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Ecological Appraisal

Client

Peveril Homes

Project

Hunts Lane,

Desford

Date

November 2025

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FIGURES

APPENDIX

Rev	Issue Status	Prepared/Date	Approved/Date
-	Final	EAS/JB / 20.11.25	EJF / 20.11.25
	Final	EAS / 24.11.25	

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following report has been prepared by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd. (FPCR) on behalf of Peveril Homes and provides details of an Ecological Appraisal undertaken at Hunts Lane, Desford (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'). The Site measures approximately 4.9 ha in extent and is centred on ordnance survey grid reference SK 47219 03563.

Site Location and Context

1.2 The Site lies to the northwest of Desford, Leicester. A residential area lies to the south, separated from the Site by Hunts Lane and Newbold Road. The residential area continues along part of the eastern boundary, with field parcels adjacent to the northeast boundary. Desford Cemetery lies to the west of the Site and an arable field is located north.

1.3 The Site itself comprises a single intensively managed arable field compartment, other neutral grassland to the northeast and an area of woodland to the east. Three trees located along the Site boundaries. Three hedgerows run along the eastern, southern and western boundaries and a tributary of Rothley Brook runs along the northern boundary.

Development Proposals

1.4 The proposals are for an outline planning application for the construction of up to 75 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, drainage infrastructure and associated works (all matters reserved except access from Hunts Lane). Off-site landscaping measures delivered as part of a wider landscaping strategy are proposed on adjacent land within the Applicant's control ('the off-site landscaping measures') (see the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan GLY0225 MP01)".

Scope of Appraisal

1.5 This Ecological Appraisal describes the current ecological interest within and around the Site, as identified through standard desk and field-based investigations. It additionally considers the potential ecological impacts and opportunities for ecological enhancement based on the Masterplan in the context of relevant legislation and planning policy, and identifies the necessary additional measures to avoid, mitigate or provide compensation for potential impacts, and the mechanisms for securing such measures.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Desktop Study

2.1 A desk study was completed for baseline ecological information for ecological receptors including designated sites and records of protected and priority species within the Site and local area. The following organisations were consulted:

- Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC);
- Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website[1].

[1] www.magic.gov.uk.

2.2 The search areas were related to the significance of sites and their potential zones of influence[2], as follows:

- 15km around the Site for sites of International Importance (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Ramsar sites);
- 2km around the Site for sites of National or Regional Importance (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs), and bat records;
- 1km around the Site for non-statutory sites of Local or County Importance or statutory sites such as Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and species records (e.g. protected or Section 41 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 species of principal importance and notable species) from the previous 20 years.

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

Field Survey

Habitat Survey

2.4 A field survey was conducted on the 7th of October, 11th November and 19th November 2025 by an experienced ecologist from FPCR. Survey methods broadly followed the UKHab classification system[3] and comprised a systematic walk over the Site to classify the broad habitat types and identify any Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) for the conservation of biodiversity as listed within Section 41 (S41) of the NERC Act (2006)[4]. Habitats were mapped in the field, with further information providing habitat area, distinctiveness and condition, which are used to calculate the value of each habitat. This survey data was used to inform description of the baseline calculations and inputs into a biodiversity net gain assessment. Habitat condition assessments were undertaken using the relevant Condition Assessment Criteria within the Statutory biodiversity metric condition assessments excel spreadsheet[5].

2.5 Full details of the calculation methodology are provided in The Statutory Metric – User Guide[6].

2.6 Any habitats suitable for, or features with the potential to support, protected or notable species were also assessed and recorded with the surveys.

2.7 Consideration was given as to the potential presence of invasive species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981) and the presence of any notable weeds including those covered under the Weed Act 1959 (where a population is significant enough to be considered injurious).

[2] Zone of Influence - the areas and resources that may be affected by the proposed development

[3] Butcher, B., Carey, P., Edmonds, R., Norton, L. and Treweek, J. 2020. The UK Habitat Classification User Manual 1.1 http://www.ukhab.org.

[4] *The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.* [Online]. London: HMSO. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents.

[5] Defra 2024. Statutory biodiversity metric condition assessments [Online] Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides

[6] Defra 2024. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide [Online] Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides

Fauna

2.8 During the habitat survey, observations, identification and signs of any species protected under the following Acts and Regulations were noted:

- Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (*as amended*)[7];
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992[8];
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (*as amended*)[9]; and
- The NERC Act 2006 S41 Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity.

2.9 Given the nature of the habitats within and immediately surrounding the study area, particular consideration was given to the potential presence of birds, bats, badger, amphibians and reptiles. In addition to evidence of field signs, the suitability of habitats to support such species was assessed, for example the suitability of mature trees to support roosting bats.

2.10 Further species records were made where appropriate in order to make an initial appraisal of the presence of species of nature conservation importance. For example, birds present within the study area were noted to determine the presence of any species of conservation concern[10].

Badger

2.11 All hedgerows and other suitable habitats within the development boundary and accessible land within 30m were searched for evidence of badger *Meles meles* activity. The methodology employed followed that outlined by Harris, Creswell and Jefferies[11].

2.12 Evidence of badger occupation and activity sought included:

- Setts: including earth mounds, evidence of bedding and runways between setts;
- Latrines: often located close to setts, territory boundaries or favoured feeding areas;
- Prints and paths or trackways;
- Hairs caught on rough wood or fencing;

2.13 Other evidence: included snuffle holes, feeding and playing areas and scratching posts. The identification of these latter signs on their own does not necessarily provide conclusive evidence of the presence of badgers. A number of such signs need to be seen in conjunction before badgers can be confirmed as being present.

2.14 The status and the level of activity of setts identified were noted as follows:

- *Main sett*: usually continuously used with significant signs of activity, including a large number of holes and conspicuous spoil mounds;

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[7] *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (*as amended*). [Online]. London: HMSO Available from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69

[8] *The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended).* [Online]. London: HMSO Available from: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents

[9] *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 – Statutory Instrument 2017 No.1012.* [Online]. London: HMSO. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made

[10] Eaton, M.A., Aebischer, N.J., Brown, A.F., Hearn, R.D., Lock, L., Musgrove, A.J., Noble, D.G., Stroud, D.A. & Gregory, R.D. 2015. Birds of Conservation Concern 4: the population status of birds in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man. *British Birds* 108:708-746.

[11] Harris, S., Cresswell, P. & Jefferies, D. 1989. *Surveying for badgers. Occasional Publication of the Mammal Society No.9.* Mammal Society, Bristol.

- *Annexe sett*: usually found close to a main sett and connected to it by well used paths. Such setts may not be continuously occupied;
- *Subsidiary sett*: lesser-used setts usually comprising a few holes and without associated well-used paths. Such setts are not continuously occupied;
- *Outlier sett*: one or two holes without obvious paths, with a very sporadic use.

2.15 With the level of activity described as:

- *Active*: clear of debris, trampled spoil mounds and obviously active e.g. presence of prints, dislodged guard hairs;
- *Partially active*: some associated debris/moss/plants in the entrance. Could be used with minimal amount of excavation usually with signs in the vicinity of the sett e.g. badger paths etc.
- *Disused*: partially or completely blocked/collapsed.

Bats

Roost Assessment of Trees

2.16 A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of on-site trees was undertaken from ground level on 7th October 2025 by a suitably experienced ecologist from FPCR. During this survey potential roosting features were sought, based on British Standard 8596:2015[12], including:

- Natural holes (e.g. knot holes) arising from naturally shed branches or branches previously pruned back to a branch collar;
- Man-made holes (e.g. cavities that have developed from flush cuts or cavities created by branches tearing out from parent stems;
- Woodpecker holes;
- Cracks/splits in stems or branches (horizontal and vertical);
- Partially detached, loose or platy bark;
- Cankers (caused by localised bark death) in which cavities have developed;
- Other hollows or cavities, including butt rots;
- Compression of forks with occluded bark, forming potential cavities;
- Crossing stems or branches with suitable roosting space between;
- Ivy stems with diameters >50mm with suitable roosting space behind (or where roosting space can be seen where a mat of thinner stems has left a gap between the mat and the trunk); and
- Bat or bird boxes;

2.17 Certain factors such as orientation of a potential roost feature, its height from the ground, the direct surroundings and its location in respect to other features, can enhance or reduce the potential value of the feature as a roost site.

2.18 Using professional judgement, trees were classified into the following general bat roost potential groups (none, Further Assessment Required (FAR), or Potential Roost Features (PRF)) based upon the presence of potential suitable roost features noted. Assessment of such features is based upon guidance set out in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good

[12] British Standard 8596:2015 Surveying for bats in trees and woodland, October 2015.

