



BM
Ecology

Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

Land off Coventry Road,
Hinckley

November 2023



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) has been produced to support the Planning Application for residential development of the Site.

The Site is not located within 2 km of a Statutory or Non-Statutory designated wildlife site. There are 32 potential, candidate or notified Local Wildlife Sites within 2 km of the Site, but there is a negligible risk of the development having an adverse impact on the conservation interests of such sites.

All remaining buildings within the Site are considered as being of negligible bat roost potential, and no further surveys are required on these buildings.

A single tree was considered to be of moderate bat roost potential (TN2), with four trees considered to be of low bat roost potential (TN1 and TN4), all other trees were considered to be of negligible bat roost potential. Based on the proposed plans for the Site, the trees containing bat roost potential associated with TN1, TN2 and TN4 will be retained, unimpacted by the development. Should plans change and these trees require removal, additional surveys in the form of activity surveys or aerial inspections would be required. The treelines within the Site are of higher value for foraging bats.

The introduced shrubs, trees and scrub within the Site provided suitable habitats for nesting passerines. Recommendations regarding timings and potential pre-works checks (dependent on works timings) are provided.

No other potential ecological constraints have been identified, but standard recommendations in relation to the works have been provided.

Cotoneaster species were abundant within the introduced shrubs on Site, and it is recommended that all cotoneasters should be removed from the Site during the development / landscaping stage of the works. These works should be undertaken by a competent vegetation clearance company and disposed of appropriately.

Additional enhancement measures are recommended to provide opportunities for roosting bats and nesting birds.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment will be undertaken at the Site and issued as a separate report. The report will detail areas of habitat for retention, enhancement, and recreation and, where necessary, will detail requirements for off-Site compensation.

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1 INTRODUCTION

For ease of reference, throughout this report, the red outlined area in Figure 1 will be referred to as the 'Site'.

1.1 Instruction

This Update Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) was instructed by Fisher German, on behalf of Cadent Gas. The update PEAR has been produced to update the findings of the previous ecology surveys undertaken at the Site and to support the Planning Application for residential development of the Site.

The proposed Site layout can be seen within Appendix 3.

1.2 Site Description

The Site is located Land off Coventry Road, Hinckley and Bosworth, Leicestershire, LE10 0BX within the built-up town of Hinckley. The Site consists of a gasworks with associated infrastructure and car parks.

The Site is centred on grid reference SP 42071 93826, is flat in nature and situated approximately 109 metres (m) above ordnance datum.

The location of the Site is shown within Figure 1 below.



Figure 1. Approximate Site boundary (outlined red) – Google Earth Imagery 2021

1.3 Background on Previous Surveys

1.3.1 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal - 2020

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal survey and report was first undertaken on the Site by Quants Environmental in October/November 2020.

The key findings from the survey report were that two of the buildings within the Site were found to be of moderate bat roost potential (B3 and B4 of this report), with all other buildings being of negligible bat roost potential. A single tree to the north-east corner of the Site was also categorised as being of moderate bat roost potential but was and is proposed to be retained as part of the development (TN2 of the update report, 2023).

Standard precautionary measures for birds, as well as good working practices were also provided.

No additional ecological constraints were observed.

This report should subsequently be read in conjunction with the following report:

- Land off Coventry Road Hinckley - Ecological Appraisal - November 2020.

1.3.2 Bat Surveys - 2021

Based on the findings of the PEA report (2020), bat emergence and return surveys were conducted on B3 and B4 (of the PEA 2020 report) in May and June 2021 by BM Ecology and in line with best practice guidelines.

No bats were recorded to emerge or re-enter the building and there was no evidence of bat droppings at the base or on the wall of the building during the daytime inspection.

Given the survey results, it was concluded that the demolition works could proceed on the substations (B3 and B4) without likely effects on bats and without the requirement for further surveys, mitigation or licensing from Natural England.

This report should subsequently be read in conjunction with the following report:

- BM Ecology (2021). Cadent, Hinckley - Bat Survey Report - June 2021.

1.3.3 Building Demolition

Since the PEA (2020) and bat surveys (2021), and sometime between February 2022 and May 2023 (based on satellite imagery), many of the buildings, including B3 and B4, have been demolished via prior notification (21/01284/DGDO).

1.4 Objectives

The primary purpose of this update PEAR is to identify and verify the baseline and any likely ecological constraints associated with the project, to identify any mitigation measures likely to be required, to identify any additional surveys that may be required and to identify any opportunities offered by the project that would deliver an ecological enhancement (CIEEM, 2017).

The PEAR was informed by a desk-based study and a field survey of the Site and surrounding area. The approach to this PEAR follows best practice published by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2017 & 2019a) and the British Standards Institution (BSI, 2013).

