

231 Shaw Lane, Markfield Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Prepared for Andrew Pickup

November 2025

Revision 00

TURNSTONE ECOLOGY LIMITED**Project Number:** TT4381**Project Title:** 231 Shaw Lane, Markfield**Document Reference:** R01-Preliminary Ecological Appraisal-Rev00**Document Issued To:** Andrew Pickup**Document Issued By:** Turnstone Ecology Limited

Revision Number	Author(s)	Reviewer(s)	Issuer	Issue Date
REV00	YE Ecologist	TE Principal	YE Ecologist	20/11/2025

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SURVEY AND REPORT VALIDITY

It is important that planning decisions are based on up-to-date ecological reports and survey data. However, it is difficult to set a specific timeframe over which reports or survey data should be considered valid, as this will vary in different circumstances. In some cases there will be specific guidance on this (such as for the age of data which may be used to support a protected species licence application) but in circumstances where such advice does not already exist, the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) has provided the general advice set out below.

<i>Age of Data / Survey / Report</i>	<i>Validity</i>
Less than 12 months	Likely to be valid in most cases.
12-18 months	Likely to be valid in most cases with the following exceptions: • Where a site may offer existing or new features which could be utilised by a mobile species within a short timeframe; • Where a mobile species is present on site or in the wider area, and can create new features of relevance to the assessment; • Where country-specific or species-specific guidance dictates otherwise.
18 months to 3 years	A professional ecologist will need to undertake a site visit and then review the validity of the report. Some or all of the other ecological surveys updated.
Protected Species Licensing	Licence applications usually only possible using data less than 2 years old

The likelihood of surveys needing to be updated increases with time and is greater for mobile species or in circumstances where the habitat or its management has changed significantly since the surveys were undertaken. Factors to be considered include (but are not limited to):

- Whether the site supports, or may support, a mobile species which could have moved on to site, or changed its distribution within a site;
- Whether there have been significant changes to the habitats present (and/or the ecological conditions/functions/ecosystem functioning upon which they are dependent) since the surveys were undertaken, including through changes to site management;
- Whether the local distribution of a species in the wider area around a site has changed (or knowledge of it increased), increasing the likelihood of its presence.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of Report

This report has been completed in connection with the proposed development at 231 Shaw Lane, which is located between Bardon and Markfield, Leicestershire LE67 9PW (National Grid Reference: SK 46217 11749). The location of the proposed development site (the ‘Site’) is shown in *Figures 1 and 2* and the proposed development plans are fully detailed in *Section 4*.

A survey was conducted on the 2nd of October 2025 by Turnstone Ecology Ltd and consisted of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal using the UK Habitat Classification Approach, a Preliminary Roost Assessment, a Protected Fauna Survey and Habitat Suitability Assessment and a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNG) using the Statutory Metric (full version).

This report details survey and assessment methodology along with the results of a desk-based study and on-site survey. It also provides a quantitative assessment of potential impacts from retention, loss, enhancement and creation of habitats on-site and appropriate mitigation to offset any impacts associated with the proposal and to satisfy national and local planning policies in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Figure 1. Location of proposed development (Accessed on MAGIC Maps - <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.html>)

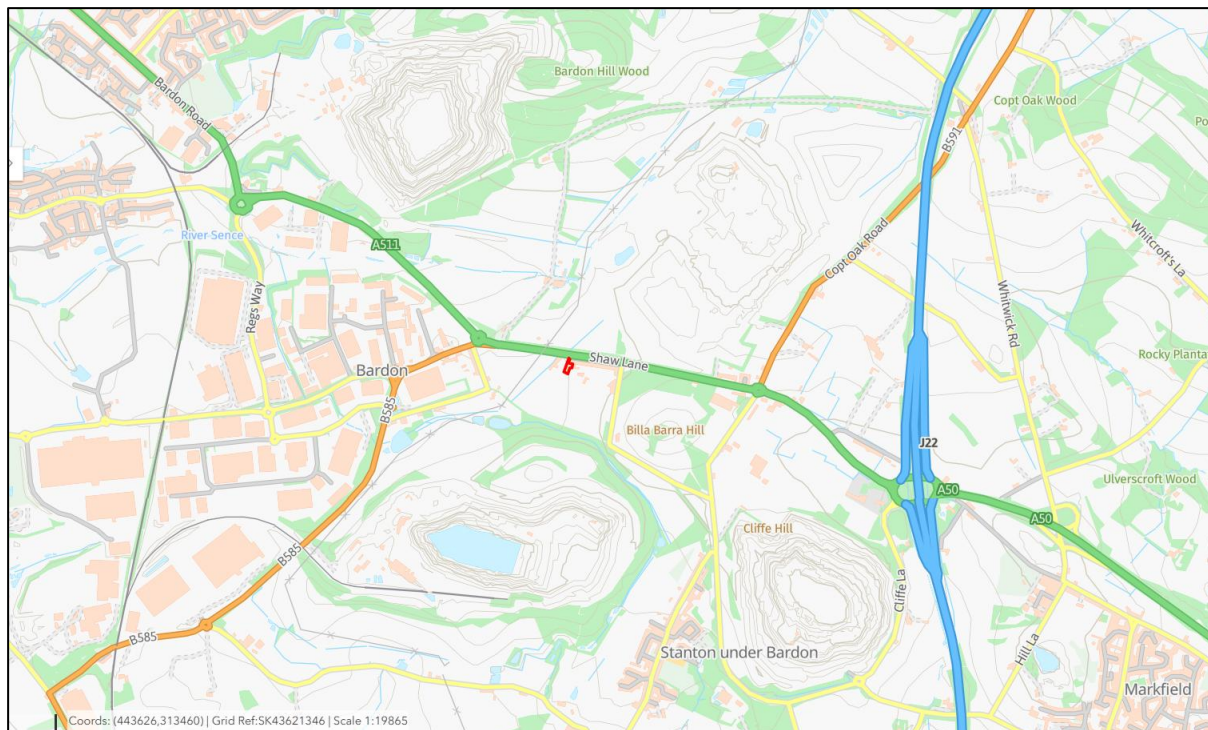


Figure 2. Site location and Wider Landscape



1.2 Ecological Context

The proposed development site is located on the between the village of Markfield and the parish of Bardon, approximately 3.5 km southeast of Coalville town centre. The site includes land to the rear of 231 Shaw Lane along with three further four residential gardens and includes four outbuildings. A hedgerow is present on the west boundary of the site, with fences present on the east and southern boundaries.

Residential properties are present to the east and a commercial property to the west of the site. The A55 dual carriageway is present to the north of the site. The wider landscape consists of residential and commercial properties, agricultural fields, woodland parcels and quarries. The M1 is situated 1.6 km east of the site.

2 METHODS

2.1 Desk-based Study

A data request through the local environmental records centre was not undertaken as the site is small, the habitats that will be impacted are limited and it is very unlikely that the records obtained would impact the site assessment and mitigation proposed.

