Land to the north of 25 Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 9GN

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

Document Control

Client:	Mr J. Eyre
Project Title:	Land to the north of 25 Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 9GN
Report Title:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report
Report Ref.:	P2865_01
Version:	V0
Status:	Final
Revision Comments:	-
Principal Author:	EKJ BSc (Hons)
Technical Review:	PMH BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM
Issued to Client:	08 October 2025

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1. Summary

Table 1: Summary

Report Purpose	With reference to the development proposals and the applicable planning policy & legislation, the scope of the present report is to: • Identify key ecological constraints associated with the project. • Identify avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures likely to be required in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. • Identify any additional surveys that may be required to inform the above. • Identify likely opportunities to deliver ecological enhancement.
Methodology	A desk study was carried out including a study of the UK Government MAGIC[1] website for designated sites of nature conservation, Natural England licensing, and the site in the context of habitat connectivity to the surrounding landscape. The field survey included a UKHab Habitat survey of the site, extended to consider protected species.
Key Notes	Hedgerow H2 was assessed as a NERC Priority Habitat. Building B1 was assessed to offer low suitability for roosting bats. The site offered some habitat suitability for foraging and commuting European badgers, bats, European hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus,* amphibians, including great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN), and reptiles. The site offered suitable habitat for nesting birds.
Conclusions	• **Recommendation 1 – Precautionary methods during works:** Precautionary methods should be implemented during works to protect foraging and commuting badger, hedgehog, nesting birds, and bats. • **Recommendation 2 – Artificial lighting mitigation:** Bats are present in the wider area. Where lighting is required, this should be sympathetic to wildlife through the design of lighting observing the principles set out in guidelines from the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) & Institution of Lighting Professionals (BCT & ILP, 2023).

[1] Multi-agency Geographic Information for the Countryside: www.magic.gov.uk.

2. Introduction

Background

2.1. Elton Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Mr J. Eyre to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site known as Land to the north of 25 Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 9GN.

2.2. The present Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR) has been prepared by Ecologist EKJ[2] BSc (Hons), accredited agent on Natural England Bat Licence Reference Number: 2018-33647-CLS-CLS. EKJ is a Qualifying member of CIEEM and is experienced in undertaking ecology surveys, GIS mapping, and report writing.

Site Description

2.3. The site comprises an area of introduced shrub, two shed structures, trees and hedgerows. The site is located at Land to the north of 25 Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 9GN (Figure 1: Site Location Plan) (central OS grid reference: SK 47610 03806).

Development Proposals

2.4. The development proposals include the construction of a two-storey dwelling with associated soft and hard landscaping.

2.5. Relevant documents used to inform the assessment include:

- Site Location Plan (Drawing No. 6540 / E / 3) (Graham Harris Partnership Ltd, August 2025)

Report Purpose and Scope

2.6. With reference to the Development Proposals, the purpose and scope of the present report is to:

- Identify key ecological constraints associated with the project.
- Identify avoidance, mitigation or compensation measures likely to be required in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy.
- Identify any additional surveys that may be required to inform the above.
- Identify likely opportunities to deliver ecological enhancement.

Planning Policy and Legislation

2.7. A summary of biodiversity planning policies and wildlife legislation relevant to the site is provided in Appendix 1: Planning Policy and Legislation Summary. The relevant planning policy and legislation includes:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023.
- Government Circular ODPM 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation.
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

[2] Full personnel can be provided upon request.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 – Habitats and species of principal importance.
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992; and
- The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 (as amended).

2.8. The site is covered by the Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP), which includes:

- Hedgerows
- Bats

3. Methodology

Assessment

3.1. The present assessment has been carried out with reference to best practice guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal provided by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2017).

Personnel

3.2. The Extended UKHab Habitat Survey and Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was carried out by EKJ BSc (Hons), accredited agent on Natural England Bat Licence Reference Number: 2018-33647-CLS-CLS. EKJ is a Qualifying member of CIEEM and is experienced in undertaking ecology surveys, GIS mapping, and report writing. EKJ has received a provisional result of a Level 3 Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC).

3.3. The technical review was carried out by Senior Ecologist PMH BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM. PMH holds a Natural England Level 1 Bat Licence (CL17) (reference number: 2021-54491-CLS-CLS) and a Natural England Level 1 Great Crested Newt Licence (CL08) (reference number: 2022-10461-CL08-GCN), a botanical Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) Level 3, and a Modular River Survey River Condition Assessment Certificate level of Qualified Surveyor. PMH has attended formal training in UKHab survey, Biodiversity Net Gain, and botanical species identification. PMH is an Associate member of CIEEM and is experienced in assisting and undertaking ecology surveys, GIS mapping, and report writing.