Practice Guidelines[13], in which the general bat roost potential groups are defined within Table 4.2 of the guidelines, reproduced in Table 1.

Table 1: Suitability of Trees for Bats

Suitability	Description
None/negligible	Either no potential roost feature (PRF) or highly unlikely to be any.
FAR	Further Assessment Required to establish if PRFs are present.
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF.

Habitat Assessment

2.19 Habitats present within the study area were considered for their potential suitability to support foraging and commuting bats.

Birds

2.20 Habitats present within the study area were considered for their potential suitability to support nesting birds, in addition to their value as a resource for overwintering bird populations.

Winter Bird Survey

2.21 A route was mapped out prior to the survey being undertaken, paying particular attention to any linear features, such as hedgerows and watercourses, and other features such as ponds and scrub. Bird surveys were not undertaken in unfavourable conditions, such as heavy rain or persistent strong wind (conditions which can negatively affect the results). To provide inter-survey temporal variation between surveys to account for variation in species' detectability throughout the day, the starting location and direction of walking were stratified across the surveys. Table 2 provides details of the survey date and weather conditions.

2.22 The survey methodology employed was based on that recommended in standard literature e.g. Winter Farmland Bird Survey as used for the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO)[14,15]. Standard BTO species codes and symbols for bird activities were used to identify birds and denote activity, sex and age where appropriate.

Table 2: Wintering Bird Survey Dates & Weather Conditions

Survey	Date	Cloud Cover (%)	Rain	Wind (Beaufort)	Visibility
1	05.11.25	100%	Dry	2 – Light Breeze	Good

Great Crested Newt

2.23 Any waterbodies within a 500m radius were identified using OS maps and aerial satellite imagery, and habitats present within the Site were considered for their potential suitability to support great crested newt and other amphibians, including the presence of potential shelter and hibernation features and connectivity to other suitable habitats. This assessment was

[13] Collins, J. (ed.) 2023. *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition).* The Bat Conservation Trust.

[14] Bibby, C.J., N.D. Burgess & D.A. Hill (1992): Bird Census Techniques. London: Academic Press

[15] Gilbert, G., Gibbons, D.W., and Evans, J. (1998): Bird Monitoring Methods: a manual of techniques for key UK species. RSPB, Sandy

based on the methodology detailed in the Herpetofauna Workers Manual[16] and the Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook[17].

Reptiles

2.24 Habitats present within the Site were also considered for their potential suitability to support reptile populations, including the presence of features which provide opportunities for reptiles to bask, forage and/or hibernate, and areas of varied vegetation structure in sheltered locations with sunny aspects and connectivity to other suitable reptile habitats, based on the methodology detailed in the Herpetofauna Workers Manual and the Froglife Advice Sheet[18].

3.0 RESULTS

Desk Study

Designated Sites

3.1 Locations of statutory and non-statutory sites referred to in the following section are illustrated on Figure 1a and detailed in Table 3.

Statutory Designated Sites

3.2 One statutory designated site of International Importance was identified within 15km of the Site. This was a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located 13.7km to the northwest of the Site. Two national level statutory designated sites were identified within 2km of the Site. Botcheston Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located 1.3km to the northeast of the Site, whereas Lindridge Wood Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) is located 240m to the north of the Site. The Site is within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for this Botcheston Bog but none of the proposal types are applicable to this application.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

3.3 16 non-statutory designated sites are located with 1km of the Site. The closest was a hedgerow (historic, potential Local Wildlife Site (LWS)) located less than 5m east of the northern boundary. The next closest Site was Hedgerow South of Hunts Lane allotments located c.160m south Weston the other side of a road and farmland.

Table 3: Statutory designations within 15km and Non-Statutory Designations within 1km of the Site

Plan Ref.	Site	Designation	Distance and Relative Direction (km)	Description
1	Hedgerow	pLWS (Historic)	0.002 E	No recent data available.
2	Hedgerow South of Hunts Lane allotments	pLWS	0.16 SW	An 'Important' hedgerow under Hedgerow Regulations that is species-rich with 9 different recorded species.

[16] Gent, A.H. & Gibson, S.D., eds., 1998. *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual*. Peterborough, Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

[17] Langton, T.E.S., Beckett, C.L., and Foster, J.P. 2001. *Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook*. Froglife, Halesworth.

[18] Froglife, 1999. Reptile survey: an introduction to planning, conducting and interpreting surveys for snake and lizard conservation. *Froglife Advice Sheet 10*. Froglife, Halesworth.

Plan Ref.	Site	Designation	Distance and Relative Direction (km)	Description
3	North Peckleton Hedgerows	pLWS	0.46 SW	Four hedgerows all of which containing between 9-12 different species.
4	Hedgerow	pLWS (Historic)	0.36 W	No recent data available.
5	Desford Hedgerow	pLWS (Historic)	0.37 N	No recent data available.
6	Semi-improved Grassland	pLWS (Historic)	0.84 W	No recent data available.
7	Pond	pLWS (Historic)	0.82 W	No recent data available.
8	Grassland and woodland along stream	pLWS (Historic)	0.58 NW	No recent data available.
9	Hedge	pLWS (Historic)	0.75 N	No recent data available.
10	Hedgerows between Kirkby Road and Desford Lane	pLWS	0.83 S	Eight hedgerows all of which containing between 9-16 different species.
11	Desford, The Range pond and marshland	cLWS	0.92 S	A pond and adjacent marshy grassland that is dominated by rush.
12	Desford, Neovia logistics bridleway	cLWS	0.97 SE	A well established and species rich grassland, scrub and tall herb narrow verge and ditch that runs along the west side of a frequented bridleway.
13	Desford, Peckleton Lane (East)	pLWS	0.86 SE	Hedgerow to the east of Peckleton Lane.
14	Desford, Station Road Ash	cLWS	0.96 E	A mature ash tree that has a circumference of 3.26m.
15	Rothley Brook	pLWS (Historic)	0.87 NE	No recent data available.
16	Desford, Lindridge Lane Footpath Hedgerow	pLWS	0.94 N	A hedgerow considered "Important" under the Hedgerow Regulations.
17	Lindridge Wood	ASNW	0.24 N	No description provided by LRERC.
18	Botcheston Bog	SSSI	1.3 NE	No description provided by LRERC.
19	River Mease	SAC	13.7 NW	Comprises of a lowland clay river supporting nationally significant populations of spined loach *Cobitis taenia* and bullhead *Cottus gobio*, two internationally notable species of

Plan Ref.	Site	Designation	Distance and Relative Direction (km)	Description
				native freshwater fish with a restricted distribution in England. Additional interest is provided by populations of white-clawed crayfish *Austopotamobius pallipes* and otter *Lutra lutra*, which both animals have restricted distribution in East Midlands.

Protected/Notable Species

3.4 The desk study returned number of notable species records. Those of relevance to the study are summarised below and the recorded locations of species included are shown in Figure 1b.

Amphibians & Reptiles

3.5 Two great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* record were returned from within 1km of the Site boundary, the closest located 552m southwest of the Site and dated 2020.

3.6 One common toad *Bufo bufo* record was identified within the search area, located 634m southwest of the Site, and dated 2019. Three common frog *Rana temporaria* were returned, the closest located 144m southwest of the Site and dated 2022. Three smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* records were returned, the closest located 144m southwest of the Site and dated 2022.

3.7 A single grass snake *Natrix helvetica* record was returned from within 1km of the Site, located 634m southwest of the Site and dated 2019.

Bats

3.8 71 bat records were returned from within 2km of the Site. These included records of brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*, Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri*, Nathusius's pipistrelle *P. nathusii*, Natterer's bat *M. nattereri*, noctule *N. noctule*, soprano pipistrelle *P. pygmaeus* as well as records of *Myotis sp.*, *Nyctalus sp.*, *Pipistrellus sp.*, and unidentified bat.

3.9 The closest records were brown long-eared bat, common pipistrelle, *Myotis sp.*, Nathusius's pipistrelle, noctule, *Nycatlus sp.*, *Pipistrellus sp.*, and soprano pipistrelle from approximately 176 southwest of the Site, dated 2019. This was also the highest concentration of bat records.

Birds

3.10 51 bird records were returned from within 1km of the Site. Of these, 30 records were of species listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 and/or the Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (BoCC) red or amber lists, or species listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Table 4). These species were mainly located to the south and east in Desford village and the adjacent fields.