Information relating to designated sites, and historic records of protected species within 2 km of the proposed development site were obtained from Magic (www.magic.gov.uk) and other freely available information on the internet, such as planning portals.

Any relevant historic records within 2 km of the proposed development have been obtained from freely available information on the internet, such as planning portals and NBN Atlas (<https://nbnatlas.org/>) where unless stated otherwise, all records are provided to the NBN Atlas under licences CC-BY or OGL.

2.2 Baseline Habitat Assessment

The survey methods were based on the UK Habitat Classification approach (<https://ukhab.org>, updated January 2021), which is a standardised method to survey main habitat types in the UK and comprises of a five level Primary Habitat Hierarchy system with Secondary Codes. Plant nomenclature in this report follows Rose (Revised Edition 2006) for native, naturalised and garden varieties of vascular plant and Stace; New Flora of the British Isles (Fourth Edition 2019) for cryptic or hybrid flora. Introduced species and garden varieties of flora are identified to genus level due to the number of cultivars, some flora may be listed to species level where that cultivar is easily identifiable.

UK Habitat Classification is the industry standard survey method used when determining baseline conditions for Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments.

2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is required in England under a statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). This statutory framework is referred to as *biodiversity net gain* in Planning Practice Guidance. Under the statutory framework for biodiversity net gain, subject to some exceptions, every grant of planning permission is deemed to have been granted subject to the condition that the biodiversity gain objective is met. This objective is for development to deliver at least a 10% increase in biodiversity value relative to the pre-development biodiversity value of the onsite habitat. This increase can be achieved through onsite biodiversity gains, registered offsite biodiversity gains or statutory biodiversity credits.

The biodiversity gain condition is a pre-commencement condition: once planning permission has been granted, a Biodiversity Gain Plan must be submitted and approved by the planning authority before

commencement of the development. There are exemptions and transitional arrangements which disapply the condition from certain planning permissions, as well as special modifications for planning permissions for phased development and the treatment of irreplaceable habitats. The statutory framework for biodiversity net gain also includes provisions about information requirements for planning applications and the treatment of the condition on decision notices on the grant of planning permission.

Habitat condition assessments are undertaken during the baseline site survey and is a measure of the state of a habitat based on current and past management practices. Habitat condition is used to measure variation between parcels of the same habitat type and the scores determined are required to complete the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tool (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides>). The metric tool evaluates how the proposed development will impact biodiversity by calculating the lost, retained, enhanced and created habitats using a quantitative approach which follows four rules:

- Trading rules: the trading rules set minimum habitat creation and enhancement requirements to compensate for specific habitat losses, up to the point of no net loss. They are based on the habitat type and distinctiveness of the lost habitat and the metric must meet the trading rules as well as a 10% net gain.
- Biodiversity unit outputs: The requirement to deliver at least a 10% net gain applies to each type of unit: habitat, hedgerow and watercourse (where present within the redline boundary). These are to be treated independently and must not be summed, traded, or converted between the three types of unit.
- The statutory metric tools (small sites or full) as provided on the gov website, are to be used to ascertain whether biodiversity objectives have been met, other formula to determine biodiversity value are not accepted under the Statutory Metric rules.
- In exceptional ecological circumstances, deviation from this biodiversity metric methodology may be permitted by the relevant planning authority, in these situations a bespoke compensation agreement must be arranged.

The biodiversity metric principles have been applied to the site by a competent Ecologist. Protected species considerations are covered separately within the report, following principle 2. As required under principle 7, habitat interventions are determined to be realistic and deliverable within the project timeframe with summarised management prescriptions given within this report that demonstrate achievability of proposed habitat mitigation and/or compensation long-term.

2.4 Protected Fauna Survey and Assessment

The habitats on site were assessed for suitability for protected fauna that occur in the region and obvious signs and incidental sightings of protected species were noted where present. Taking into consideration the geographical region and habitat types on and adjacent to site, the protected species and species groups that could be encountered are listed below.

- Badger

- Bats
- Nesting birds
- Great Crested Newt
- Reptiles

Details of initial survey methods for each relevant species are given below.

2.4.1 Badger

Where access allowed, a comprehensive assessment was carried out to identify areas that are used by Badgers (*Meles meles*) for foraging and sett digging. Signs of Badgers including setts, foraging signs, paths and latrines were recorded where present.

2.4.2 Bats

Preliminary Roost Assessment

A Preliminary Roost Assessment was conducted on all buildings within the site. The Preliminary Roost Assessment was carried out during the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal walkover by Molly Foulds who is a licenced Senior Ecologist at Turnstone Ecology. The licence covers the disturbance of bats in all counties in England. A detailed inspection was made of the exterior and interior of the buildings for any evidence of bat use, such as live or dead bats, droppings, scratch marks, staining and prey remains, and in some cases the absence of cobwebs. Large quantities of cobwebs in roof voids or at access points tend to be suggestive of no bat use, although this evidence is not conclusive. Features identified as possible bat access points or potential roosting locations were thoroughly searched where possible, using powerful torches and binoculars to facilitate the process. The surveys were undertaken in good light conditions and no recent sweeping or other cleaning had been undertaken.

Buildings are categorised according to their suitability for roosting bats as follows (Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn.) (2023) :

- None – No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bat at any time of the year (i.e., a complete absence of crevices/suitable at all ground/underground levels).
- Negligible – 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.
- Low – A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. 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).
- Moderate – 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).

- High – 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 potential to support high conservation status roosts such as maternity roosts or classic cool/stable hibernation sites.

Coupled with the above categorisations, a roost can also be:

- Confirmed – where roosting bats are confirmed as being present, either by the discovery of live or dead bats, droppings, prey remains, scratching or fur-staining.

Ground Level Tree Assessment

Trees were surveyed following Bat Conservation Trust Survey Guidelines 2024 to determine initial suitability for roosting bats using the below categorisation. The trees were assessed from ground level for features or potential roosting features (PRFs) that bats could use and a tree is determined as having either no suitability for roosting bats, having confirmed features which may require further inspection, or be of a size and structure which is likely to have PRF's but cannot be confirmed using a ground level inspection. The assessment of roosting suitability is further refined where possible by using additional surveys such as tree climbing. During further inspection a potential roost feature may be ruled out, be determined to have potential for individual bats (PRF-I), or potential for multiple bats (PRF-M)

Habitats were assessed for their suitability for use by foraging or commuting bats. Areas of particular interest vary between species but generally include sheltered areas and those habitats with good numbers of insects, such as woodland, scrub, hedges, watercourses, ponds, lakes and more species-rich or rough grassland.

2.4.3 Nesting birds

Habitat that might be used by nesting birds was identified and actively nesting birds or evidence of nesting birds noted where present.

