

Land off Hodson Lane, Broadhelm Business Park, Pocklington

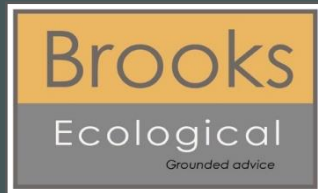


Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

10/01/2024

The Broadhelm Venture

Report Ref. ER-7276-01B



Report reference	ER-7276-01 - Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report		
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Date	10/01/2024		
Report duration	In accordance with CIEEM (2019), unless otherwise stated the findings of this report remain valid for a period of 18 months. After this period advice should be sought on the scope of any updating work required.		
Revision	A	Date	05/03/2024
Summary of changes	Minor changes to wording		
Revision	B	Date	05/04/2024
Summary of changes	Edits to RLB in all maps and corresponding changes to wording		
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Summary

This report is produced to inform The Broadhelm Venture of potential ecological constraints associated with their proposed development site and the need for further reporting or output to support a planning application.

This report is based on a desk study of designated wildlife sites and records of protected or notable species, and an extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey carried out in December 2023.

Key Findings

The Site is a small section of disused land, colonised by tall forbs and successional scrub. It is of generally low ecological value. Beyond the recommended retention of established trees, ecological constraints have not been identified at the Site.

Biodiversity Net Gain

Details on measurement of the Site's biodiversity and the implications of complying with the requirement to provide a net gain for biodiversity are provided in our separate report ER-7276-02.

Further surveys

Further surveys have not been recommended.

Introduction

1. Brooks Ecological Ltd was commissioned by The Broadhelm Venture to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of Land off Hodson Lane, Broadhelm Business Park, Pocklington, grid ref. SE792478.
2. This report is produced with reference to British Standard BS:42020 'Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development' and the CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.

Purpose of a PEA

3. A PEA is an *initial assessment* of the baseline for a proposed development site and establishes whether the Site is likely to be constrained by ecology, and whether more information is needed to identify the ecological baseline.
4. The subsequent Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) is intended to give guidance to a developer and assist with the early stages of project planning and design. Where a site is not complex or constrained, and no additional ecological input is necessary, the PEAR *may* be sufficient and suitable to support a planning application.
5. Biodiversity Accounting metrics are used separately to quantify the value of a Site in Biodiversity Units, which helps in the later stage of assessing the ecological impacts of the proposed development. This process is set out separately in the Biodiversity Gain Report which accompanies this PEAR.

Proposals/Reason for PEA

6. The PEA has been commissioned to inform proposals to develop the Site for car parking.

The Site

7. The application site 'the Site' comprises a small plot of disused/vacant land off Hodson Lane adjacent to the Broadhelm Business Park. The red line boundary (RLB) refers to the parcel of land to be developed and the blue line boundary (BLB) shows off-Site land to be used to contribute towards Biodiversity Net Gain, laid out in a separate report (ER-7276-02C High Level BNG assessment, Brooks Ecological 2024).

Figure 1 The Site (red line boundary)



Desk Study

- The assessment uses a 2km area of search around the Site for records of protected and notable species and locally or nationally designated wildlife sites.

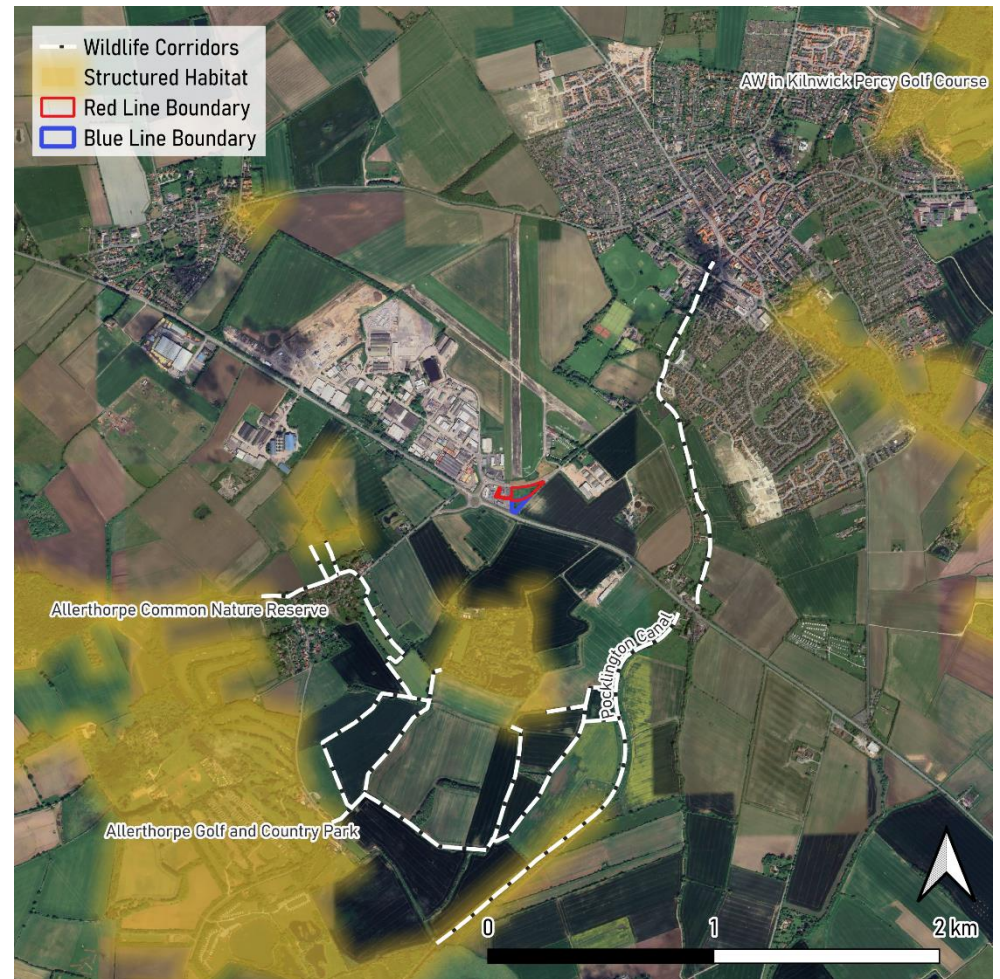
Landscape

- The Site (RLB) consists of a small (approx. 0.67ha) triangle of vacant land that sits approximately 1.5km southwest of Pocklington. The Site is immediately adjoined by developed land to the west, Hodson Road to the southeast and arable fields beyond. An airfield sits to the north.
- The surrounding landscape supports a mixture of arable farmland, light industrial estates and residential, with occasional woodland blocks, ponds and amenity spaces.
- The Site overlies the Triassic sedimentary bedrock of the Mercia Mudstone Group, as well as superficial deposits of the Pocklington Gravel Formation. Mercia Mudstone Group consists of mudstone and subordinate siltstone with thick halite-bearing units, likely to result in neutral soil conditions.

Wildlife Corridors

- The Site is not linked to any obvious wildlife corridors. The closest potential corridor is Pocklington Beck, which transects north-south approximately 720m east of Site. The Site is separated from the beck by arable land.
- A network of structured habitat is present to the southwest, centred around the Allerthorpe Golf and Country Park, Allerthorpe Common Nature Reserve, Allerthorpe Lakeland Park and the Little Grebe Lodge Estate. The habitats include treelines, parkland, lakes, ponds and woodland blocks. This network of structured habitat is separated from the Site by a main road, with limited connectivity.