Table 4: Notable bird species records from within 1km

Common Name	Scientific Name	BoCC / WCA Listing
Barn Owl	*Tyto alba*	Schedule 1
Brambling	*Fringilla montifringilla*	Schedule 1
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*	Amber

Common Name	Scientific Name	BoCC / WCA Listing
Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus*	Red
Dunnock	*Prunella modularis*	Amber
Fieldfare	*Turdus pilaris*	Red / Schedule 1
Grey Patridge	*Perdix perdix*	Red
Greylag Goose	*Anser anser*	Amber
Herring Gull	*Larus argentatus*	Red
Hobby	*Falco subbuteo*	Schedule 1
House Sparrow	*Passer domesticus*	Red
Lesser Redpoll	*Acanthis cabaret*	Red
Linnet	*Linaria cannabina*	Red
Osprey	*Pandion haliaetus*	Amber / Schedule 1
Peregrine	*Falco peregrinus*	Schedule 1
Red Kite	*Milvus milvus*	Schedule 1
Redwing	*Turdus iliacus*	Amber / Schedule 1
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*	Red
Song Thrush	*Turdus philomelos*	Amber
Spotted Flycatcher	*Muscicapa striata*	Red
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*	Red
Swift	*Apus apus*	Red
Tree Sparrow	*Passer montanus*	Red
Yellowhammer	*Emberiza citrinella*	Red

3.11 Other bird species returned from within 1km included Canada goose *Branta canadensis*, Mandarin duck *Aix galericulata*, and swallow *Hirundo rustica*. Of which the closest was located approximately 417m west of the Site and dated 2018.

Terrestrial Mammals CONFIDENTIAL

[redacted]

[redacted]

Other Notable Species

3.14 Two invertebrate records were returned from within 1km of the Site. This included one record of a grizzled skipper *Pyrgus malvae*, located 531m southeast of the Site, dated 2007 and one record of a harlequin ladybird *Harmonia axyridis*, located 2m from the southern boundary of the Site, dated 2023.

3.15 27 plant records were returned within 1km of the Site. These included records of bee orchid *Ophrys apifera*, bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, buck's-horn plantain *Plantago coronopus*, caper spurge *Euphorbia lathyris*, cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, columbine *Aquilegia vulgaris*, corncockel *Agrostemma githago*, field scabious *Knautia arvensis*, harebell *Campanula*

rotundifolia, hoary plantain *Plantago media*, Japanese rose *Rosa rugosa*, scarlet pimpernel *Anagallis arvensis*, small-leaved lime *Tilia cordata*, white mustard *Sinapis alba*, wild strawberry *Fragaria vesca*, wood-sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta x hispanica*, and *Rhododendron ponticum*. Of these records the closest was a corncockle and small-leaved lime, located at 2m south of the Site, dated 2024 and 2023 respectively.

Field Survey – Habitats

3.16 The habitats described below correspond to those mapped on Figure 2 with photographs of habitats available in Appendix A.

Arable

3.17 The Site was dominated by part of a single intensively managed arable field compartment. The field was ploughed at the time of the survey.

Other Neutral Grassland

3.18 An area of other neutral grassland was located to the northeast of the Site. The area was dominated by perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne* with rarely occurring oak *Quercus robur* sapling arounds the edge, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, scentless mayweed *Tripleurospermum inodorum*, dove's-foot cranesbill *Geranium molle*, black grass *Alopecurus myosuroides*, willowherb sp. *Epilobium sp.* and red clover *Trifolium pratense*. Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* was also recorded occasionally.

Woodland

3.19 An area of broadleaved woodland was located to the east of the Site. The canopy was dominated by ash *Fraxinus excelsior*. The understory comprised abundant hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus agg*. and ivy *Hedera helix*, and rarely occurring holly *Ilex aquifolium*, willow *Salix sp.* and rose *Rosa sp*. The ground fauna was dominated by nettle *Urtica dioica* with abundant cleavers *Galium aparine* and occasionally occurring cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris* and garlic mustard *Alliaria petiolata*.

Hedgerows

3.20 Two native hedgerows were present onsite. H1 is located along the southern boundary and H3 along the eastern boundary of the Site. The Site was also bound by one native hedgerow with trees. H3 is located on the western boundary.

3.21 Hedgerow H1 was approximately 170m in length is made up of woody species including holly *Ilex aquifolium*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and hawthorn *Creaegus monogyna*, it also contains two *Tilis cordata* standards . H2 was approximately 69m in length and is dominated by holly, including the standards. H3 was approximately 119m in length and dominated by holly. The hedgerows exhibited evidence of a regularly management regime by trimming. Further details are provided in Table 5.

Table 5: Onsite Hedgerow Descriptions

Ref	Canopy Species	Height/ Width (m)	Length (m)	Sp. Per Av. 30m	Hedgerow Category	Associated Features	Important under HR?
H1	Common hawthorn, elder, holly, blackthorn, small leaved lime, ash	>1.5/>1.5m	170	4	Native species	Adjacent to PRoW, <10% gaps, three or more woodland species	No
H2	Holly	>1.5/>1.5m	69	1	Native species with trees	One or more standards per 50m, <10% gaps	No
H3	Holly, privet, hawthorn	>1.5/<1.5m	119	1	Native hedgerow	<10% gaps, three or more woodland species	No

Individual Trees

3.22 Two medium sized small-leaved lime trees *tilia cordata* were recorded on Site associated with H1. Additionally, a medium sized holly tree was recorded within H3.

Stream

3.23 A tributary of Rothley Brook was located to the North of the Site and flowed from west to east. The channel bed comprised of gravel/pebble and sand. There was major encroachment on either side of the stream in the form of arable land.

Fauna

Badger CONFIDENTIAL

[redacted]

[redacted]

Bats

Roosting

3.26 There are no buildings located within the Site boundary. An ash tree within the woodland was identified as a PRF tree with two potential bat roosting features. A woodpecker hole was identified on the main trunk approximately 5m high and there was a knot hole on a branch approximately 4m high (photograph 1). No other trees within the Site were identified as having roosting potential.

Photograph 1: PRF tree with two potential roosting features circled.

Foraging/Commuting

3.27 The managed arable field habitat within the Site boundary provided limited foraging and commuting opportunities for bat. The woodland and hedgerows had greater value for foraging and commuting and provided habitat connectivity to the surrounding area.

Birds

Breeding Birds

3.28 The managed arable field habitat within the Site boundary provided limited and poor-quality foraging and commuting opportunities for birds, however the hedgerows had greater value for foraging and commuting and provided habitat connectivity to the surrounding area.

3.29 Suitable nesting habitat for a wide range of farmland and urban edge bird species is present within the Site and along the Site boundaries in the form of hedgerows. Given that the majority of the Site is formed by intensive agricultural field habitat, it is considered that the Site is suitable for ground nesting farmland bird species such as yellow wagtail *Motacilla flava* or skylark *Alauda arvensis*, though the suitability of this agricultural habitat would be variable subject to changes in the crops sown in each field and their respective management and harvesting regime.

3.30 A breeding bird survey would be required in Spring 2026 to inform the extent to which the Site is used as a breeding resource by the abovementioned farmland bird species, as well as its use by other farmland specialist species including linnet *Linaria cannabina* and yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella*, both of which are likely to be locally present given that records for both species were returned during the desk study.

Wintering Birds

3.31 During the wintering bird survey undertaken in November 2025, a total of 13 species were recorded. Of these species, rook *Corvus frugilegus* and jackdaw *Corvus monedula* were

recorded only as overflying the Site, and are thus not considered further for the purpose of this study.

3.32 Of the remaining 11 recorded bird species, nine are considered notable due to their inclusion in at least one of the following:

- Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1971;
- Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006;
- Inclusion within Leicestershire's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP);
- Inclusion within the Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (BoCC5) Red or Amber lists.

3.33 Notable wintering bird species recorded during the survey visits are shown in Table 6, and their approximate spatial locations shown in Figure 4. A full list of the notable and non-notable wintering birds recorded during the surveys are shown in Appendix B.

3.34 Notable bird species recorded were generally common and widespread generalist species which primarily were associated with hedgerow, tree, and scrub habitats. These bird species included greenfinch *Chloris chloris* and wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, as well as commuting winter migrant thrush species including redwing *Turdus iliacus*, and fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*.

3.35 The open agricultural fields were associated with a low number of wintering bird species, including woodpigeon *Columba palumbus* and skylark.

