

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Survey Report

For:	JJL Design and Build
Site	1 Peckleton Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 7RN
Report Date:	13 th March 2024
Report Reference:	SQ-1634

Surveying Ecologist:

Sam Toon BSc (hons)

Natural England Species Licence:

Bat – 2018-35446-CLS-CLS



1 Peckleton Lane
Desford
Leicester
LE9 7RN

Client:	JJL Design and Build
Site Name:	1 Peckleton Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 7RN
Grid Reference:	SK 48393 01690
Report:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Date of survey:	6 th March 2024
Surveyed by:	Sam Toon BSc (hons)

Issue:	Revision:	Stage:	Date:	Prepared by:	Approved by:
1	-	Draft for review	13 th March 2024	Elise Beatson BSc (hons), Estrada Ecology Ltd	Sam Toon BSc (hons), Estrada Ecology Ltd
2	n/a	FINAL	13 th March 2024	Elise Beatson BSc (hons), Estrada Ecology Ltd	Natasha Estrada BSc (hons), MRes, MCIEEM Estrada Ecology Ltd



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The contents of this report have been produced with due consideration of current best practice guidance, and in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct.

This report should not be submitted as part of a planning application without any accompanying species-specific reports which may have been recommended herein.

Data within this report is valid for a maximum of eighteen months from the date of the survey. After this period, an updated site visit will be required to determine a new ecological baseline.

Summary

The survey site is approximately 4.6 hectares in size and was dominated by developed land; sealed surface, and two buildings including a recreational building (B1), and a bike shed (B2). The site also comprises of modified grassland, with sections of scattered trees, and compartments of introduced shrub and mixed scrub.

Site boundaries are formed by metal fencing on along the east and south, with open access to the wider caterpillar site along the north and west, as well as woodland northeast of the site.

Findings

Historic breeding bird nests were recorded within multiple scattered trees throughout the site; however, no active breeding bird evidence was recorded during the survey. The habitats noted during the survey were deemed to provide suitable potential for supporting breeding birds. Further recommendations have been made within this report.

No species listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded within the application boundary. One species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended),

Cotoneaster horizontalis was record with the site. Recommendations regarding this species are provided in the conclusion of this report.

No evidence of amphibians was recorded during the site survey; No aquatic habitats were recorded within the site or immediately adjacent.

No evidence of reptiles was recorded during the site survey. No suitable aquatic habitat was recorded within the site. It is deemed that due to the built-up nature within the site and immediate environment, the level of disturbance is likely to be high, suggesting it to be unlikely that the works on site will impact common reptile species.

The site provides limited conditions for badger, however, no field signs synonymous with badger activity were recorded during the survey. No further survey effort is recommended regarding this species.

The site provides hostile conditions for riparian / aquatic mammals due to the lack of suitable habitats, as well as the immediate wider landscape use of industrial properties and road networks. No further survey effort is recommended at this juncture.

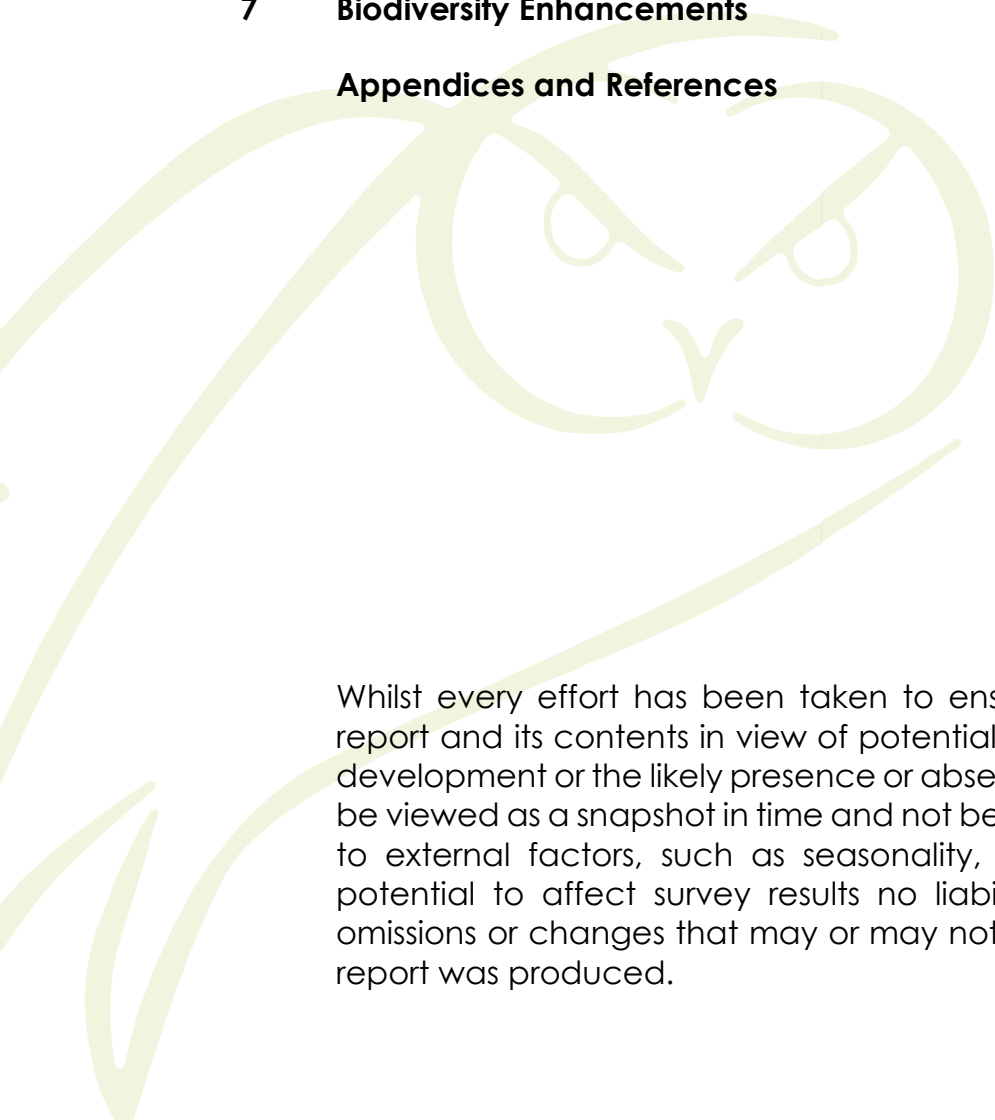
No trees or buildings were deemed to provide any suitable features in which bats could potentially utilise when assessed by a licensed bat ecologist (2018-35446-CLS-CLS). No further surveys are required for roosting bats at this juncture.

