



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Land and buildings at 82 Main Street
Carlton
Leicestershire
NGR SK 40003 05120

Survey by
Christopher Barker CEnv dipHort ACIEEM

	Report prepared by: C Barker	Date Issued: 15 August 2023
	Reviewed by: KLB	Report Version: V2
	Report ref: P2801 /0823 /01	C B E Consulting Highbank, 5 Grantham Road, Navenby Lincoln. LN5 0JJ. Telephone (01522) 810086. www.cbeconsulting.co.uk

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Non-Technical Summary

The site surveyed comprises an irregularly shaped parcel of land situated off Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire, centred at NGR SK40003 05120. The Client has requested an ecological survey of the land to determine whether there is anything of ecological value or any evidence of protected species present. An inspection of the site was completed on 07th July 2023.

The defined site area comprises part of a residential garden and an area used as a small builders yard and workshop on the south side of Min Street, Carlton. There are houses and gardens to the east and west of the survey area. Main Streets runs along the northern side of the access and there are residential houses and garden to the north of this. To the south is a parcel of open arable land. The site is in a rural location on the edge of a small village.

The site is not a Statutory or Non-Statutory site of ecological significance. There are no Statutory sites within a 1km radius but there are a number of LWS and potential LWS sites within 1km, the nearest being over 350m from the area surveyed.

The survey has identified the following habitats within the site area:

- Buildings
- Hardstanding
- Ruderals and Ephemerals in disturbed ground
- Residential garden
- Hedgerows
- Specimen Trees

An assessment of the survey area has identified the following potential for protected species to be present:

Species	Present within 1km	Suitable habitat on site / evidence of presence	Likelihood of presence on site	Further Survey / Mitigation recommended
Nesting Birds	Yes	Ground nesting within the site interior highly unlikely due to lack of cover. No nesting identified associated with the buildings or trees in the survey area. Some nesting within the dense hedgerows possible.	Moderate potential within the boundary and interior hedgerows.	Measures to avoid disturbance to any nests or nesting activity will need to be considered prior to any hedgerow clearance / trimming
Reptiles	Yes	Tiles, pipes etc were lifted and search for reptiles but none were found. The majority of the site area is suboptimal for reptile species.	Low - some individual Grass Snake may be foraging within the survey area but significant populations are very unlikely.	An inspection should be carried out before any work starts and before the building materials are removed.
Amphibians	Yes No GCN	There are no ponds or wetland areas within the site to attract amphibians. Habitat within the majority of the site interior is sub-optimal for amphibians.	Amphibians are unlikely to be present in any significant numbers and the potential for GCN is very low.	No further surveys of specific mitigation measures are recommended but an inspection should be carried out before the building materials are removed.
Bats	Yes	No buildings or trees with roost potential were identified during the inspection and no field signs of bats were found.	Negligible potential for roosting bats to be present. Some foraging across the garden likely.	No further surveys recommended

Badger and other mammals	Water Vole	No field signs of badger were found in any part of the site area assessed.	The likelihood of badger accessing this land to forage is considered to be negligible.	No further surveys recommended.
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Constraints:

No significant ecological constraints have been identified during the survey. The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Nesting birds may be present in the dense boundary and internal hedgerows in the future.
- Whilst unlikely, individual reptiles such as Grass Snake and even common amphibians such as Toad may access the garden in the future and small number of individuals could be present.
- There is potential for hedgehogs to be present within the site, particularly around the site boundaries and badger foraging activity cannot be entirely ruled out in the future although this is unlikely.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Local Wildlife Sites identified within 1km of the land inspected are all sufficiently distant to avoid any impact from the small scale of the development being proposed.

The survey area comprises an area of buildings, hardstanding and residential garden becoming partly overgrown now that it is no longer in use. The site has limited biodiversity at the present time due to the former management and use of this land. No evidence of any significant locally rare plants or plant communities within or around the site area surveyed was identified during the survey.

At the present time a conceptual scheme has been provided to indicate the scale and layout of the proposed development. Specific details of the proposed landscaping associated with this have not been provided but it is clear for the development plan that the boundary hedgerows are being retained and each of the three plots will have a garden area. A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has not been completed but since the site is of low biodiversity value and a large proportion of this area comprises building and hardstanding, it is likely that any significant loss in calculated biodiversity units across this site area from the development can be avoided.

The inspection completed in July 2023 did not identify any physical evidence or field signs of protected species within the survey area. After inspection of the site, assessment of its landscape context and a review of the biological records for this area, the following precautionary measures are advised:

Birds: There is negligible potential for ground nesting birds to be present and no nests were found. However, nesting is possible within the dense hedgerows in the future. If any vegetation removal needs to be carried out, this should be completed outside of the nesting season or be preceded by an inspection by an Ecologist to ensure no nesting birds are present or determine what mitigation measures to protect nesting birds are required.

Reptiles and Amphibians: There is potential for individual reptiles to be present although none were found. It is unlikely that common amphibians such as Toad will be present but this cannot be entirely ruled out. The likelihood of GCN being present is considered to be negligible. As a precaution, the building materials stored across the site area should be inspected by an Ecologist as a precaution ahead of any clearance works starting.

Hedgehogs and Badger: No evidence of these species was found on the site but since it lies adjacent to open agricultural land the presence of these mobile species foraging near the site in the future cannot be entirely ruled out. Measures to protect hedgehogs and badgers should be included within any construction management plan prepared for this site.

General Recommendations: It is recommended that as part of landscaping works the following biodiversity enhancements should be incorporated

- a) At least one bat roost tube should be incorporated into the structure of one of the new houses on the south or west facing side
- b) At least two nest bricks/ tubes should be incorporated into the structure of one of the new houses on the north facing side of this in a suitable position
- c) Hedgehog and reptile refugia should be positioned along the south boundary hedgerow where this will be accessible to wildlife commuting along the field boundary.



Christopher Barker ACIEEM CEnv

Part 1: Site Details

1. Introduction

1.1 Site Description and Location

The site surveyed comprises an irregularly shaped parcel of land situated off Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire, centred at NGR SK40003 05120. The location of the site is shown on the plan within **Figure 1** and an aerial photograph has been provided within **Figure 2** to place the site in context.



Figure 1: Site location.

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The Client has requested an ecological survey of the land to determine whether there is anything of ecological value or any evidence of protected species present. An inspection of the site was completed on 07th July 2023 and details of the survey are provided in the table below. A photographic record of key areas is included alongside target notes within the report and a list of plant species identified in the site during the survey is included within **Appendix 1**.

