

Gleeds, Hinckley College

ECOLOGICAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

784-B026224 V1



Gleeds

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Prepared by: Thomas Cumberland Consultant Ecologist	Checked by Michelle McGinn Senior Ecologist	Approved By: Elizabeth Sanders MCIEEM Principal Ecologist	

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Contents	Summary
Site Location	The 'site' is located at Hinckley in Leicestershire and is centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SP 43998 94547 – see Figure 1. It comprises of a school with associated buildings, hardstanding, broad-leaved scattered trees, amenity grassland, one accessible waterbody, and boundary intact species-poor hedgerows. The site is located within an urban setting with residential housing surrounding the site to the north and the west of the site. Surrounding the site to the east of the site is Hinckley golf course. Surrounding the site to the south of the site are arable fields.
Proposals	The 'Preliminary Proposal' for the site includes the construction of a new building on the school grounds. The proposal also includes the refurbishment of specified buildings, demolition of buildings and hard and soft landscaping of some areas of the site.
Existing Site Information	No reports relating to the site were known to Tetra Tech at the time of writing this report.
Scope of this Survey(s)	The purpose of this Ecological Feasibility Study is to provide an assessment of potential ecological constraints to inform any future development proposal for the site. Recommendations for further surveys, avoidance, mitigation or enhancement measures (as appropriate) have also been provided.
Results	The site supports the following habitats: amenity grassland, hardstanding, broad-leaved scattered trees, open water, intact species-poor hedgerows and buildings. Habitats within the site boundary were assessed as having potential to support the following notable and protected species: • GCN; • Badger; • Bats (roosting and foraging); • Invertebrates; • Reptiles; • Birds (nesting and foraging); and • Hedgehog.
Recommendations	The following recommendations are made: • All hedgerows, waterbodies and broad-leaved scattered trees within the site should be retained and protected from the impacts of the development where possible. • Any buildings identified with bat roost suitability which are to be impacted either directly or indirectly will require further bat emergence / return surveys prior to submission of a planning application. • Avoidance of works to vegetation or buildings during bird breeding season (late February – early September). Alternatively, a nesting bird

	survey should be carried out by an experienced ecological clerk of works 24hr -48hr prior to the commencement of vegetation or building clearance during the bird breeding season. • ECoW consideration for species including reptiles and hedgehog where vegetation clearance may be required in suitable habitat. • A pre-commencement survey of the site and within 30 m of the site boundary for the consideration of badgers. • Pond TN5 on site was assessed as having Poor suitability to support breeding great crested newts using an HSI assessment. One of the ponds (TN6) was not accessed during the site visit in July due to dense vegetation. Given this is the feasibility stage of the assessment, it is recommended that a check of the ponds on and within 500 m of the site are made prior to submitting a planning application for the site to determine whether the pond with no access holds water and is suitable to support GCN. Enhancement opportunities. • Additional planting, including hedgerows of native trees and shrubs in the landscaping schemes. • Bats - artificial bat roost boxes and a sympathetic lighting strategy • Birds - bird boxes • Invertebrates –incorporate nectar rich plant species into the landscape scheme
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GLOSSARY

Badger Act	Protection of Badgers Act 1992
BCT	Bat Conservation Trust
BoCC	Bird(s) of Conservation Concern
BSI	British Standard Institute
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
CRoW Act	Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
DEFRA	Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
ECOW	Ecological Clerk of Works
GCN	Great Crested Newt
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LERC	Local Ecological Record Centre
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LRERC	Leicester & Rutland Environmental Records Centre
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MCIEEM	Member of Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management
Natura 2000 site	A European site designated for its nature conservation value
NE	Natural England
NERC Act	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
SAP	Species Action Plan
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPI	Species of Principal Importance
SSSI	Site(s) of Special Scientific Interest
W&CA	Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

Tetra Tech was commissioned by Gleeds in July 2021 to undertake an Ecological Appraisal of the site known as Hinckley College in Hinckley, Leicestershire. The survey was requested to provide an assessment of potential ecological constraints to inform any future development proposal for the site.

This report has been prepared by Consultant Ecologist Thomas Cumberland and the conditions pertinent to it are provided in Appendix A.

1.2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The 'site' is located at Hinckley in Leicestershire and is centred at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SP 43998 94547– see Figure 1. It comprises of a school with associated buildings, hardstanding, scattered broad-leaved trees, amenity grassland, one accessible waterbody, and boundary intact species-poor hedgerows.

The site is located within an urban setting with residential housing to the north and the west of the site, Hinckley golf course to the east, and arable fields to the south.

1.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The 'Preliminary Proposal' for the site includes the construction of a new building on the school grounds. The proposal also includes the refurbishment of specified buildings, demolition of buildings and hard and soft landscaping of some areas of the site.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The purpose of this report is to complete:

- A desk study to obtain existing information on statutory and non-statutory sites of nature conservation interest and relevant records of protected/notable species within 1 km of the site;;
- An extended Phase 1 habitat survey, involving a walkover of the site to record habitat types and dominant vegetation, including any invasive species, and a reconnaissance survey for evidence of protected fauna or habitats capable of supporting such species;
- An assessment of the potential ecological receptors present on site, identify any constraints they pose to future development and (if possible) any recommendations for any further surveys, avoidance, mitigation or enhancement measures to inform future development proposal options (as appropriate).

Note that scientific names are provided at the first mention of each species and common names (where appropriate) are then used throughout the rest of the report for ease of reading.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 DESK STUDY

2.1.1 Previous Reports

Tetra Tech are unaware of any previous reports relating to the site.

2.1.2 Local Ecological Records Centre

Data was requested from a number of sources as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Desk Study data obtained

Data Source	Data Received	Data obtained
Magic ¹	July 2021	Statutory Designated Sites, Impact Risk Zones, EPS licences for bats and GCN and Priority habitats
Leicester & Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC)	July 2021	A search was made of statutory, non-statutory and protected and notable records within 1 km of the centre of the site.

The data search did not cover:

- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs); or
- Conservation Areas designated for their special architectural and historic interest.

Note that relevant extracts from the desk study are provided in Appendix C, as appropriate.