Desk Study

3.4. The sources of information and study areas of the desk study data are provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Desk study sources and areas

Feature		Study Area	Data Source	Date of Search
Designated sites of nature conservation	International (e.g. Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area, and Ramsar)	10 km radius of the site boundary	UK Government MAGIC[3] website	25/09/2025
	National (e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), SSSI Impact Risk Zones (SSSI IRZ)), Local Nature Reserves, National Nature Reserves	5 km radius of the site boundary		
Granted Natural England Mitigation Licences		2 km radius of the site boundary	UK Government MAGIC website	
Natural England Ancient Woodland Inventory		Site & 1 km radius of the site boundary		
Natural England Priority Habitat Inventory		Site & 1 km radius of the site boundary		

[3] Multi-agency Geographic Information for the Countryside: www.magic.gov.uk.

Feature	Study Area	Data Source	Date of Search
The site in the context of habitat connectivity to the surrounding landscape	2 km radius of the site boundary	Satellite and OS map data	
Relevant ecological information used to inform other planning applications	Site & surrounding area	LPA planning portal - Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council	

Field Survey

UKHab Habitat Survey

3.5. The UKHab Habitat survey was carried out on the 8th July 2025 and was extended to include an assessment for Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) and of the sites potential to be used by protected or notable species as described below. The study area included the site boundary and a 30m radius for evidence of mobile protected species such as badger, access permitting. Weather conditions were appropriate for field survey with temperatures of 18°C, no rain, and good visibility.

3.6. The site was walked over, and botanical species lists of representative and notable plant species for each habitat type were recorded. Habitats were classified and mapped with reference to best practice guidelines from UKHab Ltd (2023). The nomenclature used for botanical species lists broadly follows that of Stace (2019). Protected or notable plant species were recorded where observed.

3.7. Species density was calculated by selecting a proportionate number of randomly distributed 1m2 quadrats per habitat parcel and counting the number of vascular plant species present within. The sum of the total number of species present in each quadrat was then divided by the number of quadrats selected to obtain an average species density.

Hedgerow Survey

3.8. During the UKHab Habitat Survey, the hedgerow(s) at the site were assessed for their importance under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 and determined as either species poor (fewer than five woody species per 30m length) or species rich (greater than five woody species per 30m length). Notes were also made on other features of the hedgerow such as height and width, ground flora, standard trees, percentage gaps, structure, and connectivity.

3.9. A hedgerow is defined as a boundary line of shrubs, provided that at one time the shrubs were stock proof and more or less continuous. Any bank, wall, ditch, or tree within 2m of the centre of the hedgerow is considered to be part of this habitat, as is the herbaceous vegetation within 2m of the centre.

Amphibians (Including Great Crested Newt)

3.10. The habitats at the site were assessed for their suitability to support amphibians, including a search of the site for ponds and suitable terrestrial habitat. The desk study included a search of ponds within a 250m radius of the site.

Badger

3.11. The badger walkover survey included a search for evidence of badger at the site, such as sett entrances (normally 25 to 35cm wide and shaped like a ‘D’ on its flat edge), large spoil heaps outside sett entrances, bedding, footprints, mammal paths, latrines, hairs, scratching posts,

and signs of digging for food or 'snuffle holes'. The survey included a search of the site and 30m radius (access permitting) for badger setts.

Bats – Ground Level Tree Assessment

3.12. The preliminary Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) was carried out with reference to best practice industry guidelines (Collins, 2023). The study area included all trees within the survey area.

3.13. The survey included a surveyor assessing the tree(s) from ground level aided by binoculars, noting potential bat entry/exit points, potential roosting features (PRFs), and any evidence of bats. The trees were graded for their suitability to support roosting bats, which will inform the need for further survey effort, if required, such as a potential roost feature (PRF) inspection via rope and harness access and/or nocturnal survey.

3.14. The suitability of the trees for roosting bats was then categorised with reference to best practice industry guidelines (Collins, 2023) (Table 3) as either none, further assessment required (FAR), potential roosting features present for individual bats (PRF-I), or potential roosting features present for multiple bats (PRF-M), which informs the need for further survey effort to establish the presence/ likely absence of roosting bats.