2.4.4 Great Crested Newt

The suitability of any aquatic and terrestrial habitat on the site, and in the immediate vicinity, was assessed for suitability for use by Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*). Great Crested Newts are known to travel up to 500m between breeding ponds and suitable terrestrial habitat, however, they are only likely to travel up to 250m away from a breeding pond if there is suitable terrestrial habitat within that distance. A desk-based search was therefore undertaken for any ponds up to 250m from the site using OS maps and aerial imagery. The terrestrial habitat between the site and any ponds, and therefore connectivity to the site, was also considered.

2.4.5 Reptiles

The site was assessed for suitability for use by widespread species of reptiles, with particular attention paid to those features that could be used as basking areas (e.g. south-facing slopes), hibernation sites

(e.g. banks, walls, piles of hardcore) and opportunities for foraging (e.g. rough grassland and scrub). The site was assessed for its suitability for the commoner reptile species which have broadly similar habitat requirements, but more specific requirements include those shown below (Beebee & Griffiths 2000).

- Common Lizards (*Zootoca vivipara*) use a variety of habitats from woodland glades to walls and pastures, although one habitat they use is brownfield sites
- Slow-worms (*Anguis fragilis*) use similar habitats to Common Lizards, and are often found in rank grassland, gardens and derelict land
- Grass Snakes (*Natrix natrix*) have broadly similar requirements to Common Lizards but with a greater reliance on ponds and wetlands, where they prey on amphibians
- Adder (*Vipera berus*) use a range of fairly open habitats with some cover, but are most often found in dry heath.

2.5 Constraints

The survey was conducted in October which is considered to be outside of the optimal floristic period (April – September). This is not considered to be a significant constraint due to the scale of the site and existing habitat composition. Full access to the site was granted.

2.6 Criteria for Assessment

The scientific value of habitats for nature conservation is assessed according to widely accepted criteria of which the most important are naturalness, extent, rarity, and diversity.

The assessment of impacts is based on the principles within Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) Guidance (2024) which assesses the impacts of the proposal on ecological receptors taking into consideration extent, duration, reversibility, timing, frequency and certainty.

Mitigation and enhancement is designed to reduce the level of impact upon receptors and provide ecological enhancement in order to meet current legislation and planning policy. The information below has therefore been considered during assessment.

- Criteria that have been developed to assist in the identification of statutory Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) (JNCC 2013)
- Habitats and species of Principal Importance included under Section 41 (England) and Section 42 (Wales) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- The legal status of habitats and species according to The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- CIEEM Guidelines (2024) for assessing the value of ecological receptors within a defined geographical context using the following categories: international (i.e. Europe); UK and

national (England); regional; county; Unitary Authority; local or parish; and zone of influence. Receptors are identified as ‘important’ at these levels, or as ‘not important’

- Species protected by European directives
- Species protected by the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended)
- Other species listed as scarce or notable in literature issued by conservation organisations or learned societies *e.g.* vascular plant species listed in Stewart *et al.* (1994) and Red and Amber List Birds of Conservation Concern (Stanbury *et al.* 2021)
- Local Wildlife Site selection criteria
- National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF), 2024
- BS42020:2013 – Biodiversity Code of practice for planning and development
- Protected species handbooks and best practice guidelines
- Leicester, Leicestershire, and Rutland Local Biodiversity Action Plan
 - Habitats: Habitat targets have been set for the following habitat types found within the Leicestershire area; Broad-leaved woodland, Wet woodland, Lowland wood-pasture and parkland, Hedgerows, Mature trees, Eutrophic standing water, Mesotrophic lakes, Floodplain wetland, Reedbed, Fast-flowing streams, Sphagnum ponds, Springs and flushes, Neutral grassland, Heath grasslands, Calcareous grassland, Roadside verges, Field margins, Rocks and built structures, Urban habitats, Rivers.
 - Species: Specific targets have been set for the following species/groups found within the Leicester area; Barn Owl (*Tyto alba*), Bats (*Chiroptera*), Black Hairstreak Butterfly (*Satyrrium pruni*), Black Poplar (*Populus nigra*), Dingy (*Erynnis tages*) and Grizzled Skipper Butterflies (*Pyrgus malvae*), Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*), Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*), Otter (*Lutra lutra*), Purple Small-reed (*Calamagrostis canescens*), Redstart (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*), Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*), Violet Helleborine (*Epipactis purpurata*), Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*), White-clawed Crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), Wood Vetch (*Vicia sylvatica*), Swifts (*Apus apus*), Swallows (*Hirundo rustica*), and House Martins (*Delichon urbicum*).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Designated Sites

There are four statutory designated sites within 2 km of the Site;

- Billa Barra Hill Local Nature Reserve (LNR) is located approximately 250m east of the site. The site is dominated by acid grassland and woodland and is a Regionally Important Geological Site (RIGS).
- Bardon Hill Quarry is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is located approximately 1 km northwest of the site. The site is designated for its geological conditions.
- Cliffe Hill Quarry SSSI is located approximately 1.1 km southeast of the site. The site is designated for its geological conditions.
- Bardon Hill SSSI is situated approximately 1.1 km northwest of the site. The site is designated as it has remnants of Charnwood Forest heath and a diverse invertebrate fauna.

3.1.2 Protected Species Licence Sites

There are seven records of Protected Species licences that have been issued for development works within 2 km of the site:

Bats

- 2015-13818-EPS-MIT, 2015-13818-EPS-MIT-1 was granted for the destruction of a breeding and resting place for Brown Long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), Common Pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), and Whiskered Bats (*Myotis mystacinus*) at a site located approximately 0.7 km north of the site.
- 2016-24489-EPS-MIT, 2015-11978-EPS-MIT was granted for the destruction of a resting place for Brown Long-eared and Common Pipistrelle at a site located approximately 1.5 km north of the site.

Great Crested Newts

- 2016-25458-EPS-MIT, 2016-25458-EPS-MIT-1, 2016-25458-EPS-MIT-2 was granted for the damage and destruction of a breeding and resting place for Great Crested Newts at a site located approximately 0.7 km north of site.
- 2017-29399-EPS-MIT-1 was granted for the damage and destruction of a resting place for Great Crested Newts at a site located approximately 1.1 km northwest of the site.
- EPSM2013-5924 was granted for the destruction of a breeding and resting place for Great Crested Newts at a site located approximately 1.9 km northwest of the site.
- 2015-16512-EPS-MIT, 2015-16512-EPS-MIT-1, 2015-16512-EPS-MIT-2, 2015-16512-EPS-MIT-3 was granted for the damage and destruction of a resting place for Great Crested Newts at a site located approximately 1.9 km northwest of the site.
- 2015-16512-EPS-MIT-4 was granted for the damage of a breeding and resting place, and destruction of a resting place for Great Crested Newts at a site located approximately 1.9 km northwest of the site.

There were also 13 records of Great crested Newt Survey Licence Returns within 2 km of the site. The closest licence returns located approximately 0.7 km northeast of the site and 1 km southwest. There is connectivity to the site from the record located in the southwest.

