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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Kirkby Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire

Report Reference: BG25.310

July 2026



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www.brindlegreen.co.uk

Head Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Unit 3 Silverhill Court, Radbourne, Derby, DE6 4LY

Tel: 0800 222 9105

Sheffield Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Horizon House
Whiting Street
Sheffield S8 9QR

Barnsley Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Sergeants House
36 Edderthorpe Lane
Barnsley S73 9AT

London Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Nutter Lane
Wanstead
London E11 2HZ

Kent Office

Brindle & Green Limited
Sandy Lane
Sevenoaks
Kent TN13 3TP

Document Control

Report	Name	Date
Prepared by	David Judson ACIEEM Consultant Ecologist	13/08/2025
1 st Check by	Victoria Halford Principal Ecologist	14/08/2025
2 nd Check by	Matthew Norris BSc Hons MRSB Technical Ecological Mitigation Lead	22/08/2025
Issued by (PDF)	David Judson Consultant Ecologist	29/08/2025
REV1 Issued by	David Judson ACIEEM Consultant Ecologist	19/12/2025
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Project Details

Project carried out by:

Brindle and Green

The Old Estate Office

Silverhill Farm

Radbourne

Derby

DE6 4LY

Head Office: 01332 825771

Email: info@brindlegreen.co.uk

Website: www.brindlegreen.co.uk

Project carried out for:

David Abernethie

30 Lindridge Lane

Desford

Leicester

LE9 9GN

Project site:

Kirkby Lane

The Oaks

Kirkby Lane

Newbold Verdon

Leicester

Leicestershire

LE9 9LN

Grid reference: SK 45904 03680

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1 Summary

- 1.1.1 Brindle & Green Ltd were commissioned by David Abernethie to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal incorporating a UK Habitat (UKHab) Classification Survey and Protected Species Assessment at the land at Kirkby Road, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire. This report summarises the potential ecological constraints to the outline planning application for partial site clearance to facilitate the self-build development of two residential dwellings. Design proposals can be found within Appendix 6. The survey was carried out on the 25th of July 2025.
- 1.1.2 The red line boundary is approximately 0.4ha in extent and comprises a vegetated garden consisting of ornamental planting, short mown grassland, longer unmanaged grassland, hedgerows, scattered trees, eight buildings (B1 – B8), four ponds (P1 – P4), four hedgerows (H1 – H4), and bramble scrub. The site was evaluated to support 'District' value on a regional scale.
- 1.1.3 The habitats described within this report have the potential to support protected and/or notable species. As such, this report outlines important measures to protect species during site clearance, and recommendations to improve the biodiversity status of the site post development.
- 1.1.4 A full description of the recommendations can be found within Chapter 7. Table 1 is a summary of the ecological issues recommended for further consideration as a result of our initial investigations.

Table 1: Ecological recommendations

Ecological Consideration	Recommendations (e.g. further survey, mitigation)	Timing
Breeding Birds	Works should be sympathetic to this group of species, with vegetation clearance undertaken following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAMS) outlined in chapter 7	During Site Clearance (Optimal timing between October – February outside of breeding bird season)
Roosting Bats	Building B3 assessed to hold 'Low' suitability for roosting bats, however, it will be retained by the development. Reasonable Avoidance Measures are recommended detailed in Chapter 7.	During and post construction
Foraging and Commuting Bats	Works should be sympathetic to this group of species through sensitive lighting, detailed in Chapter 7	During and post construction
Badger		
Reptiles	Method statement should be produced to ensure that any reptile species present within the site are not harmed during the construction phase. detailed in Chapter 7	Year Round, during development
Mammal Species of Principal Importance	Reasonable Avoidance Measures are recommended during site clearance and construction	During development
Invasive Species	Removal of cotoneaster and giant rhubarb on site and suitable disposal by a qualified contractor, detailed in Chapter 7	Year round

2 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The purpose of this assessment was to provide a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site incorporating a UKHab Survey and Protected Species Assessment to establish the likelihood of the site supporting protected species. The survey provides detail on the need for any additional, more detailed protected species surveys, likely mitigation, and any opportunities for enhancement.
- 2.1.2 The site is subject to an outline planning application for partial site clearance to facilitate the self-build development of two residential dwellings. Design proposals can be found within Appendix 6.
- 2.1.3 The legislation relevant to protected species within the United Kingdom is summarised within Appendix 4.
- 2.1.4 Results and recommendations contained within this report have been prepared by an experienced ecologist and are therefore the view of Brindle & Green Limited. The survey is based on information provided by our client, the development proposals, results of the desk study and our survey of the site. This report pertains to this information only.

