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Hammonds Way
Hinckley
Ecological Impact Assessment

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) has been undertaken on behalf of Hinckley Investment LLP in respect of the Site at Hammonds Way, Hinckley.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan should be developed to ensure that there is no construction phase pollution to the Ashby Canal Candidate Local Wildlife Site. This should include suitable dust suppression, refuelling processes, access and egress routes and up to date generic pollution prevention guidance.

Retained trees are recommended to be protected from construction/demolition activities through the erection of fencing in line with BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations. Any loss in habitat should be offset through the Biodiversity Net Gain Process

Good working practices should be followed during development to ensure any trenches are left with a ramp or sloping end and any pipes are capped off at night to prevent badgers (and other mammals) from becoming trapped. Should a potential badger sett be recorded at any time works must stop and an ecologist contacted.

Any lighting utilised during the construction phase of the development and any new lighting proposed as part of the final scheme for the Site should follow best practice guidelines outlined in Bats and Artificial Light at Night (2023) to maintain suitable foraging and commuting routes. The proposed final lighting scheme for the development should be submitted for review by an ecologist prior to implementation.

As all bird species receive legal protection during nesting, it is advised to conduct vegetation clearance outside of the breeding bird season of March to August (inclusive). Work outside of this period should still be preceded by a nesting bird survey carried out by contractors, as some species can nest all year round. If it is necessary to commence works within this period, it should be preceded by a nesting bird check conducted by an ecologist. Active nests found at any time must remain unaffected until all chicks have fledged.

Opportunities for invertebrates should be incorporated into the final scheme including wildlife friendly planting and the additional of habitat piles and insect boxes within retained and newly created habitats.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Instruction

- 1.1 This Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) has been undertaken on behalf of Hinckley Investment LLP in respect of the Site at Hammonds Way, Hinckley.

Site Description

- 1.2 The Site is located at Hammonds Way, Hinckley, LE10 3EJ. The Site itself comprised an area of neutral grassland, scrub and trees and an adjacent commercial area primarily comprising of hardstanding. Surrounding the Site was a mixture of residential areas and commercial properties. The Ashby de la Zouch Canal flows approximately 130m north of the Site and an active rail line is present approximately 60m north. The Site is centred on grid reference SP 41052 92679. The location of the Site is shown in **Figure 1.1**.



Figure 1.1: Site Location Plan

The Project

- 1.3 Development of the site to provide an industrial / logistics unit within flexible B2 / B8 Use Class (General Industrial / Storage and Distribution) alongside associated landscaping, yard, parking, access and other supporting infrastructure.

Objectives

- 1.4 The purpose of this assessment is to:
- To identify and describe all potentially significant ecological effects associated with the Proposed Development;
 - To set out the mitigation measures required to ensure compliance with nature conservation legislation and to address any potentially significant ecological effects;

- To identify how mitigation measures will/could be secured;
- To provide an assessment of the significance of any residual effects;
- To identify appropriate enhancement measures; and
- To set out the requirements for post-construction monitoring provide a baseline of all ecological considerations and associated impacts relating to the development proposals. This will include mitigation and enhancement as appropriate.

Scope of Works

- 1.5 The ecological appraisal was informed by a desk-based study and a Site survey. The approach to this EclA follows best practice published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2018 updated 2022) and the British Standards Institution (BSI, 2013). Further details are provided later in this report.

Legislation and Planning Policy

- 1.6 The following legislation relates to species and habitats that could potentially occur in association with the Site:
- The Environment Act 2021;
 - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended);
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
 - The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
 - Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
 - The Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
 - Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996; and
 - The Hedgerow Regulations 1997.
- 1.7 Further information on the legislation relevant to this Site is provided in **Appendix 1**.
- 1.8 Consideration has also been given in this report to relevant National and Local Planning Policy as summarised below.
- 1.9 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guides Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) when developing their planning policies and considering planning applications affecting protected habitats, sites and species.
- 1.10 In respect of the natural environment, the NPPF states under Paragraph 187 that:

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

- a) *Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*

- b) *Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- c) *Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) *Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- e) *Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) *Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."*

1.11 The NPPF Paragraph 192 states that:

"To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:

- a) *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; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*
- b) *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."*

1.12 The NPPF Paragraph 193 also states that:

"When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) *if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) *development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*

- c) *development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons⁶⁷ and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) *development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while 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 or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate."*

1.13 Through the NPPF and Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, LPAs have a duty to consider habitats and species listed as being of principal importance for nature conservation in England on Section 41 (S41) of the Act when considering a planning application. In addition, the biodiversity duty of local planning authorities also covers species and habitats listed in local biodiversity action plans.

