ALCA ecology

Land Adjacent to 19 Newbold Road, Barlestone, Leicestershire

Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Statement

July 2025

This report contains sensitive ecological information. It is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to determine whether it should be made publicly available.

The advice within this document has been produced in accordance with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

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1.0 Executive Summary

Background
Alca Ecology were commissioned to undertake an Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment at a site located at Newbold Road, Barlestone. A walkover and desk study were undertaken to assess the potential of the site to support protected or notable species. eDNA / HSI surveys of nearby ponds were also undertaken.
Findings
One statutory designated site (River Mease SSSI / SAC) and twelve non-statutory designated sites were recorded. No designated sites are expected to be affected by development due to the small-scale nature of proposals. The site consists of other neutral grassland in poor condition, modified grassland in moderate condition, bramble scrub, vegetated gardens and native hedgerows in moderate condition. GCN are not considered to pose a constraint to development. Roosting / foraging / commuting bats are not considered to pose a constraint to development. Reptiles are not considered to pose a constraint to development, though precautionary working methods are recommended to reduce the potential impact on this species. No evidence of badger was recorded and badgers are not considered to pose a constraint to development, though precautionary working methods are proposed. Riparian mammals are not considered to pose a statutory constraint to development. Off-site BNG units will need to be purchased to ensure the proposed development achieves an overall 10% gain.
Recommendations / Enhancements
It is recommended that a range of bat and bird boxes are used within the site.

2.0 Introduction

Background / Site Context

2.1 Alca Ecology Ltd were commissioned to undertake an Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment at a site located at Newbold Road, Barlestone (central grid ref SK428056), hereafter referred to as 'the site'.

2.2 A desk study and site walkover were undertaken to categorise present habitats and to determine any potential constraints to development. Presence/absence surveys and HSI assessments for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN) were undertaken at nearby ponds, the results of which are presented herein, as well as recommendations for providing enhancements for biodiversity.

2.3 The site, approximately 0.1 hectares in extent, lies within the village of Barlestone, Leicestershire. The site consists of a single parcel containing grassland and bramble scrub, with two native hedgerows. The site is surrounded on all sides by residential development.

2.4 Proposals for the site include the construction of two residential dwellings, with associated gardens, access and shrub planting.

3.0 Methods

Desk Study

3.1 A consultation exercise was undertaken whereby baseline ecological information from the last 20 years was collected and analysed. Details of statutory and non-statutory designated sites, granted European Protected Species (EPS) licences and nearby records of protected species were collected from the local ecological records centre (Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC) and Natural England (via the Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website[1]).

3.2 The search radius for designated sites was related to the type of site and any potential zones of influence. The following search areas were used:

- 10km from the application area for sites of International Importance (e.g. Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA), Ramsar sites);
- 2km from the application area for sites of National or Regional Importance (e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), National Nature Reserves (NNR)) and bat records; and
- 1km from the application area for statutory sites of Local Importance (e.g. Local Nature Reserves (LNR)), non-statutory sites of County or Local Importance (e.g., Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)) and species records (e.g. legally protected or otherwise notable species).

[1] https://magic.defra.gov.uk/

3.3 OS Maps and Google Earth were also used to assess the context of the local area and to determine any features of potential ecological significance, such as ponds. The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan[2] (LBAP) was also consulted.

Habitat Survey

3.4 A walkover of the site was undertaken on the 18th June 2025 by an experienced ecologist / botanist with a Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) level 4, GCN CL08 Licence (ref 2018-38299-CLS-CLS) and Water Vole CL31 Displacement Licence (ref 2023-90007-CL31-WVO).

3.5 Survey methods broadly followed the UKHab survey methodology. The purpose of the walkover was to classify present habitats and identify any Habitats of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity as listed within Section 41 (S41) of Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006[3]. The abundance of species was quantified using the DAFOR scale, ranging from Dominant (>75%), through Abundant (75-51%), Frequent (50-26%) and Occasional (25-11%) to Rare (10-1%).

Protected Species Assessment

3.6 During the walkover on the 18th June 2025, a thorough search of the site was carried out for signs of protected species in accordance with the following Acts / Regulations:

- Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)[4];
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992[5];
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)[6]; and
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 S41 Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity.

3.7 Particular consideration was given to the potential presence of birds, bats, badgers and amphibians. Where possible, evidence of badger *Meles meles* was sought within 30m of the site boundary.

3.8 Furthermore, the site was assessed for the potential use by other fauna listed, in accordance with the following (collectively referred to herein as 'notable species'):

- Species of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England listed in S41 of the NERC Act 2006;
- Red Data Book (RDB) and Red List species;
- Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC);
- Species listed on any Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) initiatives; and

[2] Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2026, 2nd edition: December 2016. Available at: https://www.lrwt.org.uk/about-us/caring-wild-places/biodiversity-action-plan
[3] *The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.* [Online]. London: HMSO Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents
[4] *The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* (*as amended*). [Online]. London: HMSO Available from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69
[5] *The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended).* [Online]. London: HMSO Available from: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents
[6] *The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 – Statutory Instrument 2017 No.1012.* [Online]. London: HMSO. Available at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made

- Nationally scarce/notable invertebrate species.

Great Crested Newt

Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Assessment

3.9 Ponds P1 and P3 were subject to an HSI assessment, which measures the likely suitability for a pond to support Great Crested Newts (GCN). This does not determine whether a pond supports GCN, however ponds with a higher HSI score are more likely to contain GCN, and vice versa. HSI is calculated using 10 attributes, which are multiplied together, the tenth root is calculated, which then gives a score between 0 and 1, with 1 being the highest score. Pond suitability is determined as follows:

- <0.5: Poor;
- 0.5-0.59: Below average;
- 0.6-0.69: Average;
- 0.7-0.79: Good; and
- >0.8: Excellent.

Environmental DNA (eDNA) Surveys

3.10 Attempts were made to conduct eDNA surveys of ponds P1 and P3, however P1 did not contain enough water and access to pond P3 was not granted.

3.11 eDNA surveys of ponds P2 and P4 were successfully conducted by a CL08 licence holder on the 18th June 2025, during clear, sunny weather with no rain.