3 Methodology

3.1 Desk Study

- 3.1.1 Table 2 lists organisations and/or resources used as part of the desk study process. Data regarding any known statutory or non-statutory sites, in addition to any records for protected species, were requested from the following sources:

Table 2: Ecological Data Resources

Consultant	Requested data	Search radius	Date requested
Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC)	- Protected and Notable Species Records - Local, National and International Site Designations	2km	10/07/2025
Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC)	- National and International site Designations - Granted European protected species Development (EPS) Licenses - Priority Habitat Inventory	2km	13/08/2025

3.2 Surveyors

- 3.2.1 The survey was carried out by Dave Judson MSc, ACIEEM, Consultant Ecologist.
- 3.2.2 The survey was overseen by Lucinda Sweet PhD, MCIEEM Natural England Bat Licence (Class Level 2, 2019-9122-CLS-CLS), Great Crested Newt Licence (Class Level 1, 2016-22852-CLS-CLS), Director.

3.3 Survey Conditions

- 3.3.1 The survey was undertaken at 10:00am on the 25th of July 2025. The outside temperature was recorded as 24°C, with dry conditions, and 1/8 cloud cover.

3.4 UK Habitat Classification Survey

- 3.4.1 A UK Habitat Classification survey was undertaken where habitats were categorised and mapped (Appendix 1) following the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.01 (UK Hab Ltd., 2023) to establish the presence and distribution of habitat types within the site and potential ecological constraints to development

3.4.2 The UKHab System is comprised of a five-level Primary Habitat Hierarchy, with each successive level providing increasingly detailed descriptions of habitat parcels present onsite. The system encompasses all habitat types found in the UK, irrespective of scale or geographic range, including UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitats and Habitats Directive Annex I habitats.

- Level 1 includes the description of each major ecosystem present; Terrestrial, Freshwater, and Marine.
- Level 2 includes nine ecosystem types; Grassland, Woodland and Forest, Heathland and Shrub, Wetland, Cropland, Urban, Sparsely Vegetated Land, Rivers and Lakes, and Marine Inlets and Transitional Waters.
- Level 3 describes the 20 broad habitat types of the nine ecosystems outlined in Level 2. Examples include Acid Grassland, Calcareous Grassland, Neutral Grassland, Modified Grassland, Broadleaved and Mixed Woodland, Hedgerows, and Dense Scrub.
- Level 4 expands the 20 broad habitat types of Level 3 into 85 detailed habitat types, including Lowland Meadows, Other Neutral Grassland, Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, and Other woodland; Mixed. This level also allows the separation of 46 UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority habitats from other habitats of lower ecological significance.
- Level 5 provides a further detailed expansion to Level 4 habitat types. 119 habitats are described within this level including 72 habitats as listed in Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive.

3.4.3 Primary habitat types are accompanied by a list of Secondary Codes, which are further categorised into 'Essential' and 'Additional' codes. Each recorded habitat parcel is assigned a single Primary Habitat Code from Levels 2-4 and includes all Essential Secondary Code features relating to the habitat parcel. Additional Secondary Codes are also applied where relevant. No more than six Secondary Codes are recommended per parcel (UKHabs Ltd. 2023) and a list of Secondary Code definitions relevant to the site have been provided within Appendix 1. Where additional details were required, Target Notes have also been provided (Appendix 2). A plant species list (Appendix 2) summarising all plants identified on site was produced during the survey and all scientific nomenclature was produced according to Stace (2010).

