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Wood Lane, Norton-Juxta-Twycross. Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)

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Non-technical Executive Summary

Background and Proposals

In March 2026, BN Ecology was commissioned by Jaz Sahota, Partnership Homes Ltd (hereon referred to as 'the client') to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to support planning proposals comprising the erection of four self-build residential dwellings and associated works on land at Wood Lane, Norton-Juxta-Twycross, CV9 3QB (delineated as the redline boundary, totalling 0.81 ha). The key objective of this Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was to record and highlight key habitats on-site and assess the potential the Site has to support or bolster the ecological network for protected species & species of conservation concern. Where necessary, any material ecological considerations for the Site have been noted, and in turn support the results and recommendations.

Ecology Survey Methods & Surveyor Competencies

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken in accordance with Codes of Practice as set out in the UK Habitats classification system¹; the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management²; the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines for Bat Surveys³; and the BS 42020:2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development* (BSI 2013).

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was performed by Evie Rice. All findings are supported by a desk study. Results of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal are illustrated in a habitat map (Appendix 2), which represents habitat types (outlined as target notes ('TN')) and identifies locations of evidence or potential for protected species and species of conservation concern on Site. Photos of the site are also provided (Appendix 1). These support the results and recommendations outlined in this report.

Results

The Site falls within a semi-rural landscape, situated on the eastern edge of the small rural village of Norton-Juxta-Twycross. The Site lies along Wood Lane, with access gained via an established track to the north. The Site itself occupies a transitional zone between built development and open countryside, with residential properties and associated private gardens immediately to the west and east, and larger arable fields extending to the north and south.

The wider landscape supports a mosaic of pastoral and arable farmland, typically enclosed by species-rich hedgerows, hedgerows with trees, and treelines. These boundary features will likely provide important habitat for birds, bats and small mammals, and are likely to function as key ecological corridors.

¹ UK Habitat Classification, Habitat Definitions, Version 2.0, 2023.

² Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition*: Ampfield, Romsey. Issued December 2017.

³ BCT (2023): Collins, J. (ed.) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

The Site comprises:

- u1b5 – Developed Land – Sealed Surface; Buildings
- u1b – Developed Land – Sealed Surface
- u1f 81 – Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral
- h3d – Bramble Scrub
- g4 – Grassland - Modified Grassland
- w1g – Other Woodland – Broadleaved Woodland
- 33 – Line of Trees
- 31 – Individual Trees – Urban Trees

Sparsely vegetated land and modified grassland cover the majority of the site and are of low ecological value and can be readily re-created. The south of the Site contains broadleaved woodland, which is of moderate ecological value. Removal of woodland is likely to be required to facilitate the proposals.

The proposed development site does not sit within or adjacent to any priority habitat.

Consideration has been given to the following protected species or notable features:

- Above ground nesting birds
- Foraging and commuting habitats for bats
- Terrestrial badger activity
- The habitat suitability for amphibians during terrestrial phases
- Habitat suitability for hazel dormouse
- The habitat suitability for reptiles during terrestrial phases
- Terrestrial habitat potential for hedgehog
- Terrestrial habitat potential for brown hare
- Terrestrial and riparian habitat suitability for otter and water vole
- Root Protection Zones for retained trees
- Invasive non-native species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

Recommendations

The recommendations outlined in this report briefly comprise:

- Mitigation measures for:
 - **Amphibians – FURTHER SURVEYS/ACTION REQUIRED**
 - **Bats – FURTHER SURVEYS REQUIRED**
 - Badgers
 - Nesting birds
 - Reptiles
 - Hedgehogs
 - Protection of retained habitats
 - Protocol measures for the containment, control and removal of non-native species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
 - On-site enhancements

The report also recommends that a sensitive lighting scheme for bats is designed (if any artificial lighting is required to facilitate the proposals) to ensure the boundary features are not subject to excessive artificial light spill.

It is expected that further survey(s) will be required to be undertaken prior to decision being made on the application, in accordance with the Biodiversity and Geological Conservation Circular 06/2005. However, once the recommended surveys (or confirmation pertaining to joining an appropriate District Level Licensing Scheme) have been completed, it is expected that the avoidance, mitigation and, where necessary, compensatory measures recommended can be secured by planning conditions.

Baseline Habitat Map



1. Introduction, Background and Project Details

- 1.1. This report has been compiled to support a proposal comprising the erection of four self-build residential dwellings and associated works on land at Wood Lane, Norton-Juxta-Twycross, CV9 3QB (delineated as the redline boundary, totalling 0.81 ha). The grid reference for the redline boundary site is SK32540681.
- 1.2. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out by BN Ecology to assess the ecological baseline of the site, and where necessary, determine if further Phase II species-specific surveys are required.
- 1.3. This report demonstrates and confirms that there are no significant ecological constraints beyond the implementation of avoidance, mitigation and minor compensatory measures, as outlined in section six of this report, in relation to nesting birds; foraging and commuting bats; hedgehogs & badgers during terrestrial cycles; protocol measures for the control, containment and removal of non-native invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); and protection protocols for retained trees. Further survey effort is required in relation to amphibians due to a single pond noted within 2m of the Site, and bats to confirm presence or likely absence due to access restrictions into the western room of building B1.

Table 1. – Site Specific Information	
Category	Site Specific Information
Site Name	Wood Lane
Site Location	Wood Lane, Norton-Juxta-Twycross, CV9 3QB
Local Authority	Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council
Overall Site Area (Redline)	0.81 ha
Existing Land Use (Redline)	Agricultural Land
Proposed Land Use (Redline)	Residential

2. Report Objectives

2.1 – The Objectives Set Out in this Report
- To establish the baseline ecological conditions within the redline boundary and future changes resulting from the proposed development. - To consider significant impacts resultant from the proposed development and identify any ecological considerations and constraints that will inform the proposal's design and working methods during the construction phase. - To assess if development is likely to be in accordance with wildlife legislation. - HRA Screening (only if within a Consultation/Impact Risk Zone). - To identify the need for further species-specific (commonly referred to as Phase Two) surveys if needed.

- To establish enhancements in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (excluding mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain as instilled by the Environment Act 2021, which is addressed in a separate report).

3. Methodology

3.1 Desk Study Assessment

A desk study was performed in April 2026 to inform of local records, some or all information which may be relevant to the proposal. Online resources (in this instance, the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)⁴ website) were used as part of this exercise, and included the following:

- Information pertaining to Statutory Site Designations within 2km of the Site, and within 5km for designations relating to bats.
- Information pertaining to European Protected species licences that have been issued within 2km of the Site.
- Any notable Priority Habitats listed under the Priority Habitats inventory onsite or close to the Site.
- Information relating to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), including any associated features that may be within the Site boundary, or within an Impact Risk Zone.
- Any other relevant faunal, floral or geological information.

Google Maps⁵ was also used to view satellite images of the Site from an aerial and street view context.

Not all of the below abbreviations are necessarily used within this report. However, for thoroughness, common abbreviations used in such reports include:

- SAC = Special Areas of Conservation
- SPA = Special Protection Area
- SSSI = Site of Special Scientific Interest
- NNR = National Nature Reserve
- LNR = Local Nature Reserve
- AONB = Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- SNCI = Site of Nature Conservation Importance
- ASNW = Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland
- RAWs = Restored Ancient Woodland Site
- PAWS = Plantation of Ancient Woodland Site
- NE = Natural England
- LRERC = Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Records Centre

PLEASE NOTE: As part of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, the client did not commission local records to be obtained by Leicestershire & Rutland Environmental Records Centre.

⁴ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

⁵ <https://www.google.co.uk/maps/@52.8382004,-2.3278149,6z>

Aerial images and Ordnance Survey maps were utilised to characterise the wider landscape. Off-site features and habitats were examined and assessed in relation to the ecological value they contribute to existing ecological networks that are tangibly associated with the site.

Ancient woodland has been defined as non-statutory designated sites for the purposes of this report. Such habitats are defined as 'irreplaceable' and receive strong protection through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). More recently, their protection is further strengthened in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 as a result of the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) policy, specifically associated with Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024.

3.2 Field Survey

Habitats:

A walkover of the Site was undertaken on the 18th of March 2026. The survey nature was an extended UK Habitat Classification Survey, specifically to inform the baseline of the habitats present on-site and their potential to support protected species and species of conservation concern. Any evidence suggestive of protected species being present on-site was noted throughout the course of the survey. The survey was carried out in reference to CIEEM 2017, UK Habitat Classification 2023 and BS 42020:2013 *Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development* (BSI 2013).

Habitats on site were assessed to determine whether habitats present are listed under Section 41 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, (2006), Priority Habitats UK's listed within the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2024), habitats of local priority for conservation such as those that pertain to Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP), or if there are any qualifying features that may justify further designation such as non-statutory designated site inclusions (SINC/ LWS/ SNCI).

Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provides a list of non-native invasive species, which essentially prohibits the introduction or accidental introduction/spread of these species into the wild in Great Britain. Examples include Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* and giant hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*. Where observed, such species were noted during the survey.

Protected Species and Species of Conservation Concern:

Species taken into consideration included those listed under;

- Section 41 The NERC Act 2006;
- Species lists such as those of local priority and conservation interest, e.g. ones listed within Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAP);
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
- Species of Conservation concern (listed as Red, Amber, Near Threatened or Data Deficient or otherwise listed in a Red Data Book if taxonomic group updated assessments have not been undertaken);
- Species listed within the Species Status Project Reviews, such as those that have been listed as Nationally Rare or Nationally scarce.

Bats:

The assessment of the suitability of structures (if present) for roosting bats was based on current guidance set out by the Bat Conservation Trust⁶.

The assessment comprised a Daytime Bat Walkover survey of the Site for its potential to provide roosting features for bats (if appropriate). The focus of attention was to determine if the habitat features onsite form part of foraging and flight-path networks for local bat populations. Photographs were taken of the Site, including the hedgerows and immediate habitat surroundings. Structures (if present) were assessed on a five-point scale (1-5) for their potential as roost sites (where 1 = High potential, 2 = Moderate potential, 3 = Low potential, 4 = Negligible potential, 5 = No potential (Collins et al, 2023)). The assessment was made according to the criteria set out in Table 2. Habitat was also assessed and made according to the criteria set out in Table 3.

The survey concentrated on looking for signs and evidence of bat usage as follows:

- Live and/or dead bats,
- Chattering and squeaking sounds (social calls) heard,
- Droppings,
- Feeding remains (e.g. butterfly or moth wings, beetle wing cases),
- Bat-fly (Nycteribiid) pupal cases,
- Perch abrasions,
- Characteristic staining from urine,
- Marks from oil secretions.

Table 2 – Roosting potential suitability in reference to presence of roosting and habitat features. (Collins et al, 2023).		
<u>Suitability</u>	<u>Description of roosting habitats</u>	<u>Number of activity survey visits required</u>
None	POINT SCALE: 5 There are no habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year.	None
Negligible	POINT SCALE: 4 There are no noticeable habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats.	None
Low	POINT SCALE: 3 The structure in question provides one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats, on an opportunistic basis, at any time of the year.	One, in the period May to August
Moderate	POINT SCALE: 2 The structure in question provides one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size,	Two, in the period May to September with at least one of the surveys

⁶ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation trust, London; Mitchell-Jones A. and McLeish A. (2004). Bat Workers Manual (3rd Edition). Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough; ell-Jones A. (2004). Bat Mitigation Guidelines. English Nature, Peterborough.

	shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat, but are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.	between May and August
High	POINT SCALE: 1 The structure in question provides one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by possibly significant numbers of bats on a recurring basis and if the conditions are appropriate, potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support roosts of high conservation status.	Three, in the period May to September, with at least two of the surveys between May and August
Confirmed	POINT SCALE: 0 Evidence of bats or use by bats found during the Daytime Bat Walkover, usually found during the external or internal inspection.	Minimum of two surveys to characterise the roost in the period May to September, with at least one of the surveys between May and August

Table 3 – Summary of guidelines for assessing the suitability of surrounding bat habitat (Collins et al, 2023).

Suitability	Description of commuting and foraging habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year.
Negligible	No key and/or apparent habitat features on site likely to be used as foraging resources or associated flightpaths.
Low	Habitat is generally isolated but may possess a few features that could be used by small numbers of bats, such as flightpaths, e.g. gappy hedgerow.
Moderate	The concerned habitat is continuous and usually connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flightpaths such as treelines, well developed scrub or linked back gardens.
High	The concerned habitat is usually high-quality habitat that is well-connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flightpaths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.

If appropriate, a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) for trees was also undertaken if trees with potential suitability were identified on-site. The purpose of this is to ascertain and locate

Potential Roosting Features (PRF) on the exterior of the trees (for example, woodpecker holes). The criteria applied to this assessment is outlined as follows:

- PRF – I: PRF(s) only suitable for individual bats or a very small number of bats, either due to their size or a lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
- PRF – M: suitable for multiple bats and could be used by a maternity colony.

An assessment was also undertaken to classify the surrounding habitats suitability for commuting, foraging and roosting bats. This survey was in direct reference to methods recommended in the Bat Conservation Trust Survey Guidelines, 2023⁷.

Badgers:

A search within the Site, which extended across a 30m buffer around the site perimeter where accessible, was undertaken. Where present, the locations of badger evidence, such as runs, setts, latrine, prints, hair, scratching posts, and/or foraging signs such as snuffle holes, were noted. The survey considered the Badger Trusts 'Badger Protection: Best Practice Guidance for Developers, Ecologists and Planners (England)'⁸.

Birds:

All bird observations and calls were noted during the survey. Features that could be utilised by nesting birds were also noted, and potential suitability for Schedule 1 listed birds, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), were assessed.

Dormice:

Dormice are small, nocturnal mammals which make use of habitats such as hedgerows, scrub and rich mosaics such as woodland complexes. The dormouse requires a good linear network which is well connected with a good range of food sources such as fruit, nuts, flowers (notably petals) or insects. Notable favourites for the species include hazel, bramble, oak and honeysuckle, but they will utilise other species such as hawthorn, hornbeam, blackthorn, sweet chestnut and sycamore in the network's composition.