Table 6: Notable Species Recorded during the Wintering Bird Survey

Species: Common Name	Species: Scientific Name	Survey 1 3.11.25	Conservation Status & Protection
Woodpigeon	*Columba palumbus*	9	Amber List
Rook	*Corvus frugilegus*	2 flyovers	Amber List
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*	1	Red List NERC S.41
Wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes*	1	Amber List
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*	1	Red List NERC S.41
Redwing	*Turdus iliacus*	18	Amber List WCA Sch.1
Fieldfare	*Turdus pilaris*	1	Red List WCA Sch.1
Greenfinch	*Chloris chloris*	1	Red List

Great Crested Newt (GCN)

3.36 No ponds were present within the Site boundary (Figure 5). A stream runs along the northern boundary, and the boundary hedgerow provides some limited shelter and resting opportunities for GCN if present in the wider environment.

3.37 The desk study identified five off-site ponds located within 500m of the Site (Figure 5). Ponds P1 and P5 are balancing ponds and located south of the B582, within the residential area. P2 is located 117m east of the Site and P4 329m east; both are separated from the Site by a woodland area and grassland fields. P3 is located 368m northeast of the Site and is separated by an arable field.

3.38 P1 was dry during the habitat survey. Further assessment of the ponds, such as HIS, was not possible as access was not available.

Reptiles

3.39 The Site was dominated by a ploughed arable field, with an area of other neutral grassland to the northeast. The grassland parcels did not have a tussock structure, and the Site did not support a suitable matrix of habitats required to support a viable reptile population.

Other Mammals

3.40 The Site has potential to support hedgehog among the woodland and hedgerow habitats. Numbers are likely to be very low however due to the predominance of intensively managed arable habitat, and if present, are unlikely to represent a viable population.

3.41 A tributary of Rothley Brook runs along the northern Site boundary. No evidence of otter or water vole was identified during the onsite surveys. As such, the Site is considered unlikely to riparian mammal species.

4.0 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Designated Sites

4.1 The River Mease SAC is located approximately 13.9km northwest of the Site and is separated by a network of residential areas, roads, arable fields and woodland parcels. Whilst the relatively small scale of the Site and close proximity to a residential area suggests that there will be minimal impact on the river, the potential affects to water quality are considered. To minimise the risk, construction operations and Site management protocols to prevent pollution and soil run-off resulting in siltation and/or changes in water quality are recommended. Although the Environment Agency (EA)'s Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPGs) have been withdrawn, they still remain the best source of guidance in relation to avoidance of pollution. Reference will be paid to PPG01-06, PPG21 and PPG22 (available on the National archives).

- The Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) guidance will also be followed, in particular:
- CIRIA C471 – Environmental Good Practice on Site (4th Edition) 2015;
- CIRIA C532D – Control of water pollution from construction sites. Guidance for consultants and contractors (2001); and
- CIRIA SP156 – Control of Water Pollution from Construction Sites (2012).

4.2 These measures should be detailed within a Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEMP) prepared for the development.

4.3 The waste water generated by the proposals will be piped to the relevant sewage works for treatment. To avoid potential increases in phosphate level that proposals will provide mitigation through the provision of the relevant contribution to the council phosphate mitigation scheme. This contribution is expected to be collected through the S106 agreement of the development. Surface water will be treated through appropriate surface water treatment mechanism with the Sites infrastructure and balancing facilities to ensure any discharge is clean.

4.4 Subject to these measures outlined being fulfilled, the development is unlikely to affect the integrity of the River Mease SAC.

4.5 Two statutory designated sites were located within 2km of the Site, including Lindridge Wood (ASNW) and Botcheston Bog (SSSI). Due to the relatively small scale of the Site, close proximity to residential areas and distance from the designated sites, it is unlikely that the proposals will result in a significant additional use of the surrounding designated sites or potential effects to the conservation value through increased recreational pressure.

4.6 A further 16 non-statutory potential, candidate and historic LWSs were identified within 1km of the Site. The closest was a hedgerow, located less than 5m east of the Site boundary. The habitats along this boundary are to be retained and provide a green buffer between the LWS and the SuDS pond. As such, it is unlikely that the LWS will be significantly impacted by the development. Nevertheless, given the proximity and the potential for disturbance, air pollution, runoff, and encroachment due to increased traffic it is considered that best practice mitigation is included for this feature within the CEMP.

4.7 In terms of the other sites they are at least 160m from Site and no impacts are anticipated. As such they are not considered to be a constraint.

Habitats

4.8 The degree to which habitats receive consideration within the planning system relies on a number of mechanisms, including:

- Inclusion within a specific policy, for example veteran trees, ancient woodland and linear habitats within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)[19];
- A non-statutory site designation (e.g. LWS);
- Habitats considered as Habitats of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity as listed within Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006;
- Habitats identified as being a Priority Habitat within the Leicestershire County Council's Action for Nature Strategy.

4.9 The only habitats identified during the survey which falls within one of the above listed categories are the hedgerows and hedgerows with trees. These hedgerows have not been identified as an 'important' hedgerow under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

4.10 The arable land on Site offers no/negligible ecological value.

[19] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2

4.11 The other neutral grassland, woodland, native hedgerows and hedgerows with trees on Site offer local level ecological value. The Illustrative Master Plan shows that all of the woodland and the majority of the other neutral grassland is to be retained. Hedgerows H2 and H3 to the west and east, respectively, will be retained, and southern hedgerow H1 will be partially retained. The loss of these habitats will be compensated for by additional grassland and hedgerow planting.

4.12 To avoid indirect impacts on the retained hedgerow and trees during the construction period it is recommended that suitable protection is provided in line with BS 5837 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations.

4.13 The proposed green infrastructure has potential to create a more diverse range of habitat types than those currently existing, including meadow grassland, mixed scrub, native trees and hedgerows. It is recommended that meadow grassland is created using a native species-rich grassland mix such as Emorsgate EM1 or EM3 to promote a rich flora and provide suitable habitat for a wide range of invertebrates and other local fauna.

4.14 Additional habitat creation is proposed in the off-site landscaping measures in the adjacent field parcel. This will provide additional ecological benefits in the form of meadow grassland, hedgerows and tree planting.

4.15 It is further recommended that specifications for new planting and other habitat creation, including measures to ensure successful establishment of new habitats, and to maintain/ enhance the ecological value of retained habitats in the long-term should be detailed within a Landscape Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) secured by planning condition. This should include the off-site landscaping measures.

Fauna

4.16 Principal pieces of legislation protecting wild species are Part 1 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Some species, for example badgers, also have their own protective legislation (Protection of Badger Act 1992). The impact that this legislation has on the planning system is outlined in ODPM 06/2005 Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System.

4.17 The presence of protected species is a material consideration in any planning decision, it is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent to which they are impacted by proposals is established prior to planning permission being granted. Furthermore, where protected species are present and proposals may result in harm to the species or its habitat, steps should be taken to ensure the long-term protection of the species, such as through attaching appropriate planning conditions.

4.18 In addition to protected species, there are those that are otherwise of conservation merit, such as Species of Principal Importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity under the NERC Act 2006. These are recognised in the NPPF, which advises that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying a set of principles including:

- If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.

4.19 Potential implications for development at the Site are outlined below:

Badger

4.20 Badgers are a widespread species that are protected from harm and cruelty by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

4.21 A disused badger sett and active run were identified within the offsite woodland and badger footprints were recorded along the public footpath running across the northern parcel of the Site. One badger sett record was returned from LRERC from within the Site boundary. Due to the data record only providing a 6-figure grid reference, this is likely the identified disused sett within the woodland. No further evidence of use of the Site by badger was identified during Site surveys.

4.22 The woodland provides suitable habitat for foraging and sett construction and is to be retained in the proposals. The arable field and other neutral grassland within the Site offer limited suitable habitats for badger foraging and sett construction, with hedgerows providing limited potential foraging resources.

4.23 A pre-commencement badger survey is recommended within 30m of the development, including offsite land, to confirm that the badger sett within the woodland is still disused and there is no additional badger activity. It is recommended that construction best practice measures are detailed within the CEMP and include:

- Directing any security lighting away from the retained treelines and woodland;
- Covering any trenches at the end of each working day, or including a means of escape for badgers (and other mammals); and
- Capping of temporarily exposed pipe systems out of work hours.

4.24 Should the sett become active, further advice would be provided.

4.25 The retention hedgerows will maintain habitat linkages to off-site habitats and therefore commuting opportunities for the species. Furthermore, the inclusion of species-rich grassland, scrub, tree and hedgerow planting within the green infrastructure will provide benefits for badger in terms of a more diverse foraging resource.