2. METHODS

Zone of Influence (ZOI)

- 2.1 The search area for biodiversity information was related to the significance of sites and species and potential zones of influence, as follows:
- 5km around the Site for sites of International Importance (e.g. Special Area of Conservation [SAC], Special Protection Area [SPA], Ramsar site);
 - 2km around the Site for sites of National or Regional Importance (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI] and Local Nature Reserves [LNR]); and
 - 2km around the Site for sites of County Importance (e.g. Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation [SINC]/Wildlife Sites and species records (e.g. protected, UK BAP or notable species).
- 2.2 The 'zone of influence' for a project is the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed project and associated activities. Ecological or hydrological links may extend this beyond the Site boundaries. For this Site, the zone of influence was unlikely to extend beyond the Site boundary.

Consultation

- 2.3 Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC) was contacted to request records of any locally designated sites and/or protected species from the Site and land within a 2km radius and 10km radius for bat SSSIs and SACs. Records more than ten years old have been largely disregarded.
- 2.4 In addition, the data sources listed below were also searched to gather additional ecological data of relevance to the project, including the identification of non-designated ecologically sensitive habitats such as vegetation corridors, woodlands, watercourses and standing water.
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC);
 - Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 mapping; and
 - Aerial imagery (Google Earth – imagery dated 2025).

UK Hab Survey

- 2.5 A Site survey was undertaken on 16th May 2025 by Chris Grocock MSc BSc (Hons) ACIEEM. Chris has extensive experience in survey and site assessment for protected species and is appropriately qualified for the surveys based on the CIEEM competencies for species surveys (CIEEM, 2017). Chris is registered to use Natural England 2016-24827-CLS-CLS, 2015-17144-CLS-CLS and CL29/00389 class licences to survey for bats, GCN and barn owl.
- 2.6 The visit was completed using UK Hab survey techniques as defined in the standard methodology (UKHab Ltd, 2023). The abundance of plant species was recorded using the DAFOR scale.

- 2.7 The aim of the visit was to gather sufficient baseline information on the habitats within the Site in order to allow an interpretation of the ecological value of the land.
- 2.8 In addition, the methodology was extended to include a search for incidental evidence of protected/notable fauna and an assessment of the Site's potential to support protected/notable fauna. Specific consideration was given to the following species:
- Amphibians, including great crested newts (GCN) *Triturus cristatus*;
 - Badgers *Meles meles*;
 - Bats;
 - Birds;
 - Reptiles; and
 - Priority Species, such as hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*.
- 2.9 Standard methodologies were used where applicable. Habitats adjacent to the Site were viewed, where possible, from the Site boundaries in order to assess their potential to support protected species that could be utilising the survey Site.

GCN eDNA Survey

- 2.10 An eDNA survey was conducted on 24.04.2025 by Chris Grocock of a single pond within 250m of the Site. The eDNA kit was sourced from and analysed by SureScreen Scientifics. Samples were collected and handed over to the laboratory on the same day.

Reptile Survey

- 2.11 A seven visit reptile survey was conducted in September 2025 which comprised the placement of approximately 50 mats across the Site which were allowed to bed in for two weeks before checks commenced on warm, dry days. Survey details are provided in **Table 2.1**. The survey was led by Chris Grocock.

Table 2.1: Reptile Survey

Date	Temperature (degrees Celsius)	Cloud Cover	Wind Speed (mph)	Start Time	End Time
05/09/2025	15	10	0	09:00	09:30
08/09/2025	15-16	10	10	09:45	10:30
09/09/2025	15-16	20	9-10	09:50	10:25
12/09/2025	11	30	5	09:00	09:30
16/09/2025	15	60-40	12	10:30	10:55
22/09/2025	15	30	8	15:30	16:00
24/09/2025	14	60	9 - 10	10:45	11:15

Survey Comments

- 2.12 The UKHab survey was carried out in May. All areas of the Site were accessed. A survey at this time of year is within the optimal period for botanical survey and at a time which is sufficient for an experienced surveyor to categorise the habitats and assess the potential for protected species to be present, in line with the aims of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.
- 2.13 In line with standard guidance, the results and recommendations within this report are valid for up to two years from the date of survey, assuming there are no significant changes to the survey Site or its immediate surroundings. Updated survey work may be required to support any future planning applications outside of this time period.

Assessment

- 2.14 The Ecological Impact Assessment has been undertaken following guidelines provided by CIEEM (CIEEM, 2019).
- 2.15 In order to assess the significance of effects, Important Ecological Features that could potentially be affected by the development have been identified and described and the potential effects quantified using a range of parameters (e.g. extent, magnitude and duration).
- 2.16 For the purposes of this assessment, a 'significant effect' is an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for 'important ecological features' or for biodiversity in general. Conservation objectives may be specific (e.g. for a designated site) or broad (e.g. national/local nature conservation policy) or more wide-ranging (enhancement of biodiversity) (CIEEM, 2019).
- 2.17 Only where significant effects are predicted have mitigation measures been proposed, although it should be noted that a number of precautionary measures have been included and these are detailed within this document for completeness.
- 2.18 The potential for mitigation and enhancement measures were then considered to avoid, reduce or compensate for any significant adverse effects, where possible.
- 2.19 The current guidelines identify various characteristics that can be used to identify ecological resources or features likely to be important in terms of biodiversity. These include:
- Naturalness;
 - Animal or plant species, sub-species or varieties that are rare or uncommon, either internationally, nationally or more locally, including those that may be seasonally transient;
 - Ecosystems and their component parts, which provide the habitats required by important species, populations and/or assemblages;
 - Endemic species or locally distinct sub-populations of a species;
 - Habitats that are rare or uncommon;