The site recorded sub-optimal habitat for use by bats for commuting / foraging within the northern section of the site in the scattered trees. Furthermore, the site is deemed to be in an environment subject to moderately high levels of artificial lighting as a result of the site use. No further recommendations have been made.

The habitats within the site comprised of common species of vegetation. The site is not deemed capable of supporting important assemblages of invertebrates.

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Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this report and its contents in view of potential ecological constraints to development or the likely presence or absence of species it must only be viewed as a snapshot in time and not be viewed as definitive. Due to external factors, such as seasonality, weather etc having the potential to affect survey results no liability can be assumed for omissions or changes that may or may not occur after the date this report was produced.



1 Introduction and Background to the Site

- 1.1 Estrada Ecology Ltd was commissioned to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site at 1 Peckleton Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 7RN to inform the redevelopment of the site.
- 1.2 Under current proposals, it is understood that the site is to be redeveloped to extend the current car park, subject to the necessary consents.
- 1.3 The survey site is approximately 4.6 hectares in size and was dominated by developed land; sealed surface, and two buildings including a recreational building (**B1**), and a bike shed (**B2**) (visual representation of numbering and position can be seen within Appendix Three). The site also comprises of modified grassland, with sections of scattered trees, and compartments of introduced shrub and mixed scrub.
- 1.4 Site boundaries are formed by metal fencing along the eastern and southern aspects, with open access to the wider caterpillar site along the northern and western elevations, as well as woodland northeast of the site.

1.5 Report Objectives

- Present the findings of the ecological survey.
- Assess the potential of existing on-site habitats to support protected or notable species.
- Evaluate any likely ecological impacts on protected and notable species or habitats because of the proposed development.
- Provide recommendations for any further species-specific survey and mitigation measures that may be required; and
- Provide habitat enhancement recommendations in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023).

1.6 Location of the Site

- 1.6.1 The survey site's central OS grid reference is SK 48393 01690.

Figure 1: The survey site within its wider setting.



Google Earth

1.7 Surrounding Area

- 1.7.1 The site is located within the Desford area, approximately 10.7km southwest of Leicester city centre.
- 1.7.2 Surrounding land is dominated by agricultural and recreational land. Industrial developments are also located to the immediate west of the site. Small pockets of woodland are also present within the immediate landscape.

2 Protected Species Legislation

- 2.1 Relevant legislation includes the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations which came into force on 31 December 2020.
- 2.2 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1 Oct 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of

principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The list has been drawn up in consultation with Natural England, as required by the Act. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions.

- 2.3 The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework was developed in response to the Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020. Its five strategic goals and twenty biodiversity targets supersede the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

2.4 Environment and Biodiversity

- 2.4.1 Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023), local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance the natural environment when determining planning applications. Local planning authorities also have an obligation to seek opportunities to further enhance the conservation status of Species and Habitats of Principle Importance.

- 2.4.2 Species and Habitats of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England (JNCC, 2009) are covered under section 41 of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006). Species and habitats listed within Section 41 need to be taken into consideration by a public body when performing any of its functions, such as assessing planning applications.

2.5 Wildlife

- 2.5.1 European Protected Species, such as bats (all species) and great crested newt, are afforded protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as well as under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000. It is an offence to:

- Deliberately or recklessly capture, injure, or kill any wild animal of a European protected species.
- Deliberately or recklessly disturb any such animal.
- Damage or destroy their breeding site or resting place; and

- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead animal, or any part of, or anything derived from these species.

2.5.2 Disturbance of European Protected Species constitutes any activity which is likely to:

- To impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or, in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; and
- To significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

2.6 UK Legislation

2.6.1 Breeding birds (all species) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird and to take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs. Schedule 1 species are afforded additional protection from disturbance at or near nest sites, including reckless disturbance under the Countryside Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000.

2.6.2 Reptiles (common species of adder, grass snake, common lizard and slow worm) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure and trade these animals.

2.6.3 Amphibians (smooth newt, palmate newt, common frog and common toad) are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The sale, barter, exchange, transporting for sale and advertising to sell or to buy are an offence.

2.6.4 Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 and under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence: to wilfully, or attempt, to kill, capture, ill-treat or injure any badger; to obstruct, destroy or damage a badger sett or to disturb a badger whilst within its sett; to sell or offer for sale a live badger, or have possession or control of a live badger; and marking a badger or attaching any ring, tag, or other marking device to a badger.

2.6.5 Otters are a European Protected Species (EPS) and are also fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is against the law to capture, kill, disturb or injure otters (on purpose or by not taking enough care); damage or destroy a breeding or resting place (deliberately or by not taking enough care); obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places (deliberately or by not taking enough care); and possess, sell, control or transport live or dead otters, or parts of otters.

2.6.6 Water voles are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and are a priority conservation species. It is against the law to:

- Intentionally capture, kill, or injure water voles.
- Damage, destroy or block access to their places of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care).
- Disturb them in a place of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care); and
- Possess, sell, control or transport live or dead water voles or parts of them (not water voles bred in captivity).

3 Survey Methodology

3.1 Desktop Survey

3.1.1 A biological data records search was commissioned from Leicester and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC) for a 1km radius from the central grid reference.