- 3.4.4 This survey was extended to note the potential for habitats on site to support protected and/or notable species and for evidence of any such species. The habitats on site were assessed for their suitability to support protected species in relation to the habitat type found at the site. Any incidental sightings or field signs were noted at the time of survey. Where evidence of, or the confirmed presence of a protected species was identified, further species-specific surveys may be recommended to ensure that the presence or otherwise of a legally protected species is fully considered prior to the determination of any planning approval or to guide an EPS development licence.
- 3.4.5 Hedgerows on site were assessed following the Hedgerow Survey Handbook (DEFRA 2007) and defined as species-rich if the structural species making up a surveyed 30m section of hedgerow included at least five native woody species. Results were compiled and assessed against qualifying criteria within the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) and also the UK Biodiversity Action Plan / NERC Act 2006.
- 3.4.6 Legislation, guidance and methodology for species relevant to this site are presented in full within Appendices 4 and 5 of this report.

3.5 Site Evaluation

- 3.5.1 Following the ecological appraisal, the site was classified into one of six groups (Table 3), to indicate whether the site is considered to hold ecological value on a local, national or international scale. This evaluation is intended as a guide and only targeted survey work can establish the significance of protected species populations onsite.

Table 3: Definitions of each of the six evaluation brackets, indicating the importance of each habitat type and an example of their possible habitat status. (Table constructed following The CIEEM EclA Guidelines, Terrestrial, Freshwater and Coastal (2024) pages 16 -17)

Evaluation Value	Example of habitat or species
International	An internationally designated site or candidate site, including habitat or species included within Special Protection Areas (SPA) / Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar Sites, listed under Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive.
National	Sites designated at UK level, e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), supporting species considered nationally threatened or rare. A regularly occurring regionally or county significant population/number of any nationally important species A feature identified as of critical importance within Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006).

Evaluation Value	Example of habitat or species
Regional	Key Habitat type included within BAP. A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a regionally important species.
County	Designated sites, such as Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs) or viable habitat / species populations of value at a county level (LBAP).
District	District level designated sites, such as Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) or habitats / species populations of value at a district (Which have features qualifying for LWS status). Sites/features that are scarce within the district or which appreciably enrich the district habitat resource.
Local / Site	Habitats or species populations of value in a local (i.e. within ~ 5km of the site) context. Habitats of poor to moderate biological diversity e.g. established conifer plantations, species poor hedgerows and un-intensively managed grassland which supports species which are common to the local area and whose loss can be easily mitigated.

3.6 Limitations

- 3.6.1 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment. The protected and notable species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of these species occurring on site, based upon the suitability of the habitats, known distribution of the species in the local area and any direct evidence on site. It should not be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group.
- 3.6.2 eDNA samples for Great Crested Newt (GCN) could not be taken from P1 as dense vegetation surrounds this waterbody, and the pond has steep banks which limit access. As a result, samples were not taken on this waterbody due to health and safety concerns. However, each of the remaining ponds within the site (P2 – P4) were sampled. As these ponds are all in close proximity to P1 (most notably P2, which is directly adjacent), it is anticipated that if GCN were present, they would be present within each of the ponds. Therefore, this is not considered to have significantly impacted the results of the survey.

3.7 Report Lifespan

- 3.7.1 Given the transient nature of the subject, we would consider the survey results contained to be accurate for up to 18 months, at the discretion as assessed by a suitably qualified ecologist.

4 Site Context

4.1 Site Description

- 4.1.1 The application site can be found at SK 45904 03680, positioned on the eastern extent of Newbold Verdon, a rural village within the county of Leicestershire. The site comprises a vegetated garden consisting of ornamental planting, short mown grassland, longer unmanaged grassland, hedgerows, scattered trees, eight buildings, four ponds, four hedgerows, and bramble scrub. No designated sites, or priority habitats are situated within or directly adjacent to the application site.
- 4.1.2 The landscape surrounding the application site is dominated by agricultural land bound by hedgerows and tree lines, with residential dwellings, and farms interspersed. The site is connected to offsite habitats via a network of inter-connected hedgerows and trees lines which extend throughout the wider landscape. As a result, there are dispersal opportunities to the east, south, and west of the site for a range of species. The B582 runs along the north of the site and is considered to be a barrier to dispersal to terrestrial species. No statutory designated sites are located within 2km of the application site.



Figure 1: OS map of the project site and surrounding area. Red line boundary depicts application site.