3.12 Twenty water samples were taken from 20 locations around each pond. These samples were then thoroughly mixed, and 15ml placed into 6 sterile tubes containing preservative. Samples were analysed by ADAS.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Assessment

3.13 A BNG assessment was undertaken based on the most up-to-date proposals (14.127.04 B, R3Design Developments). The UKHab data was analysed using GIS software, and the current Statutory Metric[7] was used to calculate the change in biodiversity unit value between the baseline habitats and proposed habitats. The assessment was undertaken in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide[8].

Limitations

3.14 There were no limitations to conducting a full survey of the site.

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-biodiversity-metric-tools-and-guides
[8] Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2024. *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide.*

4.0 Results

Desk Study

4.1 The locations of statutory and non-statutory designated sites are shown in Figure 1. Table 1 below provides details of the statutory and non-statutory designated sites recorded within the search area.

4.2 One statutory designated site was recorded within 10km of the site, as well as 12 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). The site also lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ).

4.3 Eight historic potential Local Wildlife Sites (pLWS) were also recorded within the search area, the closest of which was c260m east of the site.

Table 1: Designated Sites Recorded Within the Search Area

Site Name / Designation	Approx. Distance from Proposed Site	Summary
River Mease SAC/SSSI	9.5km NW	Annex I habitats present including 'Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Ranunculion fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation'. Annex II species present spined loach *Cobitis taenia,* bullhead *Cobitis gobio*, white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* and otter L*utra lutra.*
May Meadow and adjacent sites	115m E	Marsh and tall herbs, with ponds and scrub, wet woodland, small stream on adjacent land. Wet rush pasture in field to the north
Barlestone, Main St hedgerow	230m N	Hedgerow
Barlestone wet woodland and marsh	230m S	Small area of wet woodland along stream, with associated marshland. Water voles recorded from stream. Well-used public footpath alongside stream, through woodland
Barlestone, Garden Farm track hedge	300m N	Species-rich hedge - 8 species in central 30m section of western part, 5 in central 30m of eastern part - both parts meet Hedge Regs criteria as 'important'.
Barlestone, hedgerow 1 S of Newbold Rd	340m SE	Hedgerow
Barlestone hedgerows 3	430m SE	4 hedgerows identified as important under Hedgerow Regulations
Barlestone, hedgerow 2	520m SE	Hedgerow
Barlestone, Bosworth Rd hedge (east side)	520m SW	Hedgerow with average of 6 native woody species/30m.
Barlestone, The Fulford pond	580m SW	Large pond with large population of Toads (thousands of tadpoles)

Barlestone, marshland along stream towards Osbaston	750m S	Small area of marsh, no possible to survey, but visible from path, with sedges, rushes, angelica, greater birdsfoot trefoil, great burnet, marsh thistle. Extent of good habitat not clear.
Barlestone, Field Farm Pond	760m S	*Potamogeton* sp. present
Nailstone Ash trees	960m N	6 mature Ash trees, girths >3m

Protected Species

4.4 One European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) for bats was recorded within 1km. This licenced was issued in 2009 for the destruction of a common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* breeding roost.

4.5 A summary of species records returned are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Species Records Returned from Within the Search Area.

Species	No. of Records	Approx. Location of Closest Record / Most Recent Year	Description
Brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*	27	235m NW / 2024	Two roost records, the rest detector passes.
Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*	1	660m E / 2020	Detector pass.
Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*	51	85m S / 2024	4 roost records, the rest detector passes.
Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*	33	235m NW / 2024	Detector passes.
Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*	1	660m E / 2020	Detector passes.
Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri*	12	235m NW / 2023	Detector passes.
Myotis sp.	19	235m NW / 2022	Detector passes.
Nathusius's pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*	3	660m E / 2024	Detector passes.
Natterer's bat *Myotis natteri*	1	660m E / 2020	Detector passes.
Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*	27	235m NW / 2024	Detector passes.
Nyctalus bat sp.	13	235m NW / 2022	Detector passes.
Serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*	2	660m E / 2024	Detector passes.
Whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*	1	710m SW / 2024	Detector passes.
Pipistrellus sp.	5	235m NW / 2023	Droppings / detector passes.
Unidentified bat sp.	6	470m SW / 2023	Several roosts.
Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*	1	640m N / 2021	eDNA presence.
Smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*	2	295m E / 2014	-
Common frog	4	235m NW / 2021	-

Species	No. of Records	Approx. Location of Closest Record / Most Recent Year	Description
Rana temporaria			
Common toad *Bufo bufo*	2	650m E / 2023	Breeding records.
Badger *Meles meles*	30	370m NW / 2023	Mostly trail cam footage, some setts.
Otter *Lutra lutra*	3	370m S / 2022	Trail cam footage.
Water vole *Arvicolca amphibius*	4	300m S / 2020	Some feeding signs.
Red kite *Milvus milvus*	1	715m W / 2020	-
Redwing *Turdus iliacus*	1	380m SW / 2021	-
Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*	1	380m SW / 2021	-
Firecrest *Regulus ignicapilla*	1	380m SW / 2010	-
Greylag goose *Anser anser*	1	380m SW / 2013	-

Field Study

Habitats

Other Neutral Grassland (G1)

4.6 The central portion of grassland was heavily dominated by false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, and therefore keyed out to Arrhenatherum neutral grassland (UKHab code: g3c5). Other species present here included frequent instances of creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, occasional instances of cocks foot *Dactylis glomerata* and nettle *Urtica dioica*, and rare instances of broadleaved dock *Rumex obtusifolia* and common couch *Elymus repens*.

4.7 Grassland G1 was assessed as being in poor condition.

Modified Grassland (G2)

4.8 The entrance of the site and a small portion of grassland leading into the site had been regularly disturbed as a result of site access. This area was considered to constitute modified grassland (UKHab code: g4) and contained abundant perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*, frequent soft brome *Bromus hordaceus* and false oat grass, occasional instances of Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and rare instances of tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*. Forb species included locally abundant instances of white clover *Trifolium repens* and creeping cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans* and rare instances of dandelion *Taraxacum* agg., ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, greater plantain *Plantago major*, common cats ear *Hypochaeris radicata*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, common mallow *Malva sylvestris*, black medick *Medicago lupulina*, smooth sow thistle *Sonchus oleraceus* and spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*. One tutsan bush *Hypericum androsaemum* was present in the east of the site.