Great Crested Newts:

Features on-site, and where appropriate off-site, were assessed for their potential to support great crested newt. The Great Crested Newt Conservation Handbook (Frog Life 2001) and Herpetofauna Workers' Manual (Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 2003) were referred to. Aerial maps and Ordnance Survey maps were utilised to determine whether any waterbodies within 500m of the site could be used by the species and thus have relevance to the site boundary in terms of terrestrial supporting habitat.

Reptiles:

Features on-site were assessed for their suitability for reptiles. Features relevant to reptiles' ecological lifecycle depending on the time of year were assessed and noted, with

⁷ BCT (2023): Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th Edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

⁸ Anon. (2023), *Badger Protection: Best Practice Guidance for Developers, Ecologists and Planners*, Badger Trust, Brighton.

particular consideration given to the Reptile Management Handbook (Edgar, Foster & Baker, 2011) and the Reptile Mitigation Guidelines Technical Note TIN 102 (Natural England, 2013).

Other species:

Other species considerations were noted where appropriate habitat suitability was present or otherwise ruled out where no potential features were found that could be utilised by a species(s).

4. Limitations

4.1 Survey Limitations

The field survey that informs this report is a snapshot of the ecological features and evidence onsite at a specific time of year and is informed by the information obtained during the site visit for a particular period. It cannot be ruled out that important ecological features may be missed due to survey timings, unusual climate events that can disrupt ecological cycles, or the year of the survey. Every effort has been taken to ensure the advice provided within this report is balanced and in-depth, but a lack of evidence for protected species does not always mean a likely absence.

The main barn (B1) is subdivided into two internal rooms. The western room was locked at the time of the survey and could not be accessed. Additionally, the western elevation was partially constrained from inspection due to its proximity to adjacent private residential properties; however, observations were undertaken as far as access permitted along this boundary.

Building B2 is in a severely dilapidated condition and is largely structurally unsound. The eastern section has completely collapsed, and due to safety constraints, access to several internal areas was not possible. Consequently, a full internal inspection of all areas could not be completed.

Bats are very small animals, capable of accessing small spaces, and it is possible that bats, or their signs, might have been missed during the survey if they are normally present opportunistically or in small numbers for a short period of time each year. Not all features in trees or buildings suitable for use by bats are visible from the ground, and there can be no external evidence of use; consequently, it is only possible to make a best effort when carrying out such a survey.

Habitat condition surveys were undertaken in March, which represents a sub-optimal time of year for the accurate assessment of certain habitat types, particularly grassland and woodland ground flora. At this time, many diagnostic plant species have not fully emerged or are identifiable, which may result in an underestimation of species diversity and overall habitat condition.

These limitations have been taken into consideration in the conclusions and recommendations following the assessment.

5. Results

5.1 Desk Study and Local Policy and The Law

Local Plan Policies & strategies

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's planning framework is set out within the Local Plan (2020–2039), published in February 2022, which guides development across the borough and embeds the protection and enhancement of the natural environment within its policy framework.

Ecological considerations are primarily addressed through Policies NAT01 to NAT12. Policy NAT07, for example, affords protection to internationally and nationally designated sites, stating that development likely to adversely affect the notified features of such sites will not normally be permitted. This ensures that sites of the highest ecological importance are safeguarded from inappropriate development. Policy NAT08 focuses on the enhancement of biodiversity and habitat connectivity. It requires development proposals to conserve and enhance features of ecological and geological value, including securing their long-term management.

In addition to the Local Plan, the borough forms part of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), published in July 2025. The LNRS provides a strategic, landscape-scale framework for habitat restoration, species recovery, and the strengthening of ecological networks across the wider area.

The LNRS identifies eight priority habitat types—woodland, freshwater, grassland, urban, agricultural, open mosaic habitats, green and blue corridors, and geodiversity. Across these habitats, the strategy promotes a consistent approach centred on the protection and expansion of existing assets, the creation of new habitats, and the enhancement of ecological connectivity. It also emphasises the importance of sustainable management practices to improve habitat condition and resilience to climate change, alongside supporting natural processes such as flood management, soil health, and species movement.

Collectively, the Local Plan policies and the LNRS establish a robust policy and strategic framework that seeks not only to protect designated sites and existing habitats but also to deliver measurable biodiversity enhancements and strengthen ecological networks at both site and landscape scales.

Ecological Context

The Site consists of:

- u1b5 – Developed Land – Sealed Surface; Buildings
- u1b – Developed Land – Sealed Surface
- u1f 81 – Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral

	• h3d – Bramble Scrub • g4 – Grassland - Modified Grassland • w1g – Other Woodland – Broadleaved Woodland • 33 – Line of Trees • 31 – Individual Trees – Urban Trees The Site falls within a semi-rural landscape, situated on the eastern edge of the small rural village Norton-Juxta-Twycross. The Site lies along Wood Lane, with access gained via an established track to the north. The site itself occupies a transitional zone between built development and open countryside, with residential properties and associated gardens immediately to the west and east, and larger arable fields extending to the north and south. The wider landscape supports a mosaic of pastoral and arable farmland, typically enclosed by species-rich hedgerows, hedgerows with trees and treelines. These boundary features provide important habitat for birds, bats and small mammals, and function as key ecological corridors.
Statutory & Non-statutory Designated Sites	The desk study revealed that the Site does not sit within any Statutory Designated Sites, and none lie within 2km. <u>River Mease Special Area of Conservation (Impact Risk Zone):</u> The Site lies within a Nutrient Impact Risk Zone associated with the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Under current planning and environmental policy, development proposals that include overnight accommodation and increased foul wastewater discharge within the River Mease catchment have the potential to contribute additional nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus) to watercourses. The River Mease SAC is a designated European site protected for its ecological interest, and it is currently nutrient-impacted, meaning it is in unfavourable condition as a result of elevated nutrient levels. In accordance with the principles of nutrient neutrality, where a development is considered a “nutrient-affected development”, it must be demonstrated that the proposal will not result in a net increase in nutrient inputs to the designated site. This is typically achieved by demonstrating that the development is nutrient neutral, meaning that any additional nutrient load caused by increased wastewater or changes in land use is mitigated so that there is no overall increase in nutrient export to the SAC catchment. Because the application site is located within the River Mease Impact Risk Zone catchment and involves the erection of overnight accommodation with associated foul wastewater

	discharge, the proposal is considered to be screened in for nutrient neutrality assessment. This means it is likely that an Appropriate Assessment will be required under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The Appropriate Assessment must demonstrate that the development will not have Likely Significant Effects on the integrity and favourable conservation status of the River Mease SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Consequently, consultation with Natural England will be necessary to confirm the scope of the assessment, the appropriate methodology for achieving nutrient neutrality, and any mitigation requirements. The applicant has advised that nutrient neutrality will be demonstrated in accordance with Natural England's March 2022 advice. The mitigation strategy and Habitats Regulation Assessment will be progressed separately with the drainage consultant and secured by planning condition or legal agreement as appropriate. <u>Special Areas of Conservation or Component Sites of Special Scientific Interest (Bats):</u> There are no Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) associated with bats within 5km of the site. The Site is not situated within an Impact Risk Zone. Therefore, consultation with Natural England is not considered necessary.
Habitats	<u>The Law</u> There is a list of habitats and species, noted as such by their principal importance in England. This includes 56 habitats and 943 species. These were originally highlighted as priority habitats and species in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)⁹. The publication of this list is a legal duty under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) shows that there are no Priority Habitats located within the site or adjacent to the it. The nearest known Priority Habitat lies approximately 221 metres northwest of the Site, which is identified as deciduous woodland by the National Forest Inventory 2020. Priority habitats within 2km of the Site include:

⁹ <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-bap/>

	• Deciduous Woodland • Traditional Orchard Blanket bog, Lowland fens, Limestone pavements, Coastal sand dunes, Ancient woodland, Ancient trees and veteran trees, Spartina saltmarsh swards and Mediterranean saltmarsh scrub are defined as 'irreplaceable' habitats and receive strong protection through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). More recently, their protection is further strengthened by the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) policy, specifically associated with Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024. The closest area of habitat defined as 'irreplaceable' to the Site is an area of ancient and semi-natural woodland, namely, Gopsall Wood, 1.16 km southeast of the Site. The proposals are located far enough away from the Priority and Irreplaceable Habitat to conclude that no impact is foreseen. The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), published in July 2025, identifies eight priority habitat types: • Woodland • Freshwater • Grassland • Urban • Agricultural • Open mosaic habitats • Green and blue corridors • Geodiversity. Woodland and grassland habitats are present within the Site boundary. Wherever practicable, these habitats will be retained, and recommendations for habitat enhancement within the Site are provided in Section 6.2 of this report. Within the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy, the priority for grassland habitats is the conservation and enhancement of existing grasslands, alongside the creation of new grassland areas. The proposed Site layout incorporates areas of wildflower meadow, which will contribute to meeting this priority by both enhancing existing habitat value and creating new grassland habitat.
Amphibians	<u>The Law</u> Great crested newts and natterjack toads are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to:

	- Deliberately capture, injure or kill a great crested newt or natterjack toad - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a great crested newt or natterjack toad - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a great crested newt or natterjack toad uses for shelter or protection - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place. Species of principal importance in England include great crested newt, pool frog, natterjack toad and common toad. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there are no records confirming the presence of great crested newt within 2km of the site. In addition, no European Protected Species Class Survey Licence Returns for the species were identified within 2km. The Site in its entirety lies within an Amber Risk Zone for great crested newt. Amber Zones indicate regions where the species is likely to be present, with suitable habitat and potential dispersal routes. This indicates a moderate risk of development impacting the newt population. The Site lies within a 'Fringe' Great Crested Newt Strategic Opportunity Area; these are areas where adding new ponds could benefit GCN populations, especially those on the edge of "core" areas, which this Site is. A review of OS maps identified six ponds within 500m of the Site, and two within 250m of the site. The Great Crested Newt Mitigation Guidelines (2001) states that the species can be capable of commuting up to 500m from their ponds during their terrestrial phase; however, these distances for such migration are energetically expensive, very dangerous and only considered necessary where habitats are scarce within the locality. English Nature (2004) published that most individuals will only travel within 100m of their pond, and few migrate beyond 200m. Pond 2 is located approximately 146m to the east of the redline boundary. Several significant barriers are present between the Site and this pond, including a large factory building extending along the eastern boundary. Beyond this are additional built structures, areas of hardstanding, residential development, and Wood Lane. Collectively, these features are likely to act as substantial constraints to amphibian movement, reducing the likelihood of Great Crested Newt dispersal to the Site.
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	However, Pond 1 is situated approximately 2m to the east of the redline boundary, adjacent to Wood Lane and access serving the Site (inside private residential curtilage).
Badgers	<u>The Law</u> Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under this legislation, it is an offence to; - Take, injure, or kill a badger - Treat a badger cruelly - Interfere with a badger sett - Possess or control a live badger - Mark or ring a badger - Damage or destroy a badger sett - Obstruct access to a badger sett - Disturb a badger when it is occupying a sett
Bats	<u>The Law</u> All bat species are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation, it is an offence to: - Deliberately capture, injure or kill bats - Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats; or under the habitat regulations deliberately disturb in a way that would affect their local distribution or abundance, or affect their ability to survive, breed or rear young - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which bats use for shelter or protection - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place. - Possess, control, transport, sell, exchange or offer for sale/exchange any live or dead bat or any part of a bat Bat species of principal importance include: - Greater horseshoe bat - Lesser horseshoe bat - Greater mouse-eared bat - Bechstein's bat - Barbastelle - Common pipistrelle - Soprano pipistrelle <u>Findings</u>

	A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there have been no European Protected Species licence issued within 2km of the Site, specifically pertaining to bats.
Birds	<u>The Law</u> All wild birds are granted legal protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation, it is an offence to: - Kill, injure or take any wild bird - Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built - Take or destroy the egg of any wild bird Schedule 1 listed bird species under this Act are afforded further protections, making it illegal to disturb these species while building a nest, or if a nest contains eggs or young, or to disturb dependent young. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that the Site sits within the following Countryside Stewardship targeting areas: • Lapwings are listed on the UK Red List. They are listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which provides special protection for wild birds, their nests, eggs, and young. It's an offence to disturb them during nesting season. Lapwings require arable land, grazed pasture and wet features such as scrapes and flushes, which enhance a 'muddier' environment for invertebrates. No such habitats are present on the Site. • Corn Bunting are listed on the UK Amber list and receive protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), safeguarding them, including their nests and eggs, from intentional harm or disturbance. The Corn Bunting is a farmland bird species associated with open, lowland agricultural landscapes. It favours extensive areas of arable or mixed farmland with large, open fields, minimal tree cover, and good visibility. Suitable habitats typically include cereal crops, rough grassland, and weedy field margins, which provide nesting sites on or near the ground. The species relies on a combination of seed-rich habitats for winter foraging and invertebrate-rich areas during the breeding season. Features such as hedgerows, fences, or scattered shrubs are used as song posts, but dense woodland or heavily enclosed

	landscapes are generally avoided. No such habitats are present on the Site. The Site also sits within a sighting zone for: • Corn Bunting • Grey Partridge , as listed under the Grassland Assemblage of Farmland birds. The species in the UK is identified as Red under the Birds of Conservation Concern 5: the Red List for Birds (2021). Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. Grey Partridges require open, lowland arable farmland, mixed farms, and sometimes rough upland pasture, specifically favouring areas with wide, untrimmed, tussocky hedgerows and field margins for nesting. Habitat extents on-site are not suitable to provide the compositions required to support this species.
Flora & Invertebrates	<u>The Law – Flora</u> Many species of plant are afforded protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to deliberately collect, pick, uproot, cut or destroy these plants. It is also an offence to possess, sell or exchange such a plant. Additionally, many of these species are also listed as species of principal importance. <u>The Law - Invertebrates</u> The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 affords protection to 45 invertebrate species. It is an offence to: - Intentional kill, injure or take such species - Deliberately damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place used by such species - Disturb such species when occupying a structure or place For eight species of invertebrate, the species and associated habitat(s) are afforded further protection under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). An additional 21 species benefit from partial protection. Nearly 400 species of invertebrate are included as species of principal importance. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there have been no