Date	Time	Location	Weather
07 July 2023	11.00am	60 Main Street, Carlton, Leicestershire CV13 0EZ	Clear with occasional light cloud. Wind 9mph from the west. Temperature 19 degrees C. Humidity 68% at 1023hPa.
Accessibility	All areas of the site accessible to search for evidence of protected species.		

The defined site area comprises part of a residential garden and an area used as a small builders yard and workshop on the south side of Min Street, Carlton. There are houses and gardens to the east and west of the survey area. Main Streets runs along the northern side of the access and there are residential houses and garden to the north of this. To the south is a parcel of open arable land. The site is in a rural location on the edge of a small village. A contextual aerial photograph has been provided below.



Figure 2: Site Contextual Aerial Photograph

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1.2 Objective of the Report

This report is a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the area identified in yellow within the aerial photograph above. The objective of the ecological appraisal is to identify the habitat(s) present on, and surrounding, the site area being assessed. Development of the site for the purpose of constructing new residential houses within the land will require planning approval and this report has been prepared to provide information as part of any future planning application process. To this end the report is required to comply with the recommendations and principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 as amended (NPPF). The report contains Biological Records and has been prepared to meet the standard required by BS42020 (British Standard for Biodiversity and Development).

Chapter 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) describes the Government's national policies on promoting 'an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment.' NPPF is accompanied by Planning Practice Guidance on 'Biodiversity, ecosystems and green infrastructure' (2014) and ODPM Circular 06/2005.

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 Chapter 15 sets out the Government's objectives for planning in regard to the protection of habitats and biodiversity. The planning objectives in relation to biodiversity and the natural environment are stated within paragraph 170 of the NPPF 2021 and are as follows:

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

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

b) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.

c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate.

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and

f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.”

Within the revised NPPF 2021 it is now policy that ‘*permission should be refused for major development applications within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty other than in exceptional circumstances*’. Planning policy context requires that Planning policies and decisions should be based on up-to-date information about the natural environment and other characteristics of the area including an assessment of existing and potential components of ecological networks (NPPF paragraph 43).

The above approach encapsulates the ‘mitigation hierarchy’ described in British Standard BS 42020:2013 which involves the following stepwise process:

- **Avoidance** – avoiding adverse effects through good design,
- **Mitigation** – where it is unavoidable, mitigation measures should be employed to minimise adverse effects,
- **Compensation** – where residual effects remain after mitigation it may be necessary to provide compensation to offset any harm,
- **Enhancement** – planning decisions often present the opportunity to deliver benefits for biodiversity, which can also be explored alongside the above measures to resolve potential adverse effects.

The measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development (BS 42020:2013, section 5.5).

This ecological appraisal provides information on the existing ecological and biodiversity value of the land on the site and also reports any evidence of protected species or significant habitats present. It has been provided to provide information to the Planning Authority in order to help meet the requirements of the NPPF and enable the Authority to assess the site area in accordance with the Code of Practice within BS42020 and guidelines issued by CIEEM in 2012. The report also identifies any habitats or species present that require more detailed surveys prior to any improvements being undertaken.

Part 2: Survey Methodology and Results

2. Appraisal Methodology

2.1 Baseline Study

Within NPPF it states that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: “economic, social and environmental.” The environmental role includes “contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment” and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity.

Within the NPPF 2021 it states that: *“Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight....”* Paragraph 172

Within paragraphs 174 and 175 of NPPF 2021 the principles by which the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity within the context of proposed development are described. These principles state in Paragraph 174 that any development proposal should:

- a) **Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks**, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and steppingstones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*
- b) **promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement** of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for **securing measurable net gains for biodiversity**.*

Paragraph 175: When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

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

The biodiversity of a site area and the potential presence of protected species are factors relevant to all developments irrespective of the size scale and will apply to any development on the site being assessed. Available information on the baseline ecology of the site and the presence of protected species within the locality has been obtained from the local biological records centre and reviewed (**Appendix 2**) and the records obtained are provided as separate appendices.

These data sources have been reviewed and the character and nature conservation value of habitats and species assessed. The aims of this appraisal of information are:

- To characterize all the existing available information regarding habitats and species that may be present at the site and provide up to date information about the environmental characteristics of the site area.
- To identify any habitats potentially present of nature conservation value in terms of local, regional and national context and within the context of local, regional and national policy; and,
- To identify any areas of ecological interest in order to either a) make recommendations to minimize the potential impact of any site works, or b) identify the need for a further survey work.

Following the appraisal of the available information, a site inspection has taken place to obtain specific site data at the site.

2.2 Habitat Assessment Methodology

The site was inspected on 07th July 2023. The inspection used the extended Phase 1 Habitat Assessment methodology as adopted by Natural England (Joint Nature Conservation Committee 1993) and in accordance with the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2012) issued by the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (IEEM) and BS42020 (British Standard for Biodiversity and Development).

The survey required a systematic walkover of the site to classify the habitat types present and was completed using standard Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology whereby the habitat types present are identified and mapped, together with an assessment of the species composition of each habitat. This technique provides an inventory of the basic habitat types present and allows identification of areas of greater potential which require further survey. Any such areas identified can then be examined in more detail through Phase 2 surveys. This method was extended, in line with the Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to record details on the actual or potential presence of any notable or protected species or habitats.

Using the above method, the site was classified into areas of similar botanical community types, with a representative species list compiled for each habitat identified summarised within **Appendix 1**. A habitat base map and target notes have been prepared and included as **Figure 3** within section 3 of this report.

2.3 Protected Species Assessment Methodology

A methodical inspection was carried out to look for any evidence of protected species using the site and to identify any habitats with potential to provide significant shelter or foraging opportunities for these. The survey was carried out by Christopher Barker, an experienced ecological consultant and Chartered Environmentalist holding Class Licenses issued by Natural England.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 consolidates the various amendments that have been made to the Regulations. The original (1994) Regulations

transposed the EC Habitats Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) into national law.

“European protected species” are those which are present on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. They are subject to the provisions of Regulation 41 of those Regulations. All European Protected Species are also protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Taken together, these pieces of legislation make it an offence to:

- a. Intentionally or deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal included amongst these species
- b. Possess or control any live or dead specimens or any part of, or anything derived from these species
- c. deliberately disturb wild animals of any such species
- d. deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal, or
- e. intentionally, deliberately or recklessly damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal, or obstruct access to such a place

For the purposes of paragraph (c), disturbance of animals includes 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.