4.2 Zone of Influence

- 4.2.1 The zone of influence describes the geographic extent of potential impacts of a proposed development. The small scale of the proposed development reduces the likelihood of impact to the surrounding area; however, suitable connective vegetation could influence the presence of protected species within the application boundary. Given the small scale of the scheme, the zone of influence was considered to be 500 metres from the application boundary for amphibians and reptiles, 30 metres for terrestrial mammals such as badgers, and within the area of impact for breeding birds and bats.

5 Results

5.1 Desk Study

Designated Sites

- 5.1.1 The site was subjected to a search for designated sites within a 2km radius of the site using data supplied by the Local Records Centre (Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre (LRERC)) and the online desk-based resource MAGIC.
- 5.1.2 The data supplied by LRERC was received on 10/07/2025 with the closest and most relevant records summarised within Table 4 below. The search revealed no statutory and no non statutory designated sites within a 2km radius of the site. The data search does include 17 potential and candidate Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), and the details of these designations can be produced upon request.
- 5.1.3 A search of the online resource MAGIC found no additional sites with Statutory designations within the 2km radius search.

Protected Species Assessment

- 5.1.4 Data supplied by LRERC also included records of protected species. A summary of the most relevant species is listed below within Table 4 below. Full datasets can be made available upon request.

Table 4: Summary of relevant protected and priority species records

Species	Grid Ref.	Date	Description
Birds			
Barn Owl (<i>Tyto alba</i>)	SK 478 034	18/10/2021	Two records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The most recent of these being made in 2021, from a point approximately 1.9km east of the site.
Fieldfare (<i>Turdus pilaris</i>)	SK 446 038	14/10/2000	44 records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest of these records is from a point approximately 1.2km west of the site.
Redwing (<i>Turdus iliacus</i>)	SK 446 038	14/10/2000	51 records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest of these records is from a point approximately 1.2km west of the site.

Species	Grid Ref.	Date	Description
Mammals			
Badger (<i>Meles meles</i>)	CONFIDENTIAL	CONFIDENTIAL	
Polecat (<i>Mustela putorius</i>)	SK 45900 03744	28/02/2017	Single record of the species made from within the 2k search radius. Pertains to a dead individual recorded approximately 17m north of the site in 2017.
Bats			
Brown Long-eared Bat (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>)	SK 45655 03786	06/05/2018	Twelve records of the species within a 2km radius of the site. The closest record pertains to field sighting from a point approximately 0.25km northwest of the site.
Common Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>)	SK 46187 03719	06/05/2018	Thirty records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest record pertains to a field record made from approximately 0.24km east of the site.
Daubenton's Bat (<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>)	SK 452 036	31/07/2018	Two records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest record pertains to a field sighting made approximately 0.62km west of the site.
Leisler's Bat (<i>Nyctalus leisleri</i>)	SK 452 036	31/07/2018	Three records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest record pertains to a field sighting made approximately 0.62km west of the site.
Nathusius's Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus nathusii</i>)	SK 470 033	31/07/2019	Three records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest record to the site pertains to a field sighting 1.1km east of the site.
Natterer's Bat (<i>Myotis nattereri</i>)	SK 44250 03809	22/09/2021	Three records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. All of these records pertain to field sightings from a point approximately 1.6km west of the site.
Noctule (<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>)	SK 452 036	30/07/2018	Thirteen records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. Closest record pertains to a field sighting from a point approximately 0.62km west of the application site.

Species	Grid Ref.	Date	Description
Soprano Pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>)	SK 45264 03853	06/05/2018	Twenty records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest record pertains to a field sighting made approximately 0.65km west of the site.
Herpetofauna			
Great Crested Newt (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>)	SK 46810 03054	20/05/2021	Three records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest record is from a point approximately 1km southeast of the site.
Smooth Newt (<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>)	SK 471 033	23/05/2022	Four records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest record is from a point approximately 1.2km southeast of the site.
Grass Snake (<i>Natrix Helvetica</i>)	SK 471 028	26/06/2019	Twelve records of the species made from within the 2km search radius. The closest record is from a point approximately 1.4km southeast of the site.

5.1.5 MAGIC revealed a no granted EPS licences within 2km of the site.

Priority Habitats

5.1.6 Data supplied by MAGIC includes a UKBAP priority habitat inventory. MAGIC returned no priority habitats on or adjacent to the application site.

5.2 Habitats

5.2.1 The habitat types recorded on site are summarised below, and the frequency and distribution of habitat types is displayed within a UKHab Survey Map (Appendix 1 and 2).