1.5 Legislation and Planning Policy

Consideration has been given to relevant wildlife legislation as well as planning policy in the production of this PEAR and in the context of the proposed development at the Site.

Details of the key legislation and planning policy considered are detailed within Appendix 4.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Personnel

All elements of this survey were undertaken by Ben McLean BSc (Hons) BA (Hons) MCIEEM. Ben is the Principal Ecologist at BM Ecology Ltd and has over 11 years' experience of conducting Preliminary Ecological Appraisals in a professional capacity.

Ben is registered with Natural England as a great crested newt class licence holder (level 2) and bat class licence holder (level 2), as well as being a Registered Consultant under the Bat Mitigation Class Licence.

2.2 Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken for the Site; the sources consulted, type of information assessed, and dates of access/receipt are summarised below.

Quants Environmental had previously carried out a PEA on the Site in 2020 and had contacted Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC) to request details of any locally designated wildlife sites and protected and priority species within a 2 km radius of the Site. These records have been utilised to form part of the desk study. Given the inherently low ecological value of the Site, and limited suitability for protected or notable species, an update record search was not considered necessary for this report.

Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) was searched for international and national statutory designated sites within a 2 km radius of the Site – accessed in October 2023.

The following data sources were also searched, to gather additional ecological data on habitats such as standing water, watercourses and woodlands:

- Ordnance Survey mapping; and
- Aerial imagery (Google Earth Pro) – imagery dated 1999 to 2023.

2.3 Field Survey

The field survey was completed and mapped using UK Habitat Classification survey techniques (Butcher et al., 2020) on 11th October 2023.

The aim of the field survey was to gather sufficient baseline information on the habitats/features within the Site to allow an interpretation of the ecological value of the Site. In addition, the methodology was extended to include a search for incidental evidence of protected/notable fauna and an assessment of the Site's potential to support protected/notable fauna. Botanical species nomenclature follows Stace (2019), with the DAFOR scale used to determine the relative abundance of the flora present within the Site (D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional and R = rare).

The field survey was undertaken within the Site (as seen in Figure 1).

The weather conditions at the time of survey were 12°C, mostly dry with some drizzle, 8/8 cloud cover (okta scale), wind Beaufort Scale 1 with good visibility.

2.4 Survey Comments

Full access was available throughout the majority of the Site. There is a small, fenced area to the south-east where it was not possible to physically access, but the area could be seen through the fence.

Where it was not possible to undertake a diameter at breast height (DBH) measurement of any individual tree i.e. due to accessibility, the DBH was estimated as either < 30 cm, 30-60 cm or > 60 cm.

The survey was undertaken within the optimal period for UKHab habitat surveys (April to October). Sufficient information was also gathered on protected / notable species in terms of the likelihood of occurrence at the Site (as far as is reasonably possible during any Extended Habitat Survey).

In line with standard guidance (CIEEM, 2019b), the results and recommendations within this report are valid for up to 18 months from the date of the last field survey assuming there are no significant changes to the Site or its immediate surroundings. Updated survey work would be required to support any future applications outside of this period.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Desk Study

3.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

No statutory designated sites are located within 2 km of the Site.

The Site is within a SSSI impact risk zone; however, given the proposed development, it does not fall into any of the risk categories.

3.1.2 Locally Designated Sites

LRERC provided no records of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within 2 km of the Sites, with 32 potential, candidate or notified LWS.

The LWS within 2 km are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Locally Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Locally Designated Site	Distance from Site	Designation
Clarendon Park Arboretum	0.11	LWS (notified)
Clarendon Park, Mature Ash 1	0.27	LWS (notified)
Clarendon park mature ash 3	0.26	LWS (notified)
Clarendon Park, Mature Ash 3	0.32	LWS (notified)
Sketchley Lake	0.99	LWS (Candidate)
Burbage flood retention area	1.00	LWS (notified)
Sketchley grassland and hedgerow	1.10	LWS (Potential)
Brodick Road flood retention area	1.14	LWS (notified)
Courting stiles	1.16	LWS (notified)
Richmond School Ash	1.24	LWS (Candidate)
Ashby Canal	1.26	LWS (Potential: historic)
Ashby Canal, railway to limekilns	1.27	LWS (Candidate)
Sketchley Brook pool	1.40	LWS (Potential)
Harrow Brook	1.42	LWS (Potential: historic)
Avenue Oak Tree	1.55	LWS (Potential)
Playing Field Hedgerow	1.61	LWS (Potential)
Manor Farm hedgerow	1.66	LWS (Potential)
Hinckley hedgerow 1	1.67	LWS (Potential)
Sketchley Lane hedgerow	1.70	LWS (Potential)
Sketchley Meadows pond	1.72	LWS (Potential)
Factory Ash Tree	1.73	LWS (Potential)
Sketchley Lanne hedgerow and ash	1.73	LWS (Potential)
Sketchley grange hedgerow	1.74	LWS (Potential)
Little Pit Fishery	1.78	LWS (Candidate)
Burbage, semi-improved grassland	1.79	LWS (Potential: historic)
Sketchley Lane Oak Tree	1.80	LWS (Potential)
Pond	1.80	LWS (Potential: historic)