4.9 The entrance to the site had been disturbed regularly and small patches of bare ground were present. A small amount of construction materials (heras fencing panels and footings) were also piled to the east of the site.

4.10 Grassland G2 was assessed and found to be in moderate condition.

Bramble Scrub

4.11 A large swathe of the site had been colonised by dense bramble scrub (UKHab code: h3d). This habitat type is set at poor condition.

Urban

4.12 A small portion of the site contained vegetated garden. Small areas at the front of the site and to the west were tarmacked (developed land; sealed surface, UKHab code: u1b).

4.13 The condition assessments for these habitats are set at N/A.

Linear Habitats

4.14 Two native hedgerows are present within the site, one to the front (H1) and one to the rear (H2).

4.15 Hedgerow H1 served as screening from the road, and contained hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, wild privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, elder *Sambucus nigra* and dog rose *Rosa canina*. It had a height of c2m and was around 1.5m wide. It appeared to be regularly managed on the road side and had no additional features such as banks or ditches.

4.16 Hedgerow H2 contained only hawthorn, with occasional elder, and was becoming outgrown. Its average height was c2m and was 1.5m to 2m wide. It had no associated features such as banks or ditches.

4.17 Both native hedgerows were assessed as being in moderate condition.

Protected Species

Bats

4.18 202 bat records were returned from within 2km of the site.

4.19 No trees are present within the site boundary and the site contains no other habitats (i.e. buildings) considered suitable for supporting roosting bats.

4.20 The habitats present within the site provide some foraging / commuting habitat for bats.

Great Crested Newt (GCN)

4.21 A single GCN record was returned. This was of a positive eDNA survey from a pond c640m north of the site.

4.22 The majority of on-site habitats (rough grassland / bramble scrub) were considered to provide some suitability for commuting / hibernating GCN.

4.23 Two ponds were recorded within 250m of the site, with two additional ponds located just outside 250m. All ponds were separated from the site by residential development.

4.24 Pond P1 was located approximately 120m northeast of the site, within a small patch of woodland that overshaded the pond. This pond appeared to dry regularly, apparently fed by surface water

run-off from the adjoining development, and was heavily littered, with water quality appearing bad. An attempt was made to take water samples for an eDNA survey, however the pond was almost dry and the water level was so low (c1cm) that a viable water sample could not be taken. An HSI assessment of this pond was undertaken, yielding a score of 0.27 (Poor suitability). It is considered highly unlikely that GCN would be present within pond P1.

4.25 Pond P2 is approximately 185m east of the site and was within the nearby 'May Meadow and adjacent sites' LWS. This pond was successfully tested for GCN eDNA and found to be negative, meaning GCN are absent from this pond.

4.26 Pond P3 is a stocked fishing pond located approximately 260m from the site and is separated from the site by a small brook. Access to pond P3 access was not granted for an eDNA survey. An HSI assessment of this pond was made visually off-site and found to be 0.5 (Below average suitability).

4.27 Pond P4 is approximately 285m east of the site. This pond was tested for GCN eDNA and found to be negative.

4.28 Nearby pond locations are shown in Figure 2.

4.29 eDNA test results and detailed HSI assessment results can be found in Appendices 5 and 6, respectively.

Badger Meles meles

4.30 30 badger records were returned from within the search area, the closest of which was 370m away.

4.31 No badger setts or evidence of badger was recorded during the survey. The habitats present likely provide some foraging habitat for badgers.

Reptiles

4.32 No reptile records were returned from within 1km of the site, and the site is fairly isolated from semi-natural habitats by residential development. However, an area of community allotments lies just under 100m away which likely provides suitable reptile habitat.

4.33 The habitats present provide some suitability for reptiles, in the form of the rough grassland / bramble scrub. Some construction materials were present (heras fence panels and footings) which may provide reptile basking locations.

Water Vole / Otter

4.34 No habitats suitable to support water vole *Arvicola amphibius* or otter *Lutra lutra* were present within the site or within the immediate surroundings.

Other Species

4.35 The site likely provides some limited foraging potential for hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*. Invertebrate usage of the site overall is considered to be non-significant.

5.0 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Statement

5.1 A BNG assessment using the Statutory Metric was undertaken based on most recent proposals (drawing ref 14.127.04 B, R3Design Developments). All habitats will be lost to facilitate development of this small site. Proposed habitats include vegetated garden, introduced shrub and other urban habitats (developed land; sealed surface and unvegetated garden). Details of baseline and proposed habitats are provided in Tables 3 and 4, respectively. Table 5 shows baseline native hedgerow value. Figures 3 and 4 show the baseline habitats and their condition / distinctiveness, and Figures 6 and 7 show the proposed habitats and their condition / distinctiveness. Figure 5 shows habitat retention.

5.2 During the desk study, no designated sites were recorded adjacent to the site. The habitats present are not Priority Habitats within Leicestershire, except for the native hedgerows. Aside from the native hedgerows, all baseline habitats were therefore considered to be of low strategic significance (Area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy). Native hedgerows were considered to be of medium strategic significance (Locally ecologically desirable but no in local strategy). No significant degradation has visibly occurred on the site within recent years. No irreplaceable habitats are present within the site.

Table 3: Baseline Habitat Value

Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Baseline Habitat Score
Bramble scrub	0.0293	Medium	N/A	0.12
Developed land; sealed surface	0.009	Very low	N/A	0
Modified grassland	0.0135	Low	Moderate	0.05
Other neutral grassland	0.0386	Medium	Poor	0.15
Vegetated garden	0.0059	Low	N/A	0.01
Total	**0.1**			**0.34**

Table 4: Proposed Habitat Value

Habitat Type	Area (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Proposed Habitat Score
Developed land; sealed surface	0.072	Very low	N/A	0
Introduced shrub	0.0051	Low	N/A	0.01
Vegetated garden	0.0102	Low	N/A	0.02
Unvegetated garden	0.0089	Very low	N/A	0
Total	**0.1**			**0.03**

Table 5: Baseline Hedgerow Value

Habitat Type	Length (km)	Distinctiveness	Condition	Proposed Habitat Score
Native hedgerow	0.041	Low	Moderate	0.18
Total	**0.04**			**0.18**

5.3 The assessment shows an overall loss of 0.31 habitat units (-91.25%) and 0.18 hedgerow units (-100%), with trading rules not satisfied. An off-site unit purchase will therefore be required. It is estimated that 0.34 habitat units and 0.2 hedgerow units will need to be sourced from an off-site unit provider in order for the development to achieve an overall 10% gain in units. Headline results from the site's metric are shown in Appendix 4.