3.2 Baseline Habitats

General

UK Habitats Classification was used to record habitat types within and immediately adjacent to the proposed development site. The habitats found onsite and immediately adjacent to site are listed below and shown in *Figure 3*:

- Modified grassland
- Hedgerows
- Scattered Trees
- Bramble Scrub
- Vacant land
- Buildings
- Developed land; sealed surface

Figure 3. Habitats within and adjacent to the proposed development



3.2.1 Modified Grassland (UKHabs code: g4 827)

The majority of the Site is a residential garden consisting of modified grassland (*Plate 1*). The area is abundant with Perennial Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) along with frequent instances of Common Nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), Common Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), and Broadleaved Dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*). There were occasional occurrences of Cocks Foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Yorkshire Fog (*Holcus lanatus*), and Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*). There were rare instances of Dandelion, Nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), White Clover (*Trifolium repens*), Scentless Mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum*), Annual Meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), False Oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), Hop Trefoil (*Trifolium campestre*), Dove's Foot Crane's-bill (*Geranium pusillum*). The sward height was between 10-15cm on average across the grassland area. There were large areas of debris on the grassland and areas of scattered scrub.

Plate 1. Modified grassland on-site (looking south)



3.2.2 Native Hedgerow (h2a6)

There is one native hedgerow along the west and southern boundary of the site. The hedgerow was abundant with Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and frequent with Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). There were occasional instances of Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and rare occurrences of Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Oak (*Quercus robur*).

The hedgerow ground flora was abundant with Common Nettle. There were occasional instances of Bramble, and rare occurrences of Herb Robert and *Cotoneaster Spp.* The hedgerow appeared to lack a regular management regime due to the hedges height and 'straggly' appearance.

Plate 2. Native hedgerow (looking south)



3.2.3 Scattered Trees (g4 32)

A medium sized Wild Cherry (*Prunus avium*) tree and a small Field Maple (*Acer campestre*) tree were present along the southeast boundary of the site, with both trees semi-mature. Additional trees outside of the site along the southeast boundary, separated from the site by a wooden fence, were overhanging into the site.

Four trees were present in the north east of the site, within the residential garden of 229 Shaw Lane. The trees consisted of a mature Ash tree, semi-mature Wild Cherry, semi-mature *Sorbus Spp.*, and a young Leyland Cypress tree (*Cupressus x leylandii*).

Plate 3. Tree in northeast of site (looking north)



3.2.4 Bramble scrub (h3d)

Bramble scrub was present in the north of the site with occasional Sun Spurge (*Euphorbia helioscopia*). The Bramble has grown over a dirt mound which has debris such as wooden pallets within.

Plate 4. Bramble mound (looking northeast)



3.2.5 Vacant or Derelict Land (g4 82)

An area of derelict land is present in the north east of site in an area where previously three adjacent residential gardens were present. The area consists of bare ground with large amounts of debris (*Plate 5*). The debris has been left in the garden areas after active renovation works within the associated dwellings.

Plate 5. Vacant land in northeast of site (looking north)



3.2.6 Buildings (u1b5)

Four outbuildings were present in the south of the site in land directly to the rear of 231 Shaw Lane. The buildings consisted of two single-storey metal portacabins (B1 and B2), a single storey composite building (B3) and a single storey brick-built shed (B4). B2 consists of two compartments (B2a and B2b) which were connected by corrugated metal sheet roofing. Full building descriptions and photographs can be found in *Section 3.4.2*.

An additional shed used to be present in the east of the site, however, it is now dilapidated with some brick walls left standing. The walls were not suitable for roosting bats and given this is no longer a building is not described further in *Section 3.4.2*.

3.2.7 Developed Land; Sealed Surface (u1b6)

A compacted gravel track was present in the northwest of the site.

Plate 6. Gravel Track (looking north)



3.3 Biodiversity Net Gain Metric: Baseline Data

The red line area totals 0.13 Ha and hedgerows total 0.09 km. Individual area sizes per habitat were measured during the 2025 survey when habitat borders were defined and mapped. Where condition scores differed across the site for the same habitats these have been separated out to ensure proposed management prescriptions can be targeted per habitat and are based upon the current baseline habitat conditions.

A summary of the habitats present on site, current habitat condition scores and their total area size (per habitat) in hectares can be seen in *Table 1*. A summary of hedgerows present on site, current hedgerow

condition scores and their total length size in km can be seen in *Table 2*. Habitat unit values, as calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Tool have also been included within the tables below.

Table 1. Area sizes and condition scores for all baseline habitats present on site

Habitat Type	Condition	Area Size (Ha)	Habitat Units
Modified Grassland	Poor	0.08	0.16
Bramble Scrub	Condition Assessment N/A	0.0076	0.03
Developed Land; Sealed Surface	N/A – Other	0.0331	0
Vacant or Derelict Land	Poor	0.0107	0.02
Urban Tree	Poor	0.0529	0.21
Urban Tree	Moderate	0.0041	0.03
Total:		0.1314 (Not including Urban Trees)	0.45

Table 2. Hedgerow lengths and condition scores for all baseline hedgerows present on site

Hedgerow Type	Condition	Length (km)	Hedgerow Units
Native Hedgerow	Moderate	0.087	0.35

3.4 Protected Fauna

3.4.1 Badger

There are 10 obtainable records of Badger within 2 km of the Site. No signs of Badger evidence were observed within the Site boundary.

The Bramble scrub and base of the boundary hedgerow are suitable for sett building. The grassland has some, albeit low, suitability for sett building. Scrub, grassland, and hedgerows within the site provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for Badgers.

3.4.2 Bats

There are two Protected Species Licence for bats was within 2 km of the Site. The closest is in relation to a development approximately 0.7 km north of the site.

Habitats within the site such as hedgerows, scrub and grassland are suitable for foraging and commuting bats.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

No trees within the site had features suitable for roosting bats, and as such will no longer be considered within this report for roosting bats.

The table below details the assessment of the four buildings within the site boundary. Building locations can be seen within *Figure 3*.