Table 3: Guidelines for Assessing the Potential Bat Roosting Suitability of Trees (Adapted from Collins, (2023))

Suitability	Description of Trees
None	No features likely to be used by roosting bats or highly unlikely features are present. An absence of accessible voids, cracks and crevices.
FAR	Further assessment is required to determine if features likely to be used by roosting bats are present.
PRF-I	The PRF is suitable for individual or small numbers of bats due to lack of size or suitable surrounding landscape.
PRF-M	The PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may be used by a maternity colony.

Bats - Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.15. The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was carried out on the 8th July 2025 with reference to best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).

3.16. The survey involved a Natural England bat licenced surveyor making a detailed external and internal inspection of the building(s) on-site, compiling information on potential bat entry/exit points, roosting features, and any evidence of bats found (such as actual bat sightings, droppings, urine staining and fur-oil staining). The nomenclature used for bat species lists broadly follows that of Dietz and Kiefer (2018).

3.17. The PRA was aided as required by binoculars, a high-powered torch, and an endoscope to view features on the building and/ or search accessible cracks and crevices for the presence of bats where required.

3.18. The suitability of the building(s) for roosting bats was categorised with reference to best practice industry guidelines (Collins, 2023) (Table 4: Guidelines for Assessing the Potential Bat Roosting Suitability of Structures and Trees) as either negligible, low, moderate, or high. Suitability grading of buildings requires consideration of the potential roosting features on the

building within the context of the suitability of the surrounding landscape to support commuting and foraging bats.

Table 4: Guidelines for Assessing the Potential Bat Suitability of Structures and Habitats (Adapted from Collins, (2023))

Suitability	Description of Roosting Habitats	Commuting and Foraging Habitats
Negligible	Negligible features likely to be used by roosting bats. An absence of accessible voids, cracks and crevices.	Negligible features likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats. A lack of landscape habitat features.
Low	A structure or tree with a potential roost site which could be used by individual bats, which does not provide enough space, shelter, protection, or appropriate conditions (i.e. temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels, disturbance) or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis by larger numbers of bats.	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a hedgerow with gaps or unvegetated stream, but isolated (i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by habitat). Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure or tree with a potential roost site that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but is unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (such as a maternity colony).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by commuting bats such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat.	Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees, and woodland edge. Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Sites which are close to and connected to known roosts.

Bats – Commuting and Foraging

3.19. With reference to Table 4, an assessment of the habitats at the site to support commuting and foraging bats was made, within the context of habitat connectivity to features in the wider landscape. The site was assessed as either negligible, low, moderate, or high suitability for commuting and foraging bats.

Nesting Birds

3.20. An assessment of the habitats on site to support nesting birds was made, and the site was searched where accessible for active or historical bird nests. Any sightings of bird nesting behaviour associated with the site was also noted.

Terrestrial Invertebrates

3.21. An assessment was made of the suitability of the habitats at the site to support notable assemblages of invertebrates, such as vegetation structure, vegetation species diversity, deadwood, and host plants/ animals.

Reptiles

3.22. An assessment was made of the suitability of the habitats at the site for reptiles. Optimal habitat for reptiles includes rough grassland, moorland, heathland, woodland and scrub, sub-urban areas such as railway embankments, golf courses and allotments, and sympathetically managed farmland. Favourable features for reptiles include sunny south facing banks for basking, ecotones such as the transition between grassland and scrub, and hibernacula such as stone, log, and brash piles.

Other Mammals

3.23. An assessment of the site to support other mammals including brown hare *Lepus europaeus*, harvest mouse *Micromys minutus*, and hedgehog was also made.

Invasive Species

3.24. Invasive plant species such as those listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As Amended) were recorded where encountered during the UKHab Habitat survey.

Limitations

3.25. It must be noted that survey effort has been made to provide detailed descriptions of the site within the context of potential usage by protected species, however a fully comprehensive assessment and prediction of natural factors cannot be made. The protected species assessment provides a professional view of the likelihood of such species being present and cannot be taken as a definitive presence or absence of the same. Systematic presence/ likely absence surveys for such species, which typically require multiple survey visits, have not been undertaken and are outside of the scope of Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. Such surveys are recommended in the present report if considered proportionate to the potential ecological impacts of the development proposals.