6.0 Discussion / Recommendations

6.1 The following provides an appraisal of impacts on the site based on proposals.

Designated Sites

6.2 One statutory designated site and 12 non-statutory designated sites were recorded within the search area, including the River Mease SAC / SSSI c9.5km away and a number of Local Wildlife Sites, the closest being 'May Meadow and Adjacent Sites' c115m away.

6.3 The River Mease SAC / SSSI is an aquatic habitat which is not connected to the proposed site in any way. The small-scale residential development is therefore not considered to affect the River Mease SSSI / SAC.

6.4 Due to the small-scale of the development and the distance between the site and the LWSs, no adverse impacts are expected on the LWS sites.

6.5 The site lies within a SSSI IRZ, however residential development is not listed as a potential impact and therefore consultation with Natural England is not required.

Habitats

6.6 The development will result in the loss of all habitats within the site. Due to the site's small scale and relative isolation within a residential setting, the loss of these habitats is not considered to result in a significant impact on biodiversity on a local scale.

6.7 Proposals for the site include 2 residential units with associated gardens, parking and access, with a small area of green infrastructure / introduced shrub planting.

Protected Species

Bats

6.8 No potential bat roosts (trees or buildings) are located within the site boundary.

6.9 Habitats within the site are considered to provide some foraging / commuting habitat for bats, including the rough grassland, bramble scrub and boundary hedgerows. Due to the small size of the site, it is considered highly unlikely to provide habitat for a significant assemblage of bats.

6.10 The use of outdoor lighting should be avoided where possible. Any outdoor lighting that is required should be designed to be sensitive to bats, and should not light adjacent boundary habitats, i.e. hedgerows.

6.11 In light of the above, the development is considered to have a negligible impact on breeding and foraging bats in the local area.

6.12 Ecological enhancements in the form of bat boxes are proposed (details provided below).

Badgers

6.13 No badger setts or signs were recorded within the site or in its immediate vicinity, and it is considered unlikely that the site will be colonised by badgers by the time development commences. Badgers are therefore not considered to pose a constraint to development.

6.14 If any signs of badger (i.e. droppings, fresh digging) are observed during the construction phase, it is recommended that an update survey by a suitably experienced ecologist be carried out.

6.15 As the site contains suitable badger foraging habitat, the following precautionary working methods should be followed during the construction phase:

- To prevent badgers being trapped, all pipes that have the potential to allow badger ingress (i.e. 15cm or greater in diameter) shall be capped when not in use;
- Hazardous chemicals such as diesel / oil to be stored in a fenced / locked COSHH store;
- Any excavations / pits will be covered overnight, and a plank or board ramp be left within the hole to allow the escape of any badger (or other animal);
- Off-site areas shall not be lit overnight; and
- Any piles of soil shall either be covered or compacted to prevent badgers from digging in and creating setts.

Birds

6.16 When nesting, all wild birds are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This includes the intentional or reckless destruction of nests from the nest-building phase through to when all chicks have fully fledged the nest. This also includes any disturbance that leads to nest desertion. Bird breeding habitat is present in the form of bramble scrub and native hedgerows.

6.17 The removal of the bramble scrub, native hedgerows and any other woody / scrubby vegetation should take place outside of the peak bird breeding season (March to September, inclusive). If this is not possible, any habitat clearance must be preceded by a nesting bird survey, conducted by a suitably experienced ecologist. If any active nests are found to be present, the nest will have to be buffered and left until all chicks have fledged.

6.18 Breeding birds are not considered a constraint to development.

Great Crested Newts (GCN)

6.19 A single GCN record was returned from within 1km of the site. No ponds are present within the site boundary.

6.20 All ponds within 250m of the site were either survey or assessed. Pond P1 was almost dry and had a ‘poor’ HSI score when assessed. An eDNA survey of ponds P2 and P4 were undertaken, yielding negative results. An HSI assessment of pond P3 was undertaken, yielding a score of 0.5 (below average suitability). Pond P3 was also a stocked fishing pond and was therefore unlikely to contain a stable population of GCN. Furthermore, all ponds a relatively isolated from the site by residential development.

6.21 Based on the above, GCN are considered unlikely to be present within the surrounding area, and their presence within the site is considered highly unlikely. GCN are therefore not considered to pose a constraint to development.

Reptiles

6.22 The site consisted of suitable reptile habitat, in the form of rough grassland and bramble scrub, with a small amount of construction materials present. However, no reptile records were returned from within 1km. The site is also somewhat isolated from semi-natural habitats.

6.23 While there is some potential for reptiles to be present within the site, due to the reasons mentioned above and the fact that the site is of a small size, it is considered unlikely that anything more than a small population would be present (<5 individuals for each reptile species).

6.24 It is therefore recommended that precautionary working methods be followed. This includes ecological supervision when removing the stored construction materials, such as the heras fence panels and footings which can form basking locations for reptiles.

6.25 Vegetation clearance should also be carried out under ecological supervision in a phased / directional manner, with an initial cut to around 30cm, followed by a thorough hand search by the ecologist, followed by a final cut to ground level. This should be done using strimmers. Vegetation clearance should start in the south and move north, towards the open area north of the site. This will allow any reptiles that may be present to move out of the site without pushing them into the road to the south.

Riparian Mammals

6.26 No riparian mammal habitat is present within the site or in the immediate surroundings. Otter and water vole are therefore not considered to pose a constraint to development.

Other Species

6.27 No significant adverse impacts are anticipated on other species such as hedgehog, invertebrates or fish.

Enhancements

6.28 It is recommended that bat and bird boxes are used within the proposed buildings. These should include integrated bat and bird boxes into each proposed building. This will improve the biodiversity value of the site overall by providing roosting habitat for bats and breeding habitat for birds. Examples are shown below.