5.2.2 Table 5 provides a list of habitat types present on site along with their inclusion (or otherwise) as a National and / or Local Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI) (Previously referred to as Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)) (It should be noted that additional information is included within the text where a classification under UKHab survey methodology does not mirror habitat types considered to be conservation priorities).

5.2.3 It should be noted that the application site consists of a private garden associated with the existing residential dwelling (outside of the redline boundary). In line with guidance outlined within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2025), habitats within the site have been

combined and classified together as 'Vegetated Garden' within the separately submitted Biodiversity Impact Assessment (BG25.310, December 2025), with the exception of higher value habitats, such as trees, hedgerows, and ponds. However, the distinct parcels within the garden have been described separately within this report.

Table 5: UKHab Habitat Types found on site and inclusion within UK BAP/HPI habitats

Habitat Type	N HPI	L HPI	N/A
Artificial Unvegetated – u1c			✓
Bramble Scrub – h3d			✓
Developed Land; Sealed Surface – u1b			✓
Introduced Shrub – u1.847			✓
Modified Grass – g4			✓
Other Neutral Grassland – g3c		✓	
Ponds – r1g.41			✓
Vegetated Garden – u1.828			✓
Native Hedgerow – h2a	✓	✓	
Ornamental Hedgerow – h2b			✓
Scattered Trees - 32		✓	

Artificial Unvegetated – u1c

- 5.2.4 Gravel footpaths, and a parking area are present within the site boundary. These constitute pathways which run through areas of introduced shrub, and areas surrounding buildings B1 and B4. These sections are largely void of vegetation.

Bramble Scrub – h3d

- 5.2.5 Unmanaged bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*) scrub are located within raised beds which form part of the vegetated garden (Figure 2). This area is assumed to have once formed part of a vegetable patch but has subsequently become unmanaged and is now spreading through this section of the site.



Figure 2: Bramble Scrub within the site

Developed Land; Sealed Surface – u1b

- 5.2.6 Developed land; sealed surface is present within the site in the form of eight buildings (B1 – B8). These are discussed in further detail within Section 5.3.

Introduced Shrub – u1.847

- 5.2.7 A significant portion of the site consists of ornamental planting (Figure 3). These sections are largely dominated by a significant amount of non-native and introduced species. There are significant stands of *cotoneaster* sp., and giant rhubarb (*Gunnera manicata*), bamboo (*Bambusa* sp.), and large ferns (*Tracheophyta* sp.), weeping pear (*Pyrus salicifolia*) with hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), and dogrose (*Rosa canina*) also present. In addition, tutsan (*Hypericum androsaemum*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*), *Euonymus* sp., lady's mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*), *Hosta* sp., French cranesbill (*Geranium endressii*), wood avens (*Geum urbanum*), and foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*). In addition, curled dock (*Rumex crispus*), broadleaved willowherb (*Epilobium montanum*), and Scarlett pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*) were recorded emerging through bare ground.



Figure 3: Ornamental Planting within site

5.2.8 The secondary code '847 – introduced shrub' has been applied to this habitat type.

Modified Grass – g4

5.2.9 Two small sections of short, well-maintained grassland are present towards the northern extent of the application site (Figure 4). These patches have a uniform sward height (<10cm), with very low species diversity. These sections are dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), with frequent creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) with occasional dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), and birds foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*).



Figure 4: Modified Grassland within the site

Other Neutral Grassland – g3c

- 5.2.10 An area of unmanaged grassland is located towards the northern extent of the site (Figure 5). This section has clearly not been subject to any regular management recently and had subsequently developed a long (>50cm) sward height. The dominant grass species is false oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), with an abundance of cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and occasional meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*) and creeping bent. Herbaceous species recorded within this section includes frequent common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), occasional lady's bedstraw (*Galium verum*) and hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) and rare devils-bit scabious (*Succisa pratensis*), bramble, hedge bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), and tufted vetch (*Vicia cracca*).