Although the law provides strict protection to these species, it also allows this protection to be set aside (derogation) through the issuing of licences. The licences in England are currently determined by Natural England (NE) for development works. In accordance with the requirements of the Regulations (2010), a licence can only be issued where the following requirements are satisfied:

- i) The proposal is necessary ‘to preserve 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’
- ii) ‘There is no satisfactory alternative’
- iii) The proposals ‘will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

General faunal activity, such as mammals or birds observed visually or by call during the course of the surveys was recorded. Specific attention was also paid to the potential presence of any protected, rare or notable species, and specific consideration was given to bats, birds, badgers, amphibians and reptiles as described below.

Breeding Birds: All nesting birds are protected under 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 its nest whilst in use or being built, or take or destroy its eggs. The inspection of the site included a search of hedgerows, ground vegetation and tree canopies looking for evidence of active or former nests.

Bats: All species of Bat within the UK are protected under the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (Habitat Regulations) that amended and incorporated the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These regulations make it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a bat [WCA section 9(1)]
- Possess or control any live or dead specimen or anything derived from a bat [WCA section 9(2)]
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a bat [WCA section 9(4)(a)]
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose [WCA section 9(4)(a)]

Any building or significant trees present within the survey area have been assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats based on the presence of features such as holes, crevices, cracks, splits or loose bark. Potential bat roost locations in relation to buildings are described within this report (taken from Bat Survey Guidelines 2016) as:

Confirmed Roost – a structure with physical evidence confirming the presence of bats or bats visibly seen.

High – a structure with one or more potential roost features that are obviously suitable for use by a large number of bats on a regular basis and which is situated in an area of continuous high-quality foraging habitat suitable for bats.

Moderate – a structure with one or more potential roost features that could be used by bats, but which is unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status and which is in an area of connected habitat suitable for foraging by bats.

Low – a structure with one or more potential roost features that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost features do not provide sufficient potential to be used by a larger number of bats or on a regular basis and the surrounding habitat is not of high value to foraging bats.

Negligible – a structure with negligible habitat features which is in a poor location making it highly unlikely roosting bats will be present.

Tree assessments were undertaken from ground level, with the aid of a torch and binoculars where required. During the survey features considered to provide suitable roost sites for bats such as the following were sought:

- Trunk / branch cavities – significant holes in the trunk caused by rot or injury.
- Trunk / branch split – split / fissure in trunk caused by rot or injury.
- Branch socket cavity – Where a fallen branch has resulted in the formation of an access point into a cavity.
- Woodpecker hole – created by nesting birds suitable for use by roosting bats.
- Lifted bark – bark which has rotted / lifted to form suitable access point/roost site for bats.
- Trunk hollows – decay in heartwood leading to internal cavity in trunk.
- Ivy cover – dense / mature ivy cover where the woody stems could create small cavities / crevices.

Common Reptiles: All species of British reptile are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The common species (adder, grass snake, slow worm and common lizard) are only protected against intentional killing and injuring (but not taking).

The survey included a search of all areas where suitable habitat for reptiles to shelter under or bask may be present, lifting logs and other suitable features to search underneath. The surveyor also maintained a careful watch whilst moving across the site to look for signs of reptiles moving to cover.

Great crested newts are afforded legal protection under European and UK law under the auspices of The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) (Amendment) Regulations which came into force on 21 August 2007, superseding the Habitat Regulations 1994. The 2007 amendments have increased the protection afforded to European Protected Species.

The law provides protection to adults, juveniles, efts (immature GCN) and eggs and it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly or as an incidental result of actions:

- Intentionally or deliberately capture, kill, or injure Great Crested Newts
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used for shelter or protection (including resting or breeding places) whether occupied or not
- Deliberately, intentionally or recklessly disturb Great Crested Newts when in a place of shelter
- Possess a Great Crested Newt, or any part of it, unless acquired lawfully
- Sell, barter, exchange or transport or offer for sale Great Crested Newts or any part of them.

The survey included a search of any ponds and wetland areas within the site or immediate surrounding area nearby (where these features were accessible) and an assessment of ponds in the local area using Ordnance Survey Maps and aerial photographs to consider the potential for these species to access the site area.

Badger: Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. This makes it an offence to wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or to attempt to do so; or to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett. Sett interference includes disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, as well as damaging or destroying a sett or obstructing access to it. A badger sett is defined in the legislation as “*a structure or place, which displays signs indicating current use by a badger*”.

The survey searching for evidence of badger activity comprised two main elements. The first element involved searching for evidence of Badger setts. For any setts that were encountered, each sett entrance was noted and mapped. The following information was recorded:

- Number and location of well used / active entrances; these are clear from any debris or vegetation and are obviously in regular use and may, or may not, have been excavated recently.
- Number and location of inactive entrances; these are not in regular use and have debris such as leaves and twigs in the entrance or have plants growing in or around the edge of the entrance.
- Number of disused entrances; these have not been in use for some time, are partly or completely blocked and cannot be used without considerable clearance. If the
- entrance has been disused for some time all that may be visible is a depression in the ground where the hole used to be and the remains of the spoil heap.

The second element of the survey involved searching for signs of Badger activity such as well-worn paths and push-throughs, snagged hair, footprints, latrines and foraging signs, so as to build up a picture of any use of the site by Badger.

Invasive Species: Attention was paid to the presence of any invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). However, the detectability of such species varies due to a number of factors, e.g. time of year, site management, etc., and hence the absence of invasive species should not be assumed even if no such species were detected during the Phase 1 survey.

A range of invasive non-native plant species are listed in Schedule 9 (Part 2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which makes it an offence to plant or cause these introduced

invasive plants to grow in the wild, effectively making it illegal to spread the plants during development operations.

2.4 Consultations

The evaluation of ecological features and resources is based on professional judgement whilst also drawing on the latest available industry guidance and research. The approach taken in this report is based on that described by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2016). In evaluating ecological features. The *Geographic Frame of Reference* is a key factor taken into account when assessing the potential ecological value of a site being surveyed. The value of an ecological feature or resource is determined within a defined geographical context using the following frame of reference:

- International.
- National.
- Regional.
- County (or Metropolitan).
- District (or Unitary Authority, City or Borough).
- Local (or Parish).
- Site level only.

Within this frame of reference, certain sites may carry a statutory ecological designation, e.g. Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for internationally important sites or Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for sites of national importance. Sites of more localised nature conservation importance do not receive statutory protection but may be designated by Local Planning Authorities or other bodies, e.g. Wildlife Trusts. Such non-statutory designations or 'Local Sites' include Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) and Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs), for example.

A review of the available data obtained from the Leicestershire and Rutland Biological Records Centre confirms that the site is not a Statutory or Non-Statutory site of ecological significance. There are no Statutory sites within a 1km radius but there are a number of LWS and potential LWS sites within 1km and nearest and most significant of these are summarised within the table below.