Outwoods Grassland	1.90	LWS (Potential)
Hinckley, Normandy Field mature Ash 3	1.90	LWS (Candidate)
Sketchley Meadows hedgerow	1.93	LWS (Potential)
Land At the Coppice/Woodgate,Burbage	1.94	LWS (Candidate)
Sketchley Path ash tree	1.97	LWS (Potential)
Hinckley, Normandy Field mature Ash 1	1.98	LWS (Candidate)
Hinckley, Ashby Canal and adjacent grassland	1.99	LWS (Potential)
Lash Hill path ash tree	2.00	LWS (Candidate)

3.1.3 MAGIC EPSML Search

MAGIC was searched for 'Granted European Protected Species Licences', 'Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns' and 'Great Crested Newt Pond Survey 2017 – 2019'.

- A license was granted on 4/01/2012 to allow the destruction of a breeding site and resting place for common pipistrelle, brown long-eared and natterers bats approx. 2 km northwest of the Site.
- A license was granted on 12/12/2016 to allow the destruction of a breeding site and resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats approx. 1.8 km northwest of the Site.
- A license was granted on 16/11/2017 to allow the destruction of a breeding site and resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats approx. 1.8 km northwest of the Site.
- MAGIC provided several records of GCN presence confirmed from the same site approximately 2 km north-west of the Site, with the most recent in 2016, as well as a single record for presence approx. 1.7 km west of the Site.

3.1.4 Protected / Priority Species Records

Table 2 provides an overview of protected and priority species records provided by LRERC to Quants Environmental in 2020.

Limited records for any given species may be attributed to a lack of survey effort and/or recording within the area, rather than reflecting the absence of a given species from the area.

Table 2. Overview of protected and priority species

Species	Details
Bats	LRERC provided 163 bat records within the 2 km radius, including activity records and roosts. Species recorded within the 2 km radius include common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, Nathusius's Pipistrelle, unidentified pipistrelle species, Brown long-eared, Daubenton's, noctule, unidentified Nyctalus species, serotine, whiskered bat, barbastelle bat, unidentified Myotis species and unidentified bat species.

	Most records are >1 km from the site. The closest record is of a single pipistrelle sp. located ~146 m north-west of the site.
Amphibians	LRERC provided three records of great crested newt (GCN) within 2 km of the site. Records of common frog, common toad, smooth newt and palmate newt were also provided. The closest record of GCN is located ~1.2 km north-north-west from the site (dated 2007). The majority of amphibian records are >1 km from the site with common frog being the closest record located approximately 460 m south-east of the site.
Reptiles	LRERC provided 11 records of reptile within 2 km of the site: all records are of grass snake with the closest record located 1.3 km north-west of the site dated 2014.
Birds	LRERC provided 26 records of bird species within 2 km of the site. The majority of records are located >1 km from of the site. The closest records are of eleven records of birds from St Mary's church located 438 m east of the site. Bird records within the search radius include red-list species of conservation concern³ and/or bird species of principal importance in England. Species recorded include peregrine, hobby, red kite, kingfisher, green sandpiper, redwing, fieldfare and greylag goose.
Badgers	LRERC provided nine records of badger sightings within 2 km of the site. The majority of records are located >1 km from the site, with the closest record of badger field signs located on the southern border of the site dated 2012.
Water vole	LRERC provided seventeen records of water vole within 2 km of the site. All water vole records are located >1 km from the site dated between 1995 and 2016.
Otter	LRERC provided a single record of otter within 2 km of the Site. The single otter record is located 750 m south of the site.
Other mammals	LRERC also provided a single record of polecat within 2 km of the site.

3.2 Field Survey

Also refer to Photographs in Appendix 1 and the UKHab Habitat Map in Appendix 2.

3.2.1 Habitats

The Site is located fairly centrally within Hinckley town, with residential estates, commercial buildings and minor roads dominant within the immediate and wider area. Clarendon Park is also located to the north-west of the Site.

The Site is broadly similar to that recorded by Quants Environmental in 2020, although it is now redundant with many buildings demolished. However, the vegetated habitats present within the Site have been retained during the demolition phase.

The Site is dominated by hardstanding, with occasional buildings, areas of amenity grassland and treelines along some of the Site boundaries, scattered trees, ruderal, a small area of bramble, and introduced shrubs.

u1b Developed land; sealed surface

The Site is dominated by hardstanding, with the majority of the Site previously being used for parking associated with the Cadent Gas offices. The area of hardstanding has increased within the Site since the 2020 survey due to the buildings being removed and left as hard standing – illustrated by TN3.