3.1.2 Further inspection, using colour 1:25,000 OS base maps (www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk), MAGIC (www.magic.defra.gov.uk), aerial photographs from Google Earth (www.maps.google.co.uk), was also undertaken to provide additional context and identify any features of potential importance for nature conservation in the wider countryside.

3.1.3 Furthermore, consultation with MAGIC was undertaken to ascertain any European Protected Species Mitigation Licences granted within a 2km radius from grid, as well as inspect for the presence of protected priority habitats.

- 3.1.4 Natural England's Geoportal: England- wide data for Great Crested Newts was analysed for any records within a 2km radius from grid. The dataset contains eDNA pond surveys for district level licensing (England). When available for the location, the Risk Zones for GCN are considered for the site.

3.2 Field Survey

- 3.2.1 The survey area was investigated on foot to ascertain habitats on site and the potential of those habitats to support ecological diversity. The vegetation types present within the site were assessed by experienced ecologist; Sam Toon BSc (hons), using methodology based on that described in the UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 2.0 (2023) and CIEEM's Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2018).
- 3.2.2 Habitats and features with potential to support protected and / or conservation priority faunal species, together with any field signs of such species were recorded on the field map using target notes. A search was undertaken for the following key habitats and / or field signs for protected or conservation priority species highlighted in Table 1.

Table 1: Key habitats and field signs of protected and priority species.

Taxon	Indicative habitats	Field signs
Bats	Roosts – Trees, buildings, bridges caves etc. Foraging areas – e.g., parkland, water bodies and streams, wetlands, woodland edge, hedgerow Commuting routes – linear features (e.g., hedgerows).	In or on potential roost sites: Droppings stuck to walls; urine spotting in roof spaces; oil from fur staining around roost entrances; feeding remains (e.g., moth wings).
Great crested newt	Ponds within 500m of suitable habitat within the site boundary. Suitable (terrestrial) habitat includes rough grassland, scrub and woodland, log and rubble piles and other debris, animal burrows.	Eggs, Individuals of all life stages. Egg rolled plants.
Reptiles	Rough grassland, log and rubble piles, compost heaps.	Sloughed skins; eggs, individuals.
Birds	Trees, scrub, hedgerow, field margins, grassland.	Nests; droppings below nest sites (especially in buildings of trees); tree holes.
Badger	Found in most rural and many urban habitats.	Excavations and tracks; sett entrances, latrines, hairs, well-worn paths; prints; snuffle holes.
Water vole	Water bodies / water courses.	Burrow entrances; prints; latrine areas; faeces; feeding stations.

BAP invertebrates	Each butterfly species has its own habitat requirements determined by the food plant of the caterpillar, the nectar source for the adult butterfly and the conditions needed for the caterpillar to survive and then pupate successfully.	Eggs, larva, Pupa, adult butterfly. Habitat type and presence of food plants.
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3.3 Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.3.1 Where present, trees were subject to an inspection to determine their suitability to support roosting bats. The inspections were carried out in accordance with current best practice guidance (Collins, 2023).

3.3.2 Potential roost features of bats and their roosts include the presence of droppings, stain, or grease marks, feeding remains, or the bats themselves.

3.3.3 Trees, and the quality of on-site habitats were then categorised based on the classification criteria in 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists' (Collins, 2023). Classification criteria is presented below:

- **Negligible:** a structure or tree with features unlikely to be used by roosting bats. Habitats on site unlikely to be used by foraging or commuting bats.
- **Low:** a structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that may be utilised by opportunistic bats but are not suitable for use on a regular basis or by a large number of bats. Habitat could be used by a small number of foraging or commuting bats.
- **Moderate:** a structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that may be utilised on a regular basis but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status. Continuous habitat that provides good connectivity within the wider landscape and offers foraging opportunities.
- **High:** a structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites suitable for use by a larger number of bats on a regular basis and for longer periods of time. Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected within the wider landscape and offers

high-quality foraging habitat. The site is close to and connected to known roosts.

3.4 Timing

3.4.1 The survey was conducted on March 6th, 2024.

3.5 Weather Conditions

3.5.1 Weather conditions at the time of the site visit were dry, majority cloud cover, 5mph north-north-westerly wind, 95% humidity and temperatures of 7°C.

3.6 Personnel

3.6.1 The survey was undertaken by experienced ecologist Sam Toon BSc (hons) (Natural England Bat Licence 2018-35446-CLS-CLS): Qualifying member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management; a licensed ecologist with over nine years of ecological surveying including phase one habitat surveys.

4 Ecological Constraints

4.1 It should be noted that this ecological appraisal provides baseline ecological data at the time of survey only and does not include flora or fauna which may be present at different times of the year.

4.2 An absence of species records from within a search radius does not provide confirmation that a species is absent from within the search area.

4.3 No interior surveys of the buildings were completed due to access restrictions. However, this was not deemed restrictive in relation to assessment for bats due to full external access.

5 Survey Results

5.1 Field Survey Results

5.1.1 Habitat Overview

5.1.1.1 A summary of the habitats recorded during the site inspection are listed within Table 2.

Table 2: Recorded Habitats Within the Site Boundaries.

Habitat	UK HABS Codes	
	Primary	Secondary
Modified grassland	g4	-
Mixed scrub	h3h	-
Developed land; sealed surface	u1b	800, 804
Building	u1b5	-
Introduced shrub	u1f	847
Scattered trees	w1	32

5.1.1.2 A list of all species recorded on the site during the survey can be found in Appendix Two.

5.1.2 Modified Grassland – g4

5.1.2.1 Sections of modified grassland are present north and south of the site (Figure 2). This habitat is also found throughout the site forming separation between the carpark areas, as well as forming verges around the site boundaries.

5.1.2.2 Species recorded colonising this habitat include perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*) which dominates the composition, as well as Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), herb robert (*Geranium robertianum*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), clover (*Trifolium sp.*), cleaver (*Galium aparine*), daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*), and snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*).

