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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Roost Assessment

Survey site:

Land North of Normandy Way, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE10 1SW

Client:

Morro Partnerships

Survey date:

13th February 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council. The proposal is described as:

The construction of up to 25 new residential dwellings along with access.

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.](#)

The site survey was undertaken by George Collier-Smith Msci (Hons), Consultant Ecologist (Natural England GCN Licence Number: 2024-12248-CL08-GCN) (Accredited Agent on Natural England Bat Licence Number: 2018-33540-CLS-CLS).					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
13/02/2025	5	70	100	5	None

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, proposal plan in appendix 3 and photos in appendix 4).	
Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).	
Summary of Survey Findings	Site Context The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference SP43199580 and has an area of approximately 0.8ha.
(UKHab codes used)	<p>The site is currently disused, and is formed of a series of allotments. A number of small outbuildings in the form of timber sheds are seen, along with a garage in the western corner. As a result of a lack of management and maintenance, bramble scrub and self-set saplings are a common feature throughout the space, along with more mature trees. A pond is also found in the north eastern corner of the site. Habitats within the site are common and widespread. No protected or notable plant species were recorded during the survey.</p> <p>On-site habitat descriptions</p> <p><u>u1b5</u> – Buildings A number of buildings are present onsite; such as timber sheds, greenhouses and a garage which are all due to be removed. Their description and value to roosting bats is outlined in the relevant section of the report below.</p> <p><u>g3c</u> – Other neutral grassland with scattered trees The site formerly comprised a series of allotments, however due to it being disused it has succeeded into an area of neutral grassland containing scattered trees and self-set saplings. The grassland does not appear to have regular management and maintenance, and as a result a diverse sward height is seen with good structural and species composition which gives opportunities</p>

	<p>for microclimates to form. Bare ground accounts for more than 10% of the total area, and areas of bramble scrub are present. Bracken, and other invasive species are absent from the site. Species present are perennial rye (D), red fescue (A), thistle (O), yarrow (O), plantain (O), cleavers (O), common nettle (O), herb robert (O), willowherb (O), spurge (O) and creeping buttercup (O).</p> <p>In total, 39 trees are present onsite. They are all small in size, and are at least semi-mature in age. There are no veteran trees onsite, and they all appear to be in a good condition. No signs of damage as a result of human activities was noted, and no features which bats could utilise for roosting were found. Their species and overall condition assessment score can be found below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T1 – Cherry. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T2 – Cherry. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T3 – Silver Birch. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T4 – Willow. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T5 – Apple. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T6 – Apple. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T7-9 – Cherry. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T10 – Apple. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T11-12 – Apple. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T13-15 – Cherry. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T16-17 – Apple. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T18-34 – Apple. Moderate condition score (4/6). • T35-39 – Willow. Moderate condition score (4/6). <p>w1h5 – Other woodland – mixed – mainly broadleaved; line of trees A mature tree line is present along the northern boundary of the site. Most of the trees are native, and they all appear to be in a good condition with no signs of damage as a result of human activities. No veteran features were noted, and the tree line is planted over the neutral grassland which dominates the site. Species identified were cypress, silver birch, willow, ash, holly, hawthorn and cherry laurel. Moderate condition score (4/5).</p> <p>w1h5 – Other woodland – mixed – mainly broadleaved A small plot of woodland is found in the south east of the site; this is beyond the site of the development but found within the red line boundary of the site. The woodland is comprised of mature trees, which are predominantly native (more than 75%). Young and mature trees are present, and no invasive species were noted. Tree mortality appears to be less than 10%, and no recognisable NVC community is found. No veteran trees were noted within the plot, and no significant browsing damage is seen. Moderate condition score (30/39).</p> <p>h3d – Bramble scrub Areas of bramble scrub are a common feature on the site due to a lack of regular management and maintenance.</p>
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	<p>r1g – Other standing water (ponds) A pond is present in the north eastern corner of the site. The pond is relatively shallow, and looks as though it dries infrequently. No fish were present, and no signs of waterfowl were noted either. Aquatic vegetation is scarce, and bank vegetation comprises bare ground and the neutral grassland which dominates the rest of the site. An HSI assessment of the pond can be found in the relevant section of the report below.</p> <p>Local notable habitats A search of the MAGIC database showed the presence of a small number of notable habitats within 2km of the site, however none are within close proximity or are connected.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p>On-site habitats The proposed development will result in the loss of neutral grassland, bramble scrub and a number of scattered trees. This could result in a net loss in biodiversity at the site.</p> <p>Notable habitats No impacts to any notable habitats are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such habitats as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>On-site habitats Retained trees should be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations" (BS 5837) (2012).</p> <p>A biodiversity net gain (BNG) report is required for the proposal as more than 25m² of habitat is affected by the proposal.</p> <p>Notable habitats None.</p>
Locality and Designated Sites	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p>On-site designations The site is not subject to any designation.</p> <p>Statutory designated sites (within 2km) There are no known statutory sites nearby. No national network sites (SAC, SPA, Ramsar) are located within 2.5km.</p> <p>Non-statutory designated sites The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre.</p>