- Habitats that are effectively irreplaceable;
- Habitat diversity;
- Size of habitat or species population;
- Habitat connectivity and/or synergistic associations;
- Habitats and species in decline;
- Rich assemblages of plants and animals;
- Large populations of species or concentrations of species considered uncommon or threatened in a wider context;
- Plant communities (and their associated animals) that are considered to be typical of valued natural / semi-natural vegetation types, including examples of naturally species-poor communities; and
- Species on the edge of their range, particularly where their distribution is changing as a result of global trends and climate change.

Significance Criteria

- 2.20 Current guidelines propose the following frame of reference for defining geographic context, which should be adapted to suit local circumstances:
- International and European;
 - National;
 - Regional;
 - Metropolitan, County, vice-county or other local authority-wide area; and
 - Local.
- 2.21 For the purposes of this assessment, a 'significant effect' is an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for 'important ecological features' or for biodiversity in general. Conservation objectives may be specific (e.g. for a designated site) or broad (e.g. national/local nature conservation policy) or more wide-ranging (enhancement of biodiversity). Any effect which is moderate or greater is considered 'significant'.
- 2.22 Only where significant effects are predicted have mitigation measures been proposed, although it should be noted that a number of precautionary measures have been included and these are detailed within this document for completeness.
- 2.23 The potential for mitigation and enhancement measures were then considered to avoid, reduce or compensate for any significant adverse effects, where possible.
- 2.24 For the purpose of this EclA, the significance of effects is determined using a matrix approach which combines the importance of the receptor with the magnitude of the anticipated impact as outlined in

2.25 **Table 2.2.**

Table 2.2: Significance of Effects Matrix

		Receptor Importance			
		International / National	County / Regional / Metropolitan	Local	Site
Impact Magnitude	Large	Major	Major	Moderate	Minor
	Medium	Moderate	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
	Small	Moderate	Minor	Negligible	Negligible
	Negligible	Minor	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

3. BASELINE CONDITIONS

Statutory Designated Sites

- 3.1 There were no statutory designated site present within 2km of the Site boundary and no European sites within 5km. The Site is within a SSSI risk zone, but the development type is not included within a risk category.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

- 3.2 The closest non-statutory designation is Ashby de la Zouch Canal, a Candidate Local Wildlife Site approximately 130m northeast of the Site described as follows:

Mostly dense scrub to east side with Salix spp., Rosa canina, Crataegus monogyna, Sambucus nigra, Fraxinus excelsior, Rubus fruticosus agg. Turns to plantation further south by industrial units. Towpath along western bank with adjacent overgrown hedgerow, merging into dense scrub in parts: Crataegus monogyna, Fraxinus excelsior, Sambucus nigra, Ulmus sp., Rosa canina. Locally frequent marginals including Sparganium erectum, Epilobium hirsutum, Glyceria maxima, Scrophularia sp., Lycopus europaeus, Iris pseudacorus, Rumex hydrolapathum, Filipendula ulmaria, Carex spp., Typha latifolia, Scutellaria galericulata, Impatiens capensis.

Habitats and Botanical Species

Overview

- 3.3 The UK Hab Survey Results Map is provided in **Appendix 2** with accompanying habitat descriptions below. Relevant photographs are shown in **Appendix 3**: . Botanical species nomenclature follows Stace (2019). As well as areas of developed land; sealed surface, bare earth and a small stand of introduced shrub, the following habitat types were identified.

Other Neutral Grassland

- 3.4 The Site predominantly comprised of other neutral grassland with a varied sward height up to 1m high and some short strips mown through to create amenity areas leading to picnic benches. Meadow foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis* and red Fescue *Festuca rubra* were abundant; speedwell *Veronica* sp., ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans*, cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, tufted hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*, common ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris* and creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* were recorded occasionally; cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis*, common nettle *Urtica dioica*, dog-rose *Rosa canina*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg., Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare* were recorded rarely.

Bramble Scrub

- 3.5 Two areas of scrub were recorded dominated by dense bramble.

Trees

- 3.6 A number of semi-mature to mature urban trees were recorded including native and non-native species such as willow *Salix* sp., silver birch and *Acer* sp. These were located within the grassland and along the Site boundary.

Boundaries

- 3.7 Boundary features, where present, comprised of palisade fencing.