Figure 2: Example of Modified Grassland



5.1.3 Mixed Scrub – h3h

- 5.1.3.1 Mixed scrub was recorded within the northern section of the site, lining the understory of the scattered tree habitat (Figure 3).
- 5.1.3.2 Species composition includes hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), and ivy (*Hedera helix*).

Figure 3: Example of Mixed Scrub.



- 5.1.3.3 Mixed scrub in this condition was deemed as providing suitable habitat for species such as hedgehog. Further recommendations have been made within this report.

5.1.4 Developed Land; Sealed Surface – u1b

- 5.1.4.1 Dominating the site are areas of sealed surface which form the carpark, as well as access to and from the site (Figure 4). The sealed surface is largely tarmacadam.

Figure 4: Example of Developed Land; Sealed Surface.

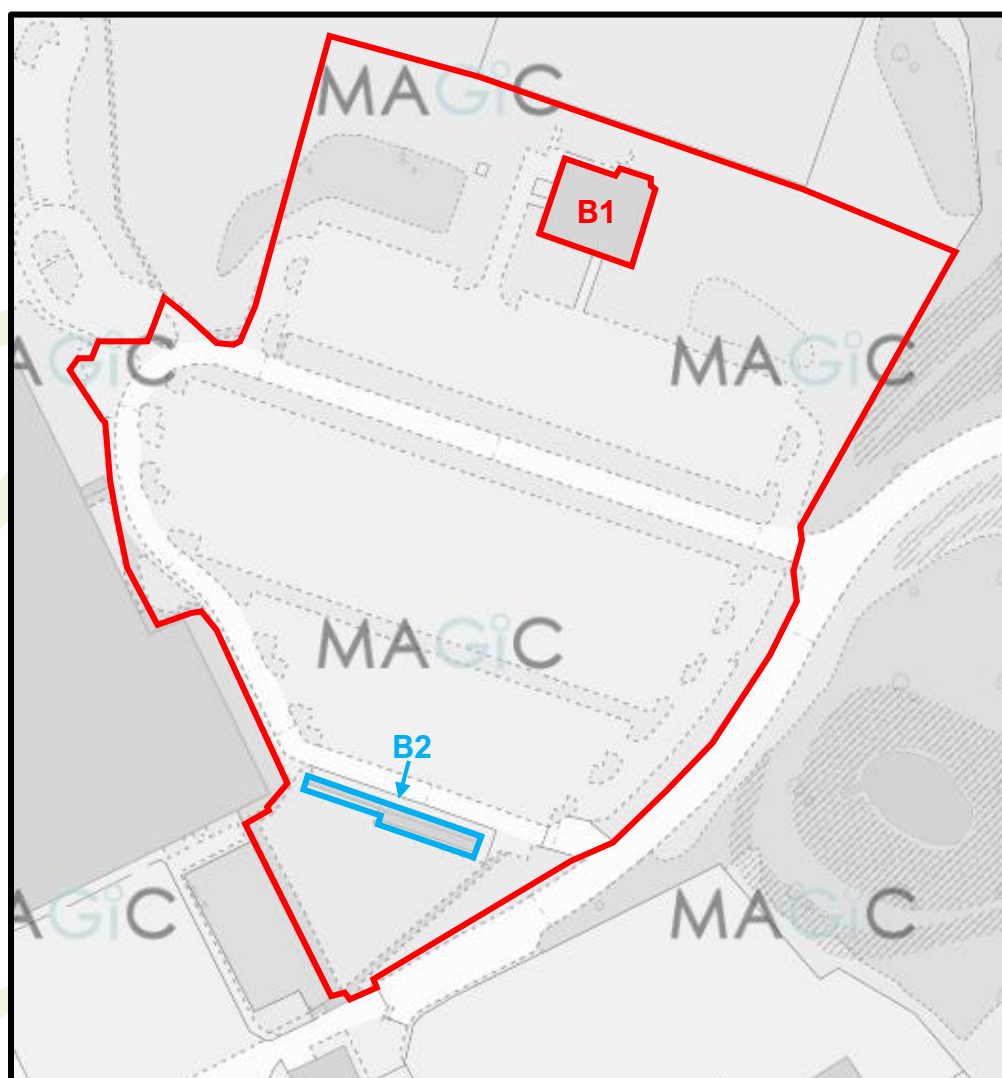


- 5.1.4.2 Sealed surface in this condition offers no intrinsic ecological value.

5.1.5 Buildings – u1b5

- 5.1.5.1 Within the site, two buildings were present. In order to create a separation when discussing these buildings, the recreational building shall be named **B1**, and the bike shed shall be named **B2** (Figure 5; Appendix Three).

Figure 5: Visual Representation of Building Numbering and Placement.



MAGiC Map © Crown Copyright and database rights 2024. Ordnance Survey 100022861

5.1.5.2 Recreational Building – B1

- 5.1.5.2.1 B1 is of non-standard corrugated metal construction, a single-storey building, with PVC windows and doors (Figure 6). All facias and soffits were recorded as being intact and sealed.

Figure 6: Southern and Western Elevations of B1.



- 5.1.5.2.2 Multiple metal vents and fans were present on the building elevations, due to the material of these features, they were deemed as negligible features for potential bat roosting (Figure 7).

Figure 7: B1 (potential roosting features highlighted in red).



- 5.1.5.2.3 B1 was deemed as providing negligible potential for bat roosting due to the metal material construction of the building.

5.1.5.3 Bike Shed – B2

- 5.1.5.3.1 B2 is of non-standard corrugated metal construction, single-storey building (Figure 8). The building is open on the northern and southeastern elevations, used as motorcycle and bicycle storage for the surrounding developments.

Figure 8: Northern and Southern Elevations of B2.