3.26. A full search of crevices and cavities on buildings typically cannot be made without specialist access equipment and in most cases intrusive works, and therefore accessible areas only have been searched for evidence of protected species and a negative result of evidence does not conclusively equate to absence of such species which may occupy inaccessible crevices on the building. However, provided any recommended nocturnal emergence/ re-entry bat survey(s) are undertaken, this is not considered a significant limitation to assessing the presence/ likely absence of roosting bats at the site.

3.27. A proportionate effort was applied to the desk study when identifying ponds within a 250/500m radius of the site. However, ponds which do not appear on ordnance survey maps, or those under tree cover, may not have been recorded via the desk study search. This includes small ornamental garden ponds. It is considered that this limitation would not significantly impact the assessment of habitat suitability for GCN within the wider landscape, and that the majority of significant and permanent water bodies are likely to have been recorded.

3.28. Third party desk study data is not exhaustive, and an absence or a negative result of a species does not indicate the absence of protected species from the site/ search area.

3.29. A final proposed plan has not been provided and therefore the recommendations within this report are based on assumptions of the proposed development description. The report should be updated once final plans have been provided.

3.30. The shed (B1) was covered in dense vegetation, limiting the view of potential roosting locations and access points. Due to the precautions recommended for removal within this report, this limitation is not deemed significant.

3.31. All dimensions, locations and distances provided are approximate.

4. Results

Desk Study

Surrounding Landscape

4.1. The surrounding landscape is primarily rural (Figure 2: Surrounding Landscape Plan).

4.2. Habitat features favourable to ecology in the wider landscape include arable and pasture grazed fields and woodland connected via hedgerows and treelines.

4.3. Landscape features which may limit habitat quality and connectivity include artificial lighting and areas of hardstanding associated with Desford.

Statutory Designated Sites

4.4. The site does not form part of an international or national designated site for nature conservation.

4.5. A summary of designated sites identified via the desk study are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Summary of Statutory Designated Sites

Site Name	Designation	Description/ Main Reasons for Designation	Distance & Direction from Site
Bocheston Bog	SSSI	Grazed marshy grassland on peaty soils.	1.2km NE

4.6. The site lies within a Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zone (SSSI IRZ), requiring the Local Planning Authority to consult with Natural England on any risks which may affect the SSSI sites as a result of certain development types. However, the current development type is not listed in the SSSI IRZ citation as requiring consultation.

Priority Habitats and Ancient Woodland

4.7. An area of ancient woodland was located 0.5km northwest of the survey site.

4.8. A summary of priority habitats identified via the desk study are presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Summary of Priority Habitats

Habitat type	Distance & Direction of Closest Priority Habitat Type from Site
Deciduous woodland	0.2km N
Traditional orchard	0.4km NW

Relevant Ecological Information Used to Inform Other Planning Applications

4.9. No relevant ecological information used to inform other planning applications was identified via the desk study.

Field Survey

UKHab Habitat Survey

4.10. The habitats recorded at the survey site during the UKHab Habitat survey are presented in Table 7 and mapped on Figure 3: UKHab Habitat Plan.

Table 7: UKHab Habitat Assessment Results

UKHab Primary Code	Habitat Type	UKHab Secondary Code	Description	(NERC) Act 2006 HPI*	Habitat of Local Importance	Photograph Ref No. (Appendix 2: Photographs)
u1	Built-up areas and gardens	200 – tree 847 – introduced shrub	The north of the site primarily comprised an area of overgrown, introduced shrub. Species included occasional leather-leaf viburnum *Viburnum rhytidophyllum,* sumac *Rhus sp., forsythia sp.*, common box *Buxus sempervirens,* sea buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides,* dogwood *Cornus sanguinea,* red escallonia *Escallonia rubra,* holly *Ilex aquifolium,* Japanese maple *Acer palmatum,* yellow ox-eye *Buphthalmum salicifolium,* Mediterranean mallow *Lavatera maritima,* tutsan *Hypericum androsaemum,* purple toadflax *Linaria purpurea,* blue enrygo *Eryngium planum,* buddleia *Buddleja davidii,* valerian *Valeriana rubra* with locally abundant box-leaf honey suckle *Lonicera pileate,* bamboo *Bambusa sp.,* and cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus.* Four trees were present on site, comprising a small conifer tree, a small field maple *Acer campestre*, a small silver birch *Betula pendula* and a small Scot's pine *Pinus sylvestris*.	No	No	5 – 9
h2b, h2a6	Hedgerow		One ornamental hedgerow and one native hedgerow was present on site. For full details, see Table 8: Hedgerow Survey Results.	Yes – Native hedgerow	Yes – Native hedgerow	10 & 11
u1b5	Buildings		Two shed structures were present on site. For full details, see Table 10: Preliminary Roost Assessment.	No	No	1 – 4

*Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI). As defined with reference to habitat descriptions provided in Maddock, A. (ed) (2011).