Site Name and Reference	Designation	Distance	Potential Links
Barton-in-the-Beans Ash 90325	LWS	947m	None
Stream at Spinney Grange, Carlton 58189	LWS	729m	None
Pond at Spinney Grange, Carlton 60242	LWS	816m	None
Oak, Carlton to Nailstone road 90338	LWS	729m	None
Stream along Nailstone/Carlton boundary 90336	LWS	953m	None
Hollow Ash, Carlton 90339	LWS	372m	Located in the village to the west. No direct links
Buften Lane hedge (south) 90335	LWS	753m	None
Carlton to Nailstone roadside hedgerow (west) 90344	LWS	461m	Located along the road to the east. No direct links
Osbaston, woodland and marsh along stream N of Lount Rd 11148	pLWS	739	None
Mill Covert 11075	pLWS	844	None

Bottle-neck Spinney 11076	pLWS	359	Small spinney in open agricultural land to the south west with open arable land in between this and the site area.
Hedgerow 11145	pLWS	779	None
Rough Grassland 10983	pLWS	534	None
Hedgerow 11077	pLWS	596	None
Hedge 11134	pLWS	791	None
Rough Grassland 10982	pLWS	493	None
Cowpastures Spinney, marsh and stream 11150	pLWS	909	None
Hedge 11127	pLWS	653	None
Hedge 10985	pLWS	462	None
Carlton, Bosworth Mill pond 11078	pLWS	740	None

There are no non-statutory sites within 350m of the survey area and the land inspected does not share a boundary with any of the areas identified in the table above.

A review of the data for protected species has identified a small number of significant records relating to the immediate vicinity of the site which are summarised within the table below.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Latest Record	Number of Records
Bufo bufo	Common Toad	2019	1
Lissotriton vulgaris	Smooth Newt	2011	1
Rana temporaria	Common Frog	2000	1
Triturus cristatus	Great Crested Newt	2009	1
Alcedo atthis	Kingfisher	2010	1
Coturnix coturnix	Quail	2017	1
Falco subbuteo	Hobby	2017	2
Milvus milvus	Red Kite	2009	1
Numenius phaeopus	Whimbrel	2017	1
Tyto alba	Barn Owl	2006	5
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Bluebell	2018	1
Natrix helvetica	Grass Snake	2020	14
Zootoca vivipara	Common Lizard	2000	1
Chiroptera	Bat	2012	3
Lutra lutra	Otter	2008	1
Meles meles	Badger	2020	6
Myotis	Myotis Bat species	2022	2
Nyctalus noctula	Noctule Bat	2022	1
Pipistrellus	Pipistrelle Bat species	2022	2
Pipistrellus pipistrellus	Common Pipistrelle	2022	4
Pipistrellus pygmaeus	Soprano Pipistrelle	2022	1
Plecotus auritus	Brown Long-eared Bat	2022	3

There is a single record of **great crested newt (GCN)** within 1km of the site dating from 2009. This relates to a pond situated approximately 150m from the survey area on the opposite side of Main Street. The road and houses along this will provide a partial barrier to commuting amphibians but if there is suitable aquatic habitat within the land surveyed to encourage these species they may be present.

There are records of Grass Snake and Common Lizard within 1km in the land around the village margins. The nearest record of Grass Snake is 156m to the west on the edge of the village and it is likely that the site will be accessible to reptile species. Reptiles could be present if there are suitable features to support these within the site.

The survey area comprises a garden and open yard area with a number of outbuildings. Whilst ground nesting is likely to be impacted by predatory cats in this location, there is potential for the buildings, trees and hedgerows to support nesting birds.

There are records of roosting and foraging **bats** in this area with Pipistrelle and Brown Long-eared bats recorded roosting in the area within 500m of the property surveyed. Since the site contains a number of outbuildings and trees these could support roosting bats if there are suitable structural features present.

There are records of **badger** activity in this area with the nearest sett being recorded within 400m of the survey area. Since the site is potentially accessible from the open agricultural land to the south the presence of this species cannot be ruled out, although the likelihood of a sett being present within the garden and open yard area is considered to be unlikely.



Figure 3 – Habitat Plan

3. Survey Findings

3.1 Habitat Classifications and Target Notes

The survey has identified the following habitats within the proposed development:

- Buildings
- Hardstanding
- Ruderals and Ephemerals in disturbed ground
- Residential garden
- Hedgerows
- Specimen Trees

Target Note: Buildings

There are eleven buildings on the site, most of which are small timber garden shed structures. The buildings are described in the table below with photographs of the exterior and interior provided.

	Description	Potential for protected species
B1	Single storey, timber framed garden shed, Single skin clad with a pitched boarded roof felted to the exterior. Window present on the south eastern wall.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found within the interior or on the exterior of the building. Negligible roost potential
B2	Timber framed covered storage area with no sides. Roof covered with corrugated steel sheeting.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found. Negligible roost potential
B3	Timber framed and clad workshop. Single storey with single skin timber cladding. Windows to two sides. Sliding timber door to the north end and south east corner. Pitched roof of corrugated asbestos cement sheeting. No enclosed loft area. Lean-to extension at south end with sloping corrugated steel sheet roof.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found within the interior or on the exterior of the building. Negligible roost potential
B4	Single storey, timber framed garden shed, Single skin clad with a pitched roof of corrugated steel sheeting. Door on the north gable end.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found within the interior or on the exterior of the building. Negligible roost potential
B5	Single storey, timber framed garden shed, Single skin clad with a pitched boarded roof felted to the exterior. Door at north gable end. On concrete pad.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found within the interior or on the exterior of the building. Negligible roost potential
B6	Timber framed covered storage area with no sides. Pitched roof covered with corrugated steel sheeting. Concrete pad.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found. Negligible roost potential
B7	Timber framed potting shed with glass sides and felted pitched roof over boards.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found. Negligible roost potential
B8	Single storey, timber framed garden shed, Single skin clad with vertical planks. Pitched boarded roof felted to the exterior. Windows present on the north and south sides. Door on the eastern gable.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found within the interior or on the exterior of the building. Negligible roost potential
B9	Single storey brick outbuilding with a sloping corrugated steel sheet roof. No lining or enclosed loft spaces. Single course of brick with no cavity. Concrete floor. Roof partly overgrown by Boston Ivy.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found within the interior or on the exterior of the building. Negligible roost potential

B10	Timber framed covered storage area with no sides. Roof covered with corrugated steel sheeting. Partly enclosed by steel chicken wire.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found. Negligible roost potential
B11	Timber framed with only part of the roof covered with corrugated steel sheeting. No side walls.	No evidence of any nesting bird activity. No field signs of roosting bats found. Negligible roost potential



Timber shed B1



Interior of B1



Timber frame store B2



Flat roof of B2



Workshop B3



South end of workshop B3



Interior of B3



Extension roof interior of B3



Timber shed B4



Interior roof of B4



Timber shed B5



Covered storage area B6



Underside of roof B6



B7 – Potting shed



Timber shed B8



Interior of timber shed B8



Brick outbuilding B9



Interior of B9



Open storage structure B10



Open storage structure B11

Target Note: Hardstanding / Building Materials storage

The majority of the western half of the area surveyed comprises compacted gravel hardstanding with some concrete pad areas along the western side. This is the access area and parts around the margins close to building B3 and B4 have been used for storage of small building materials such as pipes, bricks, tiles etc. Ruderals are starting to colonise this area but vegetation is sparse across the majority of this area.