Figure 2 Analysis of wildlife corridors and structured habitat visible on mapping in relation to the Site



Designations

Statutory Designations

14. A search has been made to identify any nationally designated sites within a 2km radius of the Site, or internationally designated sites within a 10km radius. The results are shown in the below table.

Table 1 Statutory Designated Sites

Site Name	Distance from Site	Designation	Summary Interest
Pocklington Canal	870m SE	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	The main feature for designation is the assemblage of aquatic, fringing swamp and tall fen plant communities which include a number of nationally and locally rare plant species. Also important for invertebrates and breeding birds.

15. The Site is separated from the designated site by an expanse of farmland and a main road. Impacts on the designated Site from this development are not expected.

SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs)

16. The Site lies within the IRZ for several SSSI's including Pocklington Canal, and has potential to fall into the 'Rural Non-Residential' categories if the total footprint of development exceeds 0.2ha. Should the Site fall into this category the LPA would be required to consult with Natural England in relation to potential impacts.

Non-Statutory Designations

17. Data search from the North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC) returned records of seven Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), six of which sit under the 'deleted' status, with the remaining site, holding 'designated' status. None of the sites are deemed relevant to this development due to the separation and distance by main roads and expanses of developed land/farmland.

Nature Improvement Area

18. The Site is not within any Nature Improvement Area.

Wildlife Habitat Network

19. The Site is not within any mapped Wildlife Habitat Network.

Granted EPSM Licences

20. A single granted European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licence is shown within 1km of the Site. This license (EPSM2013-5918) lies approx. 860m northeast of the Site and applies to the destruction of a resting place of Natterers bat, dating back to 2016.

Survey

21. The survey was carried out during December 2023¹ and followed the principles of Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC, 2010).
22. Although out of the main growth season, the nature of habitats present here, and the expertise and training of the surveyor meant that it was still possible to confidently classify the type and condition of habitats present on this Site.
23. Enough time was afforded the surveyor to carry out the survey. The survey was not constrained by poor weather.
24. Whilst the majority of the Site was accessible, at least 5% of the Site was inaccessible due to very dense vegetation, which could not be closely inspected. This could have concealed invasive species or protected species evidence.

Habitat Appraisal

25. The Site's habitats are described in order on the following pages. In line with the requirement to provide information on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), habitats are named in accordance with the UK Habitats classification system. We have used the UK Habitats v2.01 guidance in identifying habitats. Habitat descriptions are divided into the 'distinctiveness' categories used in the calculations presented in the Biodiversity Gain Assessment, with more weight being afforded the more distinctive/important habitats.
26. Generally, the following apply to each tier of distinctiveness, although some authorities might highlight some lower distinctiveness habitats as having a higher importance locally. Where relevant we have highlighted these.

Very Low Distinctiveness Habitats

27. Habitats of little or no habitat value, i.e., lacking any significant native vegetation, but could still provide supporting habitat for protected or notable fauna such as birds or bats. In the context of BNG, their areas are included in calculations, but mitigation or compensation is not required.

Low Distinctiveness Habitats

28. Habitats which are ubiquitous, often which have been created or modified intentionally. They tend to lack diversity of species and structure. They are unlikely to support notable flora but could still provide supporting habitat for protected or notable fauna. In the context of BNG, they are included in

calculations, but compensation/mitigation needs only to provide habitat of similar or higher distinctiveness.

Medium Distinctiveness Habitats

29. Habitats which are common but provide a higher level of structural and species diversity. Though unlikely to support more notable assemblages, species of interest could be present here and they are more likely to be important supporting habitat to fauna. In the context of BNG, mitigation needs to provide habitat of the same broad habitat type, or that of higher distinctiveness.

High Distinctiveness Habitats

30. Habitats which are more natural and contain more important assemblages of plants and potentially species which are rare in their own right. They will provide good habitat for fauna. These habitats are likely to be targeted as conservation priorities and will be the subject of additional policy guidance or legislation. In the context of BNG, whilst mitigation or compensation for loss or damage is possible, provision of more of the same type of habitat would be required, which (with a few exceptions) is likely to be difficult.

Very High Distinctiveness Habitats

31. These are the UK's rarest/best habitats. They will be present in very particular locations and a range of rare or important plant and animal species will depend on the particular conditions they provide. These habitats will be the subject of restrictive policy guidance or legislation. Whilst the BNG metric does not preclude mitigation or compensation in respect of these habitats, creation of the same habitat type would be required, and this would range between very difficult/expensive and impossible.

Condition Assessment

32. Our condition assessment for each habitat described references where available the criteria set out in DEFRA (2023) Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessments. A completed version of this spreadsheet is provided digitally with the Biodiversity Gain Report which accompanies this report.

¹ This Report has been prepared during January 2024 following a visit to the Site in December 2023, and our findings are based on the conditions of the Site that were reasonably visible and accessible at that date. We accept no liability for any areas that

were not reasonably visible or accessible, nor for any subsequent alteration, variation, or deviation from the Site conditions which affect the conclusions set out in this report.

Habitats of Very Low/Low Distinctiveness

Figure 3 Approximate location and extent of habitats of very low and low distinctiveness