6.29 Swift *Apus apus* bricks should be placed as high as possible (at least 5m high), tightly against the eaves, orientated somewhere between north and east. Bat bricks should also be placed as high as possible in a location that gets sun for part of the day (somewhere between southeast and southwest).

Example 1: Vivara Pro UK Build-in WoodStone Bat Box, potential integrated bat box. Courtesy of nhbs.com

Example 2: PRO UK Rendered Build-in Swift Box, potential integrated bird box. Courtesy of nhbs.com

Appendix 1: Site Photos

Photo	Reference / Description
	Photo 1: Other neutral grassland (G1)
	Photo 2: Modified grassland (G2)

	Photo 3: Bramble scrub
	Photo 4: Hedgerow H1

Photo 5: Pond P1

Appendix 2: BNG Condition Assessments

Other Neutral Grassland (G1)

Condition Assessment Criteria		Criterion passed (Yes or No)	Notes (such as justification)
A	The parcel represents a good example of its habitat type, with a consistently high proportion of characteristic indicator species present relevant to the specific habitat type.	Pass	-
B	Sward height is varied (at least 20% of the sward is less than 7 cm and at least 20% is more than 7 cm) creating microclimates which provide opportunities for insects, birds and small mammals to live and breed.	Fail	Uniformly high sward.
C	Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 5%, including localised areas, for example, rabbit warrens[2].	Fail	No bare ground.
D	Cover of bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* is less than 20% and cover of scrub (including bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.) is less than 5%.	Pass	-
E	Combined cover of species indicative of suboptimal condition and physical damage (such as excessive poaching, damage from machinery use or storage, damaging levels of access, or any other damaging management activities) accounts for less than 5% of total area. If any invasive non-native plant species4 (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA5) are present, this criterion is automatically failed.	Fail	Frequent creeping thistle and occasional nettle.
F	There are 10 or more vascular plant species per m^2 present, including forbs that are characteristic of the habitat type (species referenced in Footnote 3 and 5 cannot contribute towards this count). **Note - this criterion is essential for achieving Good condition for non-acid grassland types only.**	Fail	Less than 10 species per m^2.
Total		**2 passes**	**Poor condition**

5-6 passes and passes Criteria A and F: Good condition; 3-5 passes and passes Criterion A: Moderate condition; 2 passes or fewer OR passes 3-4 criteria but fails Criteria and F: Poor condition.

Modified Grassland (G2)

Criteria		Pass/Fail	Justification
A	6-8 species per m^2	Pass	Around 6-7 species present per m^2.
B	Varied sward height	Pass	-
C	Scrub cover less than 20%	Pass	No scrub present.
D	Physical damage in less than 5% of area	Fail	Physical damage frequent.
E	Cover of bare ground between 1% and 10%	Fail	Greater than 10% is bare ground
F	Cover of bracken less than 20%	Pass	No bracken.
G	Absence of invasive non-native species	Pass	No invasive non-native species.
Total		**4 passes**	**Moderate condition**

6-7 passes and passes Criterion A: Good condition; 4-5 passes and passes Criterion A: Moderate condition; 3 passes or fewer OR passes 4-6 criteria but fails Criterion A

Native Hedgerows

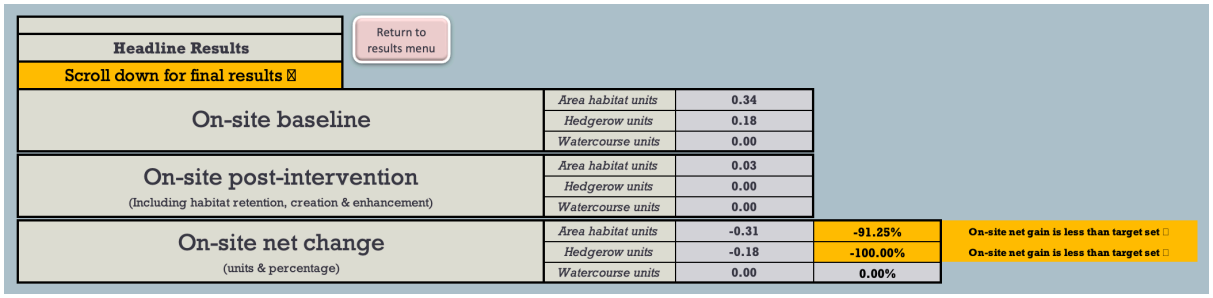
Attributes and functional groupings (A, B, C and D)		Criteria - the minimum requirements for 'favourable condition'	Pass / Fail		Notes / Justification
			H1	H2	
A1.	Height	>1.5 m average along length	Pass	Pass	-
A2.	Width	>1.5 m average along length	Pass	Pass	-
B1.	Gap - hedge base	Gap between ground and base of canopy <0.5 m for >90% of length	Pass	Pass	-
B2.	Gap - hedge canopy continuity	Gaps make up <10% of total length; and No canopy gaps >5 m	Pass	Pass	-
C1.	Undisturbed ground and perennial vegetation	>1 m width of undisturbed ground with perennial herbaceous vegetation for >90% of length: · Measured from outer edge of hedgerow; and · Is present on one side of the hedgerow (at least).	Fail	Fail	H1 is adjacent to the street pavement. H2 adjacent to vegetated garden.
C2.	Nutrient-enriched perennial vegetation	Plant species indicative of nutrient enrichment of soils dominate <20% cover of the area of undisturbed ground.	Fail	Fail	Thistles and nettles frequent around both hedgerows.
D1.	Invasive and neophyte species	>90% of the hedgerow and undisturbed ground is free of invasive non-native plant species (including those listed on Schedule 9 of WCA[3]) and recently introduced species.	Pass	Pass	-
D2.	Current damage	>90% of the hedgerow or undisturbed ground is free of damage caused by human activities.	Fail	Pass	H1 appears regularly trimmed.
Total fails			**3 - Moderate**	**2 -Moderate**	

Category	Category Requirements
Good	No more than 2 failures in total; **AND** No more than 1 failure in any functional group.
Moderate	No more than 4 failures in total; **AND** Does not fail both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and C2 = Moderate condition).
Poor	Fails a total of more than 4 attributes; **OR** Fails both attributes in more than one functional group (for example, fails attributes A1, A2, B1 and B2 = Poor condition).