	European Protected Species licences issued within 2km of the Site. The Site does not sit within any priority, targeted or conservation areas pertaining to invertebrates.
Hazel Dormice	<u>The Law</u> Hazel Dormice are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation, it is an offence to: - Deliberately capture, injure or kill a dormouse - Intentionally or recklessly disturb dormice - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a dormouse uses for shelter or protection - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place - Possess, control, transport (alive or dead) Dormice are also listed as a species of principal importance. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there have been no European Protected Species licences issued within 2km of the Site.
Otter	<u>The Law</u> Otters are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation, it is an offence to: • Kill, injure, or capture an otter • Harass an otter • Disturb an otter while it is caring for its young or in its resting place • Damage or destroy an otter's resting place or breeding site • Obstruct access to an otter's resting place or breeding site • Possess, control, or transport an otter, alive or dead
Reptiles	<u>The Law</u> Smooth snakes and sand lizards are protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as

	amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation, it is an offence to: - Deliberately capture, injure or kill a smooth snake or sand lizard - Intentionally or recklessly disturb a smooth snake or sand lizard - Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure or place which a smooth snake or sand lizard uses for shelter or protection - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place - Advertise sale, barter, exchange, transport for sale and/or advertise to sell or buy a reptile Slow worm, grass snake, adder and common lizard are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) against killing, injury and sale. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that there have been no European Protected Species licences issued within 2km of the Site.
Water Vole	<u>The Law</u> Water voles are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this legislation, it is an offence to intentionally: - Kill, injure or take them - Possess or control them (alive or dead) - Damage or destroy a structure or place used for shelter or protection - Disturb them in a place used for shelter or protection - Obstruct access to a place used for shelter or protection
Other Notable Species	<u>The Law</u> Other species are identified as species of principal importance in England. Many species are required to be considered under National and often Local Planning Policies. Species of principal importance also include hedgehog and brown hare. Hedgehogs are listed with the following protections and considerations: • Red (IUCN) List mammal species • Have partial protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)

	- Listed as priority species under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 - Hedgehogs are highlighted as a priority species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan - The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 was established in light of dramatic population declines. The legislation afforded to hedgehogs in Act 2016 and National Planning Policy Framework (2024) enforces that public authorities must have due regard when exercising their functions to conserve biodiversity. 'Conserving biodiversity' is defined in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, and restoring or enhancing a population or habitat. Brown hare are listed with the following protections and considerations: - Protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). Their protection under this act is limited during a closed season from February 1st to September 30th. During this period It is illegal to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, or take a brown hare without a license - Brown hare are also a Priority Species under the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. <u>Findings</u> A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website shows that the Site does not sit within any other related protected species zones such as Countryside Stewardship Targeting Areas.
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5.2 Field Survey	
Statutory Designated Sites	No Statutory Designated Sites of such interest are located within or adjacent to the site boundary.
Site Description	u1b5 – Developed Land – Sealed Surface; Buildings, 0.1492 ha, B1 and B2 The site contains two buildings: B1 (0.1152 ha) located along the western boundary of the site, and B2 (0.034 ha) located along the eastern boundary of the site

B1 is a large agricultural steel-frame barn with corrugated sheet cladding. The structure is divided into two sections, with the eastern side open-fronted and the western section enclosed and inaccessible at the time of survey. It has a pitched roof with translucent panels and partial brickwork at the base of the walls. The building is in a state of limited use and moderate disrepair, with scattered debris and areas of ruderal vegetation present.

B2 is a single-storey, elongated timber-framed building in a highly dilapidated condition. It features corrugated asbestos roofing, much of which is heavily weathered, with sections collapsed or missing. Timber cladding is degraded and broken in places, creating large openings into the interior. The roof shows extensive moss growth and is structurally compromised. B2 is in an advanced state of disrepair, with significant structural failure, particularly at the eastern extent. The building and its margins are heavily colonised by dense ruderal vegetation, bramble, and climbing species such as ivy, indicating prolonged neglect. Although bramble is present in abundance, particularly to the south of B2, it has not been classified as a separate habitat as it falls below the 25 m² de minimis threshold.

u1b – Developed Land – Sealed Surface, 0.0901 ha, TN1 | A hardstanding access track extends from Wood Lane at the northern boundary of the site, running southwards to B1 and providing vehicle access. An additional area of hardstanding is present immediately adjacent to the western section of B1, likely associated with previous agricultural use for storage or vehicle manoeuvring.

u1f 81 – Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral, 0.0391 ha TN2 | To the west of the access track, along the western Site boundary, is an area of sparsely vegetated land associated with a line of trees. The ground layer is species-poor, comprising rare occurrences of common ivy, common nettle, bramble, cleavers, and common nipplewort. Extensive areas of bare ground are present, alongside patches of gravel and scattered debris, including discarded litter.

Deadwood is a notable feature throughout this area, with accumulations beneath the tree line. Overall, the habitat reflects a disturbed, low-diversity assemblage with features of ecological interest primarily associated with the tree line and deadwood resource.

u1f 81 – Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral, 0.1391 ha, TN3 | A large area of sparsely vegetated land extends south of B2, wrapping around to a smaller area to the north of B1. The habitat is heavily disturbed and characterised by early-stage colonisation by ruderal vegetation.

Species richness is relatively low, averaging approximately six species per square metre. However, several flowering, nectar-rich species of value to invertebrates are present, including buddleia, bramble, white clover, scentless mayweed, creeping thistle, and purple dead-nettle. These species occur infrequently and with low cover, and the sward overall lacks both diversity and structural complexity.

Additional features within this area include several shallow ephemeral puddles, a large earth mound to the southeast of B2 with extensive areas of bare ground, and discrete piles of deadwood and spoil (WF1 and WF2).

Average Species-richness: 6 per meter²

Species	Quadrat 1	Quadrat 2	Quadrat 3	Quadrat 4	Quadrat 5
Buddleia	R	R	-	-	-
Bramble	R	-	-	-	-
Red fescue	R	O	-	-	-
Common Nettle	R	R		R	-
Colts foot	R	-	-	-	-
Dove's-foot crane's-bill	-	R	-	-	-
Common dock	-	R	-	-	R
White clover	-	R	R	-	-
Yorkshire fog	-	O	R	R	R
Cock's-foot	-	-	R	-	-
Common mugwort	-	-	O	O	-
Early forget-me-not	-	-	R	-	-
Grey field-speedwell	-	-	-	R	-
Scentless mayweed	-	-	-	R	-

Purple dead-nettle	-	-	-	R	R
Creeping thistle	-	-	-	R	-
Bulbous buttercup	-	-	-	-	F
Perennial rye-grass	-	-	-	-	R

h3d – Bramble Scrub, 0.0158 ha, TN4 | Two areas of bramble-dominated scrub are present within the Site. The larger area is located along the north-eastern corner of the Site, where dense bramble forms the dominant cover, with rare occurrences of elder and goat willow. This area shows clear signs of human disturbance, with substantial quantities of debris and waste materials present.

The second area is smaller and situated adjacent to the south-eastern corner of B1. It is similarly dominated by bramble scrub and includes two young ash trees within the vegetation. Only one ash tree (T1) has been mapped, as the second falls below the minimum size threshold, whereby individual trees are defined by a diameter at breast height (DBH) exceeding 7.5 cm. Overall, these areas represent disturbed scrub habitat with limited species diversity but some structural variation.

g4 – Grassland – Modified Grassland, 0.2087 ha, TN5 | Grassland extends southwards from the eastern boundary of B2, rising to an area of higher ground characterised by a moderately steep slope leading to a flatter plateau that supports a greater diversity of grassland species.

The grassland is unmanaged and appears to be undergoing natural colonisation following previous development activities. The sward is variable in height, comprising a mosaic of short to tall grasses interspersed with scattered tall ruderal species. Areas of tussocky and flattened vegetation are present, indicating seasonal dieback and limited recent management.

Disturbance is evident throughout, with rubble and debris distributed across the grassland and localised patches of bare ground associated with historic ground disturbance. Species richness is relatively high for g4, averaging approximately 8 species per square metre. Several flowering species of value to invertebrates are present, including white clover, creeping buttercup, square-stalked willowherb, mugwort, hedge

woundwort, dandelion, creeping thistle, and dove 's-foot crane 's-bill.

Overall, the habitat exhibits characteristics of early successional grassland on previously disturbed ground, with moderate structural variation provided by scattered taller ruderal species. In the southwest corner of the Site, beneath T1–T4, the vegetation becomes dominated by ruderal and ephemeral species, including cow parsley, ivy, lords-and-ladies, bramble, and cleavers.

Average species-richness: 8 per meter²

Species	Quadrat 1	Quadrat 2	Quadrat 3	Quadrat 4
Mugwort	R	-	-	-
Dandelion	R	R	-	-
Common dock	-	F	-	O
Creeping thistle	R	-	-	R
Perennial rye-grass	A	-	F	F
Yorkshire fog	O	O	F	F
Cock's-foot	O	A	-	-
Dove's-foot crane's-bill	-	R	O	R
White clover	-	R	-	-
Ribwort plantain	-	R	-	R
Creeping buttercup	-	-	F	-
Wood club-rush	-	R	-	-
Hedge woundwort	-	-	O	O
False oat-grass	-	-	O	-
Square-stalked willowherb	-	-	R	-
Common nettle	-	-	-	R

w1g, Other Woodland – Broadleaved Woodland, 0.1680 ha, TN6

| Broadleaved woodland lies south of grassland TN5, on a steep slope descending to the southern Site boundary. It is classified as w1g – Other Woodland: Broadleaved Woodland under the UK Habitat Classification. A review of the MAGIC database, which is supported by the field survey, confirms it is not and should not be designated/classified as a Priority Habitat under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. The woodland comprises a mix of native and non-native species, including ash, sycamore, goat willow, elder, hawthorn, apple, and cherry plum.

Apple and cherry plum are mainly along the eastern edge, reflecting past planting pertaining to adjacent land use. Localised deadwood and early signs of decay provide some

	ecological interest, though the woodland has a limited age structure and no veteran trees. The understory is moderately developed, with common nettle, ivy, cleavers, common lungwort, bramble, lords-and-ladies, and cow parsley, indicating nutrient-rich, managed conditions. Spanish Bluebell was also present. Ground disturbance is evident, including dumped materials. A shallow area of standing water reflects temporary surface water following recent heavy rainfall rather than a permanent feature. Overall, the woodland supports a mix of native and non-native broadleaved species, with a moderately developed understory typical of nutrient-enriched conditions, and provides moderate ecological value, but lacks features indicative of ancient or priority woodland habitats. 33 – Line of Trees, 0.07 km, L1 Immediately west of the access track, a narrow line of trees is present, dominated by sycamore with rare occurrences of cedar, averaging approximately 2 m in width. Tree trunks are heavily colonised by ivy. The understory (TN2) is sparse, with the ground layer largely comprising leaf litter, deadwood, and scattered debris, including construction materials and general litter. 31 – Individual Tree – Urban Tree, T1 An ash tree in the 'small' size class within bramble scrub adjacent to B1. 31 – Individual Tree – Urban Tree, T2 An ash tree in the 'small' size class adjacent to the south elevation of B1. 31 – Individual Tree – Urban Tree, T3 A field elm in the 'medium' size class adjacent to the south elevation of B1. 31 – Individual Tree – urban Tree, T4 A field elm in the 'medium' size class south of B1 with canopy extending into residential gardens south of the site.
Amphibians	Amphibians (and notably great crested newts) utilise an array of habitats including open woodland and associated fringes, grassland (varying in sward height, with a preference to rough grassland), hedgerows, scrub, field margins, allotments, gardens (particularly those with ponds), coastal sand dunes, lowland dry heath, log and stone piles, and even misplaced stockpiles, especially those that have been subject to vegetative overgrowth. The mosaic of the above, in part or entirely, is

important for the yearly lifecycles of amphibians, for foraging, commuting, shelter and hibernation activities.

Field survey

No suitable aquatic breeding habitat is present within the Site boundary. On-site habitats predominantly comprise disturbed developed land, which offers limited suitability for amphibians. The sparsely vegetated land, which covers a large majority of the Site (TN5), is heavily disturbed, species-poor, and lacks the dense vegetation or well-developed leaf litter typically required for shelter, thermoregulation, and foraging. Similarly, the modified grassland (TN5) provides low moisture retention, sparse cover, and minimal protection from predation or extreme weather conditions, reducing its value as a terrestrial refuge. The sparsely vegetated land beneath the treeline (L1, TN2) offers slightly enhanced structure and cover from predators, including a layer of deadwood; however, overall vegetation density is minimal. Areas of bramble scrub (TN4) offer a small degree of terrestrial refuge. However, its limited extent, combined with the generally exposed and disturbed character of the Site, restricts its value for amphibians.

The woodland (TN6) provides the most structurally complex terrestrial habitat, offering some cover from predators and a deadwood and leaf litter layer that may support transient individuals. However, vegetation density in these areas is generally low, and there are no permanent waterbodies for breeding. Overall, the Site offers low suitability for amphibians, with potential use likely restricted to occasional transient individuals rather than established populations.

Off-site ponds are present within 250–500 m of the Site, including one immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary.