- 5.1.5.3.2 B1 was deemed as providing negligible potential for bat roosting due to the metal material construction of the building and no potential roosting features being recorded during the survey.

5.1.6 Introduced Shrub – 847

- 5.1.6.1 Small sections of introduced shrub were recorded through the site forming separation to the carpark areas on site (Figure 9). Occasional scattered trees were recorded within this habitat.
- 5.1.6.2 Species composition includes dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*), common barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*), and Darwin's barberry (*Berberis darwinii*).

Figure 9: Example of Introduced Shrub.



- 5.1.6.3 Introduced shrub in this condition is suitable potential habitat for hedgehog. Further recommendations have been made within this report.
- 5.1.6.4 Within the southern section of the site rockspray cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster horizontalis*) was recorded, this is a non-native / invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (Figure 10). Further recommendations regarding this are included within this report.

Figure 10: Example of Rockspray Cotoneaster.



5.1.7 Scattered Trees – 32

- 5.1.7.1 Scattered trees are present throughout the site, with a larger portion found north of the site (Figure 11). The northern section is set within mixed scrub. A substantial quantity of scattered trees was recorded within the entire site, these included a variety of small, medium and large trees.
- 5.1.7.2 Assessment was made on site to determine the habitat structure. The congregation of trees was deemed to be too small in area size to be classified as woodland and too wide to be determined as a line of trees. Therefore, each tree present was deemed to be individual and should be assessed as such.
- 5.1.7.3 Species included hawthorn, beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), conifer (*Pinophyta spp.*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), spruce (*Picea spp.*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*), alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), apple (*Malus x domestica*), and cherry (*Prunus avium*).

Figure 11: Example of Scattered Trees.



- 5.1.7.3 Multiple historic bird nests were recorded within the scattered trees (Figure 12). All medium and large scattered trees were deemed as suitable habitat for breeding birds due to their size. Further recommendations regarding breeding birds are made within the conclusions of this report.

Figure 12: Historic Breeding Bird Nest Within Scattered Trees (*highlighted in blue*).



5.2 Desktop Survey Results

- 5.2.1 Records were returned from Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Biological Records Centre (LRERC) for a 1km radius from grid. In summary, the following records were returned:

- Eleven amphibian records were returned for the site radius, dated 2013. Species include common frog (*Rana temporaria*), common toad (*Bufo bufo*), smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), and great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*).
- Four reptile records were returned for the search radius, dated between 2013 and 2016. Species returned solely for grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*).

- Records for Eurasian badger (*Meles meles*) records were returned for the search radius, but details are omitted due to the sensitivity of the data. Full consideration has been given within this report.
- Records for water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) and otter (*Lutra lutra*) were discounted due to lack of suitable habitat within or surrounding the site.
- No western European Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) records were returned for the search radius.
- Twenty-eight bat records were returned for the search radius, dated between 2009 and 2022. Species include common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), noctule bat (*Nyctalus noctule*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*), natterers (*Myotis nattereri*), serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*), Nathusius's pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus nathusii*), brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*), and unidentified bat.
- The remaining records comprise of invertebrate records, teleost records and flowering plant records.
- A full list of biological records is available upon request.

5.2.2 Consultation with MAGIC returned no European Protected Species Mitigation Licences granted within a 2km radius from grid.

5.2.3 No records for great crested newt (GCN) presence were recorded within a 2km radius from grid via consultation with Natural England's eDNA pond surveys for District Level Licensing (England).

5.2.4 The site falls within the Green Risk Zone and Amber Risk Zone for GCN via consultation with Natural England's Great Crested Newt Risk Zones (Leicestershire, Rutland, Rushcliffe and South Kesteven) Dataset.

5.2.5 Green risk zones are defined as containing sparsely distributed GCN and are less likely to contain important pathways of connecting habitat for this species (Natural England, 2023). No impacts towards GCN are anticipated.

5.2.6 Amber zones contain main population centres for GCN and comprise important connecting habitat that aids natural dispersal.

5.3 Designated Sites

5.3.1 Consultation with MAGIC map returned no Statutory Designated Sites within a 2km radius of grid.

5.3.2 Three non-statutory designated sites were recorded within a 1 km radius from grid as highlighted in Table 3.

Table 3: Non-Statutory Designated Sites Within 1km Radius from Grid.

Name	Designation
Peckleton, Caterpillar Site	Local Wildlife Site
Desford Lane Hedgerow, Peckleton	Local Wildlife Site
Desford, Neovia Logistics Bridleway	Local Wildlife Site

5.4 Priority Habitats

5.4.1 No priority habitats were recorded within the site boundary.

5.4.2 No ancient semi-natural woodland / ancient replanted woodland is present within 100 metres of the site boundary.

5.4.3 Priority habitats present within the search radius but outside the site boundary includes:

- Priority Habitat Inventory – Deciduous Woodland, the closest compartment being 10 metres north of the site.
- Priority Habitat Inventory – Lowland Dry Acid Grassland, the closest compartment being 1.49km southwest of the site.
- Traditional Orchard, the closest compartment being 1.8km west of the site.

5.4.4 No protected species listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded within the application boundary.

5.4.5 One non-native / invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was recorded within the site boundary. This was rockspray cotoneaster. Recommendations are given in the conclusion of this report.

5.5 Protected Species

5.5.1 Badger

- 5.5.1.1 Records regarding badger were returned for the data search. Details have been omitted from this report, but not from an analysis of impacts.
- 5.5.1.2 Suboptimal habitat was recorded on site and no field sign evidence was recorded at the time of survey. The site is surrounded by barriers to dispersal, such as metal fencing on all site elevations and road networks.
- 5.5.1.3 The woodland situated outside the red line boundary to the north and south of the site, was surveyed on foot at the time of the site visit which recorded no field sign evidence of badger presence.
- 5.5.1.4 No impacts on badger are predicted and no further survey effort is recommended.