Ruderal species were recorded at low levels (Rare) growing through cracks or on the hardstanding.

Species recorded include Canadian fleabane *Erigeron canadensis*, bristly ox-tongue *Helminthotheca echioides*, dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, rosebay willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, annual meadow grass *Poa annua* and poplar *Populus* sp. saplings.

u1b5 Buildings

There are three buildings that are still present within the Site, as well as a mast and a prefabricated office that was not present in 2021. The buildings will be discussed separately within Section 3.2.2.

g4 Modified grassland

There are multiple areas of modified grassland throughout the Site.

For ease of reference, the modified grassland has been separated into four areas; see numbering in the UKHab Habitat Map in Appendix 2.

Modified Grassland 1 (M1) is located to the south of the Site below scattered trees and is actively managed/mown. The species recorded throughout the area and their relative abundance are as follows, perennial ryegrass (D), cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* (D), creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera* (O), creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* (A), red fescue *Festuca rubra* (O), Canadian fleabane (O),

creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans* (O), greater willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* (R), common nettle *Urtica dioica* (R), smooth sow thistle *Sonchus oleraceus* (R), common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea* (R), bramble *Rubus fruticosus* (R), and selfheal *Prunella vulgaris* (R).

M2 includes two small areas of grassland to the west of the Site, which are not currently subject to management. The species recorded throughout the areas include perennial ryegrass (D), cock's foot (O), selfheal (O), broad leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* (O), Canadian fleabane (F), creeping thistle (F) and bristly oxtongue (F).

M3 is a small area located towards the north-west of the Site and has not recently received management. The species recorded throughout the area includes perennial ryegrass (D), cock's foot (A), creeping bent (A), ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* (F), false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* (F) and spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare* (O).

M4 is an area of boundary grassland along the north and north-east of the Site and below Treelines 4 and 5. The species recorded throughout the area includes perennial ryegrass (D), cock's foot (A), creeping bent (O), false oat grass (O), white clover *Trifolium repens* (O), Canadian fleabane (F), yarrow *Achillea millefolium* (F), daisy *Bellis perennis* (O), spear thistle (F), creeping buttercup (O), creeping thistle (F), dandelion (O), ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea* (O), ribwort plantain (O), black medic *Medicago lupulina* (O) and wood avens *Geum urbanum* (O).

u1 Built-up areas and gardens (Secondary code 847 – Introduced shrubs)

There are large areas of introduced ornamental shrubs throughout the Site, which are predominately cotoneaster species *Cotoneaster* sp., as well as cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, snowberry *Symphoricarpos albus*, bamboo *Bambusoideae* sp., and other ornamental species.

u1f Sparsely vegetated urban land

An area of sparsely vegetated urban land with occasional grasses, ephemeral species and tall forbs are located within previously used permeable pebble carparks along the north and north-west of the Site. Species within this area include Canadian fleabane (F), bristly ox-tongue (F), rosebay willowherb, (O), buddleia *Buddleia* spp. (O), creeping bent (O), dandelion (O), greater willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* (O), sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* (O), false oat grass (O) and perforate St John's-wort *Hypericum perforatum* (O).

h3d Dense bramble scrub

There is a small area of bramble scrub to the west of the Site, with nettle and buddleia.

H3h Mixed scrub

There is a small area of mixed scrub to the east of the Site with hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea* and holly vagrant *Ilex* sp..

33 Line of trees

Lines of planted trees are located along areas of the Site boundaries as screening.

For ease of reference, the treelines have been categorised into five groups; see numbering in the UKHab Habitat Map in Appendix 2.

Treeline 1 (TL1) is located along the southern boundary of the Site and includes a row of nine copper beech *Fagus sylvatica purpurea*.

TL2 includes a row of trees along the western boundary of the Site and includes lime *Tilia sp.*, Norway maple *Acer platanoides*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Swedish whitebeam *Sorbus intermedia* and hybrid black poplar *Populus × canadensis*.

TL3 is a small row of trees to the north-west of the Site and includes horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, lime, Swedish whitebeam and hybrid black poplar.

TL4 is a row of predominately early mature trees to the north of the Site, including sycamore, crab apple *Malus sylvestris*, whitebeam *Sorbus aria*, Norway maple, silver birch *Betula pendula*, lime, Swedish whitebeam, hybrid black poplar, ash, cherry *Prunus avium*, beech and sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*.

TL5 is a row of predominately early mature trees to the north-east of the Site, including hybrid black poplar, sycamore, whitebeam, lime, Norway maple, hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and oak *Quercus robur*.