2.2 FIELD SURVEYS

The following methodologies have been used to identify the ecological receptors present on or near the site, which are relevant to the proposed development.

2.2.1 Habitats

An extended Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken on the site on 13th July 2021 by Tetra Tech Consultant Ecologist Thomas Cumberland. The weather conditions were sunny with a slight breeze. Light rain occurred for roughly one hour whilst the surveyor was on the site.

The vegetation and broad habitat types within the site were noted during the survey in accordance with the categories specified for a Phase 1 Vegetation and Habitat Survey (JNCC, 2010). Dominant plant species were recorded for each habitat present using nomenclature according to Stace (2019). The site was also appraised for its suitability to support notable flora, with regard to the *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* (CIEEM, 2017).

¹ www.magic.gov.uk

2.2.2 Protected & Notable Species

The site was inspected for evidence of, and its potential to support, protected or notable species, especially those listed under Schedule 2 of the Habitat Regulations, Schedule 5 of the W&CA, the CROW Act, those given extra protection under the NERC Act, and species included in the Leicestershire and Rutland LBAP. Habitats were appraised for their suitability to support notable or protected species and assessment was based on UK guidance and references in Appendix B.

2.2.3 Invasive Species

The site was searched for evidence of invasive plant species, such as Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* (formerly *Fallopia japonica*), Indian (Himalayan) balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, wall cotoneaster *Cotoneaster horizontalis* and rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* × *Rhododendron maximum*.

2.3 LIMITATIONS

To determine presence or likely absence of protected species usually requires multiple visits at suitable times of the year. As a result, this survey focuses on assessing the potential of the site to support species of note, which are considered to be of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity with reference to those given protection under UK or European wildlife legislation. This report cannot therefore be considered a comprehensive assessment of the ecological interest of the site. However, it does provide an assessment of the ecological interest present on the day the site was visited and highlights areas where further survey work may be recommended.

Access was not possible 50 m to the eastern or the southern boundary of the site to conduct a check for badgers. The habitat to the east of the site was largely amenity grassland and broad-leaved scattered trees, located within the grounds of Hinckley golf course. The habitat to the south of the site is arable fields, separated by a railway line. The habitat to the eastern and the southern boundaries of the site are considered optimal habitats for badger foraging and commuting, therefore restricted access to these areas is considered to be a minor limitation to the survey.

One waterbody could not be accessed during the survey (refer to Target Note 6). The waterbody was not accessed due to the presence of dense vegetation. The surveyor could not confirm if the waterbody was dry or if it held water at the time of the survey, and a Habitat Suitability Assessment for GCN could not be completed.

The details of this report will remain valid for a period of **two years** from the date of the survey (e.g. July 2023), after which the validity of this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether further updates are necessary. Note that the recommendations within this report should be reviewed (and reassessed if necessary) should there be any changes to the sites red line boundary and once development proposals are made available.

3.0 RESULTS AND EVALUATION

3.1 DESIGNATED SITES

The following designated sites of ecological importance have been identified within 1 km of the site.

Table 2: Designated Sites Within 1 km

Important Ecological Feature	Designation	Distance & Direction from Site	Results	Ecological Value / Development Effect ?
Statutory designated sites.	LNR	0.42 km north-east of the site	Burbage and Common Woods is a LNR which is located 0.42 km north-east of the site. Burbage and Common Woods is designated for its habitats including grassland, semi-ancient woodland and scrubland. The site supports protected / notable species including 250 species of fungi, 15 damselfly species and over 100 bird species.	The site has no hydrological link to the LNR. In the absence of mitigation Burbage and Common Woods may be impacted by a proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.
	SSSI	0.78 km east	Burnage Wood and Aston Firs is a SSSI which is located 0.78 km east of the site. The site is designated for its ash-oak-maple woodland.	The site has no hydrological link to the SSSI. In the absence of mitigation Burnage Wood and Aston Firs may be impacted by any proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.
Non-statutory designated sites	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	0.24 km south	Outwoods grassland (LWS) is a LWS which is located 0.24 km south	The site has no hydrological link to the LWS. In the absence of mitigation Outwoods grassland may be

Important Ecological Feature	Designation	Distance & Direction from Site	Results	Ecological Value / Development Effect ?
			of the site. The site supports habitat including Mesotrophic grassland.	impacted by a proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.
	LWS	0.41 km south	Land at The Coppice / Woodgate, Burbage is a LWS which is located 0.41 km south of the site. The site supports habitat including Mesotrophic grassland, mature trees, a pond and wet woodland.	The site has no hydrological link to the LWS. In the absence of mitigation Land at The Coppice / Woodgate, Burbage may be impacted by a proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.
	LWS	0.43 km south	Woodgate hedge, Burbage is a LWS which is located 0.43 km south of the site. The site supports habitat including hedgerows.	The site has no hydrological link to the LNR. In the absence of mitigation Woodgate hedge, Burbage may be impacted by a proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.
	LWS	0.46 km south	Trees at The Coppice, Burbage is a LWS which is located 0.46 km south of the site. The site supports habitat including mature trees.	The site has no hydrological link to the LWS. In the absence of mitigation Trees at The Coppice, Burbage may be impacted by a proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.
	LWS	0.55 km south-east	Burbage Wood hedgerows 2 is a LWS which is located 0.55 km south-east of the site.	The site has no hydrological link to the LWS. In the absence of mitigation Burbage Wood hedgerows 2 may be

Important Ecological Feature	Designation	Distance & Direction from Site	Results	Ecological Value / Development Effect ?
				impacted by a proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.
	LWS	0.57 km south-west	Courting Stiles scrub extension is a LWS which is located 0.57 km south-west of the site. The site supports habitat including mesotrophic grassland with scrub.	The site has no hydrological link to the LWS. In the absence of mitigation Courting Stiles scrub extension may be impacted by a proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.
	LWS	0.83 km north-west	Little Pit fishery is a LWS which is located 0.83 km south-west of the site. The site supports waterbodies.	The site has no hydrological link to the LWS. In the absence of mitigation Little Pit Fishery may be impacted by a proposed development. Potential effects and mitigation measures required should be reviewed once the details of the development proposals are known.