Bats

4.26 All UK species of bats and their roosts are listed on the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (*as amended*), making it illegal to deliberately disturb any such animal or damage/destroy a breeding site or roosting place of any such animal. Bats are also afforded full legal protection under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (*as amended*). Under this legislation it is illegal to recklessly or intentionally kill, injure or take a species of bat or recklessly or intentionally damage or obstruct access to or destroy any place of shelter or protection or disturb any animal

whilst they are occupying such a place of shelter or protection. Some bat species, including soprano pipistrelle, noctule and brown long-eared bat are also Species of Principal Importance under the NERC Act.

Roost Sites

4.27 There were no buildings onsite. One tree within the woodland to the east of the Site was identified as having potential roosting features. The tree is to be retained/buffered under the current proposals and therefore no additional surveys are required. If the removal of the tree is required, up to three ariel assessments are required to fully assess the roosting potential of the tree before works can take place. The remaining trees were identified as negligible for bat roosting potential.

Foraging/Commuting

4.28 The desk study detailed an assemblage of bat species have been recorded within 2km of the Site boundary. Of these, common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat, *Myotis* sp. and noctule readily forage within and/or commute over urban areas, therefore are relatively insensitive to urban development when this includes the provision of gardens open greenspace.

4.29 One nathusius's pipistrelle record and one Leisler's bat record were returned from within 2km of the Site boundary, located 242m and 1.8km from the Site respectively. The distance from the Site and the relatively low levels suggest that it is unlikely that these species are utilising the Site. No Annex II species records were returned.

4.30 The anticipated habitat losses will predominantly be of the managed arable field which is of negligible/low value commuting/foraging habitat and will have no more than a minor impact upon foraging and commuting bats. The woodland and hedgerows have a greater value for foraging and commuting and provided habitat connectivity to the surrounding area. All of the woodland and the majority of the hedgerows are to be retained within the current proposals. Therefore, such loss is not considered to be significant. The provision of the new species rich grassland, hedgerows and trees will increase the overall habitat diversity and is likely to result in positive effects for the local population of bats.

Lighting

4.31 Light spill onto habitat features has potential to impact bat behaviour, particularly of the more light-sensitive species such as brown long-eared bat.

4.32 Lighting used during construction and the design of the lighting scheme that forms part of the proposed development will both be designed and implemented such that light spill onto potential foraging/commuting habitats or roost sites within and adjacent to the Site is avoided wherever possible or is otherwise minimised in terms of brightness and extent to the lowest possible levels.

4.33 An unlit buffer will be maintained at all times along retained and newly established habitats at the Site perimeter, with any use of lighting to be in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Engineers guidance. Appropriate measures for consideration include:

- Avoidance of night working which would necessitate the requirement for lighting of exterior features such as hedges and woodland.

- The avoidance of direct lighting of existing trees, hedgerows or scrub, or areas of habitat creation/landscape planting. Any lighting should be directed away from such habitats. Alternatively the strategic use of landscaping and planting can be used to avoid light spill onto sensitive retained habitats. Lighting levels falling onto such habitats should be ≤1 lux where possible.
- Where necessary light spill will be controlled through a combination of directional lighting, low level lighting columns, hooded / shielded luminaires, and strategic planting.
- Smart lighting should be considered if lighting is considered necessary within greenspace areas, such as along footpaths, to ensure lighting is only provided when necessary.
- Any column mounted luminaires shall be fitted with flat glass where appropriate to ensure 0% upward light discharge and thereby minimise light pollution for larger bat species found foraging over the Site such as noctule.

4.34 Overall, with the implementation of the proposed soft landscaping and lighting plan, residual effects on foraging and commuting bats are anticipated to be negligible, and the provision of bat boxes across the Site will deliver a local enhancement in terms of available roost sites. As such no further nocturnal survey is recommended at this stage, however, should the design be revised to result in potential impacts (habitat loss, encroachment, disturbance, light spill) then further activity surveys are recommended.

Birds

Breeding Birds

4.35 All wild bird species are protected while nesting by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (*as amended*). This legislation protects wild birds and their eggs from intentional harm, and makes it illegal to intentionally take, damage, or destroy a wild bird nest while it is in use or being built.

4.36 Suitable woody vegetation nesting potential can be found on Site in the form of hedgerows. The Site provided some suitable habitat to support ground nesting birds, and the proposed 2026 breeding bird survey(s) will provide clarity on the extent to which the Site functions as a breeding and foraging resource for bird species including farmland specialists such as skylark, yellow wagtail, linnet, and yellowhammer.

4.37 To avoid disturbance to nesting birds, any vegetation clearance should be undertaken prior to the bird-breeding season (i.e. avoiding March to September inclusive) to minimise the risk of disturbance to nesting birds. If this is not possible, woody vegetation will be checked prior to removal by an experienced ecologist and if no nesting birds are identified, the vegetation removed within 48 hours. If active nests are identified, the nest site(s) will be left untouched and suitably buffered from works until all birds have fledged. Specific advice will be provided by the ecologist prior to undertaking the clearance.

4.38 The majority of hedgerows are to be retained as part of proposals. With the creation of additional hedgerows and planted trees within the proposed green infrastructure, the scheme will provide more breeding and foraging opportunities for birds.

4.39 As an additional enhancement, it is additionally recommended that a small number of bird boxes are installed onto new dwellings and/or suitably retained trees.

Wintering Birds

4.40 Bird species recorded in marginal habitats including hedgerows and trees were primarily common and widespread species which are typical of these habitats, particularly given the setting of the Site in a landscape dominated by agricultural land use. None of the species recorded within the abovementioned habitats were recorded in significant numbers given the quantity of suitable habitat within the Site.

4.41 Given that the abovementioned habitats were mostly associated with bird species which are common and widespread, and are known to utilise habitats in urban environments associated with higher disturbance, it is not anticipated that the current proposals will have any significant adverse impact upon the bird species recorded in these habitats, particularly because the majority of hedgerow, woodland, and tree habitats are to be retained under the current proposals.

4.42 Open agricultural habitat was associated with a limited number of bird species, of which only woodpigeon and skylark are considered notable bird species. Woodpigeon is frequently recorded in urban environs and would be anticipated to utilise post-development habitats including created/retained hedgerows and trees, given the species' propensity to utilise habitats in areas which are subject to higher anthropogenic disturbance.

4.43 Given that only one skylark was recorded within the Site during the wintering bird survey, it is not considered likely that the Site presents a significant winter foraging resource for the species, particularly given the abundance of agricultural habitat within the surrounding landscape. Post-development habitats are largely not anticipated to be suitable for the species, which is less tolerant of anthropogenic disturbance and avoids foraging in proximity to tall features which in the context of the development would include built structures and infrastructure, as well as any created trees and hedgerows.

4.44 It is not considered that the loss of suitable foraging habitat within the Site for skylark will have any significant impact on the locally present population of wintering skylark, considering that only one individual was recorded within the Site during the wintering bird survey.

4.45 It is overall not anticipated that there will be any significant adverse impacts to locally present wintering birds as a result of the current proposals, due to the majority of the recorded species either being common and widespread species which will continue to utilise the post-development habitats, or due to being recorded in low numbers which indicates that the Site does not form a significant winter foraging resource.

4.46 Gapping up and/or creation of hedgerows should be carried out with use of fruit-bearing hedgerow species and trees such as hawthorn and blackthorn; this will help ensure that marginal habitats remain a beneficial foraging resource for wintering birds and will additionally increase the likelihood that wintering resident breeding birds are able to survive winter.

4.47 Marginal vegetation should be allowed to grow on the periphery of the proposed attenuation feature within the Site and cut on a rotational basis to prevent encroachment of this vegetation into the open water. Doing so will provide suitable foraging and roosting habitat for wintering wetland bird species currently not associated with the Site due to a lack of suitable habitat.

4.48 To avoid disturbance to nesting birds, any vegetation clearance should be undertaken prior to the bird-breeding season (i.e. avoiding March to September inclusive) to minimise the risk of disturbance to nesting birds. If this is not possible, woody vegetation will be checked prior to

removal by an experienced ecologist and if no nesting birds are identified, the vegetation removed within 48 hours. If active nests are identified, the nest site(s) will be left untouched and suitably buffered from works until all birds have fledged. Specific advice will be provided by the ecologist prior to undertaking the clearance.

4.49 As an additional enhancement, it is additionally recommended that a small number of bird boxes are installed onto new dwellings and/or suitably retained trees.