32 Scattered trees

A description of the scattered trees within the Site can be seen within Table 3 below (those not within an obvious treeline), with corresponding tree numbers within the UK HAB map in Appendix 2.

Table 3: Tree details

Tree no.	Common Name	Latin	Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)
T1	Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	43 cm
T2	Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	40 cm
T3	Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	25 cm
T4	Tree of heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	12 cm
T5	Crab apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	25 cm
T6	Crab apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>	30 cm
T7	Swedish whitebeam	<i>Scandosorbus intermedia</i>	27 cm
T8	Cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	25 cm
T9	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	26 cm

Tree no.	Common Name	Latin	Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)
T10	Cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	33 cm
T11	Rowen	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	<30 cm
T12	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	32 cm
T13	Rowen	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	<30 cm
T14	Lawsons cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	30-60 cm
T15	Rowen	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	<30 cm
T16	Lawsons cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	30-60 cm
T17	Lawsons cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	30-60 cm
T18	Lawsons cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	30-60 cm
T19	Lawsons cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>	30-60 cm
T20	Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	37 cm
T21	Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	35 cm
T22	Rowen	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	<30 cm
T23	Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	32 cm
T24	Scot's pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>	38 m
T25	Apple species	<i>Malus sp.</i>	15 cm
T26	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	30-60 cm
T27	Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	30-60 cm
T28	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	30-60 cm
T29	Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	36 cm
T30	Walnut	<i>Juglans regia</i>	32 cm
T31	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	26 cm
T32	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	15 cm
T33	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	22 cm
T34	Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>	39 cm
T35	Tree of heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	22 cm
T36	Tree of heaven	<i>Ailanthus altissima</i>	48 cm
T37	Deodar cedar	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	>90 cm
T38	Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	12 cm

Tree no.	Common Name	Latin	Diameter at Breast Height (DBH)
T39	Cherry	<i>Prunus sp.</i>	16 cm
T40	Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>	28 cm
T41	Norway maple	<i>Acer platanoides</i>	25 cm
T42	Snake bark maple	<i>Acer davidii</i>	23 cm
T43	Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	34 cm
T44	Whitebeam	<i>Sorbus aria</i>	41 cm

3.2.2 Bats

Buildings

There are five buildings/structures within the Site, four of which were present during the 2020 PEA survey, and a prefabricated structure has more recently been placed on the Site. All other buildings have been demolished since the 2020 PEA and 2021 bat emergence survey.

Buildings with moderate bat roost potential that were subject to emergence surveys in 2021 with no bats observed have been demolished. All other buildings were assessed as being of negligible bat roost potential by Quants Environmental in 2020.

As there are now less buildings within the Site, the buildings have been reassigned new reference numbers, as seen within the UK Hab map in Appendix 2. An overview of the remaining buildings as well as their bat roost potential can be seen within Table 4 below.

Table 4. Building reference numbers

Building reference	Details	Bat roost potential
Building 1	Building 1 is a brick single storey building with a flat roof. The building was in a good state of repair with no bat roost features observed.	Negligible
Building 2	Building 2 is a brick single storey building with a flat roof. The building was in a good state of repair with no bat roost features observed.	Negligible
Building 3	Building 3 is a brick flat roofed building with a concrete eaves board. The building is in a good state of repair with no bat roost features observed.	Negligible
Building 4	Building 4 is a mast with associated single storey brick buildings with a flat roof below. The building was in a good state of repair with no bat roost features observed.	Negligible

Building 5	Building 5 is an old, prefabricated office structure, likely taken from elsewhere within the Site during the demolition works. No potential roost features were observed within the structure.	Negligible
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Trees

During the survey undertaken in 2020, Quants Environmental identified a single tree containing bat roost potential within the Site (TN2 within this report).

During the update Site visit presented within this report, the poplar tree to the north-east corner of the Site (Target note (TN) 2 within the UK Hab Map) is still considered to be of moderate bat roost potential, with two horse chestnuts to the west of the Site (TN1) and two poplars to the east of the Site (TN4) were also considered as being of low bat roost potential.

The poplar associated with TN2 was considered as being of moderate bat roost potential due to a knot hole approximately 3 m high on the east and a knot hole approximately 2 m high on the west. No additional bat roost features were observed via the ground level assessment.

The two horse chestnuts associated with TN1 and two poplars associated with TN4 were covered in dense ivy, and although no features were observed from ground level, a precautionary low bat roost potential was assigned for these trees due to their age and lack of visibility of the stem.

No other trees within the Site were found to support features likely to be used by roosting bats and were assessed as being of negligible bat roost potential.

Habitats

The hardstanding land which is dominant throughout the Site is of negligible value for foraging or commuting bats, and the introduced shrubs and modified grassland is likely to provide limited value. The treelines within the Site are of higher value for foraging bats.