Pond 1 (off-site):

Pond 1 is a small, artificially lined waterbody situated immediately adjacent to Wood Lane and enclosed by a low wooden fence reinforced with stockproof wire. The water surface is covered in duckweed, forming a thin green layer over much of the pond, though areas of open water remain, especially near the edges. The pond lies alongside a brick wall on its southern boundary, and the treeline on-site (L1) casts shade over much of the pond.

The pond banks are lined with a geomembrane liner, which is partially exposed, although some vegetation is beginning to establish along the margins. The surrounding habitat consists of a narrow strip of grassy verge, with nearby areas dominated by buildings and hard surfaces, resulting in limited terrestrial connectivity. During the survey, no fish or waterfowl were

observed in the pond. However, the pond is covered in duckweed and access was restricted, and as such, the presence of fish cannot be ruled out.

Overall, the pond is considered to have low-moderate ecological value. However, its proximity to the road, minimal vegetated margins, and exposure to human disturbance likely reduce its ecological suitability compared with more natural or well-buffered ponds.

A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment of the pond P1 was undertaken in accordance with ARG UK Advice Note 5: Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index (May 2010). The results of the assessment are presented in the table below.

Due to the timing of the survey in March, certain HSI parameters, particularly those relating to aquatic and marginal vegetation, were assessed on a precautionary basis, as some plant species used to inform scoring are not readily identifiable or present at this time of year. The results of the HSI assessment gave the pond a score of 0.51, giving the pond a suitability score of 'Below Average'.

ARGUK GCN HSI Calculator									
Pond Name		Example							
Grid Ref		SK123456							
SI No	SI Description	SI Value	SI Value	SI Value	SI Value	SI Value	SI Value	SI Value	SI Value
1	Geographic location	1.00							
2	Pond area	0.05							
3	Pond permanence	1.00							
4	Water quality	0.33							
5	Shade	1.00							
6	Water fowl effect	1.00							
7	Fish presence	0.67							
8	Pond Density	1.00							
9	Terrestrial habitat	0.33							
10	Macrophyte cover	0.30							
HSI Score		0.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Pond suitability (see below)		Average							
Categorisation of HSI Score by Lee Brady									
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							

Based on ARGUK advice note 5 - Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index

Figure 1: HSI Assessment Results (P1)

A desk study using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website revealed no records confirming the presence of great crested newt within 2 km of the Site, and no European Protected Species Class Survey Licence Returns for the species were identified within this area. However, amphibian presence on-site cannot be entirely ruled out during terrestrial activities.

Pond P2 is located on land outside the client's ownership, and access was not granted during the survey by the neighbouring landowner. Although amphibians are capable of commuting up to 500 m from breeding ponds, several significant barriers exist between the Site and Pond 2. These include a large factory building along the eastern boundary, additional built structures, areas of hardstanding, residential development, and Wood

	Lane. Consequently, amphibian migration between the Site and Pond P2 is considered unlikely. Pond P1 is situated just 2 m east of the Site boundary, with no barriers separating the pond from the redline boundary itself. While the hardstanding access track lies between the pond and the nearest on-site suitable habitat, namely the treeline (L1) and sparsely vegetated land (TN2), which may influence amphibian dispersal due to disturbance, migration from Pond P1 onto the Site cannot be ruled out. Additionally, the Site lies within an Amber Risk Zone and a mapped Fringe Opportunity Area for amphibians, indicating potential value in the local landscape for the species. Overall, while on-site habitat suitability is limited, the surrounding landscape context suggests potential for amphibian use of the Site, particularly for terrestrial foraging or dispersal under favourable conditions.
Badgers	Field survey No evidence of active setts, well-used mammal paths, or other signs of badger activity was recorded on-site or within 30 m of the boundary. Small patches of bramble scrub (TN4) and woodland edges (TN6) provide limited cover that may be used opportunistically for temporary shelter, while ruderal areas (TN2/TN5) offer low-quality foraging opportunities. The raised grassland on the slope (TN5) provides well-drained ground that could be suitable for sett excavation, although steep or compacted areas may limit use. Flowering species present within the grassland and ruderal habitats, including white clover, creeping buttercup, buddleia, dove's-foot crane's-bill, mugwort, thistles, bramble, elder, apple, and cherry plum, are likely to support invertebrates and provide seasonal food. Badgers are known to forage in short grassland and improved pasture, such as amenity grassland and semi-improved fields. Modified grassland (TN5) may offer some foraging habitat. Additionally, given that the Site is surrounded by arable land to the south, occasional badger foraging or movement across the Site is possible, and there is no barrier, such as a wooden panelled fence, between the woodland to the south and adjacent fields, leaving the Site open access to the south. Overall, it is considered reasonably likely that badgers may occasionally commute through and forage within the Site.

Bats

Field survey

The primary purpose of the Daytime Bat Walkover Survey was as follows:

- Determine whether species of bat are using the buildings, in particular, the parts of the buildings that will be affected by the proposed works
- Confirm the type of bat roost(s) (e.g. maternity roost, day roost, feeding perch, night roost, mating roost, transitional roost, hibernation roost) and species(s) if present
- Establish how bats use any roosts (e.g. the location of roosting bats, possible exit and entrance points to the roost)
- Determine the intensity of roost use (e.g. number of bats, time and duration of use)
- Identify features and characteristics of the roost and the surroundings that are important
- If a confident assessment can be made, the times of year the bats are likely to be present.

B1 Barn Overview

B1 is a large steel-frame barn divided into two sections: an open-fronted eastern section and an enclosed western section. The structure features corrugated sheet cladding, partial brickwork at the base of the walls, and a pitched roof with translucent panels. The eastern room of the barn is currently disused, with scattered debris and ruderal vegetation present. The open eastern section is exposed and unsuitable for roosting.

Access to the enclosed western section was restricted. The roof appeared similar in construction to the eastern section, with no visible internal lining or roof voids; however, potential roosting features could not be fully assessed, and evidence of bats may have been missed. The western elevation was also obscured by adjoining residential properties, preventing a complete inspection of any external roosting opportunities on that side.

No evidence of bat activity was observed internally or externally. However, as the barn could not be fully accessed, in accordance with BCT Guidelines where such constraints are encountered, the barn is therefore assessed as having **low roosting potential** (Point Scale: 3).

B2 Barn Overview

B2 is a single-storey, elongated timber-framed building in advanced dilapidation. The roof is partially collapsed, with heavily weathered corrugated panels, and the timber cladding is broken in places, creating large openings. Moss growth is extensive, and dense ruderal vegetation, bramble, and climbing ivy surround the building. Due to the building being structurally

unsound, not all internal areas could be inspected. There are no roof voids, internal linings, or features likely to provide suitable crevices, and the structure is largely open and exposed to the elements and predators.

No evidence of bat activity was observed internally or externally. The barn is therefore assessed as having **negligible roosting potential** (Pont Scale: 4).

Tree Overview

A Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) was carried out on trees along the treeline (L1), individual trees T1–T4, and trees within the woodland area (TN6) to identify any Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) for bats.

No trees were found to contain potential roosting features. There were no ancient or veteran trees present on-site, with the majority of trees being young to early-mature in age.

The wider site within the context of the surrounding landscape is considered to provide moderate foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

Wider landscape

The Site has a limited degree of ecological connectivity, with residential dwellings and private gardens along the western and eastern boundaries restricting links to surrounding habitats. Wood Lane further disrupts connectivity by severing the on-site tree line. However, connectivity improves to the south, where the woodland adjoins agricultural land bounded by mature hedgerows, treelines, and linear features that provide links to wider woodland and traditional orchard networks.

Buff Ermine is a common moth and is found in both rural and urban settings. The larva feeds on a wide variety of trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants, including oak, plantain, dock, sorrel, nettle, bramble and elder. This particular moth species is important for several bat species (but notably for (barbastelles), and these habitats can be found within the Site.

Grazed pasture was noted within 1km of the site; several bat species (particularly horseshoes) have a strong preference for permanently grazed pastures, which are optimised by interspersed patches of deciduous woodland that are well connected by hedgerows. There are habitats comprising broad-leaved woodland within 1km of the Site. Nearby land-uses may generate higher levels of favourable prey which could disperse across the landscape, including the Site's boundary, such as

Aphodius beetles, as well as Melontha and Tupilid species, which require short grass to oviposit, which the land provides.

Many juvenile bats, including barbastelles pipistrelle spp., and several Myotis spp. foraging areas, small woodland floodplains and ponds or small river systems with dense layers of shrubby growth. Such habitat lies adjacent to the Site.

Mosquitoes and caddies fly larvae are aquatic invertebrates, as well as gnat larvae, and midges use riparian habitats to breed. Six ponds lie within 500m of the site, with other rivers and streams situated within 100m of the Site, meaning bats may occasionally travel across the perimeter of this site to exploit these water features. Studies have found that soprano pipistrelles preferred foraging in wetland habitats (Vaughan et al., 1997) and typically favour riparian habitats, as known water features are often found within a 2km radius of its maternity roosts.

Traditional orchards provide a significant resource for foraging bats, especially greater horseshoe bats. Orchards can provide a protective and sheltered microhabitat for local bat populations, and the concentration of small trees enables bats (particularly low-wing-bearing and aerial hawking species) to move through the area more easily and take advantage of the insect prey from under the canopy and underlying grassland, which is often species-rich. Such habitat lies within 2km of the Site.

The roads bordering the Site do not appear to be subject to street lighting. The Site is located within the village of Norton Juxta Twycross, with residential properties situated to the east and west that are likely to generate a degree of artificial light spill onto parts of the Site. However, the woodland to the south adjoins agricultural land comprising large parcels of arable land, meaning this area is unlikely to be significantly affected by excessive artificial light spill. Therefore, the Site and the wider landscape, which are functionally connected by treelines and hedgerows, are likely to provide suitable commuting and foraging habitat for a range of bat species, as they do not appear to be substantially compromised by excessive artificial lighting.

Whilst the assemblage of Priority, Irreplaceable and other related optimal bat foraging/commuting habitat/resources are well dispersed across the wider landscape, rationale has been applied to the context of the Site's integral relationship with such features. The proposals will primarily result in the loss of habitats of 'low' to 'very low' distinctiveness, including u1b5 – Developed Land: Sealed Surface; Buildings (B1 and B2), u1f81 – Sparsely Vegetated Land: Ruderal/Ephemeral (TN5), u1b – Developed Land: Sealed Surface (TN1), and g4 – Modified Grassland (TN5).

	However, habitats of 'medium' distinctiveness are also proposed to be lost as part of the development, including bramble scrub (TN4) and broadleaved woodland (TN6). Consultation with the client confirmed that retention of a 10 m buffer between the woodland and the development redline boundary is not feasible; therefore, removal of the woodland will be required to facilitate the proposed development, however, at the time of writing it was not clear how much woodland would require removal. The proposals are not expected to result in the loss of the treeline (L1). Should this change, its removal could result in the severance of a potential bat foraging and commuting corridor. However, this feature is not well connected to higher-quality habitats, being bounded to the north by Wood Lane and to the south by Building B1 and associated areas of hardstanding. Furthermore, the treeline is located adjacent to residential properties to the east and west, meaning it is likely subject to a degree of artificial lighting. As such, its value as a functional commuting or foraging feature for bats is considered to be limited.
Birds	Field survey The site offers a variety of nesting opportunities for birds, particularly within the treeline (L1), the bramble scrub (TN4) and the woodland (TN6). These habitats provide suitable cover and structural diversity for common breeding species, offering protection from predators and supporting foraging opportunities. During the survey, evidence of avian activity was recorded both visually and audibly. Species observed included European green finch (listed as a Species of Conservation Concern (Red List) in the UK), wood pigeon, rook, and robin. Additionally, a disused bird nest (WF3) was recorded within the eastern room of Building B1, located on one of the metal structural support beams. The nest is considered likely to be attributable to a wood pigeon, based on the observation of a wood pigeon flying out of the building during the survey. No evidence of Barn Owl was identified during the survey. The site and accessible buildings/structures were assessed for features suitable for use by Barn Owl, including potential nesting, roosting and resting locations such as roof voids, loft spaces, open-fronted agricultural buildings, roof structures, ledges, beams, cavities and other sheltered locations. No suitable nesting or roosting features, pellets, feathers, prey remains, whitewash or other characteristic signs of Barn Owl activity were recorded. On this basis, the site is considered to have negligible potential to support breeding or roosting Barn Owl.