**Target Note: Residential Garden**

The south eastern part of the survey area comprise a well-maintained lawn and two small planted areas within which there is a range of common amenity plants and herbs. There are no rare or unusual species present in these small areas.

**Target Note: Perennials and Ruderals**

The northern part of the survey area is a former garden within which the disturbed ground and soil has become colonised by a range of common ruderals and ephemerals. The vegetation gives the appearance of being seasonally trimmed as the growth all appears

quite juvenile. Species present include Bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, Creeping Thistle *Cirsium arvense*, Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, St John's Wort *Geranium robertianum*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus*, Herb Bennet *Geum urbanum*, Iris *Iris foetidissima*, Garlic Mustard *Alliaria petiolata*, Nettle *Urtica dioica*, White Dead Nettle *Lamium album*, Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Forget me Not *Myosotis arvensis* and Ivy *Hedera helix*. Species diversity appears very limited. with patches of Arum along the eastern boundary close to the woodland in adjacent land.



Target Note: Specimen trees

There are mature and semi-mature trees present within the garden area and along the boundaries of this close to the existing access and these have been surveyed and a BS5837:2012 Arboricultural Survey report has been prepared.

There are no significant mature trees or veteran trees of high landscape value present. The trees within the garden interior are a mix of fruit trees (Apple *Malus domestica* and Damson *Prunus domestica*) with a juvenile Purple Damson *Prunus domestica purpurea*). There are seedling Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and Cherry *Prunus avium* within the northern boundary hedgerow.

Close to the site entrance is a semi-mature Birch *Betula pendula* which is beginning to crowd the gated access and on the opposite side is a dense thicket of Lilac *Syringa vulgaris* and Damson *Prunus domestica*.



Birch near gated access



Lilac and Damson near gated access



Apple and Damson garden interior



Purple damson garden interior

Target Note: Boundary Hedgerows

There are four hedgerows along the garden boundaries and providing an internal boundary dividing two of the former garden areas identified as H1 – H4 within **Figure 3**.

Hedgerow Regulations

A measure of statutory protection is afforded to hedgerows under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997, where any ecological or archaeological features are defined as being 'important'. The Removal of important hedgerows requires consent from the local planning authority, except in certain prescribed circumstances. The importance of hedgerows can be assessed according to the criteria identified in Part II Schedule I of the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. A hedgerow is identified as being 'Ecologically Important' if it has existed for 30 years or more and satisfies at least one of the criteria listed below.

- *Criteria 6:* Contain certain categories of species of birds, animals or plants listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 or the British Red Data Books
- *Criteria 7:* The hedgerows include:
 - a) At least 7 schedule III woody species, on average in a 30m length;
 - b) At least 6 schedule III woody species, on average in a 30m length and has at least 3 associated features;
 - c) At least 6 schedule III woody species, on average in a 30m length, including a black poplar tree, or large-leaved lime, or small-leaved lime or wild service tree;
 - d) At least 5 schedule III woody species, on average in a 30m length and has at least 4 associated features.

The associated features are:

- i. a bank or wall which supports the hedgerow along at least one half of its length;
- ii. gaps which do not exceed 10% of the length of the hedgerow;
- iii. on average, at least one tree per 50 metres;
- iv. at least 3 schedule 2 woodland species within one metre, in any direction, of the outermost edges of the hedgerow;
- v. a ditch along at least one half of the length of the hedgerow;
- vi. connections with other hedgerows, woods or ponds scoring 4 points or more (where a connection to another hedgerow scores 1 and a connection to a broad-leaved wood or pond scores 2); or
- vii. a parallel hedgerow within 15 metres of the hedgerow.

- *Criteria 8:* Run alongside a bridleway, footpath, road used as a public path, or a byway open to all traffic and includes at least 4 woody species, on average, in a 30m length and has at least 2 associated features as listed above.

In accordance with these regulations, regular 30m sections of the hedgerow at the site were sampled i.e. woody species were recorded for 30m out of every 100m in order to sample the hedgerow in a systematic way. The average number of species for each hedgerow was derived by totaling the number of species recorded and dividing by the number of sections. This gives an average to compare with the Hedgerow Regulations Criteria. Only when the average number of species is 5 or more are associated features taken into account. An average of 5 woody species and 4 associated features are needed for a hedgerow to be defined as important hedgerow in accordance with the regulations. The exception to this is when a hedgerow runs alongside a footpath or bridleway. In this case only 4 woody species and 2 associated features are needed.

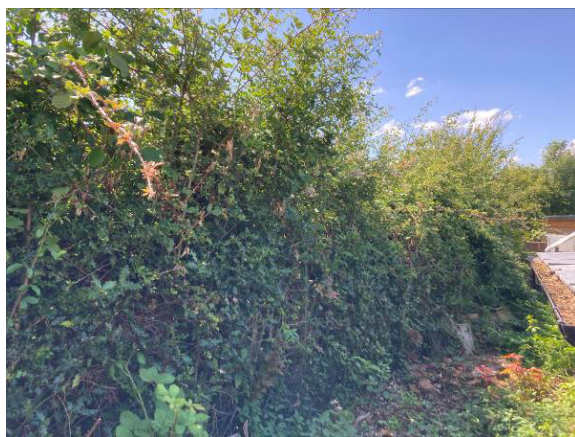
Each hedgerow is given a grade using HEGS with the suffixes '+' and '-', representing the upper and lower limits of each grade respectively. These grades represent a continuum on a scale from 1+ (the highest score and denoting hedges of the greatest nature conservation priority) to 4- (representing the lowest score and hedges of the least nature conservation priority) as follows:

- Grade 1 – High to very high value
- Grade 2 – Moderately high to high value
- Grade 3 – Moderate value
- Grade 4 – Low value

Hedgerows graded 1 or 2 are considered to be a priority for nature conservation.