Given the urbanised nature of the Site and levels of associated artificial lighting, the Site is only likely to be of some value for light tolerant species (such as common and soprano pipistrelle).

In addition, during the emergence and return survey in 2021, only a single common pipistrelle was heard during the surveys.

3.2.3 Amphibians

LRERC provided three records of GCN within 2 km of the Site, all over 1 km from the Site.

No waterbodies are located within the Site boundary and no waterbodies were observed within 500 m of the Site via OS mapping. It is noted that there may be small garden ponds within the adjacent residential gardens that are not visible on mapping.

The highly urbanised nature of the habitats within the Site and immediately bordering were considered to offer negligible value for GCN or other amphibians during their terrestrial phase.

Given the above, amphibians (including GCN), are not considered to be a constraint to the proposed development.

3.2.4 *Reptiles*

LRERC provided 11 records of GCN within 2 km of the Site, all over 1 km from the Site.

The Site was considered to be unsuitable for reptiles due to the dominance of hardstanding land providing a lack of suitable refugia, hibernacula and egg laying substrate, as well as the negligible value of the bordering urbanised environment.

3.2.5 *Birds*

During the survey, small numbers of blue tit, great tit, wren, house sparrow, black bird, magpie and feral pigeon were recorded within the Site.

The introduced shrubs, trees and scrub within the Site provided suitable habitats for nesting passerines.

Given the nature of the Site, there is a negligible risk of the Site being used by significant assemblages of breeding or wintering birds.

3.2.6 *Badgers*

No evidence of badger was observed within the Site or within land immediately adjacent, and given the urbanised nature of the area, badgers are highly unlikely to be present within the area.

3.2.7 *Other Fauna*

UK BAP species such hedgehog may forage and shelter along the boundaries of the Site.

No watercourses are located within the Site or within 30 m of the Site and subsequently, it is considered highly unlikely that associated species such as white-clawed crayfish, otters or water voles would occur within the Site.

No other species are considered to be a constraint to the proposed development.

3.2.8 *Invasive Plants*

As discussed in section 3.2.1, there are large areas of introduced ornamental shrubs throughout the Site, which are predominately cotoneaster species *Cotoneaster* sp.

4 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Statutory Designated Sites

4.1.1 *Conclusion*

No statutory designated sites are located within 2 km of the Site.

The Site is within a SSSI impact risk zone; however, given the proposed development, it does not fall into any of the risk categories.

4.1.2 *Recommendations*

None.

4.2 Locally Designated Sites

4.2.1 *Conclusion*

There are no LWS within the Site, but there are 32 potential, candidate or notified LWS within 2 km of the Site.

The Site is not connected to the potential, candidate or notified LWS through ecological or hydrological features and as such there is a negligible risk of the development having an adverse impact on the conservation interests of such Sites.

4.2.2 *Recommendations*

None.

4.3 Habitats

4.3.1 *Conclusion*

The hardstanding land and buildings are considered to be of negligible biodiversity value, and the areas of introduced shrubs are considered to be of value for species only i.e., nesting birds. The modified grassland, sparsely vegetated urban land and small pockets of scrub are considered as being of value at no higher than Site level.

The trees and treelines are considered to be of higher ecological value and considered to be of value at the Local level.

The proposed plans for the Site (Appendix 3) are sympathetic to the higher ecological value habitats and include the retention of the treelines and the vast majority of the scattered trees.

4.3.2 *Recommendations*

Sites should seek to provide biodiversity net gains where possible and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Subsequently, the Site should seek to enhance the habitats present within the Site.

An assessment of the Sites habitats will be undertaken using Natural England's most up to date Biodiversity Metric. The results of this assessment will be provided within a Biodiversity Impact Assessment report when the final landscaping plans for the Site are confirmed.

Where net gain cannot be achieved on-Site this should be compensated for off-Site either through off-Site compensation or a financial contribution.

4.4 Bats

4.4.1 Conclusion

All remaining buildings within the Site were considered as being of negligible bat roost potential.

A single tree was considered to be of moderate bat roost potential (TN2), with four trees considered to be of low bat roost potential (TN1 and TN4), all other trees were considered to be of negligible bat roost potential.

The habitats within the Site were also considered to be of limited value for foraging and commuting bats i.e., due to the dominance of hardstanding and buildings, within the urbanised environment.

4.4.2 Recommendations

Based on the proposed plans for the Site, the trees containing bat roost potential associated with TN1, TN2 and TN4 will be retained, un-impacted by the development. Should plans change and these trees require removal, additional surveys in the form of activity surveys or aerial inspections would be required. The treelines within the Site are of higher value for foraging bats.

All other trees and all buildings were considered as being of negligible bat roost potential and no further surveys are required.