	Overall, the site is considered to offer moderate suitability for common breeding birds, with the treeline bramble scrub and woodland representing the key areas of nesting habitat. As such, it is considered reasonably likely that birds may nest within the site boundary.
Flora & Invertebrate	Field survey The habitats on site are commonplace. Bramble young shoots, which will naturally regenerate within the bramble scrub, are known to be important food plants for several caterpillars, e.g. grizzled skipper butterfly and many moths, including the bramble shoot moth and scarlet tiger moth. Red admiral and speckled wood butterflies, bees and hoverflies are among several insects attracted to the nectar of blackberry flowers. The sparsely vegetated land is species-poor and structurally simple, offering limited resources for notable or specialist invertebrate species. In contrast, the grassland demonstrates moderately higher species richness and supports several flowering species of value to invertebrates, including white clover, creeping buttercup, square-stalked willowherb, mugwort, hedge woundwort, bramble, dandelion, creeping thistle, and dove's-foot crane's-bill. These species may provide foraging opportunities for generalist pollinators and other common invertebrate taxa. However, the Site overall lacks the habitat heterogeneity, floral diversity, and microhabitat variation typically associated with habitats supporting notable or species-rich invertebrate communities. Therefore, common invertebrates are likely to be present on-site. Invasive and non-native species, Spanish Bluebell, listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was observed onsite.
Hazel Dormice	Field survey No evidence of nesting activity, feeding remains, or other characteristic signs of hazel dormouse were recorded during the survey. Overall, the Site offers limited foraging opportunities for the species. Key forage plants for hazel dormice typically include hazel, hawthorn (an important early-season food source following emergence from hibernation), honeysuckle, bramble, blackthorn, and field maple. Within the Site, bramble is present in isolated areas and only limited amounts of hawthorn were recorded, with other key forage species absent. The woodland (TN6) is considered to provide suboptimal habitat for hazel dormouse due to its relatively simple structure and limited understorey diversity. Hazel dormice are strongly

	associated with structurally diverse woodland and scrub habitats with a well-developed, species-rich shrub layer that provides continuous arboreal pathways, food resources, and nesting opportunities. The woodland on-site displays relatively low shrub diversity and limited structural connectivity, reducing its suitability for dormice. The woodland on-site is considered to be arboreally isolated from more suitable habitats, backing onto arable land to the south, which provides limited connectivity and acts as a barrier to dispersal. The nearest area of priority deciduous woodland identified through MAGIC mapping lies approximately 221 m northwest of the Site. However, this woodland is separated from the Site by significant barriers, including Main Street, Wood Lane, Orton Lane, residential dwellings, private gardens, and footpaths. No continuous habitat corridors link this woodland to the Site. There are no known records of hazel dormouse from the Site, or its immediate surroundings, and the Site is not located within a recognised stronghold for the species. Overall, the limited availability of key forage species, reduced structural diversity within the woodland, and lack of functional connectivity to suitable habitats in the wider landscape indicate that the Site provides low suitability habitat for hazel dormouse, with a reduced likelihood of supporting a resident or commuting population.
Reptiles	Habitat for reptiles (particularly with the United Kingdom's unpredictable weather patterns) requires optimal thermal and structural properties (Edgar et al. 2011). Field survey The majority of the Site comprises disturbed developed land, which is of low suitability for reptiles due to limited structural diversity, high exposure to predators, and susceptibility to temperature extremes. Modified grassland (TN5) provides limited suitability for reptiles, offering sparse vegetative cover and minimal protection from predation or adverse weather conditions. While the grassland includes some structural variation and localised areas of taller ruderal vegetation, it lacks the dense ground cover and habitat mosaic typically required to support reptiles. The sparsely vegetated land beneath the treeline (L1, TN2) provides slightly enhanced structural diversity compared to the open developed areas, including the presence of localised deadwood and some cover from predators. However, vegetation density remains low, limiting its suitability as a refuge habitat. Connectivity associated with the treeline is also restricted, being bounded to the north by

	Wood Lane and to the south by Building B1 and associated areas of hardstanding, thereby limiting its function as an effective commuting corridor. Areas of bramble scrub (TN4) provide more structurally suitable terrestrial refuge habitat on-site, offering denser vegetation and improved shelter compared to surrounding habitats. However, these areas are small in extent and relatively isolated, which restricts their overall habitat value. Broadleaved woodland (TN6) provides locally valuable edge habitats that may offer sheltered microhabitats suitable for basking and refuge, particularly along woodland margins. However, the woodland itself is reasonably isolated from more suitable habitats within the wider landscape, being bordered by arable land to the south and separated from other semi-natural habitats by intervening development and infrastructure. Additionally, log and spoil heaps (WF1 and WF2) present within the Site provide small areas of potentially valuable reptile habitat, offering shelter and thermal refugia suitable for basking, refuge, or hibernation. However, these features are located within open areas of sparsely vegetated land, leaving them exposed to predation and temperature extremes, which reduces their overall suitability. Common UK reptile species, including slow worm, common lizard, and grass snake, typically require a mosaic of basking areas, dense cover, and foraging habitat. While some localised features within the Site, particularly bramble scrub (TN4), woodland edges (TN6), and sections of the treeline (L1), may provide limited opportunities for transient use or refuge, the overall suitability of the Site is constrained by its fragmented habitat structure and limited connectivity to higher-quality habitats in the surrounding landscape. Overall, while the presence of reptiles cannot be ruled out, any use of the Site is likely to be low-level and largely restricted to boundary habitats, rather than the open and more exposed areas within the Site interior.
Otter	The Site does not present habitats required for this species, such as watercourses, vegetated riverbanks, reedbeds and woodland. Otters are likely to be active in the wider landscape, but their presence is considered to be unlikely on-site.
Water Vole	The Site does not present habitats required for this species, such as slow-moving or still watercourses, and soft banks. Therefore, their presence is considered to be unlikely on-site.
Other Notable Species	The Site may offer some refuge for small mammals, notably hedgehog.

	Hedgehogs rely on sheltered habitat assemblages such as woodland edges, rough grassland, log and leaf piles and thick undergrowth, including shrubby layers. Bramble scrub (TN4), woodland (TN6) provide some suitability for hedgehogs. Brown hare are unlikely to utilise Site boundary, the species favour arable land because it provides a mosaic of open fields, grassland and hedgerow to feed as well as escape predators.
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6. Recommendations and Enhancement Opportunities

6.1 Assessment of Impacts

Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites	<u>River Mease Special Area of Conservation (Impact Risk Zone):</u> Because the application site is located within the River Mease Impact Risk Zone catchment and involves the erection of dwellings with associated foul wastewater discharge, the proposal is considered to be screened in in relation to increased levels associated with nutrients as a result of the erection of additional overnight accommodation. This means it is likely that an Appropriate Assessment will be required under Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The Appropriate Assessment must demonstrate that the development will not have Likely Significant Effects on the integrity and favourable conservation status of the River Mease SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Consequently, consultation with Natural England will be necessary to confirm the scope of the assessment, the appropriate methodology for achieving nutrient neutrality, and any mitigation requirements. It is not within the scope of this assessment to address those issues.
Habitats	The desk study revealed that there are no habitats listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 present. The habitats on-site comprise nine habitat types: • u1b5 – Developed Land – Sealed Surface; Buildings • u1b – Developed Land – Sealed Surface • u1c – Artificial Unvegetated – Unsealed Surface • u1f 81 – Sparsely Vegetated Land – Ruderal/Ephemeral • h3d – Bramble Scrub • g4 – Grassland - Modified Grassland • w1g – Other Woodland – Broadleaved Woodland

	• 33 – Line of Trees • 32 – Individual Trees – Urban Trees The habitats recorded within the site are classified as having ‘very low’ to ‘medium’ distinctiveness under the Statutory Biodiversity Metric framework. According to the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, July 2025), habitat distinctiveness reflects the ecological value of a habitat based on its type and defining characteristics. This assessment takes into account factors such as species diversity, habitat coverage, statutory protection status, and the extent to which the habitat supports species that are uncommon elsewhere. The Site includes an area of woodland that is considered to be of moderate ecological value and does not meet the criteria for Priority Habitat. However, it nevertheless provides habitat structure and connectivity within the local landscape and has the potential to support common and widespread species. Development proposals may necessitate the partial loss of this woodland; however, the extent of loss is not yet defined at this stage. In accordance with the mitigation hierarchy and relevant best practice, including BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction, the retention of existing woodland will be prioritised wherever feasible. Where woodland is retained, it will be protected during construction through the implementation of appropriate measures such as root protection areas (RPAs), protective fencing, and exclusion zones. Further design iteration will seek to avoid or minimise impacts, with any unavoidable losses to be mitigated and compensated as appropriate in line with EclA principles. Where impacts to habitats occur, these can be offset through appropriate habitat creation and enhancement measures. Enhancement measures were considered at an early stage in consultation with the client, including the retention of a 10 m buffer between the development redline boundary and the woodland edge. However, retention of this buffer is not feasible under the current proposals. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for habitats. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.2.
Amphibians	It is not expected that there will be direct impacts on the species as a result of the proposed development. However, it cannot be ruled out that local populations utilise the site during terrestrial phases. Therefore, there is a risk that amphibians may be harmed during the proposed habitat clearance The Site's habitats, predominantly being disturbed developed land, are sub-optimal for amphibians; however, some features,

specifically, the line of trees (L1), bramble scrub (TN4), and woodland (TN6), could be utilised by amphibians as daytime refuge.

A review of the MAGIC database identified no records of great crested newt within 2km of the Site, and no European Protected Species licence returns were recorded within this search radius. However, the Site lies within an Amber Risk Zone and a 'fringe' Strategic Opportunity Area. Review of Ordnance Survey mapping confirms there are six ponds within 500m of the Site, and two within 250m (including one which lies adjacent to the Site boundary)

Although no suitable aquatic habitats are present within the Site, Pond 1 (Appendix 5) is located approximately 2 m east of the redline boundary. Therefore, a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment has been undertaken to evaluate its suitability for great crested newts.

Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) of Pond 1:

SI	Parameter	Score	Justification
1	Geographic location	1.00	The pond is located within zone A, in an optimal location.
2	Pond area	0.05	The pond is approximately 35m ² .
3	Pond permanence	1.00	The pond rarely dries. Dries no more than two years in ten or only in drought.
4	Water quality	0.33	There is a low invertebrate diversity (e.g. species such as midge and mosquito larvae. Few submerged plants.
5	Shade	1.00	Approximately 60% of the pond perimeter is shaded.
6	Waterfowl effect	1.00	No evidence of waterfowl impact.
7	Fish presence	0.67	No evidence of fish, but local conditions suggest that they may be present.
8	Pond density	1.00	Six ponds within 1km of the Site.
9	Terrestrial habitat	0.33	Habitats with poor structure that offer limited opportunities for foraging and shelter.
10	Macrophyte cover	0.3	Approximately 70% of the pond surface area is occupied by macrophyte cover.

HSI Score = 0.51 (Below Average Pond Suitability)

Given the absence of on-site breeding habitat and the limited suitability of terrestrial habitat, the risk of direct impacts to amphibian breeding populations within the Site is considered low. However, due to the proximity of off-site pond (P1) and the absence of significant dispersal barriers, there remains potential for occasional terrestrial use of the Site by amphibians, including great crested newt, particularly during nocturnal foraging or dispersal movements in favourable conditions.

Potential impacts associated with site clearance or construction activities could therefore include:

	• Accidental injury or mortality of dispersing individuals; • Temporary disturbance to low-quality terrestrial habitat used opportunistically; • Minor reduction in connectivity at a local scale This would constitute an offence under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). At a precautionary level, a residual minor adverse effect at the local level cannot be entirely ruled out. Further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.2.
Badgers	It is not expected that there will be direct impacts on the species as a result of the proposed development. However, it cannot be ruled out that local populations utilise the site for commuting and foraging purposes. Therefore, there is a risk that badgers may commute through the Site and fall into excavations (if any are created) during the construction phase. Given the absence of signs of current use, the proposed development is unlikely to result in direct impacts on badgers or active setts, and no offence under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 is anticipated based on current site conditions. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for badgers. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.2.
Bats	The desk study revealed no European Protected Species licences issued within 2km. The modified grassland (TN5) and sparsely vegetated land (TN5) provide limited foraging potential for bats due to a lack of structural diversity and shelter. In contrast, the treeline (L1) and woodland (TN6) are more likely to support bat commuting and foraging activity, particularly during the summer months. Connectivity across the Site is somewhat constrained by its location within the village of Norton Juxta Twycross. The connectivity of the treeline (L1) to higher-quality habitats is constrained, being severed at its northern extent by Wood Lane and at its southern extent by Building B1 and associated areas of hardstanding. Although the woodland (TN6) is not directly connected to other habitats via continuous linear features, it adjoins open agricultural land to the south, where field boundaries and hedgerows provide indirect links to the wider countryside.

	Overall, ecological connectivity for bats is considered to be moderate, albeit with some localised constraints associated with habitat fragmentation and built infrastructure. However, access to the barn's (B1) enclosed western section was restricted, and potential roosting features could not be fully assessed. The western elevation was also obscured by adjoining residential properties, preventing a complete inspection of any external roosting opportunities. In the absence of further survey work, there is a risk that works to demolish B1 could result in the disturbance, injury or killing of bats, and the destruction of a roost. This would constitute an offence under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) Further survey effort across B1 is therefore necessary to inform appropriate mitigation and any licensing requirements, and to ensure that the proposed works can proceed in a legally compliant manner without resulting in significant adverse ecological impacts. Additionally, any increased artificial lighting on site may reduce, sever or result in existing important commuting lines and associated foraging habitats becoming inaccessible to local bat populations. Further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.2.
Birds	The Site lies within a Countryside Stewardship targeting area for lapwing and corn bunting. Lapwing typically utilise arable land, grazed pasture, and wet features such as scrapes and flushes that support invertebrate-rich foraging habitats; however, no such habitats are present within the Site. Corn bunting generally nest within cereal fields, grass silage fields, or field margins. Habitats within the Site are of limited suitability for this species, although adjacent arable land to the south provides more suitable nesting and foraging habitat. The site offers suitable nesting and foraging habitat for several common bird species, primarily concerning the western treeline (L1), individual trees (T1-T4), bramble scrub (TN4) and woodland (TN6). During the survey, a variety of common birds were recorded, both heard and observed on site. Additionally, a disused nest was observed within Building B1, likely attributed to wood pigeon. All wild birds are granted legal protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981. As the proposals are anticipated to require the removal of suitable structures and vegetation, breach of this legislation could occur if left unmitigated.