<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p>On-site designations No impacts foreseen.</p> <p>Statutory and non-statutory designated sites No impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such sites (where known) as well as the urban location of the site.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>On-site designations None required.</p> <p>Statutory and non-statutory designated sites None required.</p>
Invasive / Non-native species	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	N/A
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys but remain vigilant.
Invertebrates	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The habitats present on-site, including grassland, scrub, trees and a pond likely provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for specialised or protected invertebrates.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Grassland, scrub and trees will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally.
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>No further surveys.</p> <p>Suggested biodiversity enhancements The incorporation of bee bricks (e.g. Ibstock BeeHabitat or similar alternative brand) into the fabric of the new buildings would provide sheltering opportunities for pollinators. These should be installed 0.5m above ground level on a south-facing elevation with no obscuring vegetation. The site could be further enhanced via the provision of native wildflowers or wildflower turf, which would provide foraging opportunities for invertebrates.</p>

Bats	
Summary of Survey Findings	<p>EPSL data A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. No EPSLs are present within a 2km radius of the site.</p> <p>Foraging and commuting habitat Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of a pond, scattered trees, tree lines and a pond. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations.</p> <p>Roosting habitat Buildings and trees to be impacted by the proposed development are assessed for their suitability to support roosting bats below. No evidence of roosting bats was identified on or within any of the surveyed buildings or trees on-site.</p> <p><i>Buildings B1-B3</i> B1-B3 are single storey timber sheds located in the east of the site. They all feature exterior cladding, with roofs fit with bitumen felt. Whilst there are broken elements seen on each of the buildings, they are all single lined and no suitable crevices were observed. Due to the broken areas of cladding, the interiors are likely liable to temperature and humidity fluctuations which lower their suitability for roosting bats. Additionally, no signs of roosting bats were noted internally. B1-3 were assessed to provide no value for roosting bats.</p> <p><i>Buildings B4-B5</i> B4-B5 are both small timber sheds found centrally onsite, and comprise the same structure as B1-B3. They are both in a good condition, and no damaged areas of cladding were noted on their exteriors. Additionally, their roofs provide no value for roosting bats either. No signs of roosting bats were noted on or within B4-B5. Therefore, they were assessed to provide no value for roosting bats.</p> <p><i>Buildings B6-B8</i> B6-B8 are located in the north of the site. B6 is a metallic and glass greenhouse which provides no value for roosting bats. B7 and B8 are timber sheds which match the structure of those described above. Both appear to be in a good condition and also provide no value for bats.</p> <p><i>Buildings B9-B10</i> B9 and B10 are both polytunnels which provide no roosting opportunities for bats.</p>