5.5.2 Bats

- 5.5.2.1 Twenty-eight bat records were returned for the search radius.
- 5.5.2.2 The two buildings within the site were both deemed as containing negligible potential for bat roosting when assessed by a licenced ecologist. No scattered trees were recorded as containing any suitability for supporting roosting bats.
- 5.5.2.3 Limited foraging and commuting habitat was present throughout the site in the form of the scattered trees, however, due to the built up nature of the site and surrounding environment, it is deemed that the surrounding area is subject to high levels of light pollution. This could act as a deterrent for bat species.
- 5.5.2.4 Overall, negligible impacts on bats are predicted and no further survey effort or mitigation is recommended.

5.5.3 Amphibians

- 5.5.3.1 Eleven amphibian records were returned from the records search.

5.5.3.2 No suitable aquatic habitats were recorded within the site boundary, concluding negligible potential for amphibians within the site.

5.5.3.3 The terrestrial habitats were deemed to provide limited potential for supporting amphibian species, due to the short sward height and density which were considered to provide poor coverage from predation and support commuting.

5.5.3.4 It is deemed that there is an unlikely possibility that the works on site will impact amphibian species. No further recommendations have been made.

5.5.4 Reptiles

5.5.4.1 Four reptile records were returned for the search radius.

5.5.4.2 No evidence of reptiles was recorded during the site survey. Suboptimal terrestrial habitat was recorded within the site, with vegetation cover deemed sparse in relation to density. Furthermore, due to the built-up nature of the site and surrounding environment with industrial activities present, it is considered unlikely that reptiles are present.

5.5.4.3 It is deemed that there is an unlikely possibility that the works on site will impact reptile species. No further recommendations have been made.

5.5.5 Breeding Birds

5.5.5.1 Multiple historic bird nests were recorded within the site; no active evidence or activity was recorded during the site survey.

5.5.5.2 The trees and shrub habitats were assessed for breeding bird suitability and were deemed to provide optimal suitability due to the density of coverage and the size of the vegetation structures.

5.5.5.3 Further recommendations have been made within this report.

5.5.6 European Hedgehog

5.5.6.1 No records for European hedgehog were returned within the search radius.

5.5.6.2 No evidence of European hedgehog was recorded during the site visit. Habitats within the site were deemed suitable for supporting hedgehog populations.

5.5.6.3 It is unlikely that the species will be adversely impacted by the proposed development, provided a suitable precautionary method statement is implemented in line with vegetation clearance.

5.5.7 Other Species

5.5.7.1 The site does not support suitable habitat for any other protected or significant fauna, such as: Barn Owl, Dormouse, Brown Hare, otter, water vole or white-clawed crayfish.

5.5.7.2 Floral species composition is limited to sparsely distributed self-set common species and thus unlikely to support important assemblages of invertebrates.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Designated Sites

6.1.1 No Statutory Designated Sites were recorded within a 2km radius from grid.

6.1.2 Three Non-Statutory Designated Sites were recorded within a 1Km radius from grid, all defined as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

6.1.3 No direct or indirect impacts are predicted via encroachment. Due to the size of the proposed development, it is considered likely that any ecological impacts will be restricted to a site level, as works will be concentrated within the site itself and no impacts are predicted.

6.2 Habitats and Vegetation

6.2.1 No priority habitats were recorded within the application boundary of the site. Adjacent to the northeastern site boundary, approximately 10 meters from the site, was priority habitat deciduous woodland. Due to works being confined to the site boundaries, no further recommendations are required for this priority habitat.

6.2.2 No trees which feature on the Ancient Tree Inventory were recorded on site.

- 6.2.3 No protected or notable flora listed on Schedule of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded during the survey.
- 6.2.4 One non-native invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was recorded during the survey. This was Rockspray cotoneaster.
- 6.2.5 Whilst having Schedule 9 species on site is not an offence, it is the landowner's responsibility to prevent the spread of the species beyond the current extent. If plantings of the above-mentioned species are to be removed during the redevelopment of the site, the removal should be subject to best practice guidance in relation to Schedule 9 species. The retention of these species, if a viable option, is preferable given a reduced risk towards biosecurity compared to uprooting.

6.3 Recommendations for Further Survey/ mitigation

6.3.1 Breeding Birds

- 6.3.1.1 The scattered trees and shrub habitats within the site were deemed to offer optimal suitability for nesting birds. Historical field sign evidence suggesting the use of the site by breeding bird was recorded. However, no active evidence or activity was recorded during the survey.
- 6.3.1.2 Impacts on breeding birds are considered a possibility during the development of the site.
- 6.3.1.3 It is recommended that any clearance of scattered trees or shrubs, are undertaken outside the breeding bird season which is typically recognised as March to September (inclusive).
- 6.3.1.4 Should these timings not be feasible, then a walkover survey in advance of the impactful works is recommended to ensure there's no breeding bird activity prior to the works.
- 6.3.1.5 Should birds be recorded nesting, breeding, or attempting to breed, then a suitable buffer should be erected as advised by a suitably qualified ecologist. The buffer should be retained until breeding has ceased and the young have fledged.

6.3.2 Bats

- 6.3.2.1 The two buildings within the site were both deemed as containing negligible potential for bat roosting when assessed by a licenced ecologist. No scattered trees were recorded as containing any suitability for supporting roosting bats.
- 6.3.2.2 The site is situated within an immediate landscape of industrial usage, suggesting a heightened level of artificial light is expected, which is deemed to be a potential deterrent for bat species.
- 6.3.2.3 Woodland and agricultural habitat is present within the wider landscape on the northern, eastern, and southeastern elevations, offering potential to support commuting and foraging bats. As a result, due to the potential encroachment of this feature with the proposed development, it is deemed appropriate to implement a suitable lighting scheme within the plans to incorporate the northern, eastern, and southeastern boundaries.