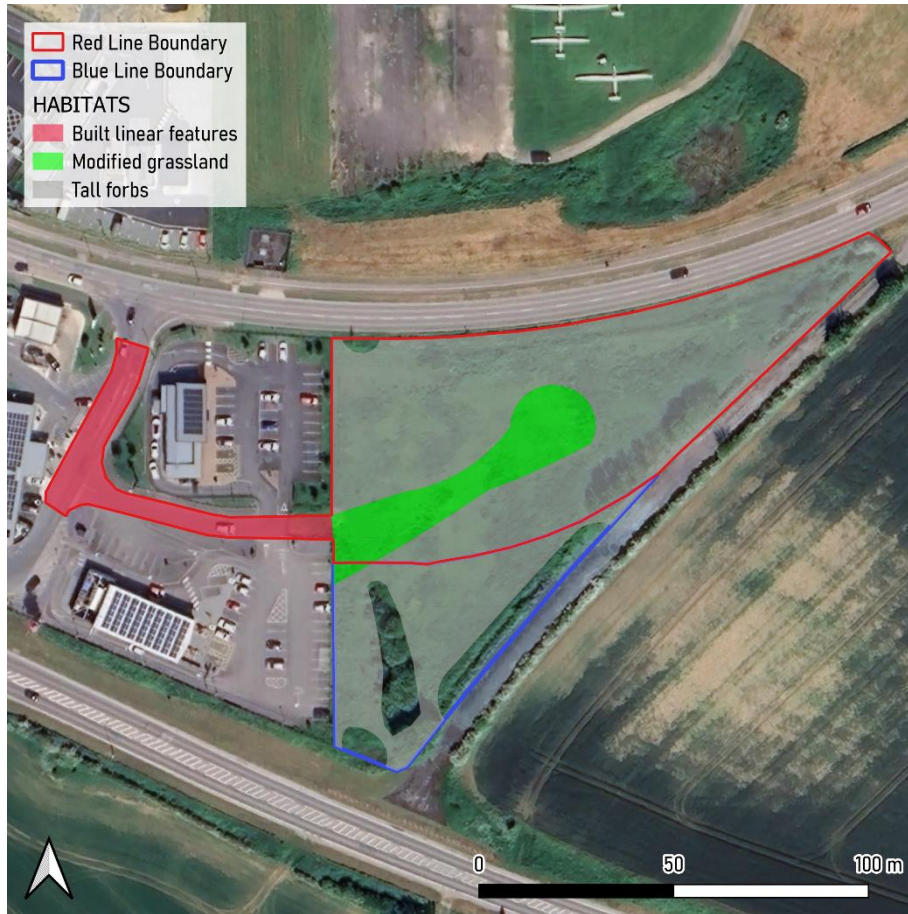


Table 2 Summary - Habitats of Very Low/Low Distinctiveness

UK Habitats	Summary Description	Condition*
Built Linear Features	Tarmacked built roads with no vegetation.	N/A
Tall Forbs	Overgrown spoil piles are present along the boundaries of Site, with the tall forb and bramble scrub patches encroaching across most of the RLB and BLB. Species include nettle, rosebay willowherb, greater willowherb, creeping thistle, mugwort, common hogweed, teasel, common ragwort, cow parsley, ribwort plantain, broad leaved dock, yarrow and creeping cinquefoil. Yorkshire fog and false oat grass are also present.	Moderate
Modified Grassland	Rough neutral grassland dominated by coarse grasses such as cocksfoot. This area sits mostly within the RLB and has been cleared in recent years likely for access to assist the adjacent development. Tall forbs are present in small quantities but not dominated as in the habitat above. Additional grass species include Yorkshire fog, Perennial ryegrass and creeping bent. Forb species include nettle, white clover, creeping buttercup and ribwort plantain. Average of 4-5 spp. per m ² .	Poor

*Full condition assessments are provided as part of the Biodiversity Gain Assessment, issued separately

Figure 4 Tall Forbs (left) and Modified Grassland (right)



Habitats of Medium Distinctiveness

Figure 5 Approximate location and extent of habitats of medium distinctiveness

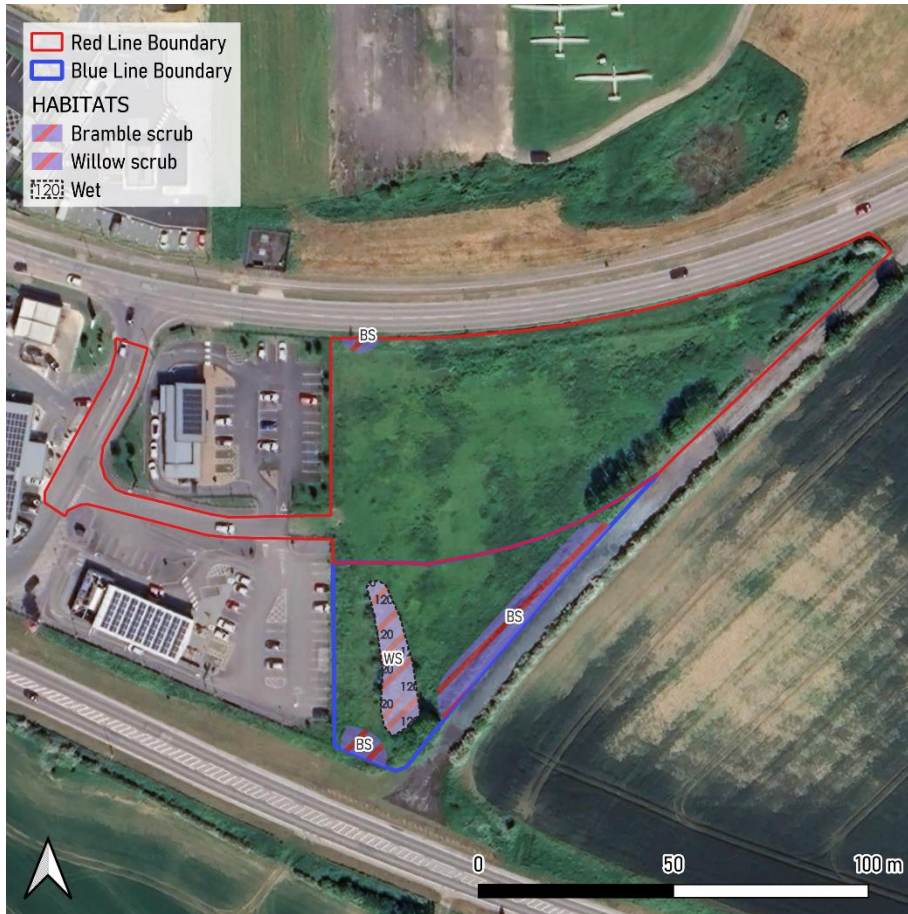


Table 3 Summary – scrub habitats of Medium Distinctiveness

UK Habitats	Label Ref	Summary Description	Condition*
Willow Scrub	WS	A shallow depression, fed by a drainage pipe entirely within the BLB. Likely previously installed as an attenuation basin for the adjacent development. The basin is unmanaged allowing dense willow scrub to establish. Species included crack willow, white willow and a likely combination of hybrids. The ground is wet with no flow, and the ground layer was dominated by water horsetail with additional hard rush, common reed and bulrush.	Poor
Bramble Scrub	BS	Low-lying bramble dominated scrub, majority of which sits within the BLB with a small patch within the northern part of the RLB. Additional species include nettle, coltsfoot and dogrose.	N/A

*Full condition assessments are provided as part of the Biodiversity Gain Assessment, issued separately.

Figure 6 Willow Scrub (left) and Bramble Scrub (right)



Individual Trees

Figure 7 Approximate location and extent of trees on Site



Table 4 Summary - trees

UK Habitats	Summary Description	Condition*
Medium Urban Trees	Two previously coppiced ash trees are present within the BLB. The largest stem of each tree was measured and found to be of a medium size class.	Moderate

*Full condition assessments are provided as part of the Biodiversity Gain Assessment, issued separately

Figure 8 Two medium urban trees in the south corner of the Site.