Table 3. Preliminary Roost Assessment Results

Building ref.	External Building Description	Internal Building Description	Potential Access Points and Roosting Features	Evidence of Bats	Potential Suitability
B1	Single-storey, single skinned, metal portacabin (<i>Plate 7</i>) with flat metal roof and three gaps for windows. The windows had no glass panes and doors were all fully open.	Open cabin with rubble and other materials covering the floor (<i>Plate 8</i>).	Windows and doors were all open, but as the interior of the building was single skinned metal, there were no potential roosting features.	No evidence of bats.	None
B2a	Single-storey metal portacabin (<i>Plate 9</i>) with flat metal roof. Cabin was fully sealed with no access points for bats. Building 2a is attached to Building 2b by a corrugated metal roof, and is used for car parking. (<i>Plate 10</i>)	No access within the internal area of the portacabin was possible. Therefore, only observations of the external area was made. The internal area of the roofed section connecting Building 2a and 2b together constituted a metal frame with wooden support beams.	No access features into B2a. Wooden supports between B2a and B2b had small gaps between wood and metal however these were fully inspected and found to be small and exposed at both ends making them unsuitable to support a roosting bat.	No evidence of bats	None
B2b	Single-storey metal portacabin with flat metal roof (<i>Plate 10</i>). Cabin was fully sealed with no access points for bats.	No access within the internal area of the portacabin was possible. Therefore, only observations of the external area was made.	No access features into B2b and no roosting features in the external area of the building.	No evidence of bats	None
B3	Single-storey composite building with flat, plastic roof (<i>Plate 11</i>). No gaps between roofing material and	No internal access for surveyor into building but partially viewed from open window. Internal structure is	An open window on the eastern aspect allowed entry to the building but no internal roosting features.	No evidence of bats	None

	walls. Window open on eastern aspect.	single skinned composite construction with no support structures. Building used for storage			
B4	One-storey brick built shed (<i>Plate 12</i>). There were some areas of missing mortar within brickwork and some bricks missing. Wooden fascias around building, in a rotting state. The building had two wooden framed stable doors and no visible windows. The roof is a pitched, slate tiled roof in a very poor condition with numerous gaps, slipped tiles and missing tiles (<i>Plate 15</i>). The ridge tiles are mostly well-sealed.	Internally, only the eastern half of the building was accessible (<i>Plate 13</i>). This area had a wooden suspended ceiling, which comprised two individual boards. There were some gaps in the brickwork internally.	Gap between fascias and brick walls. Missing tiles on roof, particularly between the tiles and wooden suspended ceiling (<i>Plate 14</i>). Only the eastern half of the building was accessible internally.	No evidence of bats.	Moderate



Plate 7. B1 as viewed from the south



Plate 8. B1 internal view



Plate 9. B2a as viewed from the south



Plate 10. Connecting roof between B2a and B2b



Plate 11. B3 as viewed from the south east



Plate 12. B4 as viewed from the south



Plate 13. B4 internal view of eastern half of building



Plate 14. Roof in disrepair

3.4.3 Birds

Bramble scrub, scattered trees, and hedgerows within the site are suitable for nesting birds. Buidlign4 and the connecting roof between B2a and B2b have features suitable for nesting birds. The grassland within the site is not suitable for ground nesting birds due to close boundary features.

3.4.4 Great Crested Newt

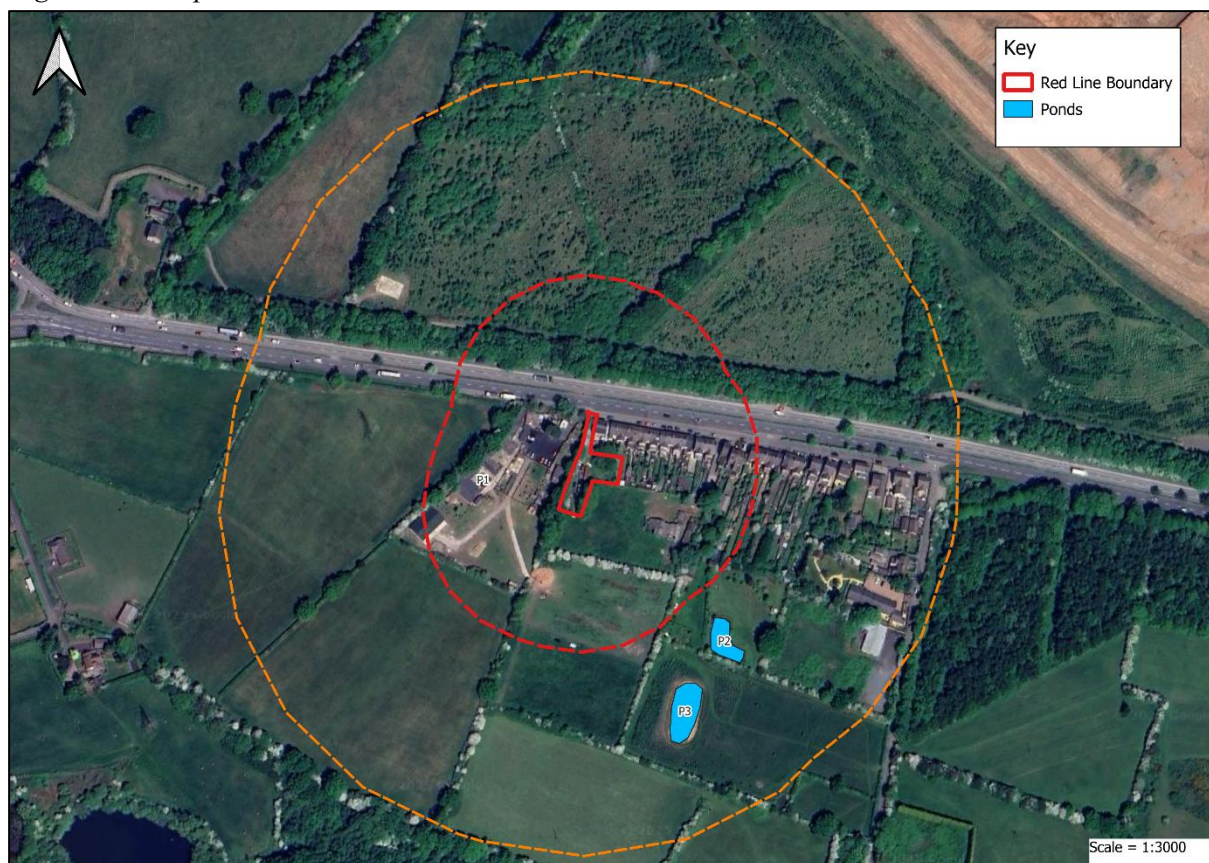
There are 45 obtainable records of Great Crested Newt within 2 km of the Site and the closest was located approximately 0.6 km north of the Site¹, likely in association with Bardon Quarry. The majority of the records (33 records) are situated to the north of the site, across the dual carriageway. The dual carriageway to the north of the site is a partial dispersal barrier. According to satellite imagery, a culvert is present approximately 80m west of the site which could offer a suitable route for Great Crested Newts to commute from north of the dual carriageway to the south.

There are three waterbodies within 250m of the Site, which are located approximately 60m, 120m and 140m southeast of the site (*Figure 4*). P1 is located approximately 60m west of the site and is a duck pond associated with Redgate Farm Animal Sanctuary. According to MAGIC Maps (<https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.html>) a pond is situated approximately 30m south of the site, however, historical satellite imagery shows the pond does not exist. An additional pond is located approximately 255m southeast of the site and has been included within the scope due to its proximity to the 250m search area and other ponds.

Terrestrial habitat suitable for hibernating or resting Great Crested Newts include Bramble Scrub and Hedgerows. There are various debris piles across the site that could be utilised. The grassland is only suitable for commuting Great Crested Newts due to exposed areas and frequent disturbance from nearby works. No breeding habitat was present within the site.