GCN

4.50 Great crested newts and their habitats in water and on land are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended), and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). These make it an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct any place used by GCN for breeding or shelter, disturb a GCN, or kill, injure or take any GCN. In addition, GCN is listed as a species of principal importance to the conservation of biological diversity under the provisions of the NERC Act 2006.

4.51 A stream runs along the northern boundary of the Site. There was limited aquatic vegetation within the stream and as such, limited suitable habitat for egg laying. Terrestrial habitats afford only very limited shelter and commuting opportunities for GCN.

4.52 Five waterbodies are located within 500m of the Site, three of which (P3, P4 &P5) are located over 250m from the Site boundary. Ponds P1 and P5 are south of Hunts Lane, which has raised curbs and therefore acts as a barrier to dispersal. P1 was dry during the habitat survey and as such is considered unlikely to support a viable population of GCN. P2, P3 & P4 are separated from the Site by grassland fields and a woodland area, offering more suitable habitat than that on Site.

4.53 Additionally, published literature[20] describes typical GCN terrestrial zones of c.63m, within which 95% of summer refuges were located. Furthermore, Jehle and Arntzen[21] determined that following the breeding season 64% of newts were recorded within 20m of the pond edge. This is supported by research conducted by English Nature[22] (now Natural England) to assess the value of different habitats for GCN, which concluded that:

'By far the most captures were recorded within 50m of ponds and few animals were captured at distances greater than 100m.' and that *'Captures on fences (and by other methods) at distances between 100m and 200 – 250m from breeding ponds tended to be so low as to raise serious doubts about the efficacy of this as an approach, although a small number of projects did report captures on significant linear features at distances approximately 150 – 200m from ponds.'*

4.54 As such it is considered very unlikely that if ponds P2-P5 did support breeding GCN, that individuals would disperse from these onto the application Site.

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[20] Franklin, P.S., 1993. *The migratory ecology and terrestrial habitat preferences of the great crested newt* (*Triturus cristatus*) at Little Wittenham Nature Reserve. De Montford University unpublished thesis.
Oldham, R.S. and Nicholson, M., 1986. *Status and ecology of the warty newt Triturus cristatus*. Report to the Nature Conservancy Council (Contract HF 3/05/123), Peterborough.
Jehle. R. 2000. The terrestrial summer habitat of radio-tracked great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and marbled newts (*T. marmoratus*). *Herpetological Journal* 10:137-142.

[21] Jehle, R. & Arntzen, J. W. Post-breeding migrations of newts with contrasting ecological requirements. *Journal of Zoology, London*, 251, pp 297-306

[22] Cresswell, W. and Whitworth, R. 2004. *An assessment of the efficiency of capture techniques and the value of different habitats for the great crested newt Triturus cristatus*. English Nature Research Report 576. English Nature, Peterborough.

4.55 Given the above it is considered that the presence of GCN is not a statutory constraint to development of the Site, but the application of the following working methods is considered appropriate.

Vegetation Clearance and Management

- Where possible ground level vegetation clearance required for the enabling phase should be undertaken between March and October during suitably warm conditions (ideally above ground clearance would have already taken place outside of breeding bird season as discussed above).
- Firstly, any logs or timber or other discarded debris that could form refugia will be moved by hand out of the area to be cleared.
- The vegetation will then be cut down to a height of 150mm and left for 2-3 days, to encourage any GCN or other species to disperse from the area.
- Finally, the vegetation will be strimmed to the ground, using hand tools such as strimmers.
- Any tree or hedgerow root balls that require 'grubbing out' must be removed under supervision.
- All arisings from the vegetation clearance will be taken away from the vicinity of the development footprint no later than the day after vegetation clearance.
- The Site must remain in its cleared state to deter GCN and other wildlife from entering.
- In the event that it is necessary to If any clearance is required during the hibernation period this must be done under ecological supervision and avoiding any areas with hibernation potential.
- There is scope for scrub to be created within areas of green space within the Site, and for any attenuation area to be managed to provide commuting habitat for GCN.
- Log piles could also be installed within areas of green space to provide resting, and sheltering opportunities for GCN and other species.

4.56 In the event any GCN are found during the Site clearance exercise all should be stopped immediately and a license from Natural England would be required for completion of the works.

4.57 Subject to these measures, the development will not have a significant impact on GCN and other amphibians.

Reptiles

4.58 All British reptiles and common and widespread amphibians are protected from killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (*as amended*) and are listed as Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the NERC Act, indicating that public bodies, such as the Local Planning Authority, have a duty to have regard to the conservation of these species.

4.59 The Site offered limited suitable habitat for reptiles. Given this and the enhancement proposed in the green infrastructure it is likely that development will provide positive enhancements for reptiles.

4.60 The precautionary working methods for GCN are deemed sufficient and subject to these measures, the development will not have a significant impact on reptiles, rather the proposed green infrastructure could provide benefits to the local population.

Terrestrial Mammals

4.61 No evidence of otter or water vole was identified during the onsite surveys. As such, the Site is considered unlikely to riparian mammal species.

4.62 Whilst hedgehogs are not currently a protected species, their populations have declined significantly in recent years, and they are considered a priority for conservation.

4.63 As hedgehogs hibernate within piles of dead vegetation and debris, removal of such material across the Site should be conducted outside of November to February inclusive. It is also recommended that during the construction phase materials should not be stored near areas of retained habitat or otherwise should be hand searched prior to removal.

4.64 The best practice measures to be followed throughout construction for badger (and detailed within an CEMP) will also ensure no harm to hedgehogs occurs.

4.65 In addition, it is recommended that all on plot fencing contains hedgehog holes (13 x 13cm holes in closed board fencing) to enable hedgehog to move through gardens to ensure the Site remains permeable to hedgehog.

4.66 Subject to these measures, the development will not have a significant impact on hedgehog.

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The desk and field surveys have demonstrated that the habitats and species present within and around the Site do not pose an 'in principle' constraint to the proposed development.

5.2 No designated sites are located within the Site boundary. 13 statutory and two non-statutory sites are located within 2km of the Site but are unlikely to be significantly impacted by the residential development. The River Mease SAC is located 13.9km from Site. Whilst it is unlikely to be significantly impacted by the development, the protocols detailed in paragraphs 4.1 - 4.3 are recommended.

5.3 From the completed surveys the habitats forming the main area of the Site are of negligible and local ecological importance, comprising intensely managed arable field, other neutral grassland, woodland and hedgerows. All of the arable field is to be lost in the proposals. All of the woodland and the majority of the other neutral grassland and hedgerows are to be retained, with sections of H1 lost to allow for access. The provision of species rich grassland, scrub, hedgerows and trees will increase the overall ecological diversity locally.

5.4 A disused badger sett was identified within the woodland and badger footprints were recorded along the public footpath. A pre-commencement badger survey is required of land within 30m of the development parcel, including offsite land, to determine if the badger sett remains disused and there is no further activity within the area.

5.5 A single PRF tree was identified within the woodland. The tree is to be retained under the current proposals and therefore no additional surveys are required. If the removal of the tree is required, up to three ariel assessments are required to fully assess the roosting potential of the tree.

5.6 Given the habitat present within the Site and the results of the ecological survey, the presence of bats, breeding birds, common species of reptile, GCN and terrestrial mammals do not pose statutory ecological constraints to the development, and appropriate precautionary measures have been recommended to ensure legal compliance.

5.7 In conclusion, it is considered that the development of the Site will comply with all relevant national and local planning policy.

APPENDIX A: BASELINE HABITATS PHOTOS

Photograph 2: Arable field with H3 on the right and the woodland in the distance.