Appendix 3: Botanical Species List

Common Name	Scientific Name	G1	G2
False oat-grass	*Arrhenatherum elatius*	D	F
Creeping thistle	*Cirsium arvense*	F	
Common couch	*Elymus repens*	R	
Cock's foot	*Dactylis glomerata*	R	
Lesser burdock	*Arctium minus*	R	
Perennial rye-grass	*Lolium perenne*		A
Soft brome	*Bromus hordeaceus*		F
Smooth sow thistle	*Sonchus oleraceus*		R
Common cats ear	*Hypochaeris radicata*		R
Black medick	*Medicago lupulina*		R
Tufted hair grass	*Deschampsia cespitosa*		R
Dandelion	*Taraxacum* sp. agg.		R
Creeping cinquefoil	*Potentilla reptans*		LA
Yorkshire fog	*Holcus lanatus*		O
Common mallow	*Malva sylvestris*		R
Broad-leaved dock	*Rumex obtusifolia*	R	
Greater plantain	*Plantago major*		R
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*		R
Spear thistle	*Cirsium vulgare*	R	R
White clover	*Trifolium repens*		LA
Nettle	*Urtica dioica*	O	
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*		R

Appendix 4: BNG Metric Headline Results



Headline Results				
Scroll down for final results ⊠	Return to results menu			
On-site baseline	*Area habitat units*	0.34		
	Hedgerow units	0.18		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site post-intervention (Including habitat retention, creation & enhancement)	*Area habitat units*	0.03		
	Hedgerow units	0.00		
	Watercourse units	0.00		
On-site net change (units & percentage)	*Area habitat units*	-0.31	-91.25%	On-site net gain is less than target set ⊡
	Hedgerow units	-0.18	-100.00%	On-site net gain is less than target set ⊡
	Watercourse units	0.00	0.00%	

Appendix 5: Negative GCN eDNA Survey Results

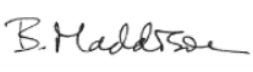
Pond P2

Client:
R3004, Bill Jeffreys, Alca Ecology
1040079-BJ-Alca, R3004, version 1

RSK ADAS Ltd
Spring Lodge
172 Chester Road
Helsby
WA6 0AR

Tel: 01159 229249
Email: Helen.Rees@adas.co.uk

www.adas.uk

Sample ID: ADAS-10062			
Client Identifier: P2		Grid references/coordinates: Not Supplied	
Description: pond water samples in preservative		Condition on Receipt: Good	
Date of Receipt : 18/06/2025		Volume: Passed	
Determinant	**Result**	**Method**	**Date of Analysis**
Inhibition Control[†]	2 of 2	Real Time PCR	20/06/2025
Degradation Control[§]	Within limits	Real Time PCR	20/06/2025
Great Crested Newt*	0 of 12 (negative)	Real Time PCR	20/06/2025
Negative PCR Control (Nuclease Free Water)	0 of 4	Real Time PCR	As above for GCN
Positive PCR Control (GCN DNA 10^{-4} ng/µL)[#]	4 of 4	Real Time PCR	As above for GCN
Report Prepared by:	Dr Helen Rees	Report Issued by:	Dr Ben Maddison
Signed:		Signed:	
Position:	Director: Biotechnology	Position:	MD: Biotechnology
Date of preparation:	20/06/2025	Date of issue:	20/06/2025

eDNA analysis was carried out in accordance with the stipulated methodology found in the Technical Advice Note (WC1067 Appendix 5 Technical Advice Note) published by DEFRA and adopted by Natural England.

** If all PCR controls and extraction blanks give the expected results a sample is considered: negative for GCN if all of the replicates are negative; positive for GCN if one or more of the replicates are positive.*

[†] Recorded as the number of positive replicate reactions at expected C_t value. If the expected C_t value is not

[§] No degradation is expected within time frame of kit preparation, sample collection and analysis.

[#] Additional positive controls (10^{-1}, 10^{-2}, 10^{-3} ng/µL) are also routinely run, results not shown here.

Pond P4 (different client identifier)

Client:
R3004, Bill Jeffreys, Alca Ecology
1040079-BJ-Alca, R3004, version 1

RSK ADAS Ltd
Spring Lodge
172 Chester Road
Helsby
WA6 0AR

Tel: 01159 229249
Email: Helen.Rees@adas.co.uk

www.adas.uk

Sample ID: ADAS-7970			
Client Identifier: P3		Grid references/coordinates: Not Supplied	
Description: pond water samples in preservative		Condition on Receipt: Medium Sediment	
Date of Receipt : 18/06/2025		Volume: Passed	
Determinant	**Result**	**Method**	**Date of Analysis**
Inhibition Control†	2 of 2	Real Time PCR	20/06/2025
Degradation Control§	Within limits	Real Time PCR	20/06/2025
Great Crested Newt*	0 of 12 (negative)	Real Time PCR	20/06/2025
Negative PCR Control (Nuclease Free Water)	0 of 4	Real Time PCR	As above for GCN
Positive PCR Control (GCN DNA 10^{-4} ng/µL)#	4 of 4	Real Time PCR	As above for GCN
Report Prepared by:	Dr Helen Rees	Report Issued by:	Dr Ben Maddison
Signed:		Signed:	
Position:	Director: Biotechnology	Position:	MD: Biotechnology
Date of preparation:	20/06/2025	Date of issue:	20/06/2025

eDNA analysis was carried out in accordance with the stipulated methodology found in the Technical Advice Note (WC1067 Appendix 5 Technical Advice Note) published by DEFRA and adopted by Natural England.