6.3.3 Precautionary Method Statement

- 6.3.3.1 The site provides suitability for hedgehogs, within the mixed scrub, and introduced shrub habitats. These listed habitats provide suitability for a place of refugia or shelter for the species.
- 6.3.3.2 No field sign evidence of hedgehog was recorded during the survey.
- 6.3.3.3 It is deemed that a precautionary method statement to detail suitable measures to mitigate the potential transient species should be included within the scheme.
- 6.3.3.4 Measures to avoid impacts on hedgehog should be employed. Any vegetation and brash from cuttings should be removed and disposed of offsite. No piles of cut vegetation which could provide potential refuge for small mammals should be retained on site.
- 6.3.3.5 Any residual impact from construction can be minimised by considering the timing and method of clearance. Whilst there is no optimum time of year for habitat clearance, due to hedgehogs' use of nests all year round, an autumn site clearance will avoid the bulk of the breeding season and will be prior hibernation. A high cut / low-cut method of removal on any boundary vegetation will also allow a check for nests in between cuts.

6.3.4 Non-Native / Invasive Species

6.3.4.1 Rockspray cotoneaster was recorded growing within the site. The noted species is a Schedule 9 listed plant on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to knowingly and intentionally spread any plant listed on Schedule 9.

6.3.4.2 It is, however, not an offence to have the species on land, as long as it is not spread. It is an option to retain the species within the landscaping design for the site plan to reduce the risk of breaching biosecurity.

6.3.4.3 If retaining the species is not an option for the scheme, then removal is possible provided that precautions are made to prevent the spread of the species. The removal will require the entire root systems to be removed to prevent the species regrowing. All plant material of each genus must be kept within itself when removed from its rooted location. Furthermore, care must be taken during removal to ensure no berries are left on site which could consequently germinate and grow.

6.3.4.4 Once all of the species has been removed, one option is to take it to a licensed landfill to be disposed of. Another option is to burn it on site; however, prior notice must first be given to the Environment Agency to make them aware of the burning of the material.

6.3.5 Biodiversity Net Gain

6.3.5.1 The survey was conducted on the 6th March 2024, which is considered to be within the suboptimal season for conducting accurate baseline assessments for biodiversity net gain. It has been discussed with the client that conducting an assessment out of the season, in line with guidance, will lead to an unrepresentative baseline unit score.

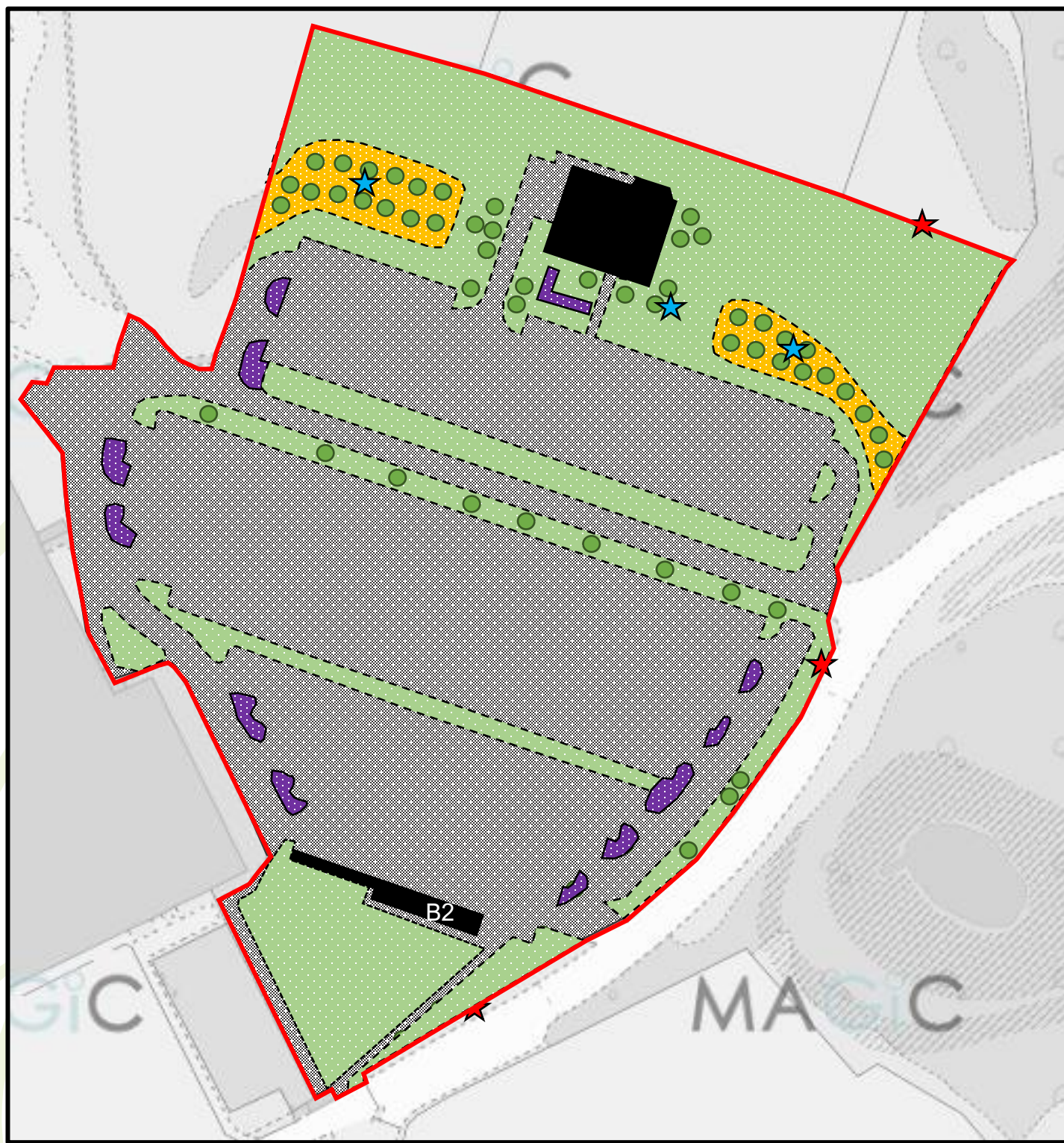
6.3.5.2 As a result, it has been discussed that a survey conducted within the season will assist with achieving a more representative baseline when considering net gain of the site

7 Biodiversity Enhancement

- 7.1 In line with National planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the application should demonstrate biodiversity enhancements. Upon finalisation of plans, calculations should be compiled.
- 7.2 Due to the size of the site and location, applicable specific habitat enhancements could include:
- Bat and bird boxes integrated into the scheme design to enhance roosting provision over the wider site.
 - A native tree and hedgerow planting scheme should be implemented within the scheme to create a greenspace within the site. Plantings should comprise native species of high biodiversity value.
 - Boundary treatments should be left open where feasible to allow passage for small mammals including hedgehog.