Based on the proposed plans for the Site, the treelines will be retained along the Site boundaries, which will continue to provide a foraging resource for commuting bats.

4.4.3 Enhancements

Opportunities for roosting bats should be incorporated into the final masterplan across at least 10% of new buildings. These should be integrated into the new buildings, positioned as close to the eaves as possible and to the south, east or west of the buildings.

4.5 Amphibians

4.5.1 Conclusion

As discussed in Section 3, GCN were considered highly unlikely to be present within the Site and therefore, will not be considered further in this report.

4.5.2 Recommendations

None.

4.6 Reptiles

4.6.1 Conclusion

As discussed in Section 3, reptiles were considered highly unlikely to be present within the Site and therefore, will not be considered further in this report.

4.6.2 Recommendations

None.

4.7 Birds

4.7.1 Conclusion

The introduced shrubs, trees and scrub within the Site provided suitable habitats for nesting passerines.

4.7.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that works to remove the above habitats should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting period of March to August (inclusive). If this is not possible, works within the Site during the bird nesting period (March to August inclusive) would require supervision by a suitably qualified ecologist. The supervising ecologist would advise all site personnel of the potential presence of nesting birds, their legal protection and the need to minimise disturbance of nesting birds. The supervising ecologist would also check for active bird nests prior to works during March-August.

In line with current legislation (The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981), if active nests are present (including within buildings), these must be retained in-situ undisturbed by the works until the nests are no longer active.

4.7.3 Enhancements

In line with 'BS 42021:2021 Integral nest boxes – Selection and installation for new development's, integrated boxes should be installed in 100% of all new buildings; not necessarily 1 no. per building, but a ratio of 1 no. box to 1 no. building.

To compensate for the loss of nesting habitat and to enhance the Site, it is recommended that integrated swift nest bricks are incorporated into 100% of the new buildings. These should be installed within the north, north-east or north-west, on a gable below the eaves, ideally at a height of at least 5 m. A gap of 2 m should be maintained between the nest boxes.

Studies have shown that swift bricks will be used by swifts, house sparrows, house martins, blue tits, great tits, starlings and nuthatches (Stirrup, 2019) i.e., these bricks are relatively universal for species expected within the local habitat.

An example integrated swift brick can be seen within Figure 2 below.

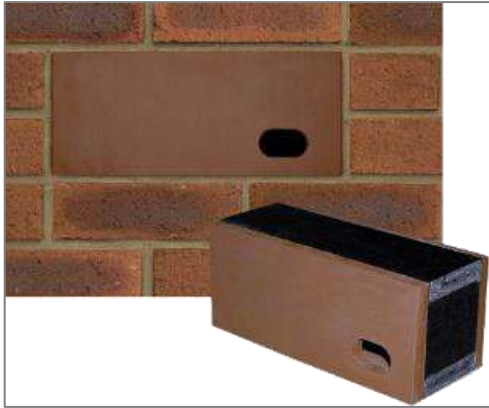


Figure 2. Example integrated swift brick (Ibstock Swift Brick)

4.8 Badgers

4.8.1 Conclusion

No evidence of badger was observed within the Site or within 30 m of the Site, and given the urbanised nature of the area, badgers are highly unlikely to be present within the area.

4.8.2 Recommendations

As a purely precautionary and standard measure, in the unlikely event that a badger sett is found during the development process, work must stop immediately, and advice sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.

4.9 Other Fauna

4.9.1 Conclusion

Hedgehogs may occasionally shelter, forage and commute within the Site.

No other species are considered to be a constraint to the proposed development.

4.9.2 Recommendations

In the interest of animal welfare, during construction, any deep excavations should be either fenced-off, covered overnight or fitted with an exit ramp to avoid the trapping of mammals.

4.10 Invasive Plants

4.10.1 Conclusion

Cotoneaster species were abundant within the introduced shrubs. No additional invasive non-native plants were recorded during the survey.

4.10.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that all cotoneasters should be removed from the Site during the development / landscaping stage of the works. These works should be undertaken by a competent vegetation clearance company and disposed of correctly.

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APPENDICIES

Appendix 1 Photographs

Photo 1. Building 1



Photo 2. Building 1



Photo 3. Souther Building 3



Photo 4. Building 4 (mast)



Photo 5. Building 5



Photo 6. Modified grassland 3



Photo 7. Treeline 3



Photo 8. Treeline 4 and modified grassland 4



Photo 9. Treeline 2



Photo 10. Treeline 5



Photo 11. Modified grassland 1 and scattered trees



Photo 12. Example of hardstanding and introduced shrubs (cotoneaster)



Photo 13. Example of hardstanding



Photo 14. Example of hardstanding following building demolitions



Photo 15. Hardstanding to east of the Site



Appendix 2 UKHab Baseline Habitat Map



Survey Information	
	Site boundary (60,454.8m ²)
UKHab Habitat Survey	
	g4 - Modified grassland
	h3d - Bramble scrub
	h3h - Mixed scrub
	u1 - Built-up areas and gardens
	u1b - Developed land; sealed surface
	u1b5 - Buildings
	u1f - Sparsely vegetated urban land
	33 - Line of trees
	32 - Scattered trees
	Target note

Secondary Codes:

847 - Introduced shrub

Source:
Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2023, All rights reserved. License Number 100049837.

