionally or recklessly damage or destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for
  shelter or protection by an otter; and/or
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb an otter while it is occupying a structure or place for that purpose; and/or
- Sell, offer for sale, possess or transport for the purpose of sale any (live or dead) otter or part or
- Derivative of an otter; and/or
- To advertise for buying and selling such things.

Furthermore, otters are included on Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Habitats &c.) Regulations (1994), making it an offence to:

- Deliberately to capture or kill a wild animal of a European protected species; and/or
- Deliberately to disturb any such animal; and/or
- Deliberately to take or destroy the eggs of such an animal; and/or
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

Otters are also listed as a priority species.

Water vole are protected through the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), receiving full protection since 2008. The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, together with amending legislation, lists the following offences:

- Intentionally killing, taking or injuring a water vole; and/or
- Possessing or controlling any live or dead water vole, or any part or derivative; and/or
- Intentionally or recklessly damaging or destroying a water vole's place of shelter or protection; and/or
- Intentionally or recklessly disturbing a water vole whilst it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; and/or
- Intentionally or recklessly obstructing access to a water vole's place of shelter or protection; and/or
- Selling, offering for sale, or possessing or transporting for the purposes of sale, any live or dead water vole, or any part or derivative, or advertising any of these for buying or selling.

Water vole are also listed as a priority species.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992 lists both badgers and their setts as protected. A licence may be obtained from Natural England if disturbance of badgers in their sett cannot be avoided or their sett is to be damaged.

Other protection

The Hedgerows Regulation 1997 aims to protect important hedgerows in the countryside. They make it illegal to remove most countryside hedges without first notifying the local planning authority and provide protection for "important hedgerows".

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 is the principal law relating to animal welfare. Animal cruelty includes causing unnecessary suffering to an animal and poisoning an animal. The 2006 Act applies to all vertebrate animals, including badgers, bats, foxes and rabbits (this is not an exhaustive list).

National Planning Policy - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by "… minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity… if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused."

Natural England Licensing - EPS Mitigation Licensing

Licences can be obtained from the Wildlife Management and Licensing Service at Natural England to allow certain activities that would otherwise constitute an offence for the purposes of development (e.g. destruction of a bat roost, loss of great crested newt aquatic and terrestrial habitat, etc).