Figure 5: Other Neutral Grassland within the site

Ponds – r1g.41

- 5.2.11 A total of four ponds (P1 – P4) are located within the site.
- 5.2.12 Pond P1 is located towards the southern extent of the site. This is an ornamental, artificial waterbody with steep sides, surrounded by dense vegetation, including emergent and floating vegetation. Vegetation within and surrounding the pond includes water lilies (*Nymphaeaceae sp.*), a range of sedge species, and bramble.
- 5.2.13 Pond P2 is located towards the centre of the site. This waterbody is again, artificially created with steep artificial banks created from stone, and brick. There is very little emergent vegetation within this pond, but a significant amount of duckweed (*Lemna sp.*) is present at the water surface.
- 5.2.14 Pond P3 is located to the northern extent of the site, with shallow banks vegetated with a range of marginal vegetation including giant rhubarb, sedge species, *iris sp.*, and willow (*Salix sp.*). This water surface is almost entirely covered with duckweed.

5.2.15 Pond P4 is a relatively narrow but long artificial waterbody running through the centre of the site, extending south. This waterbody is heavily shaded by surrounding vegetation, which largely consists of ornamental planting associated with the residential garden. The waterbody has steep banks, with the water surface heavily choked with duckweed.

5.2.16 Photographs for each of these waterbodies are provided within Appendix 9.

5.2.17 The secondary code '41 – Pond (non-priority)' was applied to all ponds onsite.

Vegetated Garden – u1.828

5.2.18 A garden associated with the offsite residential property constitutes the majority of the southern extent of the site. This garden consists of a well-maintained short lawn (similar to that described in section 5.2.7), ornamental planting (similar to that described in section 5.2.6), with paved and gravel footpaths running through the garden. The garden also contains a number of trees, which are described separately within Section 5.2.19.



Figure 6: Vegetated Garden within the Site

Native Hedgerow – h2a, and Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow – h2b

5.2.19 Four species-poor native hedgerows (H1, H2, and H4) are located at the sites peripheries, with a non-native ornamental hedgerow (H3) running through the centre of the site. None of these hedgerows appear to be subject to over management and are in good physical and structural condition.

Table 6: Description of hedgerows on site

Hedge Number	Type	Dimensions (Approx.) H x W x L	Description	Likely to Qualify *
H1	Native intact species poor (h2a)	3m x 1m x 88m	Uncut hedgerow running along the western boundary of the site. Consists of hawthorn, holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>), sessile oak (<i>Quercus petraea</i>) and hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>).	N
H2	Native intact species poor (h2a)	2m x 3m x 80m	Pruned boundary hedgerow located at the eastern boundary of the site. Species recorded within hedgerow include dogwood, hawthorn and cherry laurel.	N
H3	Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow (h2b)	2.5m x 1m x 27m	Pruned ornamental hedgerow running through the centre of the site. Hedgerow consists of cherry laurel only.	N
H4	Native intact species poor (h2a)	2.5 x 1m x 46m	Unmanaged, very narrow boundary hedgerow at the northern extent of the site. Hedgerow includes holly, silver birch (<i>Betula pendula</i>), and sessile oak with bramble and hop (<i>Humulus lupulus</i>) also present.	N

*Likely to qualify as important under Hedgerow Regulations (1997)



Figure 7: Hedgerow H1 at the western boundary of the site



Figure 8: Hedgerow H2 located at the site's eastern boundary



Figure 9: Hedgerow H3 located at the centre of the site



Figure 10: Hedgerow H4 located at the site's northern boundary

Scattered Trees – 32

- 5.2.20 A total of 19 scattered individual trees are present within the site boundary. These are present within the private garden, within parcels of ornamental planting, and also within areas of open grassland. Trees recorded within the site include sessile oak, apple (*Malus sp.*), hawthorn, *eucalyptus sp.*, maple (*Acer sp.*), whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*), conifer *sp.*, juniper (*Juniperus communis*) and goat willow (*Salix caprea*). These range from young to mature, and are largely in good physical and structural condition.

Invasive Weeds Assessment

- 5.2.21 An assessment of the site was made to establish the presence of invasive weeds included on schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- 5.2.22 Significant stands of both cotoneaster and giant rhubarb are present within the site. Currently, these are both managed within the private garden. However, both of these species are listed as Schedule 9 species.