Protected / Notable Species

Amphibians

- 3.8 There were no ponds present on-Site, but the terrestrial habitats provided optimal terrestrial habitat for amphibians offering foraging habitat and vegetative cover. A search of aerial photographs and online mapping revealed a single pond within 250m of the Site, a SUDS pond located c. 230m north of the Site at grid reference SP 40825 92893. This was subject to an eDNA survey and was found to be negative for the presence of GCN. Furthermore, the closest amphibian record was over 0.9km from the Site. GCN were therefore considered highly unlikely to be present on-site and are not considered further within this report. The eDNA results letter can be found in **Appendix 4**.

Badgers

- 3.9 No evidence of badgers was found on-Site with the exception of two latrines found within the grassland. No setts were recorded but it cannot be ruled out that they may build setts on-site in the future. There were desk study records of badgers, the exact location of which is confidential.

Bats

- 3.10 No potential roosting features were recorded on-Site within trees and no man-made structures were present. The grassland and scrub were likely to attract some insect prey and offered the best opportunities for foraging and commuting bats. However, given the location and size of the Site, an important assemblage was considered highly unlikely and only more common urban species were likely to be present. There were no desk study records of bats within the last ten years.

Birds

- 3.11 A small number of common birds were recorded during the Site visit. The Site offered some opportunities for foraging and breeding birds, but an important assemblage was considered unlikely due to the habitats present and the relative size of the Site. A number of bird species were returned with the desk study data as shown in **Table 3.1**. The closest record was a single barn owl *Tyto alba* record c. 180m from the Site; the Site was sub-optimal to support foraging barn owl, the grassland lacking the thatching typically required for hunting.

Table 3.1: Bird Desk Study Records

Distance of Closest Record (km)	Scientific Name	English Name	Date of Closest Record
0.187	<i>Tyto alba</i>	Barn Owl	01/03/2021
0.236	<i>Apus apus</i>	Swift	27/04/2019
0.289	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>	Skylark	April 2007
0.3	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	Dunnock	15/08/2018
0.352	<i>Cettia cetti</i>	Cetti's Warbler	22/04/2023
0.689	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Swallow	27/04/2022
0.689	<i>Motacilla flava</i>	Yellow Wagtail	27/04/2022
0.974	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	Song Thrush	15/12/2023
1.015	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>	Kingfisher	30/09/2009
1.015	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Canada Goose	19/01/2015
1.015	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	Bullfinch	01/01/2011
1.015	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Starling	01/01/2011
1.015	<i>Turdus iliacus</i>	Redwing	14/01/2010
1.015	<i>Turdus pilaris</i>	Fieldfare	14/01/2010
1.266	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	Red Kite	24/06/2022
1.312	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	House Sparrow	01/05/2018
1.409	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Herring Gull	20/06/2020
1.596	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrine	26/05/2019
1.619	<i>Anser anser</i>	Greylag Goose	May 2018
1.901	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Yellowhammer	May 2014 to July 2014
1.901	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Reed Bunting	May 2014 to July 2014
1.901	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>	Linnet	May 2014 to July 2014

Reptiles

- 3.12 The mosaic of habitats including scrub, varied grassland sward and south facing banks offered suitable foraging and basking habitat as well as vegetative cover. However, no reptiles were recorded during the reptile survey. Reptiles will therefore not be considered further within this report.

Other Species

- 3.13 The Site provided opportunities for hedgehogs and there were a number of desk study records within 2km of the Site.
- 3.14 The Site was likely to support common and widespread invertebrates within the grassland and scrub areas. However, given the geographical location and habitats present, an important assemblage was considered unlikely
- 3.15 Due to the habitats present and the lack of desk study records, the presence of other protected or notable species was considered highly unlikely.

4. ASSESSMENT OF EFFECTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

- 4.1 This section identifies the effects on habitats and species during different stages of the development, prior to any mitigation measures. It then details the proposed mitigation and explores the significance of any residual effects.

Designated Sites

Potential Impacts

- 4.2 Impacts to Designated sites are generally considered unlikely due to the nature of the works and the distance of the Site from any wildlife designations. However, it cannot be ruled out that construction phase pollutants such as dust could impact upon the Ashby Canal Candidate Local Wildlife Site located c.130m from the Site. This would be a small impact at the County level and therefore have a minor adverse effect (not significant).

Mitigation

- 4.3 A Construction Environmental Management Plan should be developed to ensure that there is no construction phase pollution to the Ashby Canal Candidate Local Wildlife Site. This should include suitable dust suppression, refuelling processes, access and egress routes and up to date generic pollution prevention guidance.

Residual Impacts

- 4.4 With the mitigation measures outlined above, the residual effects to any designated site are considered to be negligible.

Habitats

Potential Impacts

- 4.5 It is understood that the majority of habitats will be lost with the exception of the boundary trees along the western boundary. These habitats were relatively small in area and did not contain any rare or notable plant species or habitats of Principal Importance. This would be a small impact at Site level and therefore have a negligible effect (not significant). However, as a matter of good practice, some mitigation is proposed below.