The hedgerows were also assessed against the wildlife and landscape criteria contained within Statutory Instrument No: 1160 – The Hedgerow Regulations 19973 to determine whether they qualified as 'Important Hedgerows' under the Regulations. This was achieved using a methodology in accordance with the Regulations.

Hedge	Height	Width	Management	Woody Species	Ground Flora	HEGS Cat.
H1	2M	1.5m	Untrimmed. No trees, walls or ditches.	Hawthorn Blackthorn	Negligible	4
H2	1.5m	1.0m	Box-trimmed. No trees, walls or ditches	Hawthorn, Cherry Laurel Holly Elm	Negligible	4
H3	3/4m	2-3m	Untrimmed except for lower sides. Some sapling trees present with larger trees in garden to rear.	Cherry Laurel	Negligible	4
H4	2m	1m	Untrimmed. Sapling trees but no walls or ditches.	Elm Holly Beech Hawthorn	Negligible	4



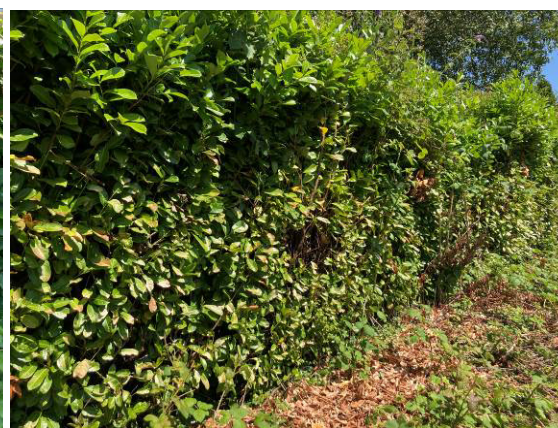
Hedge H1



Hedge H2



Hedge H2



Hedgerow H3

3.2 Evidence of Protected Species

During the inspection of the site notes were made on the suitability of habitats for protected species and any sightings or signs of protected species were recorded:

- The suitability of habitats for badger (*Meles meles*) was recorded and any evidence of badgers including setts, dung pits, badger paths, hairs, bedding, footprints and scratching trees was noted.
- Trees with features suitable for roosting bats were noted, such as hollows (e.g. old woodpecker holes), cracks and cavities within trunks and branches, crevices behind loose bark and ivy growth on trunks.
- The suitability of habitats was assessed for reptiles such as Grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) and amphibians (including great crested newts - *Triturus cristatus*).
- The suitability of site was assessed for nesting birds.

Surveying in July is an optimal time for many protected species. An experienced surveyor can make reliable judgements about the quality and composition of habitats and their potential suitability for protected species. Only an initial assessment of the site was made and no stage 2 surveys were carried out. As such, a lack of evidence of a protected species does not necessarily indicate an absence of these species. The table below provides a summary of the potential for protected species to be present within the site.

Species	Present within 1km	Connectivity	Suitable habitat on site / evidence of presence	Likelihood of presence on site
Nesting Birds	Yes	Good via open agricultural land to the south and adjacent gardens.	Ground nesting within the site interior highly unlikely due to lack of cover. No nesting identified associated with the buildings or trees in the survey area. Some nesting within the dense hedgerows possible.	Moderate potential within the boundary and interior hedgerows.
Reptiles	Yes	Limited by the surrounding landscape but possible for species such as Grass Snake commuting from the adjacent open agricultural land.	Tiles, pipes etc were lifted and search for reptiles but none were found. The majority of the site area is suboptimal for reptile species.	Low - some individual Grass Snake may be foraging within the survey area but significant populations are very unlikely.
Amphibians	Yes	Limited by the surrounding landscape. Access by GCN present in a pond to the north is likely to be impacted by the road and residential houses.	There are no ponds or wetland areas within the site to attract amphibians. Habitat within the majority of the site interior is sub-optimal for amphibians.	Amphibians are unlikely to be present in any significant numbers and the potential for GCN is very low.
Bats	Yes	Reasonable due to the presence of roost within the village and tree canopy cover within the local gardens.	No buildings or trees with roost potential were identified during the inspection and no field signs of bats were found.	Negligible potential for roosting bats to be present. Some foraging across the garden likely.
Badger and larger mammals	Yes	There are no records of badger close to the site but access from the open agricultural land to the south is possible.	No field signs of badger were found in any part of the site area assessed.	The likelihood of badger accessing this land to forage is considered to be negligible.

Birds: The local area supports a range of bird species which includes some Schedule 1 species. The open ground within the survey area is unsuitable for ground nesting as it is exposed, frequently disturbed and within range of predatory cats. The buildings on the site were inspected and there is no evidence of any nesting activity associated with these. No activity or evidence of Schedule 1 bird species was seen during the site inspection and there was no evidence of nesting activity associated with any of the buildings inspected.

There is potential for nesting activity in the future within the boundary and internal hedgerows. Measures to avoid disturbance to any nests or nesting activity will need to be considered within any development. If any work is proposed to the hedgerows or any need to be removed, this work should take place outside of the nesting season or be preceded by an inspection carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist.

Reptiles: The walkover survey of the site area was completed on a grid pattern (as far as was possible) looking for evidence or indication of reptiles. No sightings or physical evidence of reptiles was seen during the inspection completed in July. It is possible individual reptiles such as Grass Snake could be commuting and foraging along the field boundary hedgerows and accessing the site from the south. ***Significant numbers of reptiles are considered highly unlikely in the future but there may be individual reptiles such as Grass Snake present. It is recommended that prior to the removal of***

the building materials these should be hand searched by an Ecologist as a precaution.

Amphibians: The presence of significant numbers of amphibians in the area surveyed is considered unlikely as there are no water features or wetland area present and the site is sub-optimal. The inspection found no evidence of amphibians. There is a single record of GCN from 2009 within a pond approximately 150m to the north which is on the opposite side of Main Road and the houses lining this. These will prevent a partial barrier to commuting amphibians from this direction. Given the combination of barrier and distance and the lack of optimal habitat within the survey area to encourage amphibians into this, the likelihood of GCN being present is considered to be very low. Further surveys and specific mitigation measures for amphibians are not recommended but it would be prudent to have an ecologist inspect the site, particularly the building materials storage areas, immediately prior to these being removed.

Chiroptera: The building on the property have been inspected and no field evidence of roosting bats was found in any location. All of the building have been assessed as having negligible roost potential. The trees were inspected and none of these have any significant structural features which may be of interest to roosting bats and all are placed within Category 3 - *Trees with negligible potential to support bat roosts*. (Table 8.4 in Bat Surveys-Good Practice Guidelines)

Invertebrates: The area assessed does not appear to support a diverse range of flora. The potential for a significant assemblage of invertebrates to be present within the survey area is quite low at the present time and further invertebrate surveys are not recommended.