5.3 Fauna

Breeding Birds

- 5.3.1 The assessment was undertaken during the breeding bird season. Four species of bird were recorded on site during the survey including blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*), great tit (*Parus major*), blackbird (*Turdus merula*), and wood pigeon (*Columba palumbus*).
- 5.3.2 Trees, hedgerows and shrubs within the site and at the site's peripheries provide nesting opportunities for a range of common garden passerines, but are considered unlikely to support rare or notable birds. In addition, a nest box was recorded on Building B3.
- 5.3.3 Buildings themselves were not considered suitable to support nesting birds, however, a nest box was recorded on the southern elevation of Building B3, which may support common garden birds such as blue tit, great tit or nuthatch (*Sitta europaea*).

Bats

- 5.3.4 The data search returned 103 records of bat foraging and commuting activity, with the closest record located approximately 0.24km east of the site pertaining to common pipistrelle. Seven bat roosts were recorded within 2km of the site.

Roosting Bats

- 5.3.5 Hedgerows and scattered trees were present throughout. Visible trees were assessed and categorised based upon Bat Conservation Trust guidance (see Appendix 5), with all scattered trees within the site boundary assessed to have 'Negligible' suitability to support roosting bats. Despite the trees being mature in nature, they did not support suitable cracks, fissures or holes to support roosting bats.
- 5.3.6 Buildings B1, B2, B4, B5, B6, B7 and B8 were all assessed to support 'Negligible' suitability to support roosting bats. While some of these buildings supported small features such as lifted tiles, or cracks in woodwork which may support roosting bats, these features were too small to support roosting bats.
- 5.3.7 Building B3 is a small wood-built summer house which is considered to have 'Low' suitability to support roosting bats due to the presence of lifted and missing hanging tiles and lifted lead flashing which have created a small crevice, large enough to support individual bats. The main structural features of the buildings, and their suitability (or lack thereof) for supporting roosting bats are summarised below (Table 7), and associated figures can be found with Table 16 in Appendix 10. A potential roosting features (PRF) plan has also been included in Appendix 10.

Table 7: Summary of bat roost suitability and evidence found within each of the buildings / structures on site (Supporting Figures within Appendix 10)

High Moderate Low Negligible None				
Building Number	Description	Bat Evidence / potential Roosting Features (PRFs)	Roost Suitability	
B1	External: Single storey outbuilding associated with pond P1. Constructed from wood panels with a wooden pitched roof, covered in bitumen felt. Structure has several windows and skylights, which are all in good physical condition. Dense ivy is present along the northeastern aspect, however, this is not covering any significant features which could be utilised by bats. The roof and walls are in good structural condition, with no cracks or holes which could be utilised by roosting bats.	External: No suitable roosting features recorded.	Negligible	

Building Number	Description	Bat Evidence / potential Roosting Features (PRFs)	Roost Suitability
	Internal: Internally, the roof is not lined. The roof and walls are constructed with wood panels and supported by timber beams and batons. There is a significant amount of external light entering the building due to the presence of windows and skylights. No access points were recorded leading in to the building and the interior of the building is too light to support roosting bats.	Internal: No evidence of previous bat activity was recorded during the assessment.	
B2	External: Building B2 is a small decorative garden feature constructed from brick with a slate tile roof. The brickwork and pointing are in good physical condition. While the roof shows some signs of aging and some slightly lifted tiles, the gaps beneath these tiles are not deep enough and are too exposed to sufficiently support roosting bats. There is a glass window within the brickwork at the southern elevation. There is a glass window within the brickwork at the southern elevation.	External: No suitable roosting features recorded.	Negligible
	Internal: No internal access possible. Clearly quite light internally due to its small size and the presence of window.	Internal: No internal inspection possible.	