PROJECT TITLE

LAND OFF BRICK KILN STREET, HINCKLEY

DRAWING TITLE

Figure 1. UKHab Habitat Survey Plan

VER	DATE	REMARKS	Drawn	Checked
1.1	09/11/23	UKHab	MP	BM

DRAWING NUMBER:

BMECOLOGY/LandoffBrickKilnStreetHinckley/UKHab

SCALE	1:1,400	PLOT SIZE	A3	DATUM	OSGB	PROJECTION	BNG
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Appendix 3 Proposed Plans

Land Off Brick Kiln St, Hinckley

ILLUSTRATIVE
MASTERPLAN

0 | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 m



LEGEND

- Site Allocation Boundary
- Primary Movement Routes
- Secondary Movement Routes
- Shared/Private Drives
- Proposed Attenuation
- Proposed Pedestrian/ Cycle Route
- Indicative position of new tree planting
- Proposed Development Structure
- Existing Trees
- Proposed POS

- Potential Site Access off Brick Kiln St
- Potential Highway Emergency Link
- Easement
- Existing Mast



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CADENT
Project
LAND OFF BRICK KILN ST, HINCKLEY
Drawing Title
ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN
Drawing No.
DGL_230929_5830.001



Appendix 4 Legislation and Planning Policy

The following legislation relates to species and habitats that could potentially occur in association with the Site:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 (as amended);
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended);
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996; and
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997.

Bats

All British bat species are fully protected through The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 as European Protected Species (EPS). They also receive some protection through inclusion in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

It is an offence to deliberately capture, injure or kill a bat. It is an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat. It is an offence to deliberately disturb a bat; in particular any disturbance which is likely (a) to impair their ability - (i) to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young, or (ii) in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or (b) to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it is also an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or obstruct access to any structure or place which any such animal uses for shelter or protection.

The 'appropriate authority' (Natural England in England) has powers to issue licences for various purposes including - (a) scientific or educational purposes... and (e) preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment. The appropriate authority shall not grant a licence under this regulation unless they are satisfied - (a) that there is no satisfactory alternative, and (b) that the action authorised will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range. It is an offence for any person authorised by virtue of a licence to which this paragraph applies to contravene or fail to comply with any condition which the licence requires him to comply with.

Several species of bat including brown long-eared and soprano pipistrelle are identified as UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species.

Great Crested Newts

Great crested newts are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) and under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019. This makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately capture or kill a great crested newt;
- Deliberately disturb a great crested newt;
- Deliberately take or destroy the eggs of a great crested newt; or
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a great crested newt.

Great crested newt is a priority species under the LBAP and UK BAP and a *Species of Principal Importance* for the Conservation of Biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Reptiles

Smooth snake and sand lizard are fully protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2019 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Adder, grass snake, common lizard receive protection from killing and injury, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). However, it is not illegal to damage or destroy the places that these species use for shelter.

All UK reptiles are priority species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and *Species of Principal Importance* for the Conservation of Biodiversity in England under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Nesting Birds

All wild birds in the UK are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or its eggs.

Badgers

Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This legislation protects badgers from killing, injuring or disturbance.

Water Vole & Otter

Water vole are listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and is protected by Section 9 of the Act. Under the Act it is an offence to:

- Intentionally capture, injure or kill a water vole;
- Possess a live or dead water vole;
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place which water voles use for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb water voles whilst they are using such a place.

Otter is listed on Annexes II & IV of the Habitats Directive, Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations 2010 and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In England and Wales, this species is protected by the Habitats Regulations 2010 and by Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

- This protection means that it is an offence to:
- Intentionally kill, injure or capture an otter;
- Deliberately or recklessly disturb an otter; or
- Deliberately or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a breeding site or resting place of an otter.

Both water vole and otter are priority species under the LBAP and UK BAP and a *Species of Principal Importance* for the Conservation of Biodiversity in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Planning Policy

Consideration has also been given in this report to relevant National Planning Policy as summarised below.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) guides Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) when developing their planning policies and considering planning applications affecting protected habitats, sites and species.

In respect of the natural environment, the NPPF states under Paragraph 174 that:

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

- a) Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem NBGRCvices – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
- c) Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- e) Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development*

should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

- f) Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."*