Hedgerows of Low Distinctiveness

Figure 9 Approximate location and extent of Hedgerows on Site

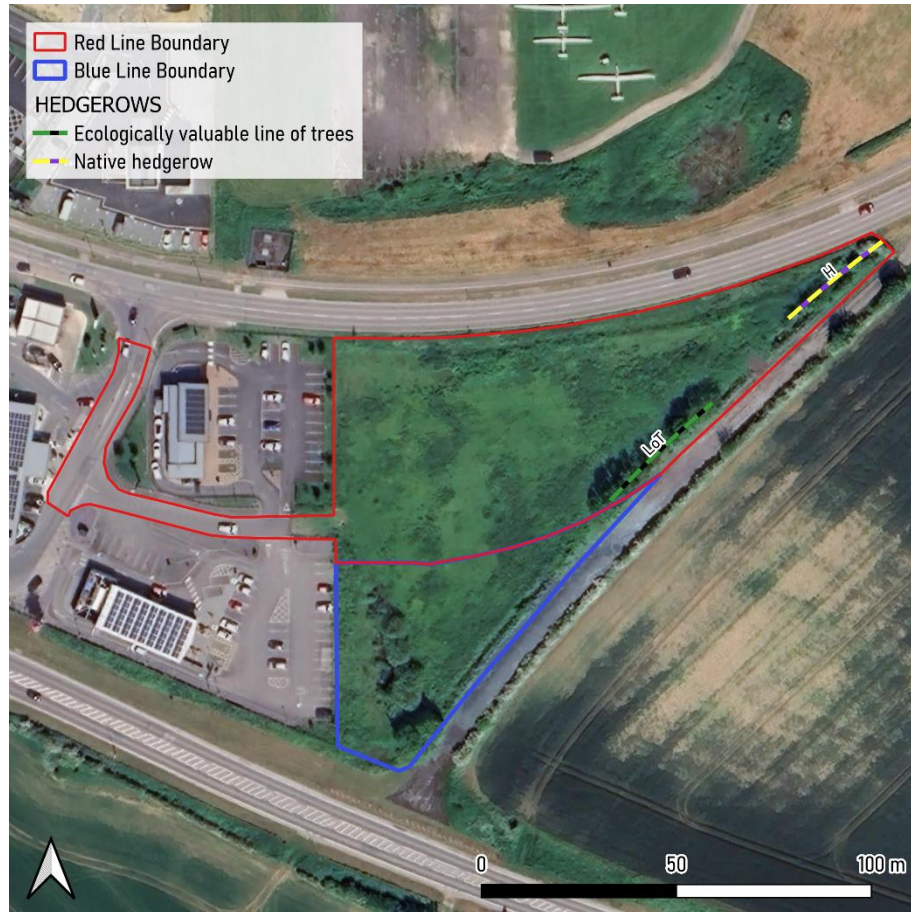


Table 5 Summary - Hedgerows

UK Habitats	Label Ref	Summary Description	Condition*
Native Hedgerow	H	A length of native unmanaged hedgerow is present within the northeastern corner of the RLB. Species include hawthorn, blackthorn and dogwood.	Good
Ecologically valuable line of trees	LOT	A line of mature ash trees is present along the southeastern boundary of the RLB. The trees are all of the same age, forming a continuous canopy.	Moderate

*Full condition assessments are provided as part of the Biodiversity Gain Assessment, issued separately.

Figure 10 Hedgerow (left) and Line of Trees (right)



Watercourses

Figure 11 Approximate location and extent of Watercourses on Site



Table 6 Summary - Hedgerows

UK Habitats	Label Ref	Summary Description	Condition*
Ditch	D	A ditch runs along the southeastern boundary of both the RLB and BLB. To the east the ditch is very slow flowing and turbid. High levels of litter and pollution are present in this area. In contrast to the south, the ditch is clear and fast flowing, with the flow being attributed to heavy rainfall and snow melt before the visit. Looking at aerial and OS mapping, the ditch is not connected to any watercourses, just an isolated network of drainage ditches.	Poor
Culvert	C	A small, culverted section of the main ditch within the BLB, leading to the unmanaged basin, now dominated by wet willow scrub.	Poor

*Full condition assessments are provided as part of the Biodiversity Gain Assessment, issued separately

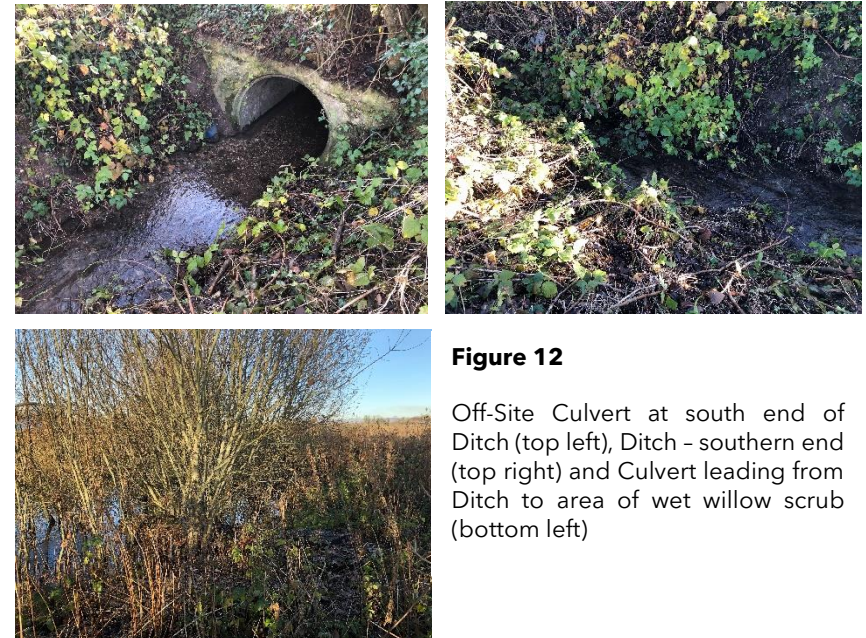


Figure 12

Off-Site Culvert at south end of Ditch (top left), Ditch - southern end (top right) and Culvert leading from Ditch to area of wet willow scrub (bottom left)

Faunal Appraisal

33. The following pages discuss only the groups and species that could be reasonably expected to be found on the type of habitats present on, or adjacent to, the Site.

Amphibians

Desk evidence

34. There are no records of great crested newt (GCN) returned for the area.
35. There are two records of smooth newt (1977 and 2004) and one of common frog (2004) within a 2km radius of the site.

Field Evidence

36. The Site is occupied primarily by tall forbs and scrub, which represents suitable terrestrial habitat for this group, but which is small in extent and isolated from any larger areas of similar habitat locally.
37. A single pond was found on mapping within a 500m radius of the RLB and BLB. This pond is part of a network of well-connected ponds on the Little Grebe Lodge estate. It is very tenuously connected to the Site via hedgerows and ditches, but has a significant road in-between that is likely to act as a barrier to some extent.
38. With the introduction of District level licencing, Natural England now consider the Ecological zone of influence of a development site to extend only 250m from the site boundary. No ponds are present within a 250m radius of the Site.