¹[Record: NE_GCN_17607 | Occurrence record | NBN Atlas](#)

Figure 4. Pond plan



3.4.5 Reptiles

17 records for reptiles (Common Lizard) were returned within 2 km of the site, with the closest record located 1.3 km north of the site². All records were located north of the site, past the A55 dual carriageway.

Habitat suitable for reptiles within the site are limited to areas of Bramble Scrub and hedgerows. Debris piles within the site could be used as refugia (*Plate 16*). The modified grassland within the site has limited opportunities for commuting reptiles.

² [Record: 20502896](#) | [Occurrence record](#) | [NBN Atlas](#)

Plate 16. Debris pile on site (looking south)

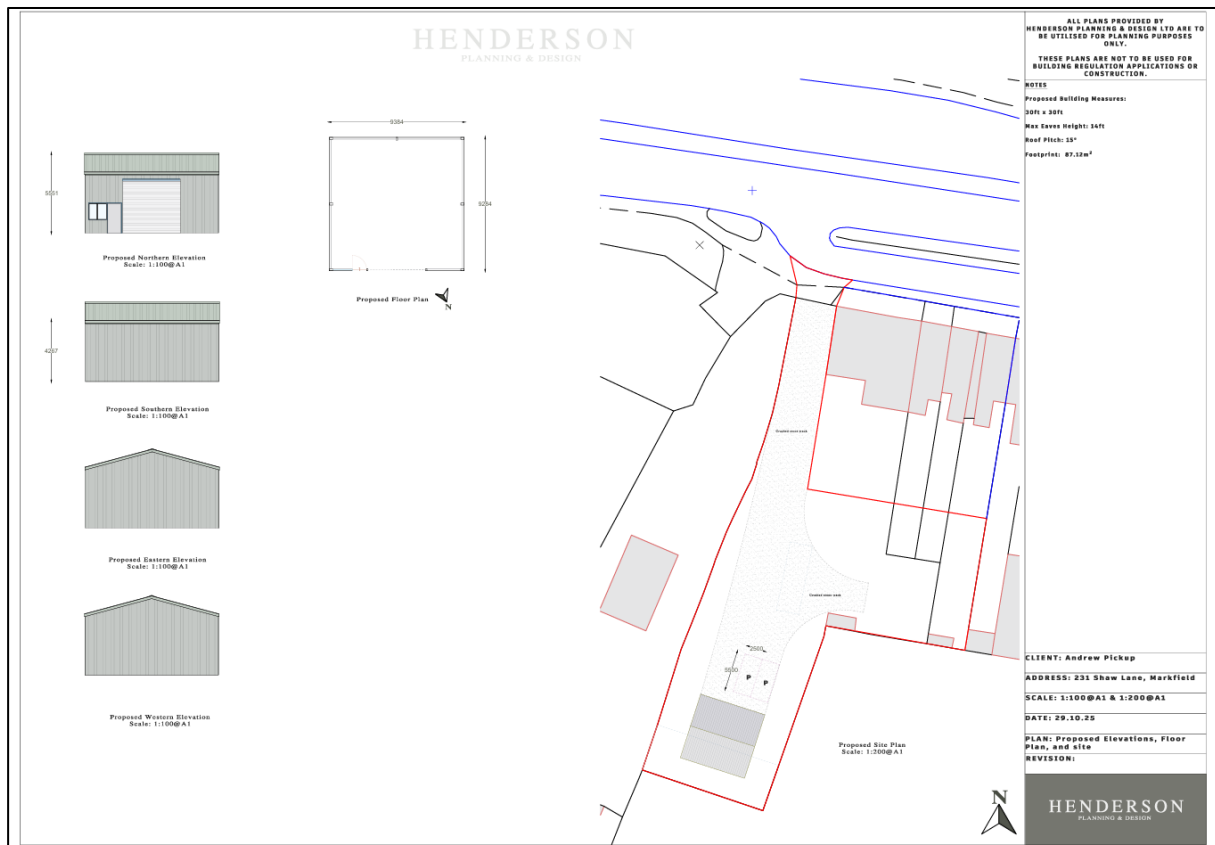


4 EVALUATION

4.1 Summary of Proposals

The proposed development involves construction of a building to be utilised for storage (*Figure 5*). A crushed stone track and parking bays are to be created in association with the building.

Figure 5. Proposed development plans



4.2 Designated Sites

There are four statutory designated sites within 2 km of the site, with the closest located approximately 250m east of the site. Due to the nature of the works and distance from the site, there will be no direct impact on the statutory designated sites.

4.3 Habitats, Impacts and Mitigation

4.3.1 General

The proposed development will largely affect habitats of low ecological value, as the majority of the development area consists of modified grassland. There is a small area of Bramble scrub to be lost and hedgerows/trees will be retained. No specific mitigation measures are required for this loss.

There is the potential for indirect impacts on boundary hedgerows and trees. Therefore, groundworks will be restricted in areas adjacent to retained hedgerow and root protection zones as defined in BS5837:2012 to be adhered to.

The proposals will result in the creation of developed land, mixed scrub and modified grassland *Figure 6*.

Figure 6. Proposed Habitats Plan



4.3.2 Habitat Retention

The proposed development will result in the retention of the following habitats:

Table 4. Retained and enhanced on-site habitat areas

Habitat Type	Area to be retained (Ha)	Area to be enhanced (Ha)
Bramble Scrub	-	0.0062
Developed Land; Sealed Surface	0.0209	0
Urban Tree	0.057	0
Urban Tree	0.0041	0

Table 5. Retained and enhanced on-site hedgerow lengths

Hedgerow Type	Length to be retained (km)	Length to be enhanced (km)
Native Hedgerow	0.087	0

4.3.3 Habitat Creation

The proposed development will result in the creation of a building with a crushed stone track. Modified grassland is to be created around the track and building. A hedgerow is to be created along the east boundary of the site. The areas of proposed habitats and hedgerows are displayed in *Tables 6 and 7*.

Table 6. Proposed on-site habitat creation (red line development area only)

Proposed development	Habitat Type	Condition Score	Area (Ha)	Habitat Units
Amenity space	Modified Grassland	Moderate	0.0619	0.21
Building and crushed stone track	Developed land; sealed surface	N/A - Other	0.0424	0
Total:			0.1043	0.21

Table 7. Proposed on-site hedgerow creation

Proposed development	Habitat Type	Condition Score	Length (km)	Habitat Units
Hedgerow planting along east boundary	Native Hedgerow	Poor	0.02	0

4.3.4 Statutory Metric Summary

The proposed development will result in a net gain of 0.05 habitat area units which equates to a **10.26% net gain on habitats** and a net gain of 0.04 hedgerow linear units which equates to a **11.09% net gain on hedgerows**.

Trading rules have been met for both habitat area and hedgerow linear units. Biodiversity Net Gain habitat plans and full habitat trading rules tables can be seen in *Appendix 6 and 7*.