	It cannot be ruled out that local populations will utilise the site for nesting and foraging purposes. Therefore, there is a risk that breeding birds may be disturbed or harmed during the proposed works. Overall, the site is considered to be of Site value for nesting birds. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.2.
Hazel Dormouse	The desk study revealed no European Protected Species licences issued within 2km. Field survey results indicate that the Site offers limited suitability for hazel dormouse. No evidence of dormouse presence was recorded during the survey, including the absence of nests, feeding remains, or signs of commuting activity. Woodland (TN6) is considered suboptimal for hazel dormouse due to its simple structure, limited shrub diversity, and poor arboreal connectivity. The woodland is also isolated from more suitable habitats, with adjacent arable land to the south acting as a barrier to dispersal. Given the absence of field evidence, combined with the suboptimal habitat conditions and isolation from the wider habitat network, the Site is considered to have negligible potential to support hazel dormice. The proposed development is therefore unlikely to result in impacts to this species, and no further survey or specific mitigation measures are considered necessary. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for hazel dormouse. No further surveys are recommended.
Reptiles	The habitats within the Site are considered to offer low suitability for supporting common reptile species. Features such as deciduous woodland and bramble scrub provide opportunities for foraging and shelter, while piles of brash, logs, and leaf litter create potential refuges and basking locations. On this basis, species such as slow worm may occur within the Site, although numbers are likely to be low, and unlikely to support viable breeding populations Vegetation clearance and groundworks associated with the proposals could result in injury or mortality of reptiles, as well as the loss of refuge features, if carried out without suitable precautions. A precautionary method of working is therefore recommended. Vegetation removal should be undertaken sensitively, progressing in a directional manner and, where practicable, avoiding periods of peak reptile activity. Retention and, where necessary, reinstatement of suitable habitat features

	would help reduce potential impacts. Such measures would also allow any reptiles present to move into adjacent suitable habitats, thereby lowering the risk of harm and maintaining local habitat connectivity. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for reptiles. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.2.
Flora & Invertebrates	The habitats on-site are commonplace. It can be expected that common invertebrates will utilise the on-site vegetation networks, albeit on a microhabitat scale. PLEASE NOTE: Spanish Bluebell, which is listed under schedule Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 concerning non-native invasive species plant, is present. Under this schedule, it is an offence to release or allow these listed species to escape into the wild without a license. Overall, the Site is considered to be of Site value for invertebrates. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.2.
Other Notable Species	It is not expected that there will be direct impacts on the species as a result of the proposed development. However, it cannot be ruled out that local populations utilise the site for nesting and foraging purposes. Therefore, there is a risk that hedgehogs may be harmed during the proposed works. No further surveys are recommended. Please see section 6.2.

6.2 Further Surveys (if required) and Recommendations

Methodology to Identifying Ecological Constraints

All potential ecological constraints in relation to the development proposals have been thoroughly considered in Section 5. Opportunities to deliver ecological enhancement in accordance with local and national planning policy have also been considered and are outlined below.

Planning policy makes it clear that any proposed development duly considers and applies the below mitigation hierarchy when considering impacts to ecological species and habitats:

1. **Avoidance:** every attempt should be made to avoid creating impacts on features from the outset;
2. **Minimisation:** where avoidance cannot be wholly achieved, measures by design, suitably designed methods of working or other actions to minimise impacts (otherwise known as mitigation) should be employed;

3. **Compensation/restoration:** if avoidance and minimisation cannot be wholly achieved, significant impacts on features should be compensated in such a way to restore an area to its original ecosystem or any other ecological functions/services that existed prior to impacts relating to the development.

The hierarchy requires that avoidance is applied where possible. When it is not feasible to avoid such impacts, rationale for minimisation/compensation/restoration should be sufficiently detailed, showing the measures are feasible to implement.

The ecological constraints associated with the development have been assessed in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy, with due consideration to apply, as much as possible, actions to avoid impacts on ecological features.

In addition to the above, Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 states that *'Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'* as well as *'Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat'*.

It should be highlighted that the below recommendations may require amendments, subject to the results of any recommended further survey work as outlined below.

Protection of Habitats

Retained woodland, lines of trees and individual trees should be protected during the works, including any groundworks, by the establishment of Root Protection Areas in accordance with BS 5837:2012. All off-site boundary features should be marked by Heras fencing, if appropriate, erected prior to works commencing. No materials or construction plant(s) should be allowed within the allocated buffer zone.

General

Prior to the commencement of any works, construction operatives should be inducted by a suitably qualified ecologist to make them aware of the possible presence of protected species, briefed on their legal protection, how to identify them, the habitats they are most likely to be found in, and the working practices to avoid harming them.

Species

Amphibians

The following options are available for the client to consider:

- The client could opt to join Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland District Level Licensing (DLL) Scheme. To begin this process, an Enquiry Form should be sent to Natural England, which enables applying for an impact assessment and conservation payment certificate (IACPC).
- If the client does not wish to join Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland District Level Licensing Scheme, works should not commence until further surveys have been carried out to assess the potential impact on great crested newts.

The site lies within an Amber Risk Zone, and there are six ponds within 500m, including two within 250m (and one within 2m) of the Site.

eDNA takes a water sample, analyses it, and provides a confirmed great crested newt presence/absence result based on the water sample. These samples can only be taken when the species are most likely to be present within the pond, between 15th April and 30th June.

eDNA surveys are a way to confirm presence or absence from a pond, and whether it is necessary to conduct further surveys, including population size class surveys on the pond.

Bats

B1:

Prior to the recommended bat activity survey(s), access should be permitted to facilitate a full internal inspection of the structure, which was not feasible during the survey.

Following professional guidelines (Collins 2023) a minimum of one bat activity emergence survey should be undertaken to confirm if roosting bats are present and if so, characterise the roost(s) within the structure. This should be undertaken in the period May to August. This may lead to further surveys being recommended if the aims and objectives in relation to ascertaining presence and therefore characterising the bat roost has not been confirmed.

A minimum of three surveyors equipped with night vision aids (NVAs) will be required to observe all potential roost access points in the building.

Mitigation/compensation and enhancement measures for bats can be considered after further surveys have been undertaken.

In any eventuality, it is recommended that a sensitive lighting design for bats, which follows Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and artificial lighting in the UK (ILP and BCT 2023), should be prepared by a suitably qualified consultant. The design should show how and where external lighting will be installed and supported, where appropriate, with technical specifications. The sensitive lighting design for bats should also ensure that areas to be lit will not disturb or prevent bats using their territory. The design should accord with Step 5 of Guidance Note 08/23. The Local Planning Authority will likely require that all external lighting needs to be installed in accordance with the specifications and locations set out in the agreed design and thereafter maintained in accordance with the design.

Badger

No setts or evidence of commuting or foraging badgers were identified within the Site or within 30m of the site. Therefore, the Site is likely to be used occasionally by commuting and foraging badgers.

It is recommended that, during construction, if excavations or large pipes are created (>200mm diameter) these must be covered at night. If excavations are left open, then it is essential that a means of escape is created. As an example, this may include a plank

to allow badgers and other small mammals to escape if they fall in. If further signs of badgers are encountered during the works, then works should stop until advice is sought from a suitably qualified ecologist at the earliest possible opportunity.

Nesting Birds

The proposed development requires the removal of vegetation which may support nesting birds. It is recommended that no removal of vegetation or works to or demolition of the building on-site should take place between 1st March and 30th of September inclusive, unless a competent ecologist has undertaken a careful, detailed check for active birds' nests immediately before the vegetation is cleared or works to or demolition of the building commences. In no circumstances should netting be used to exclude nesting birds. If nesting birds are recorded during this inspection(s), then the vegetation must remain with a sufficient sectioned exclusion zone marked around the nest site until any dependent young have fledged.

Reptiles

It is recommended that a precautionary set of working measures are implemented in relation to reptiles. Working measures should comprise the following:

- Vegetation must be maintained below 5cm to maintain the sub-optimal habitat value for reptiles
- Any excavations should be covered overnight, or a means of escape, such as a plank installed to allow reptiles to escape if they fall in
- Pollution prevention measures should be implemented in accordance with the Environment Agency's *Pollution Prevention Guidelines 2015*
- Where the use or generation of chemicals and pollutants occurs, COSHH regulations should be implemented in relation to storage and disposal in order to preserve and protect nearby waterbodies
- In the unlikely event that reptiles are found within the working area, they should be given sufficient time to disperse, or in extreme circumstances, moved by hand to suitable sheltered vegetation
- In the unlikely event that smooth snakes and/or sand lizards are identified, works must cease immediately, and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist
- Any features such as rubble piles which potentially afford resting places for common reptiles will be dismantled by hand by a competent ecologist in April or August to October.
- Tree clearance should be undertaken using a two-stage cut, with the base vegetation removed by hand and arisings carefully lifted and shaken out to allow any amphibians to disperse naturally into adjacent retained vegetation or pre-identified refugia.

Invasive non-native species

An invasive non-native species protocol should be followed concerning the containment, control and removal of Spanish Bluebell from the Site.

If the plant is young and less established, manual excavation may be possible by pulling up the plant by its roots and disposing of the whole plant appropriately. Using herbicide

treatment can assist in preventing new growth from occurring, particularly a systemic herbicide that will translocate through the plant to its roots.

If the plant is well-established, the removal of the plant may be less straightforward and could cause damage to property if not handled correctly; in these instances, it is advised to hire professionals with experience in invasive species management. This will ensure the correct herbicide is used to prevent future regrowth and the correct disposal of plant waste material.

Other Notable Species

The site offers limited refuge for hedgehog, mainly provided by the woodland. Therefore it is recommended that prior to vegetative clearance, any features potentially used by hedgehogs, such as the long rough grassland, shall be checked by a competent ecologist via a fingertip search. Any individuals found will be translocated to an appropriate location outside of the construction site and away from roads prior to works commencing. Additionally, prior to vegetative works commencing, a site check by a suitably competent ecologist should be performed to check for the presence of brown hare – the precautionary works already recommended for hedgehogs shall be sufficient to maintain the favourable conservation status for brown hare.

Enhancement Opportunities

The National Planning Policy Framework (193d) requires biodiversity enhancement to be provided within the development boundary.

- It is recommended that consideration is given to the proposed on-site hedgerow creation. Species composition of new hedgerow(s) should be planted with native species comprised of the following: hazel, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, hawthorn, field maple *Acer campestre*, and elder.
- It is recommended that a Habitat 001 bat box or similar is built into each dwelling at least four metres above ground level and away from windows of the west or south facing elevation.
- It is recommended that any new shrubs incorporated within the Site boundary should be high nectar producing to encourage invertebrates to the Site, as well as provide continued foraging for bats. The Royal Horticultural Society guide, "RHS Perfect for Pollinators, www.rhs.org.uk/perfectforpollinators" provides a well-suited plants list of both native and non-native species. In addition, all new trees planted on site should ideally be from local native stock, such as field maple, ash, hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, beech *Fagus sylvatica* and spindle *Euonymus europaeus*.
- It is recommended that a Vivara Pro Woodstone House Martin nest or similar is mounted directly under the eaves of the north elevations on each of the dwellings.
- A bee brick is recommended to be built into the walls about 1 metre above ground level on the south or southeast elevations on each of the dwellings.
- It is recommended that new fencing incorporates accessible hedgehog holes, measuring 13cm x 13cm to allow the movement of hedgehogs into and out of the Site.
- Opportunities exist to enhance the retained woodland to improve its structural diversity and biodiversity value. Enhancement measures should include the selective thinning of poor-quality or suppressed trees to promote a more varied

age structure, alongside the planting of native, locally appropriate species to strengthen species composition and resilience. The woodland understorey should be enhanced through the introduction and management of native shrubs and ground flora, where currently limited and the removal of invasive, non-native Spanish Bluebell. Retention and creation of deadwood habitats (e.g. standing and fallen timber) should be incorporated to benefit invertebrates, fungi, and foraging fauna. In addition, appropriate long-term management, such as the control of invasive or non-native species and the establishment of buffer zones to reduce edge effects from the development, should be implemented. These measures will contribute to achieving measurable biodiversity gains in accordance with current best practice guidance.

7. Conclusion

It is considered that, mitigation/compensation and enhancement measures for amphibians and bats can be considered after further surveys have been undertaken, to ensure that the proposals will not breach wildlife legislation, national or local planning policies. In relation to badgers, nesting birds, hedgehogs, reptiles Schedule 9 listed invasive non-native floral species, and protection of retained site & off-site habitats, it is considered that the proposals will not breach wildlife legislation, national or local planning policies, subject to the recommendations as outlined in section 6.2 being followed.

Appendix 1: Figures

For convenience – press “Alt + Left Arrow” to return to the section of the report

Alt



Site Photos

Figure 1: Photo showing Site entrance.



Figure 2: Photo showing TN1, TN2 and L1 facing south.



Figure 3: Photo showing TN1, TN2, and L1 facing north.



Figure 4: Photo showing TN1 and B1.



Figure 5: Photo showing B1 north elevation.



Figure 6: Photo showing B1 east elevation.



Figure 7: Photo showing B1 south elevation, TN4 and T1.



Figure 8: Photo showing B1 north elevation (closed western room).



Figure 9: Photo showing B1 internal east room.



Figure 10: Photo showing B1 internal east room.



Figure 11: Photo showing B1 internal east room.



Figure 12: Photo showing WF3.



Figure 13: Photo showing B1 south elevation.



Figure 14: Photo showing B1 restricted west elevation.



Figure 15: Photo showing B2 south elevation.



Figure 16: Photo showing B2 north elevation.



Figure 17: Photo showing B2 east elevation.



Figure 18: Photo showing B2 west elevation.



Figure 19: Photo showing B2 internal.



Figure 20: Photo showing B2 internal.



Figure 21: Photo showing TN3.



Figure 22: Photo showing TN3.



Figure 23: Photo showing TN3.



Figure 24: Photo showing WF1.



Figure 25: Photo showing WF2.



Figure 26: Photo showing TN4 and TN5.



Figure 27: Photo showing TN5.



Figure 28: Photo showing TN5.



Figure 29: Photo showing TN5 ruderal area by T2, T3 and T4.



Figure 30: Photo showing T3 and T4.



Figure 31: Photo showing TN6.



Figure 32: Photo showing TN6.



Figure 33: Photo showing TN6.



Figure 34: Photo showing TN6.



Figure 35: Photo showing TN6.



Figure 36: Photo showing TN6.



Figure 37 (off-site): Photo showing P1.



Figure 38 (off-site):
Photo showing P1.