	<p><i>Buildings B11-B12</i> B11 and B12 are also timber sheds. They appear to be in a good condition, and no exterior features were noted. No signs of roosting bats were noted internally either and therefore they were assessed to provide no value for roosting bats.</p> <p><i>Buildings B13</i> B13 is a greenhouse which provides no value for roosting bats.</p> <p><i>Buildings B14</i> B14 is a brick and concrete garage structure found in the north western corner of the site. Externally, it appears to be in a good condition; there are no cracks present which bats could utilise for roosting, and no gaps around the edges of the garage door. Additionally, the flat roof provides no value for roosting bats either. No internal access was available at the time of the survey.</p> <p><i>Buildings B15</i> B15 is an open sided timber shed located next to B14. There are no exterior features which provide value for roosting bats, and additionally due to its open sided nature the interior is too exposed to temperature changes and light pollution to provide any roosting opportunities.</p> <p><i>Buildings B16</i> B16 is a timber shed in the west of the site – it is in a good condition and provides no value for roosting bats due to a lack of suitable roosting features being present.</p> <p><i>Trees</i> No bat roosting features were identified on any of the trees surveyed.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p>Roosting habitat [Buildings] Bats are very unlikely to be roosting within the site and as such, there are not anticipated to be any impacts on bats in this location as a result of the proposed development.</p> <p>Roosting habitat [Trees] No features were identified on any of these trees and as such there are unlikely to be any impact to bats as a result of their felling.</p> <p>Foraging and commuting habitat The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats. However, the proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.</p>

	<p>Artificial lighting The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the retained building without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>Roosting habitat In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice.</p> <p>Foraging and commuting habitat No further surveys are required.</p> <p>Artificial lighting A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2</p> <p>Suggested biodiversity enhancements The installation of bat boxes at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be incorporated into the fabric of the new dwellings. They will be suitable for pipistrelles (which have been identified locally through EPSL data). Suitable bat boxes include Habibat Bat Box, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar alternative brand. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.</p>
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p>Buildings No evidence of nesting birds was identified on or within any of the buildings onsite.</p> <p>Trees and vegetation No habitat for schedule 1 birds was observed. However, habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide nesting opportunities for common species of breeding birds in the form of the scrub, tree lines and scattered trees.</p> <p>Barn owls The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls.</p>

	<p>Overwintering birds Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p>Buildings/trees The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.</p> <p>Barn owls None foreseen.</p> <p>Overwintering birds None foreseen.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>Buildings/trees Any building or vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.</p> <p>Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged.</p> <p>Barn owls None required.</p> <p>Overwintering birds None required.</p> <p>Suggested biodiversity enhancements The installation of bird boxes on new retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler No 17 Swift Nest Box (buildings) Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace (buildings) Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) Or a similar alternative brand. Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole.</p>

	Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p>EPSL data A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site.</p> <p>Habitat suitability Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide suitable foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for reptiles in the form of scattered scrub. Whilst the grassland onsite does not appear to have been subjected to management in a while and therefore provides suitable refuge, it lacks the tussocky nature which reptiles seek to utilise. Additionally, connectivity to the site is limited due to an absence of unmanaged grassland or scrub within close proximity to the site. Further, the site is surrounded by urban development (i.e. roads and buildings) which is considered sub-optimal for reptile migration and therefore reptiles are considered unlikely to migrate from any nearby suitable habitats to the development site. As such it is likely that reptiles are absent from the development site.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on reptiles as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>None required.</p> <p>Suggested biodiversity enhancements The site could be enhanced for reptiles post-development with the inclusion of log piles (created from felled materials) and planting of areas of native shrubs, to provide sheltering opportunities.</p>
Amphibians	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p>EPSL and survey data A review of the MAGIC database returned a single granted EPSL for GCN within 2km of the site, located approximately 1400m south east of the site. Great crested newts exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton <i>et al.</i> 2001). As such, the great crested newt metapopulation known to be present 1400m southeast are not suitably connected to the site.</p> <p>Habitat suitability A single pond is present onsite, being located in the northeastern corner of the site. An HSI assessment of the pond was undertaken and is shown below; the pond was assessed to provide Below Average suitability to support Great crested newts.</p>