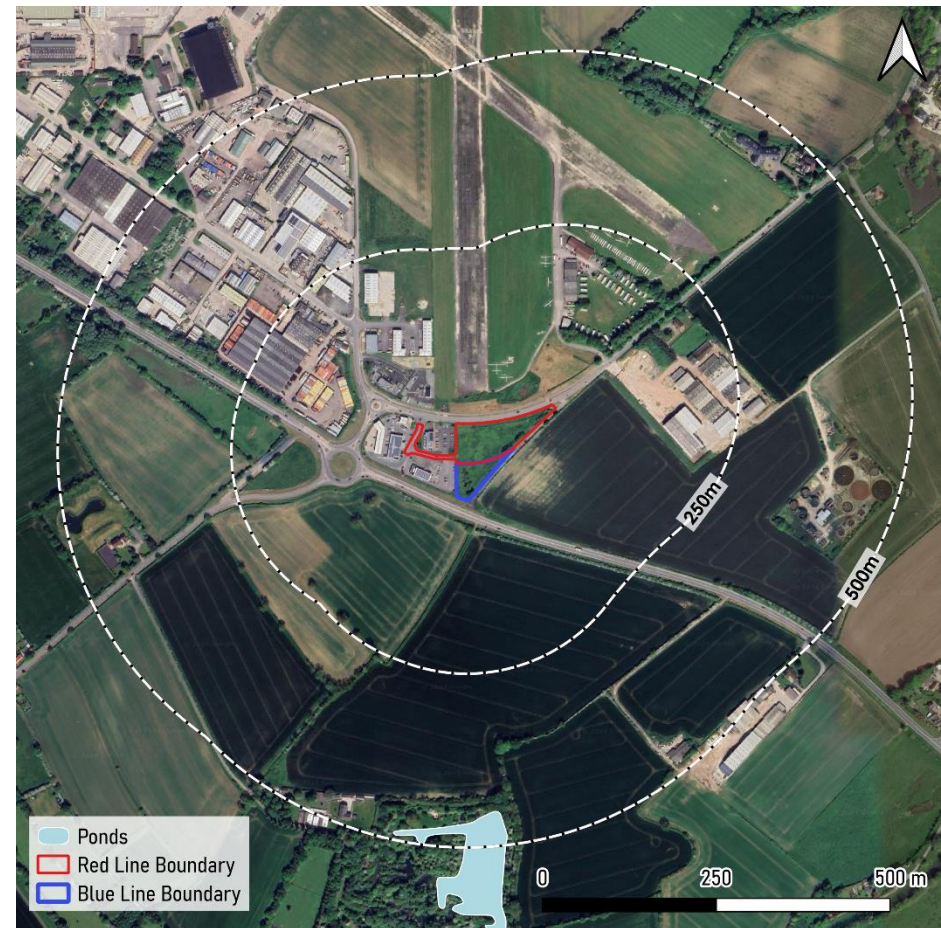
Summary Evaluation

39. Given the Site's small size, and absence of potential breeding sites within a 250m radius, the risk of GCN being present on Site is considered to be negligible.

Further Surveys and Recommendations

40. No further surveys or precautions are considered necessary.

Figure 13 Ponds mapped in relation to the Site



Bats

Desk evidence

41. There are twenty records of bats returned in the 2km search area from between 1985-2013. These include records of 9 pipistrelle spp., 5 myotis spp., 2 noctule, 1 brown long-eared and 5 unknown vesper spp.

Field Evidence (Roosting)

42. No buildings are present on Site.
43. Multiple mature trees are present on Site; however, these are in fine condition with no features suitable for roosting bats.

Field Evidence (foraging and commuting)

44. The Site has some suitability for foraging and commuting bats along the treelines and hedgerows, however this is small in extent and isolated within a landscape that is otherwise of very low suitability for attracting anything other than irregular low-level foraging and commuting.

Summary Evaluation

45. The Site is unlikely to be of value to this group, being small in extent and disconnected from any larger areas of suitable habitat.

Further Surveys and Recommendations

46. Given the Site's simple nature, bat activity is easy to predict and likely focused along the southeastern boundary. Full bat activity surveys would be disproportional to the risk of development impacting on this group, and instead, recommendations are given to retain and protect the areas of better habitat on Site.
47. The mature tree line and hedgerow along the southeast boundary should be retained where possible, or replaced if loss is unavoidable.
48. Any artificial lighting installed as part of the proposals should be directional and faced away from this boundary. A sensitive lighting plan would be useful in this instance.

Birds

Desk Evidence

49. There are fifty records of birds returned in the 2km search area from between 2004-2020, of which the species and conservation status are shown in table 7 below.

Table 7 Conservation status of bird species found in North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre radius search

Conservation Status	Species
Red	Skylark, Swift, Cuckoo, Corn Bunting, Yellowhammer, House Sparrow, Lapwing
Amber	Stock Dove, Kestrel, Dunnock, Bullfinch, Wren, Song Thrush
Green	Kingfisher, Grey Heron, Buzzard, Goldfinch, Blue Tit, Robin, Swallow, Red Kite, Great Tit, Barn Owl
Not assessed	Oystercatcher, Grey Wagtail

Field Evidence

50. Due to the urban location of the Site and habitats present, the Site is likely to support only small numbers of urban fringe specialists.
51. A small number of common bird species were noted during the survey including carrion crow and woodpigeon.

Summary Evaluation

52. Based on its size and habitats, the Site is unlikely to be important to local bird populations or any red/amber listed species found in the area.

Further Surveys and Recommendations

53. No further surveys are considered necessary to demonstrate current baseline in respect of birds.
54. Standard precautions apply in respect of restrictions on clearing vegetation during the nesting season.

Badgers

Desk evidence

55. There are three records of badgers in the 2km search area. Eurasian badger was recorded ~185m southeast of the Site in 2009, then ~1.5km northwest of the Site in 2013 and 2015.

Field Evidence

56. The Site provides potential habitat for sett building in the areas of dense scrub, however its location adjacent roads makes their presence here somewhat unlikely.
57. No evidence of badger was found, however full access throughout the entire area of dense scrub was not possible.

Summary Evaluation

58. Badger setts are unlikely to be present at the Site, but cannot be confidently ruled out at this stage.

Further Surveys and Recommendations

59. Given that absence cannot be demonstrated at this stage a precautionary pre-works check for setts is recommended – co-ordinated with Site clearance.

Hedgehogs (NERC Act 2006/Local BAP)

Desk evidence

60. There are eight records of Hedgehogs within the 2km search area from 1998-2009.

Field Evidence

61. No evidence of hedgehogs was found on site.

Summary Evaluation

62. The Site provides suitable habitat for this species and measures to allow them to access green space need to be planned for.

Further Surveys and Recommendations

63. Presence assumed; no further surveys are considered necessary.

Water vole

Desk evidence

64. There is one water vole record from 2008 (1.1km southeast of Site) and six records of otters from 1995-2017 within the 2km search area.

Field Evidence

65. A ditch is present on Site along the southeastern boundary; this is considered to offer low suitability for water vole, but is considered to be isolated from any other watercourses in the local by the presence of culverts.

Summary Evaluation

66. Although the onsite ditch provides some habitat suitability for this species, its isolation from the wider network and absence of records means that the risk of water vole being present on site is very low.

Further Surveys and Recommendations

67. No further surveys or precautions are considered necessary.

Reptiles

Desk evidence

68. No reptile records have been returned for the area.

Field Evidence

69. The Site provides some marginal basking and cover habitat in the rough grassland, tall forbs and adjacent ditch.
70. No field evidence was found.

Summary Evaluation

71. Potential (marginal) habitat is present on Site, but is small in extent and isolated in the landscape from any similar or higher value habitat. The risk of reptiles being present on Site is therefore considered to be low.

Further Surveys and Recommendations

72. No further survey is considered necessary.
73. Precautionary measures, such as directional clearance, should be put in place through a Construction Environmental Management Plan to guard against the risk (albeit low) of reptiles being present on Site in very low numbers.

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

74. INNS are species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), for which it is an offence to cause or allow it to grow in the wild.
75. No INNS were noted during survey².

Survey constraints

76. This survey is constrained by the presence of areas that were inaccessible due to the density of vegetation.
77. Although no INNS have been identified in this preliminary survey, it is not always possible to conclude absence from preliminary survey alone due to factors such as seasonal constraints, accessibility, third-party attempts to hide evidence, or undisclosed treatment programmes. For this reason, this report should not be relied upon as definitive evidence of absence of INNS.
78. This site presents a small risk of supporting undetected INNS based on the following factors:
- Areas of site inaccessible to survey
 - Potential for recent earthworks or management which may have obscured viable material
 - Potential for tipping of material
79. Should further assurances be needed in relations to INNS, a dedicated Invasive Weed Survey should be commissioned.

² Whilst our ecologists are trained in the identification of invasive species, this report is not a dedicated invasive species survey. Detectability of invasive plant species can be affected by several factors, and conclusive determination status, or extent, is not

possible through preliminary survey alone. As the presence of invasive species can generate significant costs to development, the client may wish to instruct a dedicated invasive species survey prior to entering into contracts.