Hedgerow Survey

4.11. The results of the hedgerow survey are provided in Table 8.

Table 8: Hedgerow Survey Results

Hedgerow number**	Description	UKHab Code	Important under Hedgerow Regulations (1997)	NERC Act HPI*	Photograph Ref No. (Appendix 2: Photographs)
H1	Hedgerow H1 related to the hedgerow present on the west boundary of the site. The hedgerow was approximately 5m in height, 4m in width and 18m in length. The hedgerow was dominated by lawson cypress *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*.	h2b	No	No	10
H2	Hedgerow H2 related to the hedgerow present on the eastern boundary of the site. The hedgerow was approximately 2m in height, 2m in width and 6m in length. The hedgerow was dominated by hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* with occasional elder *Sambucus nigra* and field maple *Acer campestre* with rarely present holly. The ground flora was dominated by ivy *Hedera helix*.	h2a6	No	Yes	11

**See Figure 3: UKHab Habitat Plan for hedgerow reference numbers.

Protected/ Notable Species

4.12. The results of the protected/ notable species assessment undertaken during the Extended UKHab Habitat Survey are provided in Table 9 overleaf.

4.13. A summary of desk study results is also provided in Table 9.

Table 9: Protected/ Notable Species Assessment

Species/ Species Group	Desk Study	Evidence Observed During Extended UKHab Habitat Survey	Suitability of Habitats Present
Amphibians (including great crested newt)	No previous granted mitigation records relating to GCN were noted within 2km of the survey site. Further, no Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns and Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017 – 2019 were noted within 2km of the survey site.	No evidence observed.	No ponds were observed on site during the walkover. Two ponds were identified within 250m of the survey site via the desk study. One pond (P1) was located approximately 0.18km northwest of the site, and the other (P2) was located approximately 0.21km north of the site. Due to surveyor access restrictions, the ponds were not assessed further during the survey. The site comprised an area of overgrown shrubs and hedgerows which offer suitable commuting, foraging, shelter and hibernation habitat for amphibians. A log pile was present at target note TN1 which offered suitable hibernation habitat to amphibians (Figure 3: UKHab Habitat Plan, Appendix 2: Photographs, Photo 12).
Badger	N/A	No evidence observed.	The site comprised an area of overgrown shrubs, which offered suitable foraging and commuting habitat for badger.
Bats – GLTA	One previous granted mitigation licence relating to bats was noted within 2km of the survey site. The licence allowed for the destruction of a resting place and the destruction of a breeding site for brown long-eared bat, at a location approximately 1km northeast, between 2010 and 2011.	No evidence observed.	No trees with suitable roosting features for bats were observed during the walkover.
Bats - PRA		No evidence observed.	Two buildings were present on site. For full details of the Preliminary Roost Assessment, see Table 10.
Bats – commuting and foraging		No evidence observed.	The site offered moderate suitability for commuting and foraging bats with connectivity to further suitable habitat, including arable and pasture grazed fields and woodland connected via hedgerows and treelines.
Birds	N/A	No evidence observed.	The introduced shrubs and hedgerows offered suitable nesting habitat for a range of bird species.
Hazel dormouse	The survey site was outside of the known distribution of this species and is therefore not considered further.		
Otter, water vole, Aquatic Invertebrates (including white-clawed crayfish) and fish	Due to the lack of suitable habitats on and immediately adjacent to the site, including ponds and watercourses, these species are not considered further.		
Terrestrial invertebrates	N/A	No evidence observed.	The site primarily comprised non-native species and common and widespread habitats that were considered unlikely to support notable invertebrate populations.
Reptiles	N/A	No evidence observed.	The site comprised an area of overgrown shrubs and hedgerows which offer suitable commuting, shelter and hibernation habitat for reptiles. A log pile was present at target note TN1 which offered suitable hibernation habitat to reptiles (Figure 3: UKHab Habitat Plan, Appendix 2: Photographs, Photo 12).
Other Mammals (including brown hare, harvest mouse, and hedgehog)	N/A	No evidence observed.	The introduced shrubs, hedgerows, and log pile offered suitable foraging, commuting, shelter and hibernation habitat for hedgehog.
Invasive species	N/A	No evidence observed	N/A