** If all PCR controls and extraction blanks give the expected results a sample is considered: negative for GCN if all of the replicates are negative; positive for GCN if one or more of the replicates are positive.*

† Recorded as the number of positive replicate reactions at expected C_t value. If the expected C_t value is not

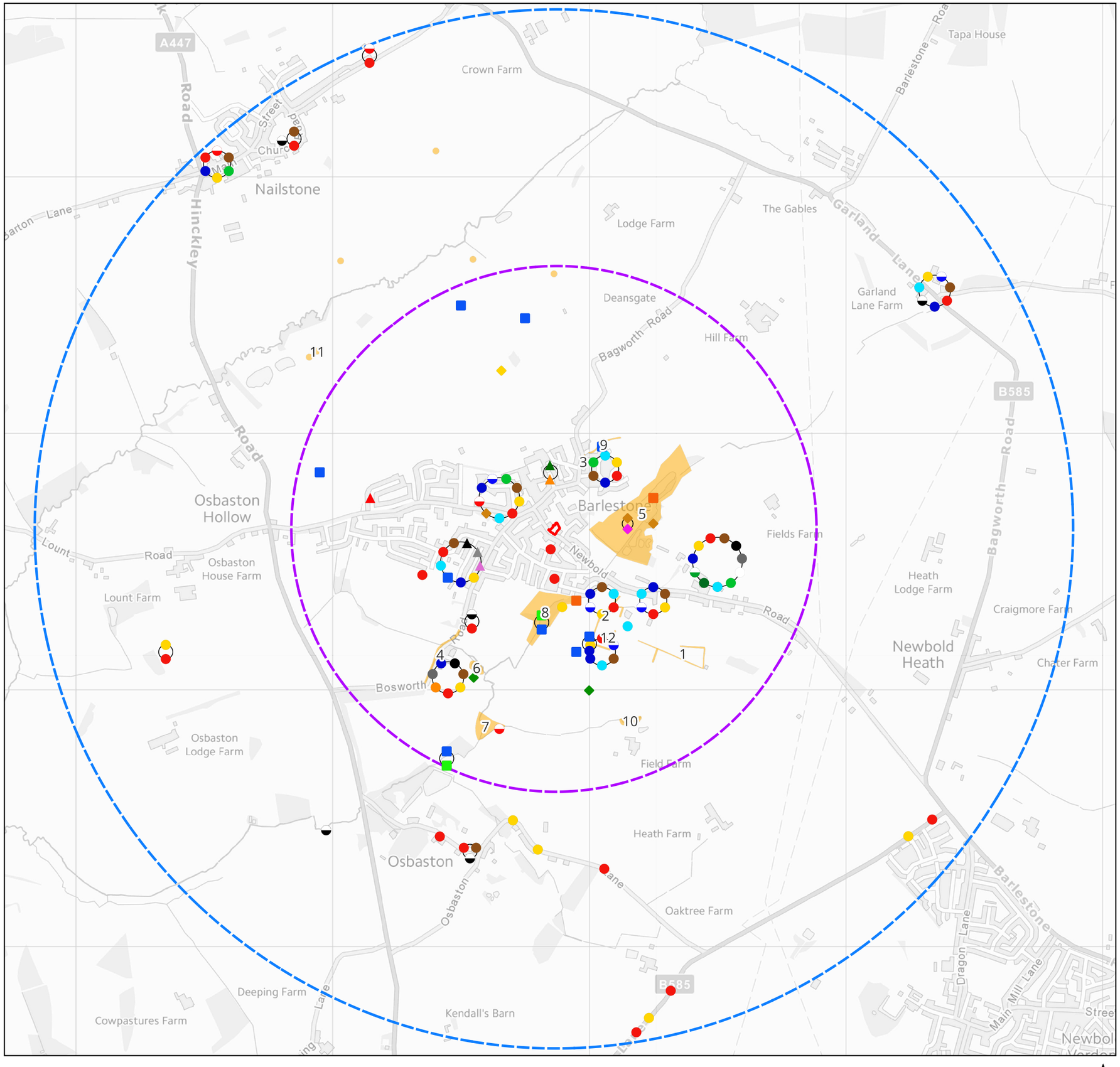
§ No degradation is expected within time frame of kit preparation, sample collection and analysis.

 # Additional positive controls (10^{-1}, 10^{-2}, 10^{-3} ng/µL) are also routinely run, results not shown here.

Appendix 6: HSI Assessment Results

	Suitability Indices	P1	P3
SI No	**SI Description**	**SI Value**	**SI Value**
1	Geographic location	1	1
2	Pond area	0.05	0.8
3	Pond permanence	0.1	0.9
4	Water quality	0.01	0.67
5	Shade	0.2	1
6	Water fowl effect	1	0.67
7	Fish presence	1	0.01
8	Pond Density	0.9	0.95
9	Terrestrial habitat	0.67	1
10	Macropyhyte cover	0.3	0.3
HSI Score		**0.27**	**0.50**
Pond suitability		**Poor**	**Below average**

HSI Score	Pond Suitability
< 0.50	Poor
0.50 - 0.59	Below average
0.60 - 0.69	Average
0.70 - 0.79	Good
> 0.80	Excellent



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Key

- Site Boundary
- 2km Buffer
- 1km Buffer
- Local Wildlife Site (LWS)
- Badger
- Bat
- Brown Long-eared Bat
- Common Frog
- Common Pipistrelle
- Common Toad
- Great Crested Newt
- Leisler's Bat
- Myotis Bat species
- Noctule
- Otter
- Peregrine
- Unidentified Pipistrelle Sp.
- Serotine
- Smooth Newt
- Soprano Pipistrelle
- Whiskered Bat
- Daubenton's Bat
- Fieldfare
- Nathusius's Pipistrelle
- Red Kite
- Redwing
- Water Vole
- Barbastelle
- Firecrest
- Greylag Goose
- Natterer's Bat
- Nyctalus Bat species

1.Barlestone, hedgerow 2
2.Barlestone, hedgerow 1 S of Newbold Rd
3.Barlestone, Main St hedgerow
4.Barlestone, Bosworth Rd hedge (east side)
5.May Meadow and adjacent sites
6.Barlestone, The Fulford pond
7.Barlestone, marshland along stream towards Osbaston
8.Barlestone wet woodland and marsh
9.Barlestone, Garden Farm track hedge
10.Barlestone, Field Farm pond
11.Nailstone Ash trees
12.Barlestone hedgerows 3

client
Mr D Jinks

project name
Land Adjacent to 19 Newbold Road,
Barlestone

title
Consultation Plan

date
08/07/25

drawn by
BRJ

scale
1:15,000 @ A3

rev
-

title
FIGURE 1

Alca Ecology Ltd / www.alcaecology.co.uk / bill@alcaecology.com / 07951 014150

0 0.5 1 km

Key

- Site Boundary
- 250m Buffer
- Ponds

client
Mr D Jinks

project name
Land Adjacent to 19 Newbold Road,

Barlestone

title
Pond Plan

title
FIGURE 2

date
08/07/25

drawn by
BRJ

scale
1:2,500 @ A3

rev
-

Alca Ecology Ltd / www.alcaecology.co.uk / bill@alcaecology.com / 07951 014150

0 50 100 m

Key

- Site Boundary

Habitats Baseline

- Bramble scrub
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Modified grassland
- Other neutral grassland
- Vegetated garden