Ecological Constraints and Opportunities

Habitat Value

80. The usual approach to development is to minimise any net loss of biodiversity, working towards a gain in biodiversity value where this is possible on-Site. Our separate report on Biodiversity Gain sets out the position of the Site in terms of measured biodiversity.
81. Irrespective of the Biodiversity Gain process, development should still seek to retain what is best about the Site.
82. The plan opposite shows the Site in the context of mapped habitat distinctiveness with the aim of informing the design of any layout. It shows that there are no targets of higher distinctiveness or irreplaceable habitat which would need to be avoided by the proposals and that the Site is relatively uniform in terms of potential impact.
83. Habitats do not impose any particular design constraints. Loss of habitats of this nature are not of the order which (outside of Biodiversity Net Gain) would require specific mitigation or compensation as they are common locally.
84. In terms of structure and connectivity, the northeast to south running ditch and adjacent hedgerow, line of trees and individual trees will contribute to the disjointed local habitat networks. These are of slightly elevated value in a local context and should ideally be retained.

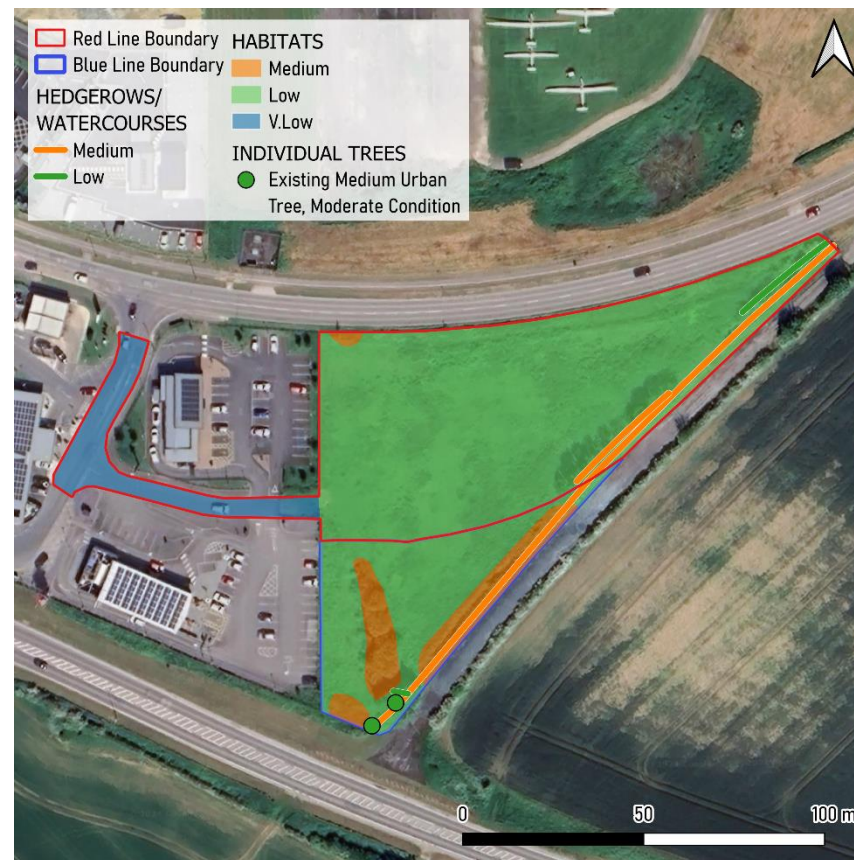
Faunal constraints

85. There is a low risk of badger and reptiles being present on Site, precautionary checks should be conducted.
86. Standard precautions apply in terms of nesting birds on Site.

Opportunities

87. Ecological opportunities at the Site relate to:
 - Potential to improve connectivity locally by enhancing the southeastern boundary habitats.
 - Potential to improve connectivity locally by providing new native hedgerow planting along the northern and western boundaries.
 - Potential to create higher quality grasslands and SuDS features on Site.
 - Installing roosting or nesting features on retained trees.
88. A Biodiversity Management Plan would be useful in defining these enhancements and can be secured by standard condition.

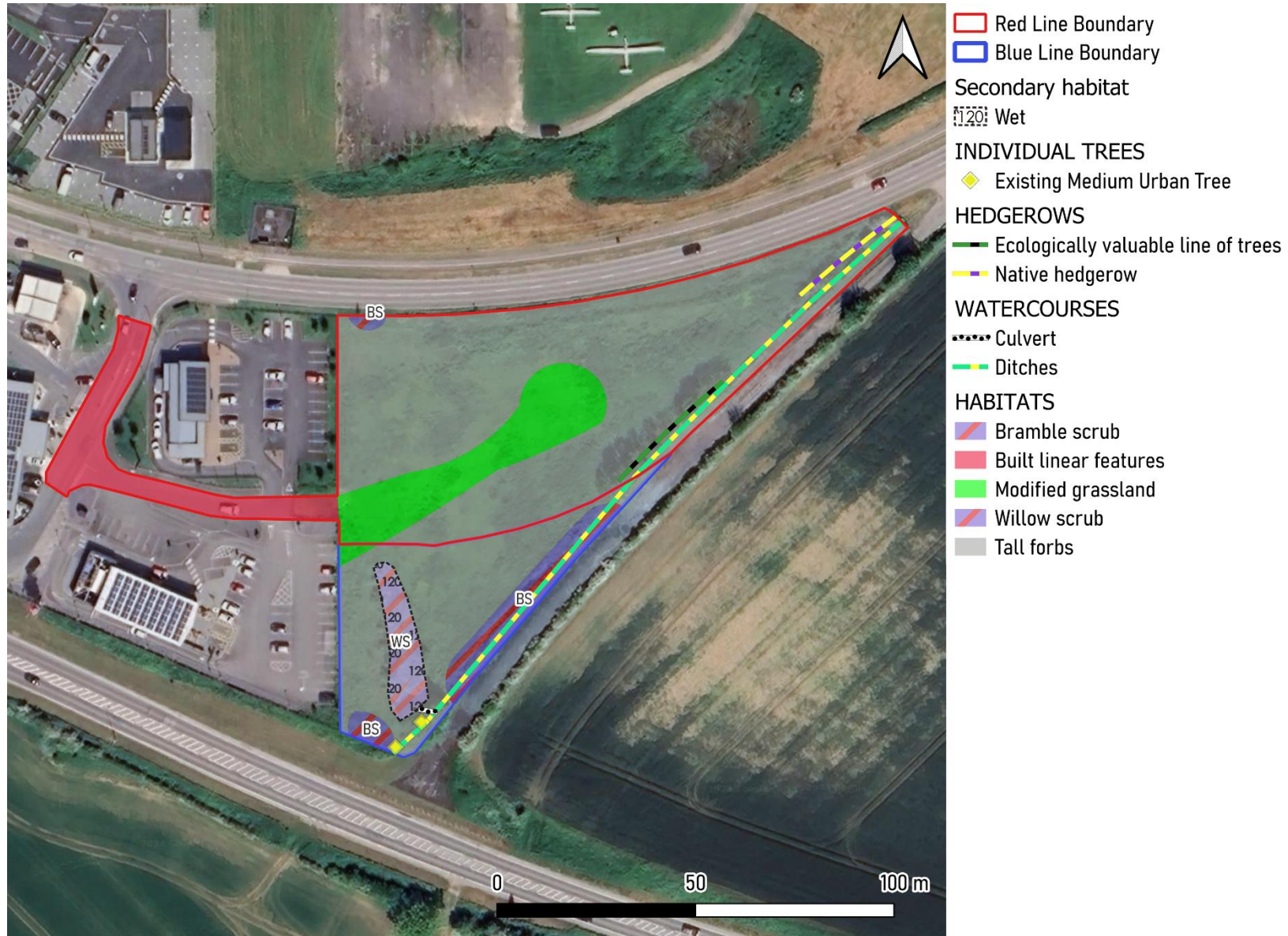
Figure 14 Habitat distinctiveness on Site