Building Number	Description	Bat Evidence / potential Roosting Features (PRFs)	Roost Suitability
B3	External: Brick built open sided summerhouse. Majority of structure is unsuitable for bats due to its open nature. The hexagon shaped roof shows some signs of aging with some minor raised tiles. However, these features are small and exposed and do not provide sufficient space for roosting bats. The roof is supported by timber beams. Brickwork of structure is largely covered in ivy but covers no suitable roosting features. There is a small dormer section on the eastern elevation of the roof, which is constructed from timber with hanging tiles. Some of the hanging tiles were recorded as being missing, and lifted, providing sufficient space for roosting bats. Similarly, some of the lead flashing surrounding the dormer section has lifted, which again, is suitable for individual roosting bats.	External: Roof tiles lifted and missing on eastern elevation of roof, and some lifted lead flashing (Appendix 10).	Low
	Internal: Internally, the roof is not lined, with the slate tiles fully exposed. The roof is supported by timber beams. The interior is very light and exposed to elements due to its open nature.	Internal: No suitable roosting features recorded.	
B4	External: Single storey wood structure with wooden window frames and doors. Roof is pitched and constructed from corrugated asbestos and plastic with a metal ridge. The building has a number of windows which are all in fair condition. The roof is completely sealed where it meets the wooden walls. Plastic guttering runs the length of the There is dense blackthorn along the southern elevation.	External: No suitable roosting features recorded.	Negligible
	Internal: Internally, the roof is not lined with the asbestos and plastic roofs exposed and supported by metal beams. The structure is utilised for storage, and contains a significant amount of building materials, home appliances and furniture. Due to open windows and walls the structure is too light and airy to support roosting bats.	Internal: No suitable roosting features recorded.	

Building Number	Description	Bat Evidence / potential Roosting Features (PRFs)	Roost Suitability
B5	External: Single storey -wood-built structure with sloped corrugated asbestos roof. Walls are constructed from a mixture of wooden boards and panels, supported with timber frames. The western aspect of the building is open sided. Slits in the wooden walls are present at the southern and northern elevation. The corrugated roof is supported by timber beams, with a gap leading into the interior of the structure. However, these gaps are too large and exposed to support roosting bats.	External: No suitable roosting features recorded.	Negligible
	Internal: Internally, the structure is completely exposed as no walls are present at western elevation and large gaps at southern elevation. As a result, the structure is light and airy internally. The structure is utilised for storage, with very little opportunity for bats.	Internal: No suitable roosting features recorded.	
B6	External: Single storey wooden structure with wooden walls at north, west and southern elevation. Open sided on eastern elevation. Roof constructed from corrugated asbestos, supported by timber beams.	External: No suitable roosting features recorded.	Negligible
	Internal: The interior of structure is completely exposed. Structure utilised for wood storage. Walls are exposed. Roof is not lined, exposing corrugated asbestos which is supported by timber beams.	Internal: No suitable roosting features recorded.	
B7	External: Old disused chicken coop and greenhouse. Chicken coop constructed from wood panels and wooden beams, with pitched wooden roof covered in bitumen felt. Doors and windows in fair condition. Green house constructed from glass and timber frame, with glass pane roof. No gaps or cracks which could be utilised by roosting bats.	External: No suitable roosting features recorded.	Negligible

Building Number	Description	Bat Evidence / potential Roosting Features (PRFs)	Roost Suitability
	Internal: Internally, both the chicken coop and greenhouse are very light due to the presence of windows, and glass walls. Greenhouse is overgrown with ruderal vegetation and bramble.	Internal: No suitable roosting features recorded.	
B8	External: Single storey red brick bungalow with a variety of roof structures including pitched and rounded. Windows and doors were comprised of PVC and sealed and in good condition during the survey.	External: No suitable roosting features recorded. Building retained and unaffected during development.	Negligible
	Internal: No internal access during survey.	Internal: No internal access during survey.	

Foraging and Commuting Bats

- 5.3.8 The site supported a number of features considered suitable to support commuting and foraging bats. The mature trees, and boundary vegetation are considered likely to provide bats with a valuable foraging resource, while hedgerows may provide suitable commuting lines for foraging bats. The site is considered to be well connected to the wider landscape through the hedgerow at the northern boundary which extends offsite and connects to the wider hedgerow network which bound the surrounding agricultural fields. The site is therefore considered to provide 'Moderate' suitability habitat for foraging and commuting bats.

Badgers

- 5.3.9 The data search returned twenty-nine records of badgers within 2km of the site. No evidence of badger setts, or activity such as mammal runs, snuffle holes or latrines were found during the ecological appraisal of the site. However, the site supported habitat such as scattered scrub and small parcels of grassland which may provide opportunistic individuals with a foraging resource. However, it is considered that the site is sub-optimal for both sett building, with more optimal habitat present within the surrounding landscape.