Appendix One: Phase One Map (Trees not quantifiably to scale).



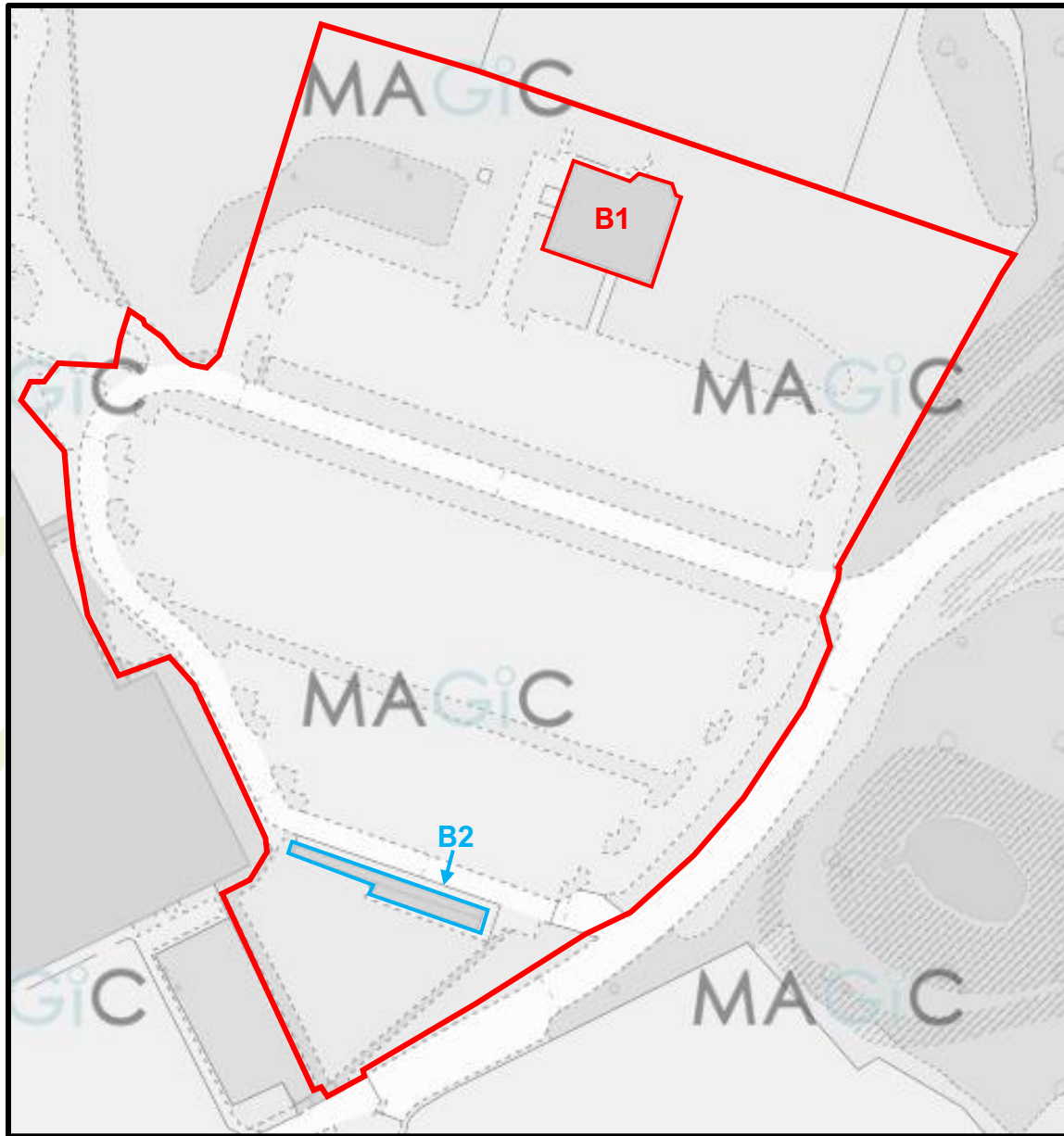
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Phase 1 Map Key	
	Site Redline Boundary
	Building
	Developed Land; Sealed Surface
	Mixed Scrub
	Introduced Shrub
	Modified Grassland
	Scattered Trees (Indicative)
	Target Note – Areas Requiring Lighting Scheme
	Target Note – Historic Breeding Bird Nests

Appendix Two: Species List

Vernacular	Taxon
Flora	
Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Apple	<i>Malus x domestica</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>
Cherry	<i>Prunus avium</i>
Cleaver	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Clover	<i>Trifolium sp.</i>
Common Barberry	<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>
Conifer	<i>Pinophyta spp.</i>
Daffodil	<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Darwin's Barberry	<i>Berberis darwinii</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Firethorn	<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Pedunculate Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Perennial Ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Rockspray Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i>
Scots Pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
Silver Birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Snowdrop	<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>
Spruce	<i>Picea spp.</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Yorkshire Fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>

Appendix Three: Visual representation of building numbering / classification.



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References

Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* 4th (edn.) The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0.* Available at [<https://www.ukhab.org>]