Conclusions and Recommendations

Planning considerations		
Recommendation	Rationale	When
R1 Additional Surveys	Not required	N/A
R2 Produce a layout which minimises loss of biodiversity	Engage with the Constraints and Opportunities set out above, involve your ecologist in designs at an early stage. The proposals will need to consider the NPPF hierarchy of Avoid–Mitigate–Compensate in minimising any loss of biodiversity. The LPA is likely to be seeking at least a no-net-loss situation and could request that a contribution is made to address any residual loss here, off-Site. Your layout may need to change to accommodate your findings from R1 surveys.	During the design process
R3 Design	Make sure your design team follows ecological advice to and make sure there are no design conflicts.	During the design process
R4 BNG	Produce a Biodiversity Net Gain Report.	During the design process
R5 Produce a Biodiversity Management Plan	To specify in detail how the development will cater for biodiversity on-Site and to show how habitats incorporated will be managed.	Delivery report Suitable for planning condition
R6 Produce a CEMP (Biodiversity)	To show how the site will be built without affecting surrounding habitats and minimising risk of affecting protected or notable fauna. The CEMP will detail the following protection measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Location of Biodiversity Protection zones or fences - Dealing with known or discovered invasive species - Pre- or during- clearance ecology checks for protected species. - Protected/notable species method statements where licensing is not needed. - Nesting bird management 	Delivery report Suitable for planning condition

Appendix 1 Habitats and Ecological Features



Appendix 2 List of species recorded

Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Soft rush	<i>Juncus effusus</i>
Broad leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Teasel	<i>Dipsacus</i>
Bulrush	<i>Typha latifolia</i>	Thistle spp.	<i>Asteraceae</i>
Common reed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>	Water horsetale	<i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>
Cock's foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	White clover	<i>Trifolium Repens</i>
Coltsfoot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>	White willow	<i>Salix alba</i>
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Crack willow	<i>Salix fragilis</i>	Yorkshire Fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>
Creeping bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>		
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>		
Creeping cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>		
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>		
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>		
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>		
Elder	<i>Sambucas nigra</i>		
False oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>		
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>		
Greater willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>		
Grey willow	<i>Salix cinerea</i>		
Good king henry	<i>Blitum bonus-henricus</i>		
Hard rush	<i>Juncus inflexus</i>		
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>		
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>		
Moss spp.	<i>Bryophyta</i>		
Laurel spp.	<i>Laurus</i>		
Mugwort spp.	<i>Artemisia</i>		
Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>		
Perennial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>		
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra agg.</i>		

Appendix 3 Explanatory Notes and Resources Used

Site Context

Aerial photographs published on commonly used websites were studied to place the site in its wider context and to look for ecological features that would not be evident on the ground during the walkover survey. This approach can be very useful in determining if a site is potentially a key part of a wider wildlife corridor or an important node of habitat in an otherwise ecologically poor landscape. It can also identify potentially important faunal habitat (in particular ponds) which could have a bearing on the ecology of the application site. Ponds may sometimes not be apparent on aerial photographs so we also refer to close detailed maps that identify all ponds issues and drains.

Designated Sites

A search of the MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside) website was undertaken. The MAGIC site is a Geographical Information System that contains all statutory (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSIs]) as well as many non-statutory listed habitats (e.g. ancient woodlands and grassland inventory sites). It is a valuable tool when considering the relationship of a potential development site with nearby important habitats. In addition, information from the local record holders was referred to on locally designated sites.

Functional linkage with off-Site habitats

When assessing these we consider whether the Site could be functionally linked to them, considering links such as:

- Hydrological links - is the Site upstream downstream, or could ground water issues affect it?
- Physical links - is the site in close proximity and could it be directly or indirectly affected by construction and operational effects? Conversely it may be that despite proximity major barriers separate the two.
- Recreational links - do footpaths and roads make it likely that increased recreational pressure could be felt?
- Habitat links - is the site part of a network of similar habitat types in the wider area? These could be joined by linear corridors or could simply be 'stepping stones' of habitat of similar form or function.

Method

Phase 1 habitat survey methodology (JNCC, 2010). This involves walking the site, mapping and describing different habitats (for example: woodland, grassland, scrub). The survey method was "Extended" in that evidence of fauna and faunal habitat was also recorded (for example droppings, tracks or specialist habitat such as ponds for breeding amphibians). This modified approach to the Phase 1 survey is in accordance with the approach recommended by the Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment (IEA, 1995) and Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM 2017).

Faunal Appraisal

This section first looks at the types of habitat found on Site or within the sphere of influence of potential development, then considers whether these could support protected, scarce, or NERC Act 2006 Section 41 species (referred to collectively as 'notable species').

Records of notable species supplied from a 2km area of search by the North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre are used to inform this appraisal.

We discuss further only notable species or groups which could be a potential constraint due to the presence of suitable habitat and their presence (or potential presence) in the wider area. We screen out and do not present accounts of notable species or groups which do not meet these criteria - in some cases it may be necessary to explain this reasoning

Consideration is given to the Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), which for this site is the 'East Riding of Yorkshire Biodiversity Action Plan'.

Species/group	Habitat
Reed bunting	Arable and horticulture
Grey partridge	Built up areas and gardens
Freshwater white-clawed crayfish	Calcareous grassland
Purple milk vetch	Standing open water and canals
Red-eyed damselfly	Coastline
Heath cudweed	Humber Estuary
Bluebell	Woodland
Sea lavender	Ancient and / or species rich hedgerows
Marbled white	Chalk rivers
Spiral tasselweed	Coastal sand dunes
Suffocated clover	Eutrophic standing waters
Redshank	Lowland heathland
Water vole	Lowland raised bog
Otter	
Greater water parsnip	

Bats

Bat roosting potential is classified according to the following criteria set out below, taken from the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines (2023).

Bat Roosting Suitability of Trees

Suitability	Criteria
<i>None</i>	Either no PRFs in the tree, or highly unlikely to be any.
<i>FAR</i>	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present within the tree.
<i>PRF</i>	A tree with at least one PRF present.

Bat Roosting Suitability of Buildings

Suitability	Criteria
<i>None</i>	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
<i>Negligible</i>	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
<i>Low</i>	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats).
<i>Moderate</i>	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation - the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
<i>High</i>	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

Evaluation

In evaluating the Site, the ecologist will take into account a number of factors in combination, such as:

- the baseline presented above,
- the Site's position in the local landscape,
- its current management and
- its size, rarity or threats to its integrity.

There are a number of tools available to aid this consideration, including established frameworks such as Ratcliffe Criteria or concepts such as Favourable Conservation Status. Also of help is reference to Biodiversity Action Plans in the form of the Local BAP and Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) to determine if the Site supports any Priority habitats or presents any opportunities in this respect.