3.2 HABITATS AND PROTECTED & NOTABLE SPECIES

Table 3 below provides a brief summary of the habitats on site and their importance, their locations can be found on the Phase 1 habitat map in Figure 3, with detailed, habitat descriptions as Target Notes included in Appendix C, as appropriate.

These habitats are further discussed in Section 4 of this report. Habitats which are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposed works are excluded from further assessment.

Where the potential for species presence has been identified (e.g. buildings with bat potential) this has been target noted on Figure 3, with a summary of the suitability of the site's habitats to support these species provide in Table 3.

Species which could be adversely affected by the proposed works are further discussed in Section 4 of this report. Species which are not considered to be adversely affected by the proposed works are excluded from further assessment.

Table 3: Habitat and Species Evaluation

Ecological Feature	Legal / Policy	Target Note Reference (Figure 3)	Result	Importance Assessment & Summary Recommendation
Habitats				
Scattered broad-leaved trees	None See Section 3.3 Bat and Birds	TN1	Broad-leaved scattered trees are located at several points around the site. The trees are particularly located adjacent to and in between the buildings on site. Some trees were present around the grassland within the north and south-west of the site. The site supports the following tree species including, English oak <i>Quercus robur</i> , field maple <i>Acer campestre</i> , alder <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> , hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> , London plane <i>Platanus x acerifolia</i> , dogwood <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> , blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> , hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , elm <i>Ulmus procera</i> , sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> , Douglas fir <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i> , beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> , Scots pine <i>Pinus sylvestris</i> and silver birch <i>Betula pendula</i> . The trees have suitability to support nesting birds. The trees were assessed as having negligible suitability to support roosting bats.	Retain and protect all trees where possible in line with BS 5837 (BSI, 2012) or mitigate/compensate with the same broad habitat. See section below in relation to bats.
Intact species-poor hedgerows	NERC HPI See Section 3.3 Bat Birds	TN2	Intact species-poor hedgerows were located within the site's northern boundary and along the eastern boundary. This habitat is considered to be of good ecological value and has the potential to support breeding birds and commuting and foraging bats. The species within the hedgerow consisted of woody species, dominated by hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> and included field maple, blackthorn, beech and Hazel <i>Corylus avellane</i> . The understory of the hedgerows included species	Retain and protect hedgerows where possible in line with BS 5837 (BSI, 2012) or mitigate/compensate with same or better broad habitat.

			such as cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i> , stinging nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> and the occasional meadow buttercup <i>Ranunculus acris</i> .	
Amenity Grassland	None	TN3	Amenity grassland is dominant within the site and the ownership boundary. Within the grassland, species included perennial rye grass <i>Lolium perenne</i> , false oat-grass <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> and Timothy <i>Phleum pratense</i> , meadow buttercup, dandelion <i>Taraxacum agg.</i> , creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> , common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> and daisy <i>Bellis perennis</i> . The amenity grassland on the site is considered to be of low ecological value due to the regular management. The grassland does have the potential to support foraging badger, foraging hedgehog and common invertebrates.	Habitat has low ecological value. Any habitat loss should be compensated through enhancement of retained and newly created habitats within the site.
Hardstanding	None	TN4	Hardstanding is present on the site in the form of car parking, roads and footpaths particularly surrounding the buildings.	Habitat has negligible ecological value. No compensation for the loss of this habitat is required.
Buildings	None See Section 3.3 Bat and Birds	B1-B16	A total of 16 buildings were located on the site (B1 – B16). Building descriptions are provided in Appendix C.	Habitat has negligible ecological value although it may support protected or notable species. No compensation for the loss of this habitat is required. See recommendations for bats below.
Open water	None See Section 3.3 GCN	TN5 and TN6	Waterbody TN5 is located in the centre of the site. At the time of the survey, this waterbody held water. A HSI of waterbody TN5 was conducted and the results are discussed in the GCN section below. This habitat has good ecological value. This habitat provides the potential to support GCN. This habitat also has the	Recommend the development retains and enhances ponds. Mitigation/compensation will be required if lost, with the same habitat.

			potential to support foraging bats, badgers, reptiles, hedgehog and birds. An further existing waterbody TN6 is located to the north west of the site, adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the site. This waterbody was not accessible at the time of the survey but was anecdotally recorded through a conversation with a school staff member.	
Protected and/or Notable species				
GCN	EPS; SPI: WCA	TN5 and TN6	LRERC returned four records of GCN within 1 km of the site, the most recent from 2019. MAGIC returned three granted EPS licences within 1 km, the closest of these, being located 0.2 km north-east of the site. The licence was granted for the destruction of a resting place (EPSM2012-4412). TN5 was located within centre of the site. The HSI score for TN5 was 0.39 indicating 'poor' suitability. The water was approximately 0.4 m in depth. The pond was dominated by bulrush <i>Typha latifolia</i> with occasional hard rush <i>Juncus inflexus</i> and Lilypad <i>Nymphaea alba</i>. Ariel imagery identified 12 waterbodies offsite, within 500 m of the site boundary. Terrestrial habitat was considered sub-optimal given the limited protective cover from high level of management and high level of human activity at the school however the eastern and southern boundary vegetation has a higher value habitat for GCN if present.	Prior to submitting a detailed planning application, it is recommended that a return visit is made to site, to assess the suitability of the ponds to support breeding GCN and to assess whether TN6 is accessible and holds water This survey should be undertaken in March/early April as if the ponds are wet and considered more suitable to GCN then eDNA/presence/likely absence surveys can be undertaken in the required ecological window.