Figure 7. Statutory Metric Summary

On-site baseline	Habitat units	0.47
	Hedgerow units	0.35
	Watercourse units	0.00
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.52
	Hedgerow units	0.39
	Watercourse units	0.00
On-site net change (units & percentage)	Habitat units	0.05
	Hedgerow units	0.04
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net unit change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	0.05
	Hedgerow units	0.04
	Watercourse units	0.00
Total net % change (Including all on-site & off-site habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	Habitat units	10.26%
	Hedgerow units	11.09%
	Watercourse units	0.00%
Trading rules satisfied?	Yes ✓	

4.3.5 Habitat Management

General

Management prescriptions will be implemented for all retained and created habitats on site to ensure the net gains detailed within this report are met.

Full details of required management, per habitat type, will be detailed in full within the accompanying Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan. This plan will cover a period of 30 years and will include the following management prescriptions for each habitat (prescriptions below are summarised, detailed management will be found in the Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan).

Mixed Scrub enhancement

Areas of Bramble will be thinned out and new native shrubs will be planted. Shrub planting must use standard or heavy standard stock, these shrubs have a higher chance of survival once planted and offer immediate value to wildlife. Scrub species will be of native origin and will consist of a mixture of at least three of the following species: Hawthorn, Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*), Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*). Where possible a higher proportion of fruiting or nut producing shrubs should be used as these offer year-round food resources for wildlife locally. Management of newly planted shrubs will be required with rabbit guards, weed suppressing mats and regular watering carried out to ensure the shrubs establish and thrive. Any shrubs that fail to establish will be replaced with a like-for-like specimen.

Modified Grassland

Modified grassland is to be created within the site. A suitable seed mixture such as Emorsgate EM2 Standard General-Purpose Meadow Mixture, or similar, will be sown into these areas. The seed mixture

could include Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) which is a plant which promotes diversity through controlling vigorous grass populations.

Hedgerow creation

New hedgerow plants should be fully hardened off 40 – 60 cm bare root whips (1 + 1), planted at a density of six plants per metre (double spaced) between November and March and staked and protected with a bio-degradable tree/rabbit guard.

Locally occurring native species from British grown stock of local provenance will be used and hedgerow planting can include a mix of Blackthorn, Hawthorn, Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), Field Maple (*Acer campestre*), Hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Elder, Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*), Holly, Dog Rose and Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*). At least five native woody species will be planted across the hedgerow length.

A water supply will be provided at planting of a minimum 170 litres per standard/large, feathered tree, 10 litres per transplant tree or 4 litres per shrub and mulching or weed suppressing mats used to aid good establishment of woody species. Herbicides (*e.g.* Glyphosate) will not be used either at the planting stage or in long-term site management practices. Hedgerows can take 5 years to reach optimal condition, therefore a management plan covering this period will be required.

4.4 Protected Fauna

To protect species of note and maintain and increase biodiversity of the site, the following mitigation measures and safe working methods will need to be incorporated into the proposals.

4.4.1 Badger

No evidence of Badger was observed during the survey. The hedgerow bases, grassland, and bramble scrub are suitable for sett building Badgers. As such, a pre-construction walkover of the site will be needed to ensure no setts have been created since the initial walkover.

There is potential for Badgers to commute through the Site during construction works. To ensure Badgers are not harmed during construction, the following best practice measures will be followed:

- Ensure excavations or trenches left overnight are covered or have an escape route such as a shallow gradient at one or both ends (or a mammal ramp placed at one end).
- Ensure excavations or trenches are inspected each morning and evening to ensure no mammals have become trapped.
- Open pipework with a diameter of more than 120mm will be properly covered or capped at the end of the working day to prevent small mammals from entering and becoming trapped.
- During the work, the storage of any chemicals will be contained appropriately so that they cannot be accessed or knocked over by any roaming mammals.

- Litter, tools and potentially dangerous materials on site will be cleared at the end of the working day. Care will be taken that there are no sharp metal objects or pointed protrusions on the ground.

4.4.2 Bats

Trees within the site lacked features suitable for roosting bats and as such have no suitability for roosting bats. All existing buildings within the site boundary were assessed for their suitability for roosting bats. B1, B2, and B3 were assessed to have no suitability for roosting bats. B4 was assessed to have moderate potential for roosting bats. The proposed development currently only involves the demolition of B1, B2 and B3. As such, no further surveys are recommended. If B4 is to be demolished or have any repair works in the future, then a minimum of two activity surveys will need to be conducted on B4. The surveys would need to be completed between May-September, with at least one survey completed between May-August.

The loss of poor modified grassland within the site is not likely to have a significant effect on foraging and commuting bats. The hedgerow onsite is to be retained within the proposed development.

If any new lighting is proposed, then the following measures will be considered:

- Any lights will have a Corrected Colour Temperature of less than 2700K and a brightness of under 500 lumens.
- Each light will be directed downwards with a 0-degree tilt angle and 0% upward light ratio.
- Where possible, the lights will be controlled by a PIR sensor with a maximum over-run time of 10 minutes.
- The lighting will be directed away from roosting provisions, hedgerows, and trees, and the use of downlighting will ensure that suitable foraging and commuting habitats remain unlit.
- All existing and any new lighting will also be directed away from access / egress points including those of the recommended bat boxes, and this will likely improve the suitability of the new buildings for roosting bats.

Long term bat roosting provision will be incorporated and will comprise a minimum of two bat boxes, such as one Schwegler 2F and one Schwegler 1FF, or equivalent, erected on the new building or boundary trees.

4.4.3 Nesting Birds

Habitats within the site suitable for nesting birds include scattered trees, bramble scrub, and hedgerows. Buildings 4 and the connecting roof between B2a and B2b have some suitability for nesting birds. Scrub habitat and the connecting roof is to be lost within the proposals, as such. the clearance/demolition works need to occur outside of breeding bird season, which is between March August inclusive. If the vegetation clearance/demolition works cannot occur within this time, a nesting bird check will be conducted by a suitably qualified ecologist to ensure no active nests are present within the vegetation/buildings to be removed. The vegetation clearance/demolition will need to occur within 24

hours of the nesting bird check. If an active bird nest is found, then works will cease until all fledglings have left the nest.

Enhanced nesting opportunities on site will be provided through the provision of additional nesting bird habitat. A minimum of two woodcrete nesting boxes will be erected on the retained trees or newly constructed building.

4.4.4 Great Crested Newt

The majority of Great Crested Newt records were located to the north of the site, with the closest situated 0.6 km north. The A55 is present to the north of the site and acts as a partial dispersal barrier for Great Crested Newts as a culvert under the dual carriageway could be present approximately 80m from the site which would provide connectivity. Three waterbodies are located within 250m of the Site with the closest (P1) located 60m west of the site. P1 is a duck pond surrounded by concrete which limits suitability for Great Crested Newts. According to satellite imagery, immediate habitat around ponds 2 and 3 are suitable for terrestrial use by Great Crested Newts with hedgerows present and woodland to the south of the ponds. The Billa Barra LNR is located to the east of the ponds.