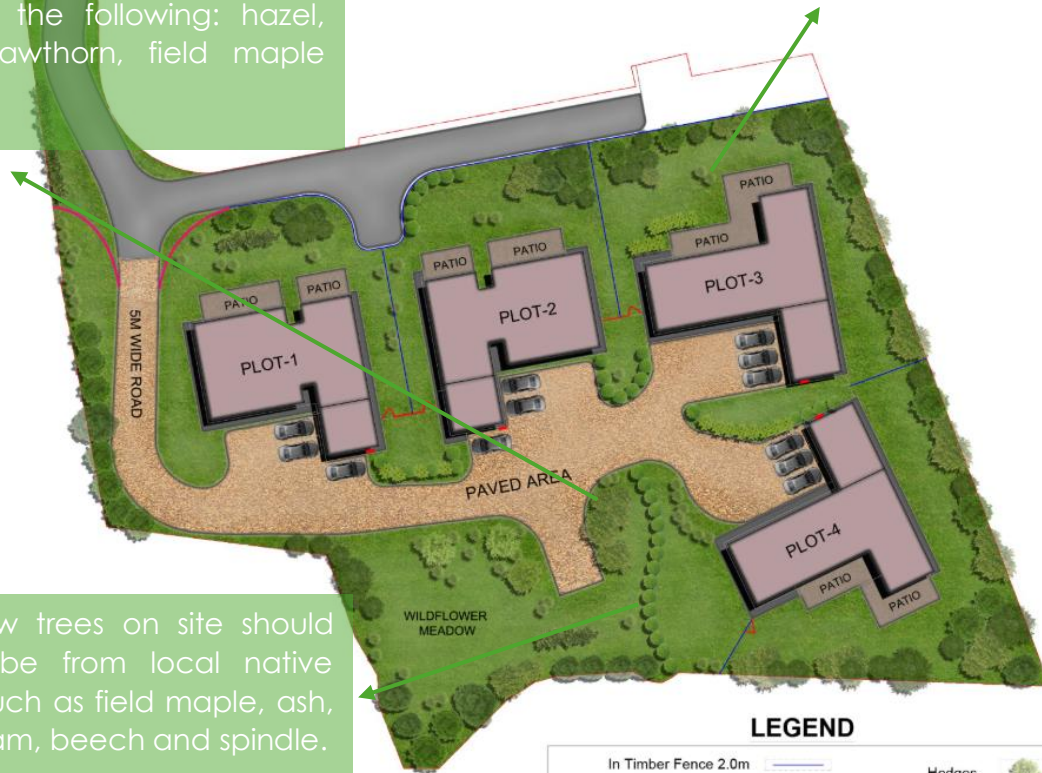


Site Plan and Enhancement Proposals

Any new hedgerow to be planted should be done so with native species comprised of the following: hazel, blackthorn, hawthorn, field maple and elder.

Any new shrubs should be high nectar producing. The Royal Horticultural Society guide, "RHS Perfect for Pollinators", www.rhs.org.uk/perfectforpollinators provides a well suited plants list of both native and non-native species.

Any new trees on site should ideally be from local native stock, such as field maple, ash, hornbeam, beech and spindle.



Proposed Site Plan

Scale: 1:500

Scale (m)



LEGEND

In Timber Fence 2.0m		Hedges	
Steel Post and rail with Hedge		Silver Birch	
900mm High Wall in stone		Apple	
Tegula Paved area		Orchard	
Parking 2.5m x 5.5m		English Oak	
Patio 3.5m x 4.5m		Pear Tree	
5 Bar Timber Gate Main Gate			
Timber Gate			
EV Car Charger			



Eco Hedgehog Hole Fence Plate



Habibat 001 Bat Box



Bee Brick



Vivara Pro WoodStone House Martin Nest Box

Appendix 2: Latin names

Floral species	
Species	Latin name
Annual meadow grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Barren brome	<i>Bromus sterilis</i>
Bird's-foot trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
Bittersweet	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>
Bluebells	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Bulbous buttercup	<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>
Carnation sedge	<i>Carex panicea</i>
Chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>
Common bent	<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>
Common bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Common dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Common fleabane	<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>
Common nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Common lungwort	<i>Pulmonaria officinalis</i>
Common ragwort	<i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>
Common reed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
Common thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Coltsfoot	<i>Tussilago farfara</i>
Common nipplewort	<i>Lapsana communis</i>
Cocks-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Common mugwort	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i>
Cows parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Cranesbill	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>
Creeping bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Creeping cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla reptans</i>
Crested dogs-tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>
Cut-leaved cranesbill	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Devil's-bit scabious	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>
Downy root crane's-bill	<i>Geranium molle</i>
Dogs mercury	<i>Mercurialis perennis</i>
Ever's greenweed	<i>Genista tinctoria</i>
Early forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis ramosissima</i>
False oat grass	<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>
Field bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>
Floating sweet-grass	<i>Glyceria fluitans</i>
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Great mullein	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>
Grey field-speedwell	<i>Veronica persica</i>
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>



Hairy sedge	<i>Carex hirta</i>
Hawksbeard	<i>Crepis</i>
Heath spotted-orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza maculata</i>
Hedge bedstraw	<i>Galium mollugo</i>
Hedge woodruff	<i>Galium odoratum</i>
Hedge woundwort	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>
Hemlock	<i>Conium maculatum</i>
Herb-Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Hop	<i>Humulus lupulus</i>
Horse parsley	<i>Smyrnium olusatrum</i>
Horsetail	<i>Equisetum arvense</i>
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Lilac	<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>
Lady's bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>
Lords and ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>
Meadow barley	<i>Hordeum secalinum</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>
Meadow thistle	<i>Cirsium dissectum</i>
Meadow vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
Morning glory	<i>Ipomoea purpurea</i>
Oval sedge	<i>Carex ovalis</i>
Oxeye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Red fescue	<i>Festuca rubra</i>
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>
Rosemary beetle	<i>Chrysolina americana</i>
Roses	<i>Rosa</i> spp.
Rough hawksbeard	<i>Crepis biennis</i>
Rough meadow grass	<i>Poa trivialis</i>
Pendulous sedge	<i>Carex pendula</i>
Pepper-saxifrage	<i>Silene silaus</i>
Perennial ryegrass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Purple beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica purpurea</i>
Purple dead-nettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>
Purple orchid	<i>Orchis mascula</i>
Saw-wort	<i>Serratula</i>
Self-heal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
Scentless mayweed	<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i>
Sharp-flowered rush	<i>Juncus acutiflorus</i>
Shepherd's purse	<i>Capsella bursa pastoris</i>
Square-stalked willowherb	<i>Epilobium tetragonum</i>
Silverweed	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>
Smooth meadow grass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>

Smooth hawksbeard	<i>Crepis capillaris</i>
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
Soft brome	<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>
Soft rush	<i>Juncus effusus</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Spiked sedge	<i>Carex spicata</i>
Stitchwort	<i>Stellaria holostea</i>
Sweet vernal grass	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>
Timothy grass	<i>Phleum pratense</i>
Virginia creeper	<i>Parthenocissus quinquefolia</i>
Wall barley	<i>Hordeum murinum</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
White dead nettle	<i>Lamium album</i>
Wild onion	<i>Allium vineale</i>
Wild privet	<i>Ligustrum vulgare</i>
Wood club-rush	<i>Scirpus sylvaticus</i>
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
Wood speedwell	<i>Veronica montana</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>

Tree species	
Species	Latin name
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Apple	<i>Malus domestica</i>
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg
Buddleia	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>
Bird cherry	<i>Prunus padus</i>
Canadian poplar	<i>Populus × canadensis</i>
Common buckthorn	<i>Rhamnus cathartica</i>
Cedar	<i>Cedrus</i> spp.
Cherry plum	<i>Prunus cerasifera</i>
Dog rose	<i>Rosa canina</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Elm	<i>Ulmus procera</i>
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Field elm	<i>Ulmus minor</i>
Garden privet	<i>Ligustrum ovalifolium</i>
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Highbush cranberry	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Lime	<i>Tilia cordata</i>



Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Scot pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>
Sweet chestnut	<i>Cryphonectria parasitica</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Wayfaring tree	<i>Viburnum lantana</i>

<i>Mammal species</i>	
Species	Latin name
Badger	<i>Meles meles</i>
Brown hare	<i>Lepus europaeus</i>
Hazel dormice	<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>
Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>
Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>
Water vole	<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>

<i>Bat species</i>	
Species	Latin name
Alcathoe	<i>Myotis alcathoe</i>
Barbastelle	<i>Barbastella barbastellus</i>
Bechstein's	<i>Myotis bechsteinii</i>
Brandt's	<i>Myotis brandtii</i>
Brown long-eared	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>
Daubentons	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>
Greater horseshoe	<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>
Greater mouse-eared	<i>Myotis myotis</i>
Grey long-eared	<i>Plecotus austriacus</i>
Leislars	<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>
Lesser horseshoe	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>
Nathusius's pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>
Natterer's	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>
Whiskered	<i>Myotis mystacinus</i>

<i>Bird species</i>	
Species	Latin name
Common owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>
Pattern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Black redstart	<i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>



Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Carion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Curlew	<i>Numenius Arquata</i>
Coal tit	<i>Pariparus ater</i>
Common buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Common gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
Common quail	<i>Coturnix coturnix</i>
Common redpoll	<i>Acanthis flammea</i>
Corn bunting	<i>Emberiza calandra</i>
Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
Dipper	<i>Cinclus cinclu</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
Eurasian hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
Fire crest	<i>Regulus ignicapilla</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Goosander	<i>Mergus merganser</i>
Great Bustard	<i>Otis tarda</i>
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Green sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>
Greylag goose	<i>Anser anser</i>
Grey Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>
Grey wagtail	<i>Motacilla cinerea</i>
Hawfinch	<i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>
Hen harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
House martin	<i>Delichon urbica</i>
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Jack snipe	<i>Lymnocyrtus minimus</i>
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Lapwing	<i>Vanellus Vanellus</i>
Lesser spotted woodpecker	<i>Dryobates minor</i>
Little egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Mandarin duck	<i>Aix galericulata</i>
Martin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>
Nightingale	<i>Turdus viscivorus</i>
Moorhen	<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Osprey	<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>
Peregrine	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Phoenix	<i>Columba livia domestica</i>
Red-throat	<i>Tringa tetanus</i>
Redstart	<i>Phoenicurus phoenicurus</i>



Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Siskin	<i>Spinus spinus</i>
Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>
Stone curlew	<i>Burhinus oedicephalus</i>
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>
Tawny owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>
Treecreeper	<i>Certhia familiaris</i>
Tree sparrow	<i>Passer montanus</i>
Turtle dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>
Tundra swan	<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>
Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>
Wood pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>
Yellow-browed warbler	<i>Phylloscopus inornatus</i>
Yellow wagtail	<i>Motacilla flava</i>

Butterfly species	
Species	Latin name
Brown hairstreak butterfly	<i>Thecla betulae</i>
Crayling	<i>Hipparchia semele</i>
Duke of Burgundy butterfly	<i>Hamearis lucina</i>
Grizzled skipper	<i>Pyrgus malvae</i>
Marsh fritillary	<i>Eurodryas aurinia</i>
Meadow brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>
Red admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>
Ringlet	<i>Aphantopus hyperantus</i>
Silver washed fritillary	<i>Argynnis paphia</i>
Small Copper	<i>Lycaena phaeas</i>
Speckled wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>
Wall brown	<i>Lasiommata megera</i>

Invertebrate species	
Species	Latin name
Beautiful demoiselle	<i>Calopteryx virgo</i>
Blue ground beetle	<i>Carabus intricatus</i>
Bramble moth	<i>Epiblema uddmanniaria</i>
Buff ermine	<i>Spilarctia luteum</i>
Goldies fly	<i>Enicocampa pusilla</i>
Cinnabar moth	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>
Common hawk	<i>Aeshna juncea</i>
Gnat	<i>Trichocerca larva</i>



Honeybee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>
Ladybird	<i>Coccinellidae</i>
Mediterranean oil beetle	<i>Meloe mediterraneus</i>
Midges	<i>Culicoides impunctatus</i>
Mullein moth	<i>Cucullia verbasci</i>
Pale-palped spring beegrabber	<i>Myopa pellucida</i>
Rugged oil beetle	<i>Meloe rugosus</i>
Scarlet tiger moth	<i>Callimorpha dominula</i>

<i>Reptile and amphibian species</i>	
Species	Latin name
Adder	<i>Vipera berus</i>
Common lizard	<i>Zootoca vivipara</i>
Common toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>
Grass snake	<i>Ix helvetica</i>
Great crested newt	<i>Triturus cristatus</i>
Natterjack toad	<i>Epidalea calamita</i>
Palmate newt	<i>Lissotriton helveticus</i>
Pool frog	<i>Pelophylax lessonae</i>
Sand lizard	<i>Lacerta agilis</i>
Slow worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>
Smooth newt	<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>
Smooth snake	<i>Coronella austriaca</i>



Appendix 3: Relevant Wildlife Legislation & Relevant National and Local Policies

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (SI No. 2017/1012) are the principal means by which the European Habitats Directive is transposed in England and Wales.

The Regulations provide for the designation and protection of a network of 'European Sites' termed Natura 2000, the protection of 'European protected species', and the adaptation of planning and other controls for the protection of European Sites.

These Regulations transpose Council Directive 92/43/EEC¹⁰ on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ No. L 206, 22.7.1992, p.7) ("the Habitats Directive"). This establishes protected wildlife sites across the European Union, known as 'Natura 2000'. This network consists of designated sites, including Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC)¹¹. These sites form part of a series of measures aimed at conserving important and threatened habitats and species.

These Regulations consolidate the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007/1842) with subsequent amending instruments, and make minor modifications reflecting changes to related legislation. The instruments being consolidated by these Regulations made, amongst things, provision for implementing Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (OJ No. L20, 26.01.2010, p.7.) and Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ No. L206, 22.7.92, p.7) in relation to marine areas where the United Kingdom has jurisdiction beyond its territorial sea. The Regulations make provision in relation to the offshore marine area, offshore marine installations and certain ships and aircraft. The "offshore marine area" is defined in regulation 2(1).