Hedgerow Baseline

- Native hedgerow

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0 5 10 m

client
Mr D Jinks

project name
Land Adjacent to 19 Newbold Road,
Barlestone

date
08/07/25

drawn by
BRJ

title
Baseline Habitat Plan

scale
1:250 @ A3

rev
-

title
FIGURE 3

Key

- Site Boundary

Baseline Habitat Condition

- Moderate
- Poor
- Condition Assessment N/A

Baseline Habitat Distinctiveness

- Medium
- Low
- V.Low

Baseline Hedgerow Condition

- Moderate

Baseline Hedgerow Distinctiveness

- Low

client
Mr D Jinks

project name
Land Adjacent to 19 Newbold Road,
Barlestone

date
08/07/25

drawn by
BRJ

title
Baseline Condition / Distinctiveness

scale
1:250 @ A3

rev
-

title
FIGURE 4

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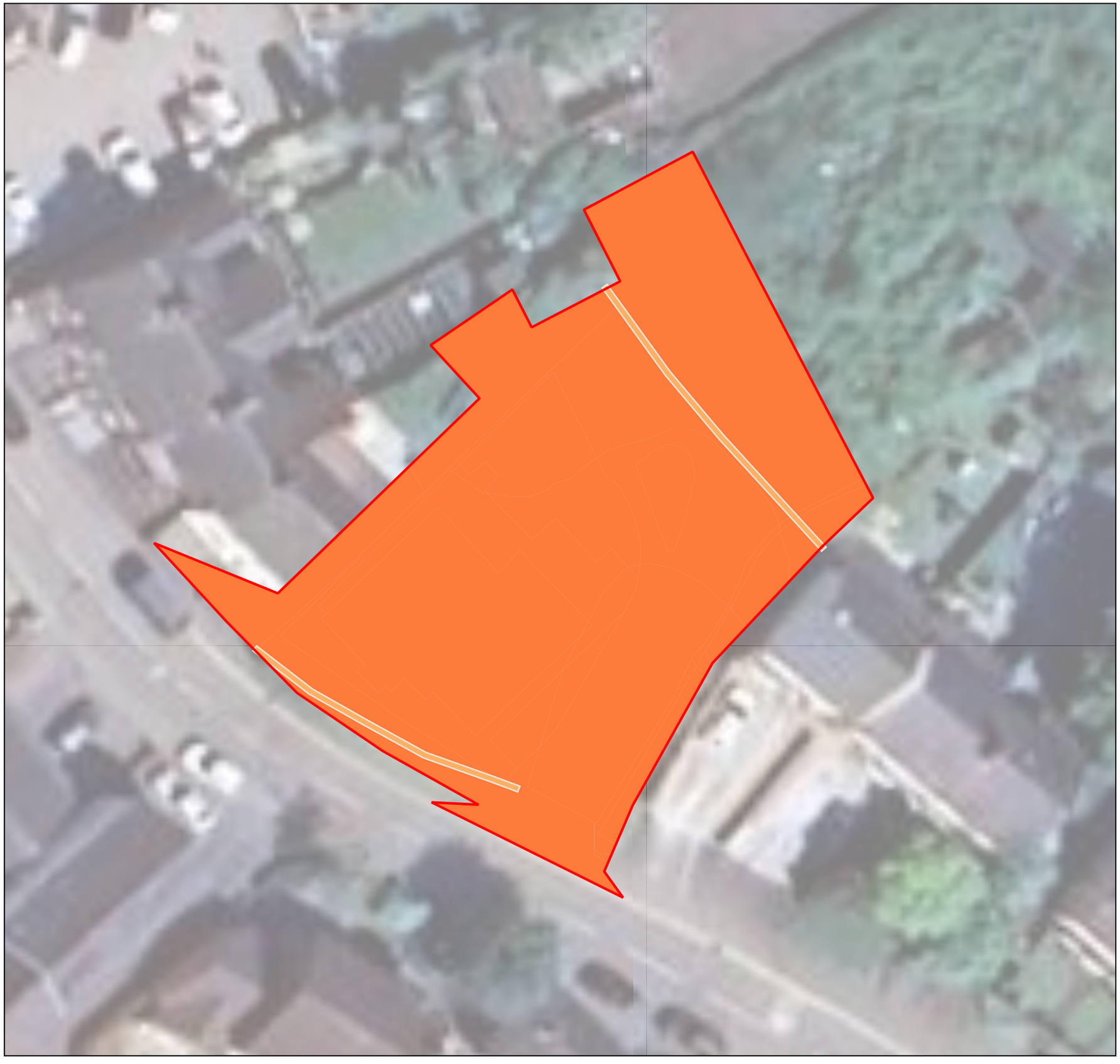
0 5 10 m



Key

Site Boundary

Habitat Retention

Lost

Hedgerow Retention

Lost

client
Mr D Jinks

project name
Land Adjacent to 19 Newbold Road,
Barlestone

title
Retention Plan

title
FIGURE 5

date
08/07/25

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BRJ

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1:250 @ A3

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-

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0 5 10 m

Key

- Site Boundary

Habitats Proposed

- Building
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Introduced shrub
- Unvegetated garden
- Vegetated garden

client
Mr D Jinks

project name
Land Adjacent to 19 Newbold Road,
Barlestone

title
Proposed Habitat Plan

title
FIGURE 6

date
08/07/25

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BRJ

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1:250 @ A3

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-

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0 5 10 m

Key

Site Boundary

Proposed Habitat Condition

Condition Assessment N/A

Proposed Habitat Distinctiveness

Low

V.Low

client
Mr D Jinks

project name
Land Adjacent to 19 Newbold Road,
Barlestone

date
08/07/25

drawn by
BRJ

title
Proposed Habitat Condition / Distinctiveness

scale
1:250 @ A3

rev
-

title
FIGURE 7

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0 5 10 m