Habitats suitable for terrestrial use within the site consist of hedgerows and Bramble scrub. Debris within the site could also be utilised. The grassland has limited suitability due to exposed areas and disturbance from renovation works of the adjacent properties.

Although Great Crested Newts are present within the wider area, they are considered unlikely to be present on the site. The close proximity of the dual carriageway provides a barrier along most of its length and the ponds in the area located south of the site are surrounded by extensive areas of more suitable Great Crested Newt terrestrial habitat. Although it is unlikely Great Crested Newts will be impacted by the works, a precautionary method of works will be followed:

- Vegetation is to be maintained at a short sward height.
- Prior to commencement of works the ecologist will give a tool box talk to the contractors and staff on site, informing them of the areas suitable for amphibians and reptiles, safe working measures to be followed and what to do in the highly unlikely event of a Great Crested Newt being found at any time during works.
- Groundworks to only take place after a hand search by and under supervision of an experienced ecologist and when amphibians and reptiles are normally active (mild and damp conditions between February and November) under an ecological watching brief. Debris onsite is to be removed under supervision.
- Pre and during construction, building materials should be stored raised up off the ground (i.e. on pallets) and away from the site boundaries.
- Any excavated earth should be removed off-site the same day it is excavated where possible however if it is to be stored on site temporarily it should be stored in bulk bags or a skip away from the site boundaries to reduce the risk of amphibians using it for cover.

- In the unlikely event a Great Crested Newt is found during site clearance/ debris removal, all works will stop, and the site will be registered under the Low Impact Class Licence (LICL) scheme and works would only re commence once registration has been confirmed by Natural England. On re-commencement of works, all works would be completed under the condition of the licence and any newts found would be moved to areas of suitable adjacent terrestrial habitat.

4.4.5 Reptiles

Bramble scrub and hedgerows within the site are suitable for Reptiles. Debris piles across the site could act as refugia, however, the grassland has limited suitability for commuting reptiles. Only grassland and a small area of Bramble is to be impacted by the works. There were 17 records of Common Lizard within 2 km of the site, however, they were all located north of the site where a partial barrier of dispersal is situated (a busy dual carriageway). Due to the location of reptile records, presence of a dispersal barrier, and limited suitable habitat being affected by the works, reptiles will not be impacted by the works. Furthermore, methods listed in *Section 4.4.4* ensure there will be no impacts on reptiles by construction.

5 LEGAL PROTECTION

This section briefly describes the legal protection afforded to the protected species referred to in this report. It is for information only and is not intended to be comprehensive or to replace specialised legal advice. It is not intended to replace the text of the legislation but summarises the salient points.

5.1 Badger

Badger is protected in Britain under the *Protection of Badgers Act 1992* and *Schedule 6* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). The legislation affords protection to Badgers and Badger setts, and makes it a criminal offence to:

- wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a Badger, or to attempt to do so;
- interfere with a sett by damaging or destroying it;
- to obstruct access to, or any entrance of, a Badger sett; or
- to disturb a Badger when it is occupying a sett.

5.2 Bats

All species of British bat are protected by *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) extended by the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000*. This legislation makes it an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take a bat;
- possess or control a bat;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a bat roost; and
- intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat whilst it occupies a bat roost.

Bats are also listed on *Schedule 2* of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (as amended). This legislation makes it an offence to:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat;
- deliberately disturb bats in such a way as to be likely to (a) impair their ability to: (i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or b), to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong; and
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat; and
- possess, control, transport, sell, exchange a bat, or offer a bat for sale or exchange.

All bat roosting sites receive legal protection even when bats are not present.

Where it is necessary to carry out an action that could result in an offence under the regulations protecting bats and their roosts it is possible to apply for Mitigation Licence from Natural England (NE) or Natural Resources Wales (NRW). Three tests must be satisfied before this licence (to permit otherwise prohibited acts) can be issued:

- Regulation 55(1)(a) states that licences may be granted to “preserve public health or public safety or 55(6)(a) other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.”
- Regulation 55(2) and 55(7)(a) states that a licence may not be granted unless “there is no satisfactory alternative”.
- Regulation 55(7)(b) states that a licence, in respect of imperative reasons of overruling public interest (IROPI), cannot be issued unless the action proposed “will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range”.

5.3 Nesting Birds

All species of bird are protected under *Section 1* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended). The protection was extended by the CRow Act.

The legislation makes it an offence to intentionally:

- kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
- take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

Certain species of bird are listed on *Schedule 1* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended) and receive protection under *Sections 1(4)* and *1(5)* of the Act. The protection was extended by the CRow Act. The legislation confers special penalties where the above-mentioned offences are committed for any such bird and also make it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturb any such bird, whilst building its nest or it is in or near a nest containing dependant young; or
- disturb the dependant young of such a bird.

5.4 Great Crested Newt

Great Crested Newt is listed on *Schedule 5* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), and receive full protection under *Section 9*. These species are also listed on *Schedule 2* of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017* (as amended). Protection was extended by the *Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000* (the CRow Act).

Under the above legislation it is an offence to:

- kill, injure or take an individual of such a species;
- possess any part of such species either alive or dead;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place or structure used by such species for shelter, rest, protection or breeding;

- intentionally or recklessly disturb such a species whilst using any place of shelter or protection; or
- sell or attempt to sell any such species.

The Great Crested Newt is included as a Priority Species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) and also as a species of principal importance for the conservation of biological diversity in England under *Section 74* of the CRow Act.

5.5 Common Reptile Species

Common Lizard, Grass Snake, Slow-worm and Adder are listed under *Schedule 5* of the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (as amended), in respect of *Section 9(5)* and part of *Section 9(1)*. This protection was extended by the CRow Act.

Under the above legislation it is an offence to:

- intentionally or deliberately kill or injure any individual of such a species; or
- sell or attempt to sell any part of the species alive or dead.

6 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN PLANS

Figure 8. Baseline Plan



Figure 9. Proposed Habitat Plan



Figure 10. Retention Plan

7 HABITAT TRADING RULES SUMMARIES

Figure 11. Habitat Area Unit Trading Summary

Trading Summary		
Distinctiveness Group	Trading Rule	Trading Satisfied?
Very High	Same habitat required ~ bespoke compensation option A	Yes ✓
High	Same habitat required =	Yes ✓
Medium	Same broad habitat or a higher distinctiveness habitat required (B)	Yes ✓
Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required Z	Yes ✓

Figure 12. Hedgerow linear unit Trading Summary

Trading Summary		
Distinctiveness Group	Trading Rule	Trading Satisfied?
Very High	Same habitat required =	Yes ✓
High	like for like or better	Yes ✓
Medium	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓
Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓
Very Low	Same distinctiveness or better habitat required	Yes ✓