Mitigation

- 4.6 Retained trees are recommended to be protected from construction/demolition activities through the erection of fencing in line with BS5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction: Recommendations. Any loss in habitat should be offset through the Biodiversity Net Gain Process

Residual Impacts

- 4.7 With the mitigation measures outlined above, the residual effects are considered to be negligible.

Protected Species

Badgers and Hedgehogs

Potential Impacts

- 4.8 Impacts to badgers and hedgehogs are considered a possibility if any trenching works are required on-Site, as animals can easily become trapped or injured in excavations. This would be a small impact at Site level and therefore have a negligible effect (not significant). However, as a matter of good practice, some mitigation is proposed below.

Mitigation

- 4.9 Good working practices should be followed during development to ensure any trenches are left with a ramp or sloping end and any pipes are capped off at night to prevent badgers (and other mammals) from becoming trapped. Should a potential badger sett be recorded at any time works must stop and an ecologist contacted.
- 4.10 Should an active badger sett be discovered and impacts cannot be avoided, the sett would likely need to be closed under licence between July and November.
- 4.11 Any hedgehogs found should be left in situ, all works should cease within the vicinity of the area and either a suitability qualified ecologist or the hedgehog preservation society should be contacted for further advice. In most cases the hedgehog can be moved by hand to a nearby off-Site place of safety. However, dependant on the time of year, i.e. if temperatures are low (below 5°C) and the hedgehog was found within the hedgehog hibernation season (from November to March) then it may be necessary to take the hedgehog to a wildlife sanctuary. Moving a pregnant hedgehog or hedgehog with young can also result in mortality.
- 4.12 During Site clearance works no brash or log piles should be allowed to develop or be left overnight. If a pile is left, then this should be cleared by hand and the base of the pile checked for hedgehogs.
- 4.13 To provide new habitats for hedgehogs and other species, it is recommended that a hedgehog friendly layout is achieved through the following provisions:
- Native shrub planting along the boundaries of the development to provide connectivity for hedgehogs and other species through and around the Site to the wider habitats;
 - Brash and log piles could be created in landscaped/planted areas to provide refuge and hibernation habitats for hedgehogs and other species.

Residual Impacts

- 4.14 With the mitigation measures outlined above, the residual effects are considered to be negligible.

Bats

Potential Impacts

- 4.15 Lighting, both during the construction and operational phases, may adversely impact foraging bats using adjacent habitats through disturbance. This would be considered a small impact at the Site level and would equate to a negligible effect (not significant). However, as a matter of good practice, measures to reduce disturbance have been outlined below.

Mitigation

- 4.16 Any lighting utilised during the construction phase of the development and any new lighting proposed as part of the final scheme for the Site should follow best practice guidelines outlined in Bats and Artificial Light at Night (2023) to maintain suitable foraging and commuting routes. The proposed final lighting scheme for the development should be submitted for review by an ecologist prior to implementation.

Residual Impacts

- 4.17 With the mitigation measures outlined above, the residual effects are considered to be negligible.

Birds

Potential Impacts - Construction

- 4.18 Small numbers of birds may nest within the Site including within the trees and scrub. Vegetation clearance could disturb or injure nesting birds. This would be a small impact at Site level and therefore have a negligible effect (not significant). However, as a matter of good practice and to ensure legal compliance, mitigation measures have been outlined below.

Mitigation

- 4.19 As all species receive legal protection during nesting, it is advised to conduct vegetation clearance outside of the breeding bird season of March to August (inclusive). Work outside of this period should still be preceded by a nesting bird survey carried out by contractors, as some species can nest all year round. If it is necessary to commence works within this period, it should be preceded by a nesting bird check conducted by an ecologist. Active nests found at any time must remain unaffected until all chicks have fledged.

Residual Impacts

- 4.20 It is not considered that the Proposed Development will result in any residual impacts to birds on-Site.

Invertebrates

Potential Impacts

- 4.21 There will be a loss of habitat for common invertebrate species due to the removal of trees, grassland and scrub. This would be a small impact at Site level and therefore have a negligible effect (not significant). However, as a matter of good practice, mitigation measures have been outlined below.

Mitigation

- 4.22 Opportunities for invertebrates should be incorporated into the final scheme including wildlife friendly planting and the additional of habitat piles and insect boxes within retained and newly created habitats.

Residual Impacts

- 4.23 It is not considered that the Proposed Development will result in any residual impacts to invertebrates.

5. ENHANCEMENT MEASURES

Bats

- 5.1 Opportunities for roosting bats should be incorporated into the final masterplan. These should be integrated into/attached to the new building or positioned on retained trees. They should be positioned in locations sheltered from strong winds and away from direct sunlight for a significant proportion of the day, usually south to south-west.