Table 10: Preliminary Roost Assessment Results

Building Reference Number***	Building Description	Potential Bat Access Points & Potential Roosting Locations	Evidence of Bats Recorded	Suitability Grading	Photograph Ref No. (Appendix 2: Photographs)
B1	Building B1 related to the shed structure located in the east of the site. The building was approximately 4m in length, 4m in width and 2m in height and comprised timber walls with a pitched roof lined with bitumen felt. Internally, the structure was open to the roof and comprised MDF boards and timber rafters. A window was present on the west elevation allowing large amounts of light ingress into the structure. The shed was covered in dense vegetation, limiting the view of potential roosting locations and access points.	No potential bat access points or suitable roosting locations observed, however the building was covered by dense vegetation which obstructed the view of potential features.	No evidence observed.	The building has precautionarily been assigned **low** due to the lack of visibility.	1 & 2
B2	Building B2 related to the shed structure located in the west of the site. The building was approximately 3m in length, 2m in width and 2m in height and comprised timber walls with a pitched roof lined with bitumen felt. Internally, the structure was open to the roof and comprised MDF boards. An open porch was present on the east of the shed. Windows were present on the east, south and north of the shed allowing large amounts of light to ingress into the structure.	No potential bat access points or suitable roosting locations observed.	No evidence observed.	Negligible	3 & 4

***See Figure 3: UKHab Habitat Plan for building reference numbers

5. Ecological Constraints & Opportunities

5.1. The ecological constraints and opportunities, and recommendations for avoidance, mitigation, or further survey (where required) are provided in Table 11 overleaf.

Table 11: Ecological Constraints & Opportunities

Ecological Feature	Potential Ecological Impact & Level of Constraint	Potential Avoidance, Mitigation and/or Compensation Measures	Further Survey Required to Inform an Ecological Impact Assessment
Statutory Designated Sites	It is considered that the development will not adversely impact on the designated sites for nature conservation identified in the desk study, due the distance between the designated sites and the development site, and the small scale of the works proposed.	N/A	No further surveys required.
Priority habitats	The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 sets out that: *'192. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:* [...] *b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species* […]*'.* The NPPF 2024 defines Priority Habitats and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Hedgerow H2 met the criteria as a NERC Act (2006) Priority habitat. The hedgerow should be retained post-development.	Retained hedgerows should be protected with reference to the British Standard *BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction – Recommendations*.	With reference to Section 14 of the Environment Act 2021, developments should achieve a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain via on-site of off-site habitat creation or enhancement. A biodiversity impact assessment to calculate the change in biodiversity units between the baseline habitats and the proposed site plans using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric will be produced following the provision of a Proposed Block Plan for the site.
Habitats (general)	The native trees on site are considered to be of local level ecological importance. However, these should be retained where possible. The remaining habitats on site are considered to be common and widespread habitats of low conservation importance. However, cumulatively these habitats have local conservation value taken as the biodiversity value of the site. Building B1 and B2 will likely be demolished to facilitate the development. There may also be a loss of introduced shrub and trees.	Retained trees should be protected with reference to the British Standard *BS 5837:2012 Trees in relation to design, demolition, and construction – Recommendations*. See adjacent column.	
Badgers	Badgers are afforded legal protection under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. No evidence of badger was recorded during the survey, however their presence in the landscape cannot be fully discounted. There remains a residual risk of badger injury and mortality during construction should this species be mobile in the area.	Precautionary methods should be implemented during works to protect foraging and commuting badger. Foundation ditches and other ditches, excavations, or trenches, which can be hazardous to badgers, should be closed overnight or fitted with roughened sloping boards or steps to allow animals to escape should they become trapped. Concrete should not be left unset overnight, or suitable barriers erected to prevent animals accessing the concrete. Pipework with a diameter greater than 120mm should have the ends closed off overnight to prevent entrapment. These measures can be controlled via the implementation of a CEMP.	No further surveys required.
Birds	Nesting birds are afforded legal protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). There will be a loss of suitable nesting habitat for birds in the form of introduced shrub and trees.	Where works affecting nesting bird habitat on site cannot avoid the nesting bird season of March to August (inclusive) and September in mild years, the habitat to be subject to works should be surveyed for nesting birds immediately prior to removal by a suitably qualified ecologist. If nesting birds are recorded, a suitable buffer zone should be defined by the ecologist and implemented until the ecologist confirms the chicks have fledged. If species identification is possible, this can be used to inform the typical egg incubation and fledging period, giving an indication of an appropriate time for re-survey to confirm fledging.	No further surveys required.