Reptiles	WCA; SPI	N/A	LRERC returned eleven records of grass snake <i>Natrix helvetica</i> within 1 km of the site. Terrestrial habitat is optimal in the south of the site. Terrestrial habitat is sub-optimal for the majority of the site given the limited protective cover from high level of habitat management and high level of human activity at the school.	Toolbox talk and ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) for reptiles during reptile active season which runs from April to October (dependent upon weather conditions) if suitable habitat is to be impacted - see Section 4.
Bats	EPS; SPI; WCA; WMA; LBAP	B1 – B16, TN1, TN5 and TN6	A total of seven species of bats were returned by LRERC. MAGIC returned no granted EPS licences within the 1 km search. The desk study returned records for the following species including, common pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>, soprano pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>, brown-long eared <i>Plecotus auritus</i>, lesser noctule <i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>, Nathusius's pipistrelle, western Barbastelle and noctule bat species. The most recent record was from 2017 for common pipistrelles. Suitable roosting features were identified in ten of the sixteen buildings located within the site. Bat roost suitability: • 5 High suitability buildings: B1, B3, B5, B10, and B11; • 1 Moderate suitability building: B2; • 2 Low suitability buildings: B6 and B14; and • 8 Negligible suitability buildings: B4, B7, B8, B9, B12, B13, B15 and B16. Suitable habitat for foraging & commuting bats is present in the form of broad-leaved scattered trees and intact species-poor hedgerow to the south of the site.	Bat emergence/re-entry survey (March – September inclusive) of buildings B2, B3, B4, B6, B7, B8, B9 and B10 should they be included within the development. The trees located within the site ownership area, should be assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats if they will be impacted directly or indirectly from the proposed development. Where a suitable tree is identified, bat emergence/re-entry survey are likely to be required prior to any works to the tree.

Badgers	WCA; PBA; WMA	N/A	LRERC returned two records of badgers, the most recent from 2019. Suitable foraging habitats present (scrub, hedgerow, and amenity grassland). Badger sett creation is unlikely on the site.	Low risk of badger setts being present adjacent to the site and within the woodland located within the ownership boundary. Pre-commencement badger survey is recommended for any works within the site or within 30 m of site boundary see Section 4.
Hazel dormouse	EPS; SPI; WCA; LBAP	N/A	No records were returned by LRERC. MAGIC returned no granted licences within the 1 km search. No suitable habitat is present on the site. No woodland habitat is present on or adjacent to the site and as such the habitat on site is not of a sufficient size to support a viable population of dormice.	None – unlikely to be present due to lack of suitable habitat.
Otter	EPS; SPI; WCA; LBAP	N/A	LRERC returned no records of Otter. Waterbody TN5 held water at the time of the survey and is considered to provide suitable habitat for otter, however, no hydrological links were identified between TN5 and any other waterbody located offsite. It is therefore considered unlikely that otter would use this habitat. Waterbody TN6 was inaccessible at the time of the survey and thus an assessment could not be made on the suitability to support otter.	None – unlikely to be present due to lack of suitable habitat.
Water Vole	SPI; WCA; LBAP	N/A	LRERC returned two records of water vole. Waterbody TN5 held water at the time of the survey as is considered to provide suitable habitat for water vole, however, no hydrological links were identified between TN6 and any other waterbody located offsite. It is therefore considered unlikely that water vole would use this habitat.	None – unlikely to be present due to lack of suitable habitat.

			Waterbody TN6 was inaccessible at the time of the survey and thus an assessment could not be made on the suitability to support water vole.	
Birds	SPI; WCA; LBAP	N/A	LRERC returned records relating to 30 species, including W&CA Sch 1 species. The Sch 1 species included: fieldfare <i>Turdus pilaris</i>, greylag goose <i>Anser anser</i>, hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i>, kingfisher <i>Alcedo atthis</i>, peregrine <i>Falco peregrinus</i>, red kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>, red-throated diver <i>Gavia stellata</i> and redwing <i>Turdus iliacus</i>. The latest record was for a peregrine falcon, which was recorded in 2019. Suitable foraging and nesting habitat present (broad-leaved scattered trees, hedgerows, ponds and buildings).	Potential to impact nesting and foraging birds. Retention of trees and hedgerow recommended. Pre-commencement survey or appropriate supervision of vegetation and building clearance if undertaken during breeding season (late February – early September)
Invertebrates including white clawed crayfish	EPS; SPI; WCA; LBAP	N/A	LRERC returned eight records including blood-vein <i>Timandra comae</i>, buff ermine <i>Spilosoma lutea</i>, cinnabar <i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>, dusky thorn <i>Ennomos fuscantaria</i>, green-brindled crescent <i>Allophyes oxyacanthae</i>, rosy rustic <i>Hydraecia micacea</i>, sallow <i>Cirrhia icteritia</i> and signal crayfish <i>Pacifastacus leniusculus</i>. The most recent record was for Signal crayfish which was recorded in 2019. Habitat onsite is likely to support common and widespread invertebrates. The habitats are unlikely to support notable or protected species of invertebrates. Waterbody TN5 and TN6 is considered unlikely to support white-clawed crayfish as there are no hydrological links from the waterbodies TN5 and TN6 to other waterbodies located offsite.	None – notable and protected species are unlikely to be present due to lack of suitable habitat.
Hedgehog	SPI; WMA	N/A	LRERC returned eight records of hedgehogs. The most recent being from 2020.	Habitat connectivity should be maintained to allow hedgehogs to move across the site freely.

			Suitable foraging and commuting habitat present include hedgerow, trees (with understorey) and amenity grassland.	Avoid removal of ground vegetation over winter when hedgehog hibernate. If this is not possible an ECoW should be present November - mid March to conduct a check on suitable hibernation sites prior to clearance. see Section 4.
Invasive species	Sch9 WCA	N/A	None recorded during the survey. LRERC returned a total of nine records relating to five invasive species, including curly waterweed <i>Lagarosiphon major</i> , Himalayan balsam <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> , Japanese knotweed <i>Fallopia japonica</i> , variegated yellow archangel <i>Lamium galeobdolon subsp. Argentatum</i> and wall Cotoneaster <i>Cotoneaster horizontalis</i> .	None

Key

EPS (European Protected species) - with associated legal obligations under Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (as amended) – species and young (including eggs) protected from harm, disturbance, damage of breeding / resting place and taking from wild. Potential effects on these species are a material consideration during the making of planning decisions and appropriate survey information is required to inform such decisions.

LBAP (Local Biodiversity Action Plan) - Requiring consideration of biodiversity conservation within the development under ODPM Circular 06/2005.

SPI (Species of Principal Importance) and **HPI** (Habitat of Principal Importance) - Requiring consideration of biodiversity conservation under NERC Act 2006.