Mammals: During the inspection of the survey area a thorough search for evidence of badger was completed.

No significant established tracks or trails indicative of badger activity were found within the survey area and no sett entrances found. Further surveys for badger are not recommended. Since the site area lies immediately adjacent to open agricultural land and badger can be highly mobile, it would be prudent to implement a construction methodology to protect badgers from accidental harm during any development work that may be approved within this site as a precautionary measure. The methodology should incorporate the following measures:

- The covering of excavations overnight to prevent animals falling in, or the provision of an escape ramp (e.g. secured scaffold boards) allowing animals to climb out.
- Secure storage of all materials, fuels, wire fencing etc, that may harm badgers / otters and other animals.
- Restricting access by site personnel to any adjoining buffer zones of trees and scrub to the west of the development area.
- The eastern boundary hedge should be fenced with heras fencing on the side of the construction zone.
- Keeping works at night-time to a minimum will minimise disturbance to commuting and foraging badgers / otters near the site. Where works after dark are necessary, lighting should be as low as possible and directed away from boundary features such as hedgerows and trees.
- A toolbox talk from a suitably experienced ecologist to all site workers will be given prior to construction works detailing the procedures to be followed if a badger / otter is found within the construction zone during works.
- If a badger or otter is found within the construction zone during works, all works must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted immediately. Their advice should be followed precisely.

The potential presence of Hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) is considered quite likely as there are local records of this species being seen within the surrounding 1km area. Measures to protect hedgehogs should be taken and this should include an inspection of any vegetation by an ecologist ahead of clearance work being carried out. Any found should be moved to a temporary refugia located in a suitable position within hedgerow in the field area to the south. Measures to protect badger will also be effective in protecting hedgehog.

3.3 Ecological Constraints and Opportunities

Constraints:

No significant ecological constraints have been identified during the survey. The following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Nesting birds may be present in the dense boundary and internal hedgerows in the future.
- Whilst unlikely, individual reptiles such as Grass Snake and common amphibians such as Toad may access the garden in the future and individuals could be present.
- There is potential for hedgehogs to be present within the site, particularly around the site boundaries and badger foraging activity cannot be entirely ruled out in the future although this is unlikely. .

Part 3: Initial Ecological Appraisal

4. Impact of Proposed Site Development

Within the NPPF 2021, guidance on the provision or retention of biodiversity within any proposed areas for development and measures to ensure the safeguarding of protected species are provided. Development should seek to contribute a net gain in biodiversity with an emphasis on improving ecological networks and linkages where possible.

The NPPF para 170 stresses that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by a variety of measures including minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity. This is reinforced by Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which identifies that 'a key purpose of this duty is to embed consideration of biodiversity as an integral part of policy and decision making throughout the public sector, which should be seeking to make a significant contribution to the achievement of the commitments made by government in its 25 Year Environment Plan' (PPG natural environment Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 8- 009-20190721).

The development proposal is shown within **Figure 4** below. This report is not intended to be a suitable alternative to an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) in accordance with the CIEEM Guidelines on Ecological Impact Assessment, 2016.

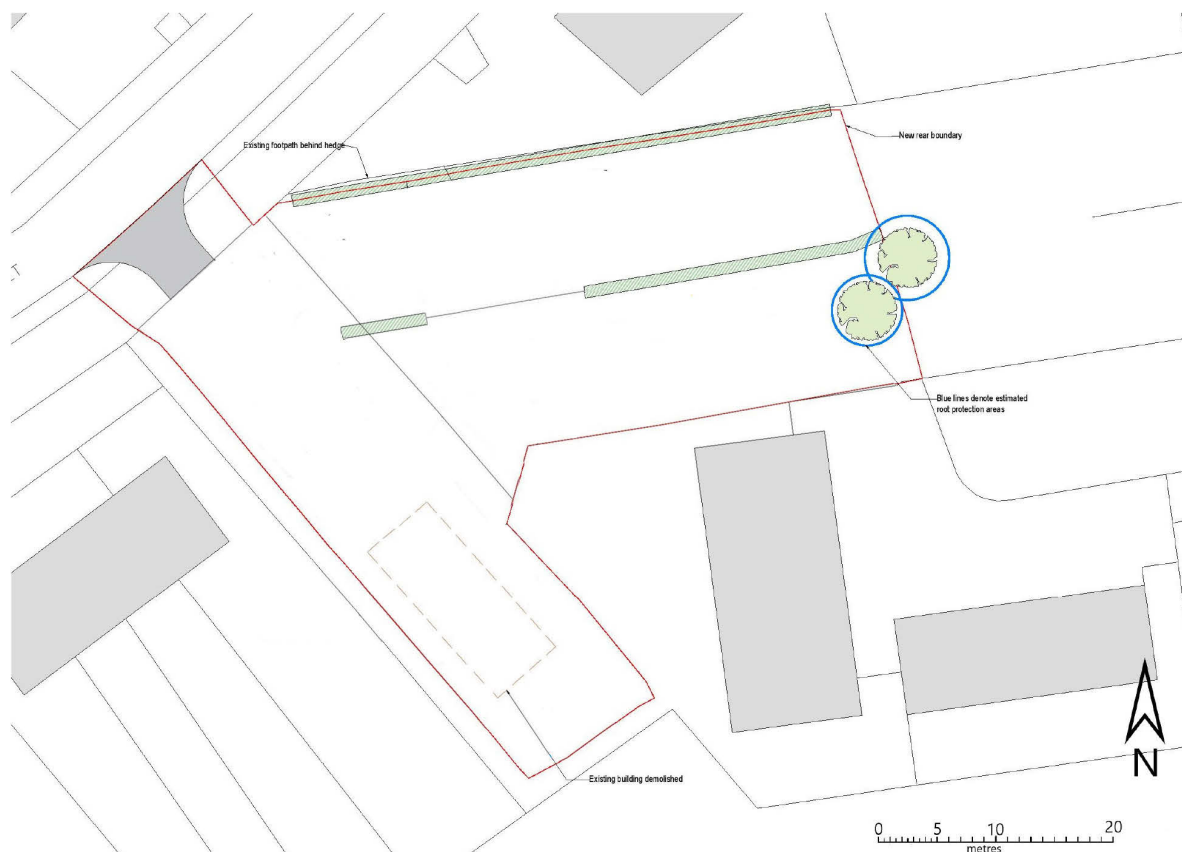


Figure 4 – Conceptual Development Plan

As noted within this report, the 'mitigation hierarchy' described in British Standard BS 42020:2013 should be applied in regard to biodiversity within sites being considered for development which is a stepwise process:

- **Avoidance** – avoiding adverse effects through good design.