The assessment of impacts considers the generic development proposals from which potential effects include:

- Vegetation and habitat removal
- Direct effects on significant faunal groups or protected species
- Effects on adjacent habitats or species such as disturbance, pollution and severance
- Operation effects on wildlife such as noise and light disturbance

Appendix 5 Bat Activity Survey Rationale

The Bat Conservation Trust Guidelines (BCTG) (Collins 2023) is now widely accepted as providing a basis and rationale for scoping and conducting bat surveys. It is acknowledged that the guidelines provide a wealth of background and are a very useful tool in standardising approaches to survey, it is also felt that an over reliance on some of the guidelines within this document can result in the provision of complicated surveys where they have significant consequences for the cost, or timescale of a large project, but could never deliver positives for bat conservation.

Taking the BCTG document as a whole, Chapter 2 helps the reader understand whether or not surveys are required, and that in the context of planning and development survey is required in relation to ensure;

- the avoidance of legal offences, and;
- the provision of a sufficient level of information - such that will allow the Local Planning Authority to make an informed decision on the proposals and their potential impacts on the Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) of bats.

Attendance at seminars presented by, and discussions with, those involved in production of the BCTG document has emphasised the point that it is within the remit of the consultant ecologist to make a decision on the necessity and scope of surveys - they will use the guidelines in doing so but are not in any way bound by them: this is reflected in Section 1.1 of the guidelines -

'The Guidelines do not aim to either override or replace knowledge and experience. It is accepted that departures from the guidelines (e.g. either decreasing or increasing the number of surveys carried out or using alternative methods) are often appropriate. However, in this scenario an ecologist should provide documentary evidence of (a) their expertise in making this judgement and (b) the ecological rationale behind the judgement.'

Such decisions require a consideration of the potential of the project to impact on bat habitat, alongside analysis of the value of habitat on and around the site and of local records and the likelihood that bats might occur in significant numbers. Our reports aim to present information on how we have arrived at our decision on the Site, what assumptions we have based this on, and where further survey is recommended we indicate what the objective of this survey should be and how best this would be achieved.

The Site is small, not strategically located and does not contain any potential key habitat features for bats, its use by this group can be easily predicted making any requirement for additional survey disproportionate.

This assessment was made by Joanna Bertwistle BSc (Hons) ACIEEM. Joanna has over 6 years of experience conducting bat surveys in a professional capacity.

Appendix 5 Wildlife Legislation, Policy and Guidance

This is not an exhaustive list but sets out briefly the relevance of Legislation, Policy and Guidance in terms of planning applications and this assessment.

Legislation

Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats Directive).

Provides framework at an international (EU) level for the consideration/protection of European Protected Species (EPS), and habitats through the designation of sites.

Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of wild birds (EC Birds Directive) and The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1971)

Provide framework at an international (EU) level for the consideration/protection of important bird populations and the sites on which they are dependant.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010)

This transposes the EC Habitats Directive into UK law and provides the basis on which all EPS are protected and impacts on them can be licensed in the UK.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended

This provides the basis on which UK species are legally protected or restricted and confers protection on Sites of Special Scientific Interest SSSIs. It contains annexes of plants and animals which are legally protected as well as those which are considered to be invasive or harmful. It provides the basis on which impacts on such species can be licensed in the UK and provides controls on work on or near SSSIs.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW)

Provides a statutory basis for nature conservation, strengthens the protection of SSSIs and UK protected species and requires the consideration of habitats and species listed on the UK and Local Biodiversity Action Plans (UKBAP/LBAP).

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC)

Sets out the responsibilities of Local Authorities in conserving biodiversity. Section 41 of the Act requires the publishing of lists of habitats and species which are "of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity". At present these largely reflect those making up the UKBAP lists.

Hedgerows Regulations (1997)

Define and provide protection for Important Hedgerows.

Protection of Badgers Act (1992)

Protects badgers from persecution, this includes excavation/development in the proximity of setts.

Protected Sites

Statutory EU/International Protected Sites

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Ramsar Sites contain examples of some of the most important natural ecosystems in Europe. Work on or near these sites is strictly protected and Local Authorities will be expected to carry out 'Appropriate Assessment' of development in proximity of them. In this case there is often an increased burden on the developer in relation to provision of information and assessment.

Statutory UK Protected Sites

Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) all receive strict protection under UK legislation. Work in or in proximity to these sites would be restricted with any needing to be agreed with Natural England. Natural England now provide guidance on the nature of development which could impact on SSSIs through Impact Risk Zones.

Locally Protected Sites

Local Authorities have a variety of protected wildlife sites designated at a local or regional level. These are gradually being brought under the banner of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) but at present a plethora of different designations exist - all subject to local policy.

Protected Species

European Protected Species

A number of species (most relevantly bats, great crested newts [GCN], and otters) receive strict protection from killing, injury and disturbance under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010). Protection is also conferred on the habitats on which they rely such as roost space in the case of bats and ponds and fields etc. in the case of GCN.

UK Protected Species

A number of species (including bats, GCN, water vole and white clawed crayfish) are strictly protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended, from killing, injury, disturbance and damage or destruction of their resting places etc. Certain species (such as reptiles) and some birds (such as barn owl) receive partial protection e.g. at certain times of the year or from certain activities only. All

nesting bird species are protected from damage or destruction of their nests - whilst active.

Invasive species

Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended

Lists these species and makes it an offence to cause or allow their spread in the wild. This often has impacts on development and planning in relation to the presence of invasive plant species such as: Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*), Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

Planning Policy/Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework was last updated in December 2023. The most relevant paragraphs from the NPPF are set out below.

The approach to assessing the natural environment is now embedded within the definition of what 'sustainable development' is and this falls under one of three objectives of the planning system - the 'environmental objective' applying in this case. Paragraph 8c (P8c) of the NPPF states that sustainable development should "protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment", including "improving biodiversity". P10 sets out the Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Section 15 details conserving and enhancing the natural environment; policies and decisions should be "protecting and enhancing valued landscape [and] sites of biodiversity [...] value", "recognise the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside" and contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution (P180). Allocations of land for development should, "allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework" and "take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats" (P181).

The Framework sets out ways to minimise the impacts on biodiversity through plans which "identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity" and promote the "conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity" (P185).

It is made clear in P186 that local planning authorities should apply a set of principles when determining planning applications. Planning permission should be refused "if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from development cannot be avoided [...], adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for". Development should not normally be permitted where an adverse effect on a SSSI is likely, and "opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity".

UK Biodiversity Indicators 2023; update to Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services

The UK Biodiversity Indicators 2023 provide updates to the indicators set out in Biodiversity 2020 including new species abundance targets as set out in the Environment Act 2021. Biodiversity 2020 builds on the Natural Environment White Paper (June 2011) - Setting out the current UK Government's approach to nature conservation. It promotes a more coherent and inclusive approach to conservation and the valuing in economic and social terms of economic resources.

The strategy promotes initiatives such as Biodiversity Offsetting, Nature Improvement Areas and a focus on well-connected natural networks and introduces the concept of securing a 'no net loss' situation with regard to UKBAP/Section 41 habitats and species.

ODPM circular 06/05 (2005) Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System

Provides guidance to Local Authorities on their obligations to biodiversity - particularly in relation to assessing planning applications and ensuring the adequacy of information.

BSI (2013) BS 42020:2013 Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development

Provides a standard for the biodiversity assessment and development industries and decision makers such as Local Planning Authorities to work to.

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