WCA (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended) – Domestically Protected Species with associated legal obligations, making it an offence to kill, injure or take any species listed on Schedule 5 or any wildlife bird and take, damage or destroy the nest and/or eggs of any wild bird.

Sch1 WCA – Birds listed under Schedule 1 of the WCA are afforded increased legal protections from disturbance while breeding as well as those protections listed under WCA. Potential effects on WCA protected species are a material consideration during the making of planning decisions and appropriate survey information is required to inform such decisions.

BoCC – Birds of Conservation Concern where red and amber listed birds have recognised conservation value and require consideration during planning (Eaton *et al.*, 2015).

NERC - Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

WMA (Wild Mammals Act) – Wild mammals protected from persecution (killing/injury, with intent)	PBA (Protection of Badgers Act 1992) – Badgers receive protection from persecution (killing, injuring and taking) and destruction/disturbance of their setts and the preservation of these species is a consideration in the making of planning decisions. Sch9 WCA – It is an offence to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant listed in Schedule 9
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4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

All of the works outlined within Table 4 below should be assumed as likely requirements for the pre-planning stage to inform a planning application, unless otherwise stated under the Optimal Survey/Delivery Period column.

Table 4: Recommendations/Mitigation Requirements

Ecological Feature	Recommendation / Mitigation Requirements	Optimal Survey/Delivery Period
Habitats	Scattered broad-leaved Trees Recommended for retention and protection where possible <u>Intact Species-poor hedgerow</u> Recommended retention and protection where possible and ongoing management to improve quality. <u>Open Water</u> Recommended retention and protection where possible and ongoing management to improve quality - See GCN below <u>Buildings</u> Demolition / refurbishment / new-build – see bats and birds below.	Habitats to be created / enhanced as advised by a landscape architect. Refer to relevant timings for protected / notable species below.
GCN	A HSI assessment of waterbody TN5 provided a Poor suitability for GCN. At the time of the survey, waterbody TN6 was inaccessible therefore a HSI could not be conducted.	Prior to detailed application, reassessment of ponds for suitability for breeding GCN between March and April. The site falls in an area where the District level licence for GCN is available. This may be an option to support development.
Reptiles	Whilst development plans are not available, the majority of habitat on site is semi-improved grassland. Once development plans are made available, an assessment will be made with regards to likely impacts on reptiles. Presence / absence reptile surveys are recommended. Should reptiles be present on the site, a toolbox talk should be delivered and sensitive working methods to be adopted during vegetation clearance and demolition / construction phases of the development.	Presence / absence surveys are required to determine the sites usage by reptiles. If reptiles are found to be present a toolbox talk and Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) for reptiles during reptile active season which extends from April to October (dependent upon weather conditions) if

		suitable habitat is to be impacted.
Bats	Further bat surveys are recommended if any of the following buildings are to be impacted: B1, B2, B3, B5, B6, B10, B11, B14 and B15, given that these buildings have been identified as having features which could support roosting bats. A sympathetic lighting strategy is to be designed to minimise light spill on to vegetated areas which are considered suitable to support roosting, foraging or commuting bats. Hoods / cowls can be used and sensor operated or timer operated lights can be used. Installation of bat boxes / bricks to enhance the site for bats or to compensate for any loss of bat roosts identified during bat presence /likely absence survey.	Dusk and / or dawn bat surveys between May and August.
Badger	Habitat present on the site is suitable for sett creation, foraging and commuting. No badger setts or foraging / commuting activity was recorded during the survey. Pre-commencement badger survey recommended for any works within the site and within 30 m of site boundary.	Anytime but may be more effective over winter with lower vegetation. It is recommended the pre commencement survey is undertaken no more than six months prior to works on the site.
Birds	The scrub, broad-leaved scattered trees, intact species-poor hedgerow and buildings have the potential to support nesting birds.	Vegetation and building demolition (subject to bat survey results) to be cleared outside of nesting season March to September (inclusive). Survey and ECoW is required between mid-February and September to conduct nesting bird checks on suitable habitats.
Hedgehog	Habitats present on site are likely to support hedgehog (intact species-poor hedgerow, amenity grassland and scrub) throughout the year including hibernation. Removal of dense ground vegetation or refugia piles should be avoided during winter (November – mid March) whilst hedgehogs are hibernating.	ECoW is required between November - mid March to conduct a check on suitable hibernation sites prior to clearance.

5.0 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCEMENTS

The following ecological enhancements are recommended to be incorporated into the development plans:

- **Bats and Birds - Enhancement** is recommended in the form of planting up and managing newly planted hedgerows and incorporating nectar rich and seed/fruit producing plant species into the landscape plan for the site.
- **Invertebrates** – The development should incorporate nectar rich plant species potentially in the form of a wildflower meadow. Creation of invertebrate houses and natural exposes or vegetated banks in sunny locations around the site. Incorporating this into the landscape plan will benefit common and widespread invertebrate species which may use the site post-construction.

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Please note that the legislation which is relevant to this report is not included in the list above, but details are included in Appendix B below.

FIGURES

Figure 1 – Site Location Plan

Figure 2 – Designated Sites Plan

Figure 3 – Phase 1 Habitat Plan



Site Location Plan

Hinckley

Gleeds



Legend

Site boundary

Notes:

Drawn by: SB
Checked by: TC
Office: Southampton

Figure No. 1
Revision No. A

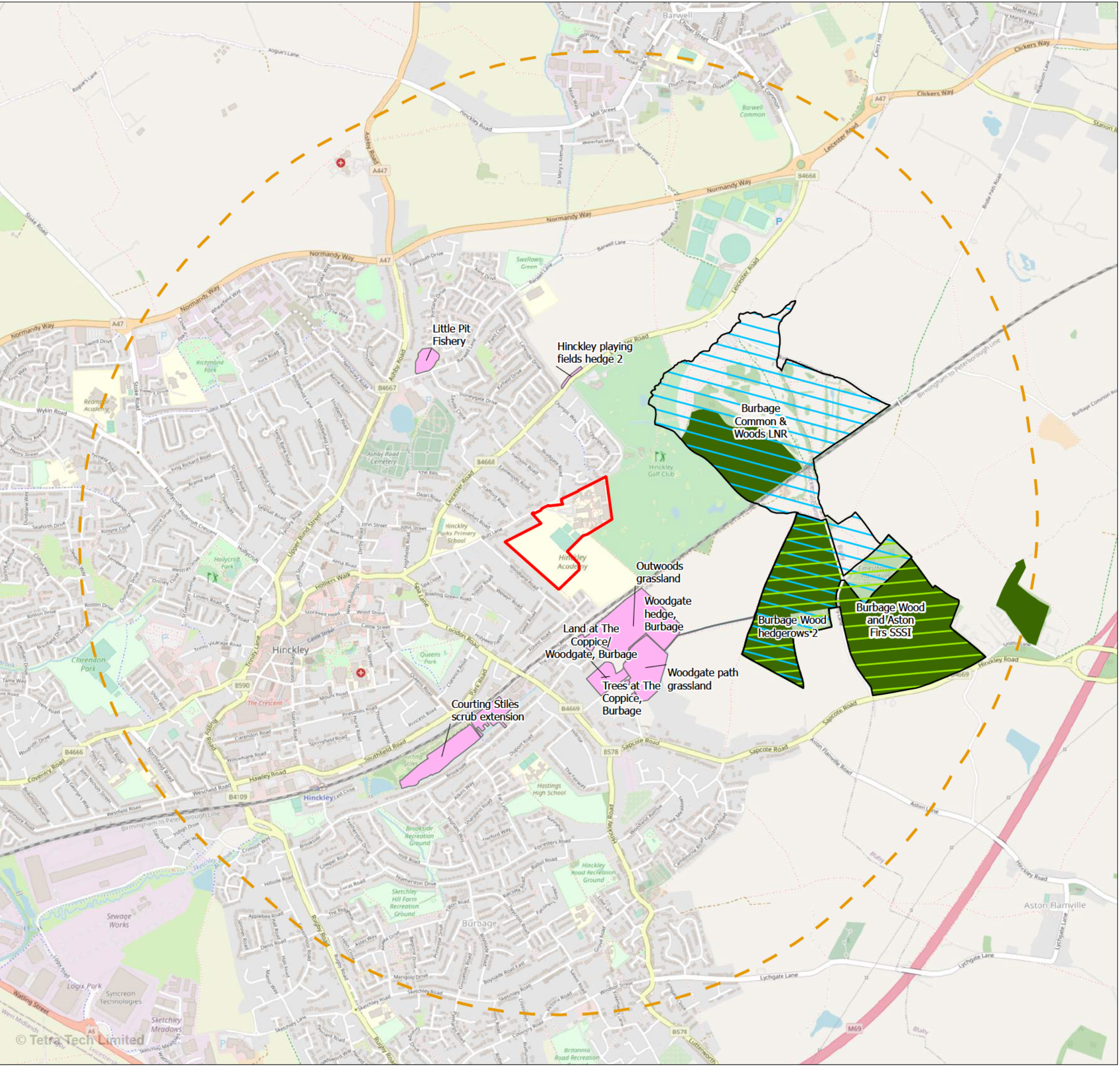
0 70 140 210 Meters
Scale 1 5,000 @A3

14 July 2021
NGR: 443881E 294420N

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Office Campus
Hedge End
Southampton
Hampshire, SO30 2AF



Designated Sites Plan Hinckley



Gleeds

Legend

- Site boundary
- 2km Site buffer
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR)
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Local Wildlife Site (LWS)

Notes:

Drawn by: MS
Checked by: TC
Office: Southampton

Figure No. 2
Revision No. A

0 260 520 780 Meters
Scale 1:17,529 @A3

26 July 2021
NGR: 443881E 294420N

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Feasibility Study

Hinckley



Gleeds

Legend

- Site boundary
- Scrub - dense/continuous
- Standing water
- Amenity grassland
- Buildings
- Hardstanding
- Intact hedge - species-poor
- Scattered tree
- Target note

Notes:

Drawn by: BB
Checked by: TC
Office: Southampton

Figure No. 3
Revision No. A

0 40 80 120 Meters
Scale 1 3,000 @A3

17 August 2021
NGR: 443957E 294368N

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Office Campus
Hedge End
Southampton
Hampshire, SO30 2AF

APPENDIX A – REPORT CONDITIONS

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The report refers, within the limitations stated, to the environment of the site in the context of the surrounding area at the time of the inspections’. Environmental conditions can vary and no warranty is given as to the possibility of changes in the environment of the site and surrounding area at differing times. No investigative method can eliminate the possibility of obtaining partially imprecise, incomplete or not fully representative information. Any monitoring or survey work undertaken as part of the commission will have been subject to limitations, including for example timescale, seasonal and weather-related conditions. Actual environmental conditions are typically more complex and variable than the investigative, predictive and modelling approaches indicate in practice, and the output of such approaches cannot be relied upon as a comprehensive or accurate indicator of future conditions. The “shelf life” of the Report will be determined by a number of factors including; its original purpose, the Client’s instructions, passage of time, advances in technology and techniques, changes in legislation etc. and therefore may require future re-assessment.

The whole of the report must be read as other sections of the report may contain information which puts into context the findings in any executive summary.

The performance of environmental protection measures and of buildings and other structures in relation to acoustics, vibration, noise mitigation and other environmental issues is influenced to a large extent by the degree to which the relevant environmental considerations are incorporated into the final design and specifications and the quality of workmanship and compliance with the specifications on site during construction. Tetra Tech accept no liability for issues with performance arising from such factors.

APPENDIX B – KEY LEGISLATION

Habitats Directive

The Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora, or the 'Habitats Directive', is a European Union directive adopted in 1992 in response to the Bern Convention. Its aims are to protect approximately 220 habitats and 1,000 species listed in its several Annexes.

In the UK, the Habitats Directive is transposed into national law via the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) in England and Wales, and via the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) in Northern Ireland.

Birds Directive

The EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) or 'Birds Directive' was introduced to achieve favourable conservation status of all wild bird species across their distribution range. In this context, the most important provision is the identification and classification of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for rare or vulnerable species listed in Annex 1 of the Directive, as well as for all regularly occurring migratory species, paying particular attention to the protection of wetlands of international importance.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

Regulations place a duty on the Secretary of State to propose a list of sites which are important for either habitats or species (listed in Annexes I or II of the Habitats Directive respectively) to the European Commission. These sites, if ratified by Ministers, are then designated as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) within six years. Public bodies must also help preserve, maintain and re-establish habitats for wild birds.