Regulation 43 relates to the protection of European protected species listed under Schedule 2 of the Regulations. Taken together it is an offence to undertake the following acts with regard to European Protected Species:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild animal of a European Protected Species;



¹⁰ European Commission (1992). Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. European Commission, Brussels.

¹¹ European Commission (1979). Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds. European Commission, Brussels.

- deliberately disturb animals of any such species in such a way as to be likely to: impair their ability to survive, breed, rear or nurture their young, hibernate or migrate, or
- affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong;
- deliberately take or destroy the eggs of such an animal; or
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal.

The disturbance offence is generally taken to refer to a discernible effect at population level and biogeographic level, rather than simply to an individual animal. However, in certain circumstances the disturbance of one individual animal may have population level effects.

The Regulations also make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately pick, collect, cut, uproot, destroy, or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 5.

However, the actions listed above can be made lawful through the granting of licences (European Protected Species Licence) by the appropriate authorities (Natural England in England). Licences may be granted for a number of purposes (such as science and education, conservation, preserving public health and safety), but only after the appropriate authority has determined that the following regulations are satisfied:

- the works under the licence are being carried out for the purposes of 'preserving public health and public safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment';
- there is 'no satisfactory alternative'; and
- the action 'will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at favourable conservation status in their natural range'.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981¹²

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is the principal piece of UK legislation relating to the protection of wildlife. It consolidates and amends existing national legislation to implement the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive) in Great Britain.



The Act makes it an offence (with exception to species listed in Schedule 2) to intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird or their eggs or nests. Special penalties are available for offences related to birds listed on Schedule 1, for which there are additional offences of disturbing these birds at their nests, or their dependent young. The Secretary of State may also designate Special Protection Areas

¹² Secretary of State, 1981. Wildlife and Countryside Act. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

(subject to exceptions) to provide further protection to birds. The Act also prohibits certain methods of killing, injuring, or taking birds, restricts the sale and possession of captive bred birds, and sets standards for keeping birds in captivity.

The Act makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to intentionally kill, injure, or take, possess, or trade in any wild animal listed in Schedule 5, and prohibits interference with places used for shelter or protection, or intentionally disturbing animals occupying such places. The Act also prohibits certain methods of killing, injuring, or taking wild animals listed in Schedule 6.

The Act makes it an offence (subject to exceptions) to pick, uproot, trade in, or possess (for the purposes of trade) any wild plant listed in Schedule 8, and prohibits the unauthorised intentional uprooting of such plants.

The Act contains measures for preventing the establishment of non-native species which may be detrimental to native wildlife, prohibiting the release of animals and planting of plants listed in Schedule 9. It also provides a mechanism making any of the above offences legal through the granting of licences by the appropriate authorities.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000¹³

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW) was passed to provide additional levels of protection for wildlife whilst also strengthening the protection afforded to Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Schedule 12 of the Act amends the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, strengthening the legal protection for threatened species. The provisions make certain offences 'arrestable', create a new offence of 'reckless' disturbance, confer greater powers to police and wildlife inspectors for entering premises and obtaining wildlife tissue samples for DNA analysis, and enable heavier penalties on conviction of wildlife

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006



The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC) is designed to help achieve a rich and diverse natural environment and thriving rural communities through modernised and simplified arrangements for delivering Government policy.

It was created to make provision in connection with wildlife, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, National Parks and the Broads; to amend the law relating to rights of way; to make provision as to the Inland

¹³ Secretary of State, 2000. The Countryside and Rights of Way Act. Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

Waterways Amenity Advisory Council; to provide for flexible administrative arrangements in connection with functions relating to the environment and rural affairs and certain other functions; and for connected purposes.

Section 40 of NERC carries an extension of the earlier CRow Act biodiversity duty to public bodies and statutory undertakers to ensure due regard to the conservation of biodiversity. Section 41 requires the Secretary of State, as respects England, to publish a list of the living organisms and types of habitat which in the Secretary of State's opinion are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The updated S41 list, published in August 2010, identified 56 habitats and 943 species of principal importance.

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 makes it an offence for any person to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006

Prior to the Animal Welfare Act 2006, people only had a duty to ensure that an animal didn't suffer unnecessarily. The new Act keeps this duty but also imposes a broader duty of care on anyone responsible for an animal to take reasonable steps to ensure that the animal's needs are met. This means that a person has to look after the animal's welfare as well as ensure that it does not suffer. The Act says that an animal's welfare needs include:

- a suitable environment (how it is housed);
- a suitable diet (what it eats and drinks);
- the ability to exhibit normal behaviour patterns;
- any need it has to be housed with, or apart from, other animals; and
- protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease.



With regards to development, this may have implications when translocations of animals are proposed. As such, care must be taken to ensure that any receptor sites are suitable for the species in terms of habitat and carrying capacity.

National and Local Planning Policy in Relation to Biodiversity

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework has recently been revised in response to the Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the Planning system consultation on 12 December 2024, and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

This revised framework replaces the previous National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012, revised in July 2018, updated in February 2012, revised in July 2021, updated in September 2023 and revised in December 2023.

The NPPF places a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

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

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

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

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

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;

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

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

If a protected species is present it becomes a material consideration for a local planning



authority dealing with planning application for any development that would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Circular 06/2005¹⁴: Biodiversity and geological conservation, prepared in support of the former PPS9, is provides substantiated guidance on how the law is applied in relation to planning and nature conservation.

Biodiversity Action Plans

The UK BAP lists are delineated as statutory lists of priorities in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. In England, there are 56 habitats of principal importance and 943 species of principal importance.

Local Planning Policy

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council's planning framework is set out within the Local Plan (2020–2039), published in February 2022, which guides development across the borough and embeds the protection and enhancement of the natural environment within its policy framework.

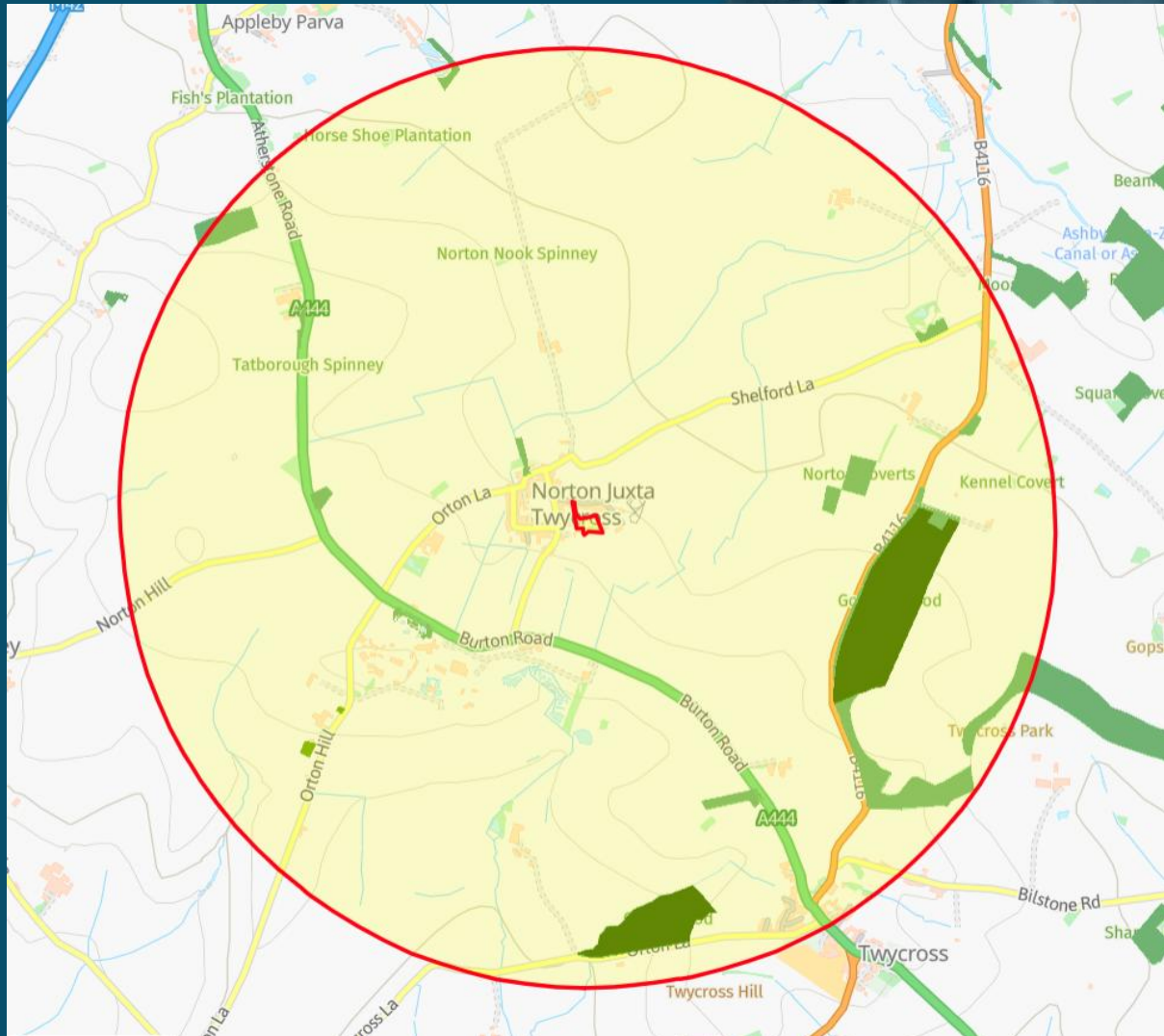
The borough forms part of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), published in July 2025. The LNRS provides a strategic, landscape-scale framework for habitat restoration, species recovery, and the strengthening of ecological networks across the wider area.

The LNRS identifies eight priority habitat types—woodland, freshwater, grassland, urban, agricultural, open mosaic habitats, green and blue corridors, and geodiversity

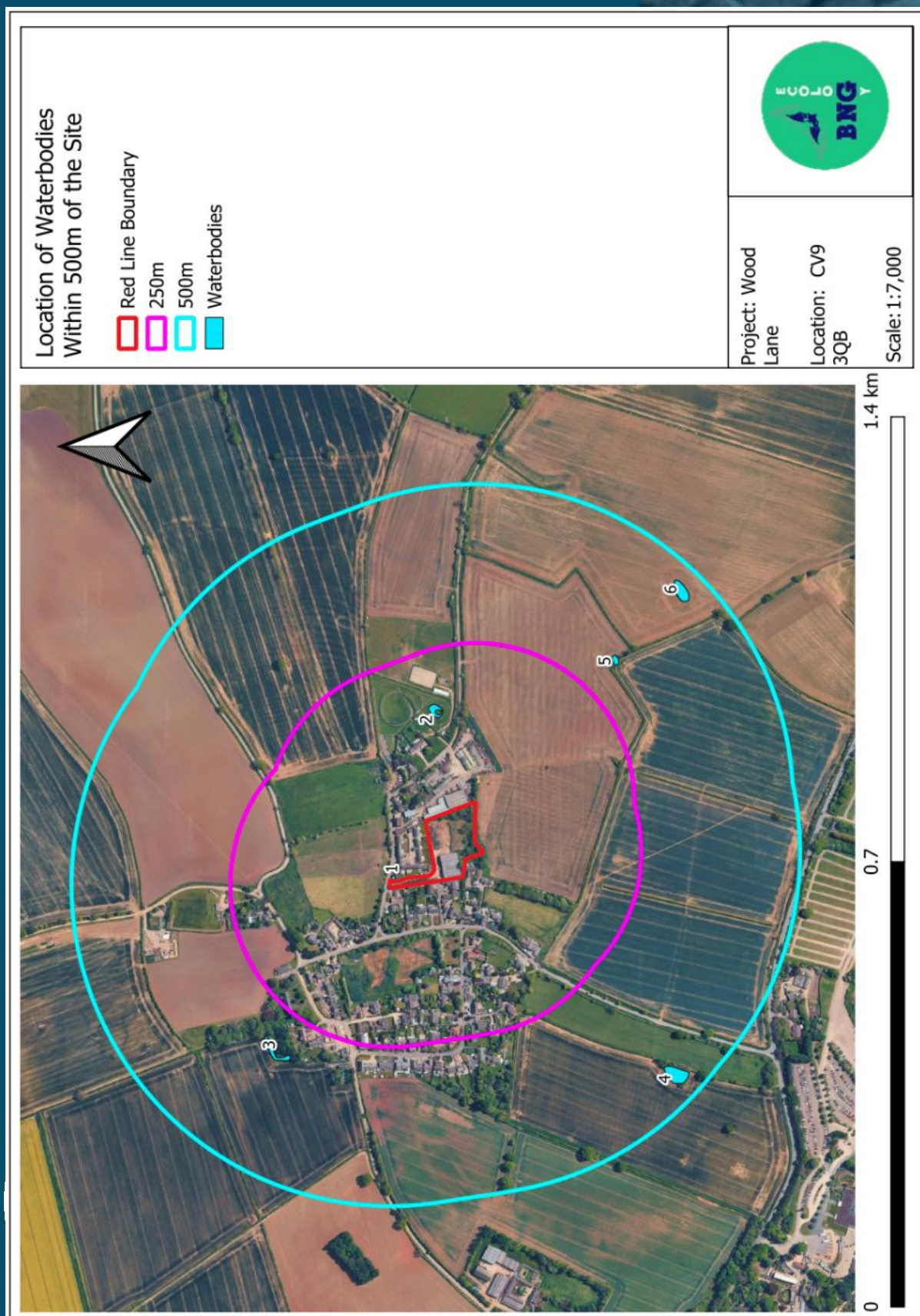


¹⁴ ODPM Circular 06/2005 Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Importance within the Planning System.

Appendix 4: Listed Habitats, UK Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat and Irreplaceable Habitat Locations within 2km of the Site



Appendix 5: Location of Waterbodies Within 500m of The Site



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