Photograph 3: Woodland

Photograph 3: Other Neutral Grassland

APPENDIX B: WINTERING BIRD SURVEY RESULTS

Species: Common Name	Species: Scientific Name	Survey 1 3.11.25	Conservation Status & Protection
Woodpigeon	*Columba palumbus*	9	Amber List
Jackdaw	*Coloeus monedula*	2 flyovers	Green List
Rook	*Corvus frugilegus*	2 flyovers	Amber List
Blue Tit	*Cyanistes caeruleus*	1	Green List
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*	1	Red List NERC S.41
Wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes*	1	Amber List
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*	1	Red List NERC S.41
Redwing	*Turdus iliacus*	18	Amber List WCA Sch.1
Blackbird	*Turdus merula*	2	Green List
Fieldfare	*Turdus pilaris*	1	Red List WCA Sch.1
Robin	*Erithacus rubecula*	1	Green List
Greenfinch	*Chloris chloris*	1	Red List
Goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis*	2	Green List

N

0 250 500 m

Key

- Site Boundary
- 1km Buffer
- 2km Buffer
- 15km Buffer

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

- Potential Local Wildlife Site (pLWS)
- Candidate Local Wildlife Site (cLWS)
- pLWS (Historic)

Statutory Designated Sites (National)

- Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Statutory Designated Sites (International)

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

Ref.	Name	Designation
1	Hedgerow	pLWS (Historic)
2	Hedgerow South of Hunts Lane allotments	pLWS
3	North Peckleton Hedgerows	pLWS
4	Hedgerow	pLWS (Historic)
5	Desford, hedgerow	pLWS (Historic)
6	Semi-improved grassland	pLWS (Historic)
7	Pond	pLWS (Historic)
8	Grassland and woodland along stream	pLWS (Historic)
9	Hedge	pLWS (Historic)
10	Hedgerows between Kirkby Road and Desford Lane	pLWS
11	Desford, The Range pond and marshland	cLWS
12	Desford, Neovia logistics bridleway	cLWS
13	Desford, Peckleton Lane (east)	pLWS
14	Desford, Station Road Ash	cLWS
15	Rothley Brook	pLWS (Historic)
16	Desford, Lindridge Lane Footpath Hedgerow	pLWS
17	Lindridge Wood	ASNW
18	Botcheston Bog	SSSI
19	River Mease	SAC

drawn date: 20/11/25

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client: **Peveril Homes**

project: **Hunts Lane, Desford**

title: **SITE LOCATION AND CONSULTATION RESULTS PLAN - DESIGNATED SITES**

scale: 1:16,000 @ A3

number: **FIGURE 1A**

rev: -

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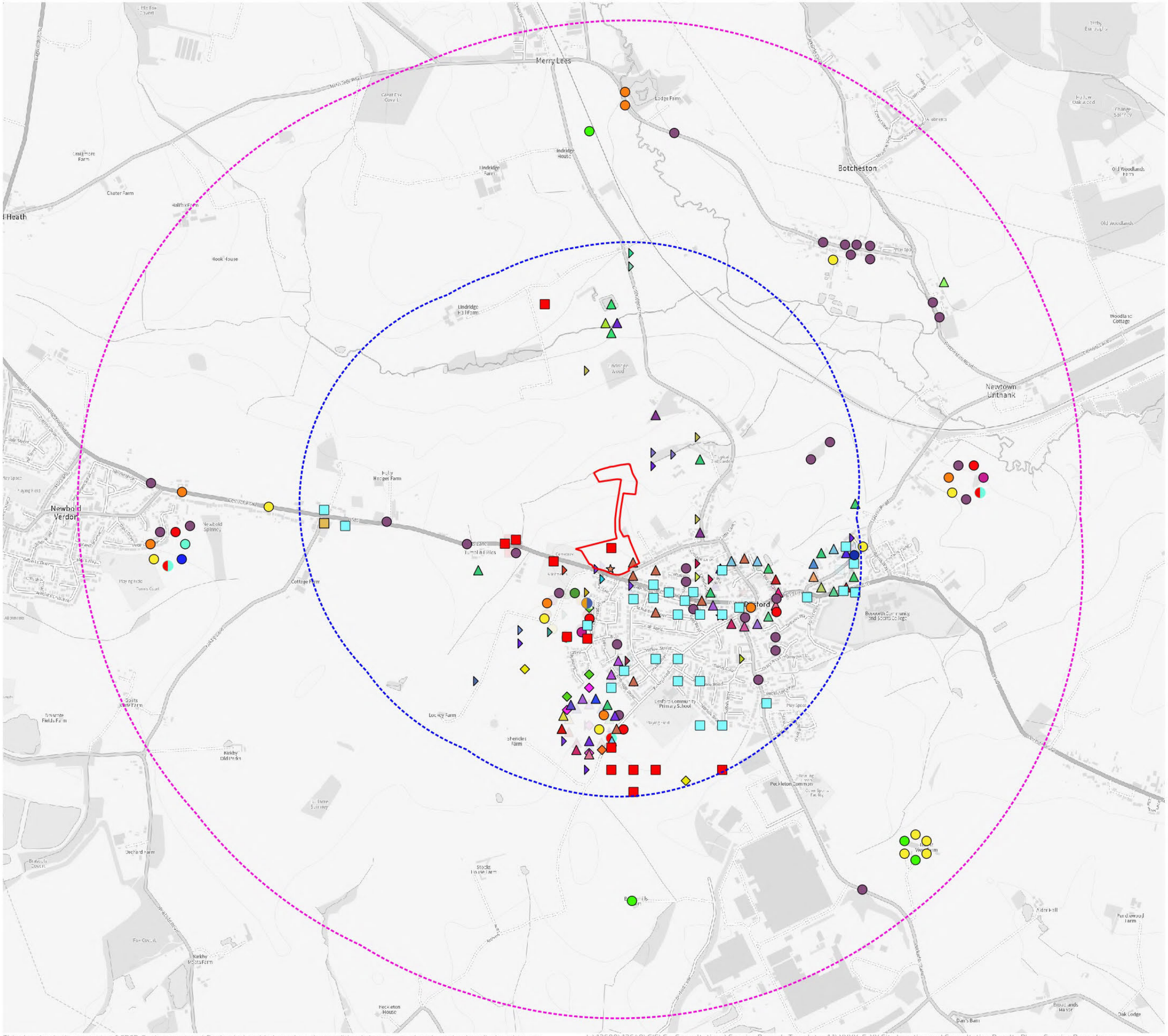

N

0 250 500 m

Key

Site Boundary | 1km Buffer | 2km Buffer

Amphibians
- Common Frog
- Common Toad
- Great Crested Newt
- Smooth Newt

Bats
- Bat
- Brown Long-eared Bat
- Common Pipistrelle
- Daubenton's Bat
- Leisler's Bat
- Myotis Bat species
- Nathusius's Pipistrelle
- Natterer's Bat
- Noctule
- Nyctalus Bat species
- Pipistrelle Bat species
- Soprano Pipistrelle

Birds
- Brambling
- Bullfinch
- Canada Goose
- Cuckoo
- Dunnock
- Fieldfare
- Grey Partridge
- Greylag Goose
- Herring Gull
- Hobby
- House Sparrow
- Lesser Redpoll
- Linnet
- Mandarin Duck
- Osprey
- Peregrine
- Red Kite
- Redwing
- Skylark
- Song Thrush
- Spotted Flycatcher
- Starling
- Swallow
- Swift
- Tree Sparrow
- Yellowhammer

Invertebrates
- Grizzled Skipper
- Harlequin Ladybird

Mammals
- Badger
- Hedgehog
- Polecat

Plants
- Bluebell
- Caper Spurge
- Columbine
- Field Scabious
- Harebell
- Hoary Plantain
- Wild Strawberry
- Wood-sorrel
- Bee Orchid
- Buck's-horn Plantain
- Cherry Laurel
- Corncockle
- Japanese Rose
- Scarlet Pimpernel
- Small-leaved Lime
- White Mustard