The 2018 amendments mainly related to the impact of the *People Over Wind* decision and some implications arising for neighbourhood plan development and a range of other planning tools including Local Development Orders and Permission in Principle – see here for full details:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/1307/note/made>

The Regulations make it an offence to deliberately capture, kill, disturb or trade in the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, uproot, destroy, or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 5 - see below:

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

This is the principal mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in the UK. This legislation is the chief means by which the 'Bern Convention' and the Birds Directive are implemented in the UK. Since it was first introduced, the Act has been amended several times.

The Act makes it an offence to (with exception to species listed in Schedule 2) intentionally:

- kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use; or
- take or destroy an egg of any wild bird.

Or to intentionally do the following to a wild bird listed in Schedule 1:

- disturbs any wild bird while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or
- disturbs dependent young of such a bird.

In addition, the Act makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to:

- intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or take any wild animal listed on Schedule 5;
- interfere with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places; and
- The Act also prohibits certain methods of killing, injuring, or taking wild animals.

Finally, the Act also makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to: intentionally pick, uproot or destroy any wild plant listed in Schedule 8, or any seed or spore attached to any such wild plant; unless an authorised person, intentionally uproot any wild plant not included in Schedule 8; or sell, offer or expose for sale, or possess (for the purposes of trade), any live or dead wild plant included in Schedule 8, or any part of, or anything derived from, such a plant.

Following all amendments to the Act, Schedule 5 'Animals which are Protected' contains a total of 154 species of animal, including several mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish and invertebrates. Schedule 8 'Plants which are Protected' of the Act, contains 185 species, including higher plants, bryophytes and fungi and lichens. A comprehensive and up-to-date list of these species can be obtained from the JNCC website.

Part 14 of the Act makes unlawful to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any plant which is listed in Part II of Schedule 9.

It is recommended that plant material of these species is disposed of as bio-hazardous waste, and these plants should not be used in planting schemes.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

The main legislation protecting badgers in England and Wales is the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (the 1992 Act). Under the 1992 Act it is an offence to: wilfully kill, injure, take or attempt to kill, injure or take a badger; dig for a badger; interfere with a badger sett by, damaging a sett or any part thereof, destroying a sett, obstructing access to a sett, causing a dog to enter a sett or disturbing a badger while occupying a sett.

The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as: "any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger"

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 41 (S41) of this Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list (in consultation with Natural England) of Habitats and Species which are of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal (e.g. planning) functions. The S41 list includes 65 Habitats of Principal Importance and 1,150 Species of Principal Importance.

Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations were made under Section 97 of the Environment Act 1995 and came into force in 1997. They introduced new arrangements for local planning authorities in England and Wales to protect important hedgerows in the countryside, by controlling their removal through a system of notification. Important hedgerows are defined by complex assessment criteria, which draw on biodiversity features, historical context and the landscape value of the hedgerow.

Birds of Conservation Concern

This is a review of the status of all birds occurring regularly in the United Kingdom. It is regularly updated and is prepared by leading bird conservation organisations, including the British Trust for Ornithology (BTO), Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) and The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

The latest report was produced in 2015 (Eaton *et al*, 2015) and identified 67 red list species, 96 amber species, and 81 green species. The criteria are complex, but generally:

- **Red list** species are those that have shown a decline of the breeding population, non-breeding population or breeding range of more than 50% in the last 25 years.
- **Amber list** species are those that have shown a decline of the breeding population, non-breeding population or breeding range of between 25% and 50% in the last 25 years. Species that have a UK breeding population of less than 300 or a non-breeding population of less than 900 individuals are also included, together with those whose 50% of the population is localised in 10 sites or fewer and those whose 20% of the European population is found in the UK.
- **Green list** species are all regularly occurring species that do not qualify under any of the red or amber criteria are green listed

Global IUCN Red List

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Threatened Species was devised to provide a list of those species that are most at risk of becoming extinct globally. It provides taxonomic, conservation status and distribution information about threatened taxa around the globe.

The system catalogues threatened species into groups of varying levels of threat, which are: Extinct (EX), Extinct in the Wild (EW), Critically Endangered (CE), Endangered (EN), Vulnerable (VU), Near Threatened (NT), Least Concern (LC), Data Deficient (DD), Not Evaluated (NE). Criteria for designation into each of the categories is complex, and consider several principles.

Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP)

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP) identify habitat and species conservation priorities at a local level (typically at the County level), and are usually drawn up by a consortium of local Government organisations and conservation charities.

Some LBAP's may also include Habitat Action Plans (HAP) and/or Species Action Plans (SAP), which are used to guide and inform the local decision making process.

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

This Act offers protects a form of protection to all wild species of mammals, irrespective of other legislation, and focussed on animal welfare, rather than conservation.

Unless covered by one of the exceptions, a person is guilty of an offence if he mutilates, kicks, beats, nails or otherwise impales, stabs, burns, stones, crushes, drowns, drags or asphyxiates any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

It's application is typically restricted to preventing deliberate harm to wildlife (in general) during construction works etc.