Birds

- 5.2 Opportunities for nesting birds should be incorporated into the final masterplan. These should be integrated into/attached to the new building. Bird boxes should be installed two to four metres above ground on the building and should offer unobstructed fly-in access. The boxes should face between north and east, thus avoiding full sun and prevailing wind.
- 5.3 The below bird boxes should be installed focussing on those species whose populations are declining and are most likely to be associated with the area, as well as a number of general purposes boxes.
- 5.4 The following should be installed:
- Open fronted nest boxes such as Schwegler 26 Brick Box Nests which are designed to support a range of species. These can be sourced from the link below: <https://www.wildcare.co.uk/schweglar-brick-box-type-26.html>
 - Sparrow terraces. These can be sourced from the link below: <https://www.wildcare.co.uk/sparrow-terrace.html>
 - Manthorpe Swift bricks. These can be sourced from the link below: <https://www.nhbs.com/manthorpe-swift-brick>

6. SUMMARY

- 6.1 **Table 6.1:** contains a summary of the likely significant effects of the development relating to the construction phase, the completed development and cumulative effects.

Table 6.1: Summary

Receptor	Potential Impact	Significance of Effect Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Residual Effects (including Cumulative Effects)
DESIGNATED SITES				
Ashby de la Zouch Canal cLWS	Construction phase impacts are possible from pollution.	Minor Adverse	Production of a CEMP.	Negligible
HABITATS				
Grassland, trees and scrub	Loss during construction.	Negligible	Exclusion fencing to be installed around retained trees and their root protection areas. Habitat loss to be offset through BNG process.	Negligible
SPECIES				
Badgers and hedgehogs	Potential for animals to become trapped overnight.	Negligible	Good working practices to be followed.	Negligible
Bats	Potential disturbance from increased lighting.	Negligible	Best practice lighting scheme to be implemented	Negligible
Birds	Potential for harm during construction phase.	Negligible	Nesting bird checks prior to works if conducted during main breeding season.	Negligible
Invertebrates	Loss of suitable habitat	Negligible	Wildlife friendly planting scheme and introduction of insect boxes	Negligible

7. REFERENCES

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- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2019) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine. CIEEM, Winchester.
- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017) Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing. CIEEM, Winchester.
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- Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020) Guidelines for accessing, using and sharing biodiversity data in the UK. CIEEM, Winchester.
- Collins J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). Bat Conservation Trust, London.
- Institute of Lighting Professionals and Bat Conservation Trust (2023) Bats and Artificial Light at Night – Guidance Note 08/23.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2024) National Planning Policy Framework. ISBN: 978-1-4098-5302-2.
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside Website.
- Stace, C.S. (2019) New Flora of the British Isles, 4th edition. University Press, Cambridge
- Stanbury, A.J., Eaton, M.A., Aebischer, N.J., Balmer, D., Brown, A.F., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D.G. & Win, I (2021) The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain. British Birds Volume 114:723–747.
- UK Hab Ltd (2023) UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Relevant Legislation

The following text provides information on the key legislation, which is applicable to this survey.

The main wildlife legislation relevant in the UK is as follows:

European Legislation

The relevant sections of the EC Directives and international conventions are summarised below:

- EC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitat Directive 1992) as amended (92/43/EEC)

The Directive requires Member States to introduce a range of measures including the protection of species listed in the Annexes. The 189 habitats listed in Annex I of the Directive and the 788 species listed in Annex II, are to be protected by means of a network of sites. Once adopted, these are designated by Member States as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), and along with Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the EC Birds Directive. The Habitats Directive introduces the precautionary principle; that disturbance to the designated sites can only be permitted having ascertained no adverse effect on the integrity of the Site.

- EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive 1979) as amended (79/409/EEC)

The main provisions of the Directive includes; the maintenance of the favorable conservation status of all wild bird species across their distributional range.

- Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979)

The Convention imposes legal obligations on contracting parties, protecting over 500 wild plant species and more than 1000 wild animal species.

UK Legislation

The sections of UK legislation considered to be of relevance include:

- The Environment Act 2021

This legislation was revised in response to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy consultation on 19 December 2023 and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The Act mandates the requirement of 10% net gains for biodiversity and as such should be the aim of all new developments.

- The Conservation (Natural Habitats, and c.) Regulations 2017 (as amended)

This transposes the Habitats Directive into national law. The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of 'European sites', and the protection of 'European protected species'.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA)

This consolidates and amends existing national legislation to implement the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive) in Great Britain.

- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW)

This act strengthens wildlife enforcement legislation.

- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act)

This act formed Natural England which places a duty on all public authorities, including local planning authorities to consider biodiversity. This Act also requires a list of species of habitats composed by the Secretary of State to help provide specific conservation targets. These species are known as Priority Species or Species of Principal Importance (SPI). These habitats are known as Priority habitats or Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI). Both SPI and HPI are listed under Section 41 of this Act. The NPPF also affords protection to these HPI's and SPI's.

- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992

This act affords protection to badgers and their setts including the destruction or obstructing access to a sett.

- Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996

This act provides protection to all wild species of mammal in the UK and is more related to mammal welfare but is directly applicable during any site clearance or other works to a site which could harm mammals.

- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The regulations require landowners to notify local planning authorities if they want to remove a hedgerow that is over 20 metres long or that joins another hedgerow. The authorities can prohibit the removal of a hedgerow if it is important from archaeological, historical, landscape or wildlife perspectives.

Species-Specific Legislation

Species specific legislation is provided in the following Table:

Species Groups	Legislation	Restrictions
Amphibians, including Great Crested Newt (GCN)	Sch. 5 and Sch. 9 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.	It is an offence to: • Sell; • Transport; • Advertise for sale. For GCN, as above but includes: • Kill; • Injure; • Disturb; • Destroy or obstruct access to any place used for rest or shelter.

Badgers	The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.	It is an offence to: • Wilfully kill, injure, take, or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or attempt to do so; • Possess any dead badger or any part of, or anything derived from, a dead badger; • Intentionally interfere with a sett by disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, damaging or destroying a sett, causing a dog to enter a sett, or obstructing access to it. A badger sett is defined in the legislation as "any structure or place, which displays signs indicating current use by a badger".
Bats	Sch. 5 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).	It is an offence to: • Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (or take) bats; • Deliberately disturb bats (whether in a roost or not); • Disturb roosting bats or obstruct access to their roosts; • Damage or destroy bat roosts.
Birds	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Sch. 1 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).	It is an offence to: • Kill; • Injure; • Take any wild bird, their eggs or nest (with the exception of those on Sch. 2). As above but includes: • Disturbing birds at their nest, or their dependent young.
Reptiles	Sch. 5 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.	It is an offence to: • Kill; • Injure; • Sell. For Smooth Snake and Sand Lizard, as above but includes: • Disturb; • Damage; • Destroy or obstruct access to any place used for rest or shelter.
Hedgehogs and Other Mammals	SPI – Section 41 NERC Act. Wild Mammals Protection Act 1996.	Protection from harm, injury intent to harm.

Otter	Sch. 5 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).	It is an offence to: • Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture (or take); • Deliberately disturb; • Disturb or obstruct access to their place of rest or shelter; • Damage or destroy place of rest or shelter; • Possess, control or transport alive or dead.
Water Vole	Sch. 5 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).	It is an offence to: • Kill; • Injure; • Take; • Possess or control alive or dead; • Disturb or obstruct access to their place of rest or shelter; • Damage or destroy place of rest or shelter.
Plants	Sch. 8 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Some species are SPI - Section 41 NERC Act.	It is an offence to: • Pick; • Uproot; • Trade; • Possess (for trade) any wild plant listed.
Invasive Species (Animal and Plant)	Sch. 9 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).	It is an offence to: • Release of any animal, plant or microorganism not native to the UK; • Sell; • Cause or allow to spread.

Protected Sites

A network of protected sites, at varying levels, have been put in place across the UK. Further details are provided below;

International Importance

- Natura 2000

Natura 2000 is the name of the European Union-wide network of nature conservation-sites established under the EC Habitats and Birds Directives. This network will comprise Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

SACs are designated under the EC Habitats Directive. The Directive applies to the UK and the overseas territory of Gibraltar. SACs are areas which have been identified as best representing the range and variety within the European Union of habitats and (non-bird) species listed on Annexes I and II to the Directive. SACs in terrestrial areas and territorial marine waters out to 12 nautical miles are designated under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended).

New and/or amended Habitats Regulations are shortly to be introduced to provide a mechanism for the designation of SACs and SPAs in UK offshore waters (from 12-200 nm).

National Importance

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

The SSSI series has developed since 1949 as the national suite of sites providing statutory protection for the best examples of the UK's flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features. Most SSSIs are privately-owned or managed; others are owned or managed by public bodies or non-government organisations. The SSSIs designation may extend into intertidal areas out to the jurisdictional limit of local authorities, generally Mean Low Water in England and Northern Ireland; Mean Low Water of Spring tides in Scotland. In Wales, the limit is Mean Low Water for SSSIs notified before 2002, and, for more recent notifications, the limit of Lowest Astronomical Tides, where the features of interest extend down to LAT. There is no provision for marine SSSIs beyond low water mark. Originally notified under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, SSSIs have been renotified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Improved provisions for the protection and management of SSSIs were introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (in England and Wales) and the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

Regional/Local Importance

- Wildlife Sites

Local authorities for any given area may designate certain areas as being of local conservation interest. The criteria for inclusion, and the level of protection provided, if any, may vary between areas. Most individual counties have a similar scheme, although they do vary.