Reptiles
- Grass Snake

drawn date: 20/11/25

drwn/chkd: CB / EAS

client: **Peveril Homes**

project: **Hunts Lane, Desford**

title: **SITE LOCATION AND CONSULTATION RESULTS PLAN - SPECIES RECORDS**

scale: 1:17,000 @ A3

number: **FIGURE 1B**

rev: -

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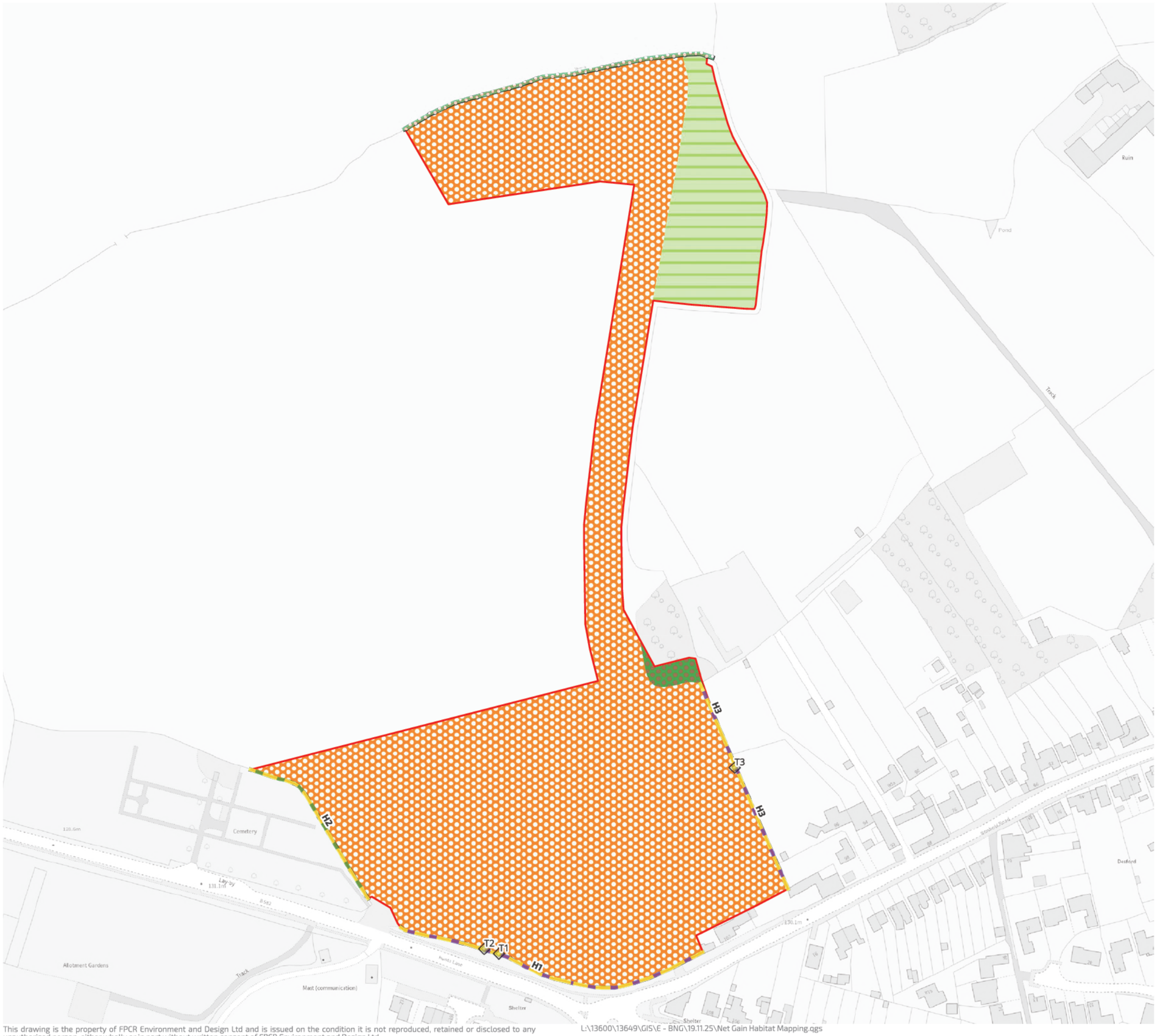

N

0 25 50 m

Key

Site Boundary

Baseline Habitats

Non-cereal crops

Other neutral grassland

Other woodland; broadleaved

Baseline Hedgerow

Native hedgerow

Native hedgerow with trees

Baseline Watercourse

Other rivers and streams

Baseline Individual Trees

Existing medium urban tree

date 20/11/25

drwn/chkd EAS

client
Peveril Homes

project
Hunts Lane, Desford

title
BASELINE HABITAT PLAN

scale 1:2,000 @ A3

number
FIGURE 2

rev -

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N

0 50 100 m

Key

- Site Boundary
- Susidiary Sett - Disused
- 30m Sett Buffer
- Footprint
- Run

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drawn date: 21/11/25

drwn/chkd: EAS

client: **Peveril Homes**

project: **Hunts Lane, Desford**

title: **BADGER SURVEY RESULTS PLAN**

scale: 1:2,000 @ A3

number: **FIGURE 3**

rev: -

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N

0 50 100 m

Key

Site Boundary

BoCC 5 Red List Species

FF Fieldfare

S Skylark

SG Starling

GR Greenfinch

BoCC 5 Amber List Species

RE Redwing

RO Rook

WP Woodpigeon

WR Wren

Additional Protections

NERC Species of Principal Importance

Schedule 1 Species

drawn date: 21/11/25

drwn/chkd: JTB / ES

client: **Peveril Homes**

project: **Hunts Lane, Desford**

title: **WINTER BIRD SURVEY RESULTS PLAN - DISTRIBUTION OF NOTABLE SPECIES**

scale: 1:2,000 @ A3

number: **FIGURE 4**

rev: -

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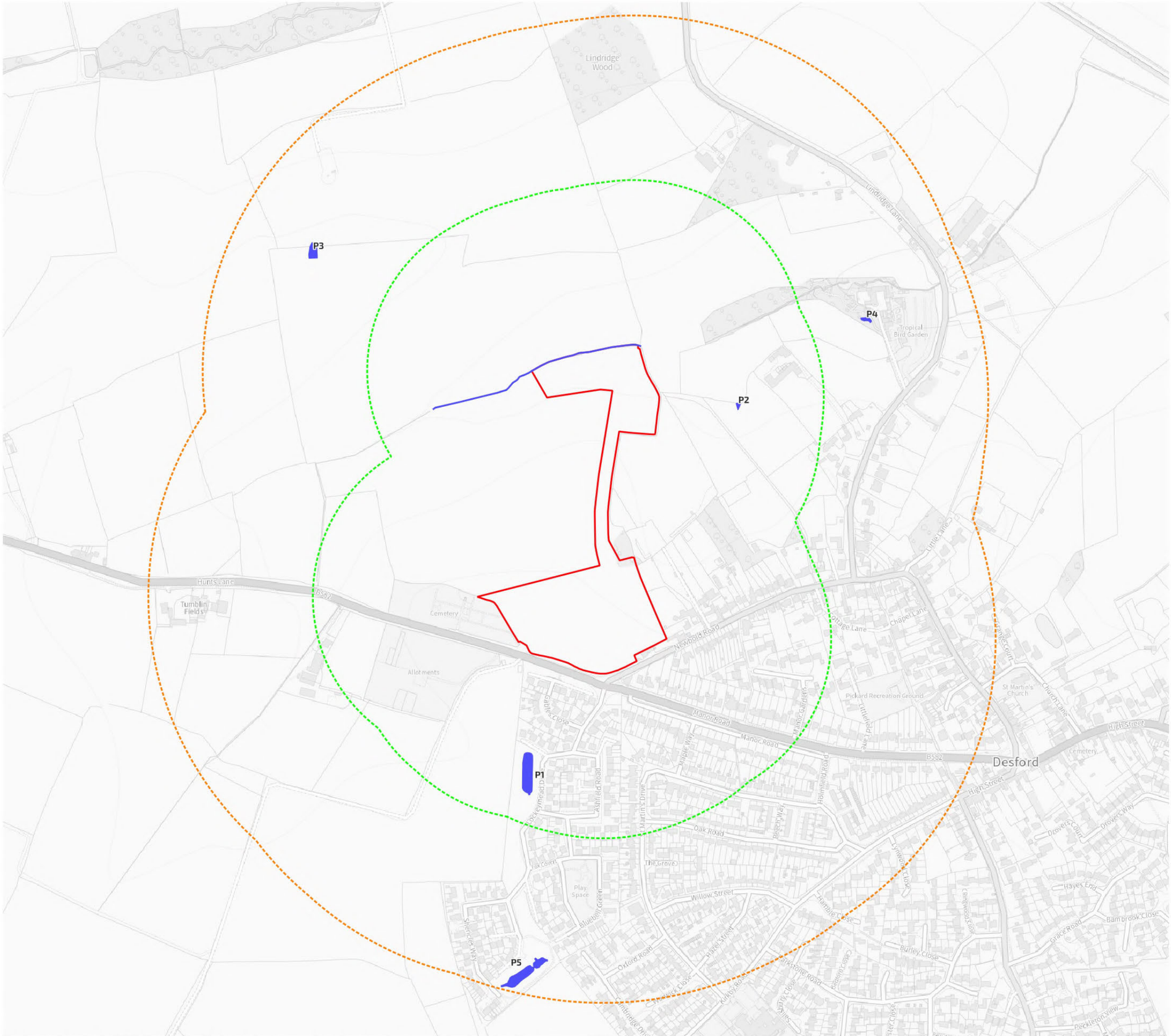

N

0 100 200 m

Key

- Site Boundary
- 250m Buffer
- 500m Buffer
- Pond
- Ditch

drawn date: 21/11/25

drwn/chkd: EAS

client: **Peveril Homes**

project: **Hunts Lane, Desford**

title: **POND LOCATION PLAN**

scale: 1:5,750 @ A3

number: **FIGURE 5**

rev: -

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