	<p>The grassland and scrub onsite provides suitable terrestrial and hibernation opportunities, and therefore their presence onsite cannot be ruled out without further survey effort.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><i>SI Description</i></th><th><i>SI Value P1</i></th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Geographic location</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Pond Area</td><td>0.2</td></tr> <tr> <td>Pond Permanence</td><td>0.5</td></tr> <tr> <td>Water Quality</td><td>0.33</td></tr> <tr> <td>Shade</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Waterfowl Effect</td><td>0.67</td></tr> <tr> <td>Fish Presence</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Pond Density</td><td>0.4</td></tr> <tr> <td>Terrestrial Habitat</td><td>1</td></tr> <tr> <td>Macrophyte Cover</td><td>0.3</td></tr> <tr> <td>HSI Score</td><td>0.56</td></tr> <tr> <td>HSI Category</td><td>Below Average</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	<i>SI Description</i>	<i>SI Value P1</i>	Geographic location	1	Pond Area	0.2	Pond Permanence	0.5	Water Quality	0.33	Shade	1	Waterfowl Effect	0.67	Fish Presence	1	Pond Density	0.4	Terrestrial Habitat	1	Macrophyte Cover	0.3	HSI Score	0.56	HSI Category	Below Average
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<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p>When georeferencing the proposed development plans over scaled mapping of the site, it is noted that the development area is likely to result in the loss or significant disturbance of 0.8ha of grassland along with the scattered scrub. If great crested newts are present within the pond 25m to the north of the site, when completing the rapid risk assessment published by Natural England (Natural England 2015), the proposed development produces a Red risk score, which states: Offence Highly Likely (see Figure 1 below).</p>																										
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>Environmental DNA (eDNA) surveys will be required of the onsite pond to determine the presence or absence of great crested newts. This will comprise collecting water samples and sending them off for laboratory analysis and such surveys must be undertaken between mid-April and June, in accordance with current survey guidelines (Biggs et al, 2014).</p> <p>Suggested biodiversity enhancements The site could be enhanced for amphibians post-development through creation of amphibian hibernacula using rubble and logs from site clearance. Information on how to construct a hibernaculum can be found here: https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/hibernaculum</p>																										
Badger																											

<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No badger setts were noted on site or within a 30m radius of the site. Further, no evidence of foraging badgers was noted within the development area. However, the site was considered suitable foraging habitat. Given their highly mobile nature and lack of physical barriers preventing access to the wider landscape to the north, the presence of foraging and commuting individuals onsite cannot be discounted.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No works will be undertaken within 30m of a badger sett. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of badgers, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to badgers, further badger surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A toolbox talk will be given to contractors regarding the possible presence of badgers at the site. • A pre-commencement inspection of the site will be undertaken for any new badger activity if works do not commence within three months. • Heras fencing will be erected around the working area to prevent encroachment into retained habitats where badger setts could be present. • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which badgers could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. <p>In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.</p>

Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for otters or water voles within 2km of the site. There are no water courses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None required.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p>EPSL data A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for hazel dormice within 2km of the site.</p> <p>Habitat suitability Dormice typically utilise a three-dimensional habitat structure as to commute between feeding and breeding sites whilst avoiding predation. As such habitats on site are considered unsuitable for hazel dormice and therefore the likelihood of this species being present on site is considered acceptably low.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None foreseen.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The grassland and scrub onsite provides limited foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Grassland and scrub will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>Similar to the badgers, a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. <p>If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.</p> <p>Suggested biodiversity enhancements</p> <p>The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities.Creation of brash piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.Installation of gaps under boundary fencing to enable hedgehogs to move freely through the site.
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Appendix 1: Survey/Habitat map



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Appendix 4: Photos



Photo 1: B1



Photo 2: B2

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Land north of Normandy Way, LE10 1SW



Photo 3: B3



Photo 4: The bramble scrub present along the boundary in the south east.

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Photo 5: The pond in the north eastern corner.



Photo 6: The bramble scrub and view of the woodland in the east.



Photo 7: The tree line along the northern boundary.



Photo 8: T10 located in the centre of the site.

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Photo 9: B4 and B5.



Photo 10: B6, B7 and B8.

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Photo 11: A closer view of B8.



Photo 12: T13-T15.

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Photo 13: The two polytunnels found centrally.



Photo 14: B10.

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Photo 15: A view of B13.



Photo 16: The group of apple trees in the north west of the site.

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Photo 17: The garage in the north west.



Photo 18: B15.

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Photo 19: B16.



Photo 20: The area of scrub in the west of the site.

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Photo 21: The scrub along the boundary in the south west of the site.



Photo 22: A view of the grassland on site, looking north east.

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Version control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	0.1	George Collier-Smith Msci (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	14/02/2025
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