These sites, which may be given various titles such as 'Listed Wildlife Sites' (LWS), 'County Wildlife Sites' (CWS), 'Local Nature Conservation-sites' (LNCS), 'Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation' (SINCs), or 'Sites of Nature Conservation Importance' (SNCIs), together with statutory designations, are defined in local and structure plans under the Town and Country Planning system and are a material consideration when planning applications are being determined.

Appendix 2: UK Hab Plan



Notes

1.Do not scale this drawing. All dimensions must be checked/ verified on site. If in doubt ask.

2.This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all relevant architects, engineers and specialists drawings and specifications.

3.All dimensions in millimetres unless noted otherwise. All levels in metres unless noted otherwise.

4.Any discrepancies noted on site are to be reported to the engineer immediately.

5.Contains Bing Mapping © 2023.

Key

- Tree
- Developd Land
- Bramble scrub
- Other neutral grassland
- Ruderal/Ephemeral

Project Title

Hammonds Way

Drawing Title

Habitat Plan

Drawn:	CG	Reviewed:	SS
Scale@A3:		1:750	

Appendix 3: Site Photographs



Bramble Scrub



Grassland



Urban Trees

Appendix 4: eDNA Results

Folio No: 638-2025
Purchase Order: 11199
Contact: BWB Consulting Ltd
Issue Date: 28.04.2025
Received Date: 24.04.2025

GCN Report

Technical Report



SureScreen Scientifics

Folio No: 638-2025
Purchase Order: 11199
Contact: BWB Consulting Ltd
Issue Date: 28.04.2025
Received Date: 24.04.2025

GCN eDNA Analysis

Summary

When great crested newts (GCN), *Triturus cristatus*, inhabit a pond, they continuously release small amounts of their DNA into the environment. By collecting and analyzing water samples, we can detect these small traces of environmental DNA (eDNA) to confirm GCN habitation or establish GCN absence.

Results

Lab ID	Site Name	OS Reference	Degradation Check	Inhibition Check	Result	Positive Replicates
GCN25 1937	Hammond - Pond 1	SP 408929	Pass	Pass	Negative	0/12

Matters affecting result: none

Reported by: Amy Bermudez

Approved by: Chelsea Warner

Methodology

The samples detailed above have been analyzed for the presence of GCN eDNA following the protocol stated in DEFRA WC1067 'Analytical and methodological development for improved surveillance of the Great Crested Newt, Appendix 5.' (Biggs et al. 2014). Each of the 6 sub-sample tubes are first centrifuged and pooled together into a single sample tube which then undergoes DNA extraction. The extracted sample is then analyzed using real-time PCR (qPCR), which uses species-specific molecular markers to amplify GCN DNA within a sample. These markers are unique to GCN DNA, meaning that there should be no detection of closely related species.

If GCN DNA is present, the DNA is amplified up to a detectable level, resulting in positive species detection. If GCN DNA is not present then amplification does not occur, and a negative result is recorded. Analysis of eDNA requires attention to detail to prevent the risk of contamination. True positive controls, negative controls, and spiked synthetic DNA are included in every analysis and these have to be correct before any result is declared and reported. Stages of the DNA analysis are also conducted in different buildings at our premises for added analytical security.

SureScreen Scientifics Ltd is ISO9001 accredited and participates in Natural England's proficiency testing scheme for GCN eDNA testing.

Interpretation of Results

Sample Integrity Check:

When samples are received in the laboratory, they are inspected for any tube leakage, suitability of sample (not too much mud or weed etc.) and absence of any factors that could potentially lead to inconclusive results. Any samples which fail this test are rejected and eliminated before analysis.

Degradation Check:

Pass/Fail. Analysis of the spiked DNA marker to see if there has been degradation of the kit or sample between the date it was made to the date of analysis. Degradation of the spiked DNA marker may lead indicate a risk of false negative results.

Inhibition Check:

Pass/Fail. The presence of inhibitors within a sample is assessed using a DNA marker. If inhibition is detected, samples are purified and re-analyzed. Inhibitors cannot always be removed, if the inhibition check fails, the sample should be re-collected.

Result:

Presence of GCN eDNA (Positive/Negative/Inconclusive)

Positive: GCN DNA was identified within the sample, indicative of GCN presence within the sampling location at the time the sample was taken or within the recent past at the sampling location.

Positive Replicates: Number of positive qPCR replicates out of a series of 12. If one or more of these are found to be positive the pond is declared positive for GCN presence. It may be assumed that small fractions of positive analyses suggest low level presence, but this cannot currently be used for population studies. In accordance with the WC1067 Natural England protocol, even a score of 1/12 is declared positive. 0/12 indicates negative GCN presence.

Negative: GCN eDNA was not detected or is below the threshold detection level and the test result should be considered as evidence of GCN absence, however, does not exclude the potential for GCN presence below the limit of detection.

Inconclusive: Controls indicate inhibition or degradation of the sample, resulting in the inability to provide conclusive evidence for GCN presence or absence.