- **Mitigation** – where it is unavoidable, mitigation measures should be employed to minimise adverse effects.
- **Compensation** – where residual effects remain after mitigation it may be necessary to provide compensation to offset any harm.
- **Enhancement** – planning decisions often present the opportunity to deliver benefits for biodiversity, which can also be explored alongside the above measures to resolve potential adverse effects.

The measures for avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement should be proportionate to the predicted degree of risk to biodiversity and to the nature and scale of the proposed development (BS 42020:2013, section 5.5).

The table below considers the features present on the site in the context of the hierarchy.

Feature	Ecological Significance	Hierarchy application	Impact of proposed development
Buildings	Negligible	None	The existing building will be removed to allow space for new housing and gardens
Hardstanding	Negligible	None	The proposed development remove the hardstanding to allow space for new housing, driveways and gardens.
Specimen trees	Low	Avoidance / Mitigation	The larger garden trees are being retained. The loss of small trees will require mitigation in the form of new tree planting and landscaping.
Ruderals and Ephemerals	Low	Mitigation	The proposed development will utilise the former garden areas which have become overgrown. Replacement garden areas and landscaping will be provided.
Hedgerows	Moderate	Avoidance	The proposed development will retain the boundary hedgerows and incorporate these into new garden boundaries .
Residential Garden	High	Mitigation	The existing residential garden areas will be removed to allow space for new housing and gardens

4.1 Potential Impact on nearby Statutory and Non-statutory sites

The Local Wildlife Sites identified within 1km of the land inspected are all sufficiently distant to avoid any impact from the small scale of the development being proposed.

4.2 Impact of the Proposals on Site Biodiversity

The level of biodiversity within the site being assessed must be a consideration in determining the impact on biodiversity that may arise from any development on the site. Within the NPPF 2021 it states that any development proposal should seek to “*contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change.....*”

Within the Guidance it specifically states that “*Planning.... decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by.....protecting and enhancing valued*

landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils.....recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland.”

The survey area comprises an area of buildings, hardstanding and residential garden becoming partly overgrown now that it is no longer in use. The site has limited biodiversity at the present time due to the former management and use of this land. No evidence of any significant locally rare plants or plant communities within or around the site area surveyed was identified during the survey.

At the present time a conceptual scheme has been provided to indicate the scale and layout of the proposed development. Specific details of the proposed landscaping associated with this have not been provided but it is clear for the development plan that the boundary hedgerows are being retained and each of the three plots will have a garden area. A Biodiversity Net Gain assessment has not been completed but since the site is of low biodiversity value and a large proportion of this area comprises building and hardstanding, it is likely that any significant loss in calculated biodiversity units across this site area from the development can be avoided.

4.3 Impact of the Proposals on Protected Species

The requirements of Part IV of ODPM / Defra Circular 06/2005 in regard to the protection of certain species are still applicable under NPPF. The presence of protected species at the site must be taken into consideration. Under the requirements of the NPPF provision in relation to the presence of protected species on, or making use of, a site proposed for any development must be taken into account. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where development requiring appropriate assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives is being considered, planned or determined or where the impact on protected species is considered to outweigh the benefit of development.

The inspection completed in July 2023 did not identify any physical evidence or field signs of protected species within the survey area. After inspection of the site, assessment of its landscape context and a review of the biological records for this area, the following precautionary measures are advised:

Birds: There is negligible potential for ground nesting birds to be present and no nests were found. However, nesting is possible within the dense hedgerows in the future. If any vegetation removal needs to be carried out, this should be completed outside of the nesting season or be preceded by an inspection by an Ecologist to ensure no nesting birds are present or determine what mitigation measures to protect nesting birds are required.

Reptiles and Amphibians: There is potential for individual reptiles to be present although none were found. It is unlikely that common amphibians such as Toad will be present but this cannot be entirely ruled out. The likelihood of GCN being present is considered to be negligible. As a precaution, the building materials stored across the site area should be inspected by an Ecologist as a precaution ahead of any clearance works starting.

Hedgehogs and Badger: No evidence of these species was found on the site but since it lies adjacent to open agricultural land the presence of these mobile species foraging near the site in the future cannot be entirely ruled out. Measures to protect hedgehogs and badgers should be included within any construction management plan prepared for this site.

General Recommendations: It is recommended that as part of landscaping works the following biodiversity enhancements should be incorporated

- d) At least one bat roost tube should be incorporated into the structure of one of the new houses on the south or west facing side
- e) At least two nest bricks/ tubes should be incorporated into the structure of one of the new houses on the north facing side of this in a suitable position
- f) Hedgehog and reptile refugia should be positioned along the south boundary hedgerow where this will be accessible to wildlife commuting along the field boundary.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Christopher Barker", written in dark ink on a white background.

Christopher Barker CEnv ACIEEM

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National Biodiversity Network: Protected species data downloaded from URL <http://data.nbn.org/interactive/map>

Appendix 1 – Plant Species List

Tree and Shrub Species	Ground Flora and Perennial Species
Apple <i>Malus domestica</i> Ash <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> Beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> Birch <i>Betula pendula</i> Blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> Cherry <i>Prunus avium</i> Cherry Laurel <i>Prunus laurocerasus</i> Cypress (amenity) <i>Chamaecyparis spp</i> Damson <i>Prunus domestica</i> Elm <i>Ulmus spp</i> Goat Willow <i>Salix caprea</i> Hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> Holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> Lilac <i>Syringa vulgaris</i>	Bindweed <i>Calystegia sepium</i> Black Medick <i>Medicago lupulina</i> Boston Ivy <i>Parthenocissus spp</i> Bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> Buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> , Creeping Buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i> Creeping Thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , Dandelion <i>Taraxacum sp</i> Forget me Not <i>Myosotis arvensis</i> Garlic Mustard <i>Alliaria petiolata</i> , Groundsel <i>Senecio vulgaris</i> Herb Bennet <i>Geum urbanum</i> Iris <i>Iris foetidissima</i> , Ivy <i>Hedera helix</i> . Lesser Willowherb <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> Nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> Perennial Ryegrass <i>Lolium perenne</i> Periwinkle <i>Aquilegia spp</i> Plantain <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> St John's Wort <i>Geranium robertianum</i> Spear Thistle <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> White Dead Nettle <i>Lamium album</i> Yorkshire Fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i>

This species list records the species seen during the site inspection and is not presented as a detailed botanical survey of the site.

Appendix 2 – Biological Records from Leicestershire and Rutland Biological Records Centre

Separate Appendix