APPENDIX C – TARGET NOTES

Target Note	Photograph
<u>TN1</u> <u>Broad-leaved scattered trees</u> Broad-leaved scattered trees were located at several points around the site. The trees are particularly located adjacent to and in between the buildings on site. Some trees were present around the grassland located to the north and south-west of the site. The site supports the following tree species; English oak <i>Quercus robur</i>, field maple <i>Acer campestre</i>, alder <i>Alnus glutinosa</i>, hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>, London plane <i>Platanus acerifolia</i>, dogwood <i>Cornus sanguinea</i>, blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i>, hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i>, elm <i>Ulmus procera</i>, Sycamore <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>, Douglas fir <i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>, beech <i>Fagus sylvatica</i>, Scots pine <i>Pinus sylvestris</i> and silver birch <i>Betula pendula</i>. The trees have suitability to support nesting birds. The trees did not have suitability to support roosting bats.	
<u>TN2</u> <u>Intact species-poor hedgerow</u> Intact species-poor hedgerows were located within the sites northern boundary and along the southern boundary. This habitat is considered to be of good ecological value and has the potential to support breeding birds and commuting bats. The species within the hedgerow consisted of woody species, dominated by hawthorn and included field maple, blackthorn, beech and hazel. The understory of the hedgerows included species such as	

cow parsley <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>, common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i>.	
<u>TN3</u> <u>Amenity Grassland</u> Amenity grassland is dominant within the site and the ownership boundary. Within the grassland, species included perennial rye grass <i>Lolium perenne</i>, false oat-grass <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> and Timothy <i>Phleum pratense</i>, meadow buttercup, dandelion <i>Taraxacum officinale</i>, creeping thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i>, common nettle <i>Urtica dioica</i> and daisy <i>Bellis perennis</i>. The amenity grassland on the site is considered to be of low ecological value due to its regular management. The grassland does have the potential to support foraging badger, foraging hedgehog and common invertebrates.	
<u>TN4</u> <u>Hardstanding</u> Hardstanding is present on the site and within the ownership boundary in the form of car parking, roads and footpaths particularly surrounding the buildings on site leading to and from school buildings and the main entrance to the school. Hardstanding has low ecological value.	

TN5

Open water

TN5 is located to the center of the site. The waterbody is located within the west of the woodland held water at the time of the survey. The water depth was approximately 0.3 m in depth. The pond was dominated by common bulrush with perennial rye grass, water starwort small fish were observed within the waterbody.

TN5 was located within the site boundary. The HSI score for TN5 returned a score of 0.39 indicating poor suitability to support breeding GCN.



TN6

Open water

TN6 is a waterbody located to the north west of the site, adjacent to the north-eastern boundary of the site. This waterbody was not accessible at the time of the survey but was anecdotally recorded through a conversation with a school staff member.



B1

This building is a single-storey building which is comprised of stone and brick. Large windows are present on every elevation of the building, typically around 1.5 to 2 m high. This building has a flat, felted roof, which is well sealed and provides no roosting opportunities for bats or access points to potential roosting features. Roosting features included several gaps in the walls where the stone meets the brick work, gaps where the stone meets the soffits. Another feature included a large, exposed gap in the brickwork on the eastern elevation between the fascia and the stonework. This building has been assessed as having **High** bat roost suitability



B2

This building is a single-storey building which is comprised of stone and brick. Large windows are present on every elevation of the building, typically around 1.5 to 2 m high. This building has a flat, felted roof. Access points included large gaps by the drainpipes where bats have access to the roof on the north east and south-east corners of the buildings. This building has been assessed as having **Moderate** bat roost suitability



B3

This building is a single-storey building which is comprised of brick. Large windows are present on every elevation of the building, typically around 1.5 to 2 m high. This building has a pitched, tiled roof, which is optimal for roosting bats given the number of features present on the roof. Roosting features included slipped tiles and lifted lead flashing where bats have access to the roof of the building. This building has been assessed as having **High** bat roost suitability.





B4

This building is a single-storey building which is prefabricated. This building has an almost flat, felted roof. No roosting features were identified. The building has been assessed as having **Negligible** potential to support roosting bats.



B5

This building is a single-storey building which is comprised of brick. Large windows are present on every elevation of the building. This building has a pitched, tiled roof. Roosting features included slipped tiles and lifted lead flashing where bats have access to the roof of the building. This building has been assessed as having **High** bat roost suitability.



B6

This building is two-story comprising of brick and stone, with a flat, felt roof. The building had one gap present within it, where the wooden roof boarding has spilt, creating a gap that bats could potentially use as an access point or roosting feature. The building has been assessed as having Low potential to support roosting bats.



B7

This building is a single-storey building which is comprised of brick. Large windows are present on every elevation of the building, typically around 1.5 to 2 m high. This building has a flat, felted roof. No roosting features were identified. The building has been assessed as having **Negligible** potential to support roosting bats.



B8

This building is a single-storey building which is comprised of brick. Large windows are present on every elevation of the building, typically around 1.5 to 2 m high. This building has a flat, felted roof. No roosting features were identified. The building has been assessed as having **Negligible** potential to support roosting bats.



B9

This building is a single-storey, prefabricated structure. This building has a flat, felted roof. No roosting features were identified. The building has been assessed as having **Negligible** potential to support roosting bats.



B10

The building is a single-story building, comprised of bricks with a pitched roof comprising of concrete tiles. This building had various gaps around the fascia where the wood had degraded and created gaps. Slipped tiles were present on all elevations of the roof. This building was assessed as having **High** bat roost suitability.





	
B11 The building is a single-story building, comprised of bricks with a pitched roof comprising of concrete tiles. This building had various gaps around the apex on the eastern and western elevations where the wood has degraded creating gaps. On the southern elevation, a large hole is present under the wooden fascia, creating a gap which could be used by bats as a roosting feature. Slipped tiles were present on the eastern elevation of the roof. This building was assessed as having High bat roost suitability.	 

B12

The building is a single-story building, comprised of bricks with a half-pitched roof comprising of concrete tiles. The building is newly built and does not have any gaps around the roof which bats could access.

The brickwork was intact with no visible gaps present. This building was assessed as having **Negligible** bat roost suitability.



B13

The building is a single-story building, comprised of bricks with a domed roof and occasional flat roof, at varying levels. The brickwork and tiles were intact with no visible gaps present. This building was assessed as having **Negligible** bat roost suitability.



B14

This building is a single-storey prefabricated structure. wooden boarding and some felt. This building has a flat, felted roof. One potential roosting feature was identified on the building, where the felt had detached from the wooden boarding. The building has been assessed as having **Low** potential to support roosting bats.



B15

This building is a single-storey building which is comprised of pebble dash. This building has a corrugated roof. No roosting features were identified. The building has been assessed as having **Negligible** potential to support roosting bats.

**B16**

This building is a single-storey prefabricated structure, which is sub-optimal for roosting bats. No roosting features were identified. The building has been assessed as having **Negligible** potential to support roosting bats.