Ecological Feature	Potential Ecological Impact & Level of Constraint	Potential Avoidance, Mitigation and/or Compensation Measures	Further Survey Required to Inform an Ecological Impact Assessment
Bats	Bats are a fully protected European Protected Species (EPS) under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The development proposals may include the demolition of building B1 which may result in harm or disturbance caused to any bats or bat roosts which may be present on site. Building B2 may be demolished to facilitate the development, however this building was assessed with reference to best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023) to as having negligible habitat to roosting bats, and the likely absence of roosting bats within this building can be assumed. In the unlikely event that roosting bats are encountered within B2, works should cease immediately, and the advice of a suitably qualified ecologist sought.	The building B1 was assessed as having low suitability for roosting bats. Should B1 be demolished, with reference to best practice guidelines (Collins, 2023) it is considered sufficient to demolish the building under a Precautionary Working Method Statement for bats, overseen by a suitably qualified ecologist. Due to the presence of bats in the wider area as highlighted by the desk study, and the suitability of the habitat for commuting and foraging bats, the impacts from external artificial lighting on the site and on adjacent habitats should be avoided. Where lighting is required, both during construction works and post-development, this should be sympathetic to wildlife through the design of lighting observing the principles set out in guidelines from the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) & Institution of Lighting Professionals (BCT & ILP, 2023).	No further surveys required.
Amphibians (including GCN) and Reptiles	GCN are fully protected as a European Protected Species (EPS) under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Reptiles are partially protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), protecting them from killing or injury. There may be a loss of limited suitable reptile and GCN habitat in the form of introduced shrub and a log pile. Using the Risk Assessment Tool provided within the Natural England Method Statement Template (Table 12 overleaf), on a precautionary basis scenario that pond P1 180m northwest and P2 210m north of the site, is a GCN breeding site and the basis that area 0.01-0.1 ha of land will be affected by the development, the calculator generated a risk of 'Green: Offence Highly Unlikely'.	To prevent the killing and injury of terrestrial amphibians and reptiles during the works, it is recommended that vegetation clearance on site is carried out under precautionary working methods for amphibians and reptiles, to include a fingertip search of vegetation and suitable hibernacula prior to works, as well as staged and directional vegetation removal encouraging the safe displacement of amphibians and reptiles into adjacent habitats. In the highly unlikely event that amphibians or reptiles are encountered during works, works should cease immediately, and the advice of an ecologist sought.	No further surveys required.
Other Mammals	Some mammals, such as hedgehog and brown hare, are listed as Species of Principal Importance in England under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. These species are termed 'Priority' species and receive special considerations in the planning process. There may be a loss of limited suitable hedgehog habitat in the form of introduced shrub.	The precautionary working methods implemented for badger will also protect other mammals such as hedgehog.	No further surveys required.

Table 12: GCN Rapid Risk Assessment

Component	**Likely effect** (select one for each component; select the most harmful option if more than one is likely; lists are in order of harm, top to bottom)	**Notional offence probability score**
Great crested newt breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land within 100m of any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Land 100-250m from any breeding pond(s)	0.01 - 0.1 ha lost or damaged	0.01
Land >250m from any breeding pond(s)	No effect	0
Individual great crested newts	No effect	0
	Maximum:	0.01
Rapid risk assessment result:	**GREEN: OFFENCE HIGHLY UNLIKELY**	

6. Conclusions

Further Surveys

6.1. With reference to Section 14 of the Environment Act 2021, developments should achieve a minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain via on-site of off-site habitat creation or enhancement. A biodiversity impact assessment to calculate the change in biodiversity units between the baseline habitats and the proposed site plans using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric will be produced following the provision of a Proposed Block Plan for the site.

Biodiversity Enhancement

6.2. Suitable methods of biodiversity enhancement for the site would include:

- The installation of two generic bird boxes. A suitable model is *the '1B Schwegler Nest Box*', one with a 32mm hole, and one with a 26mm hole. The use of woodcrete nest boxes will ensure a longer box lifespan of 20-25 years. Boxes will be hung at a height of 1.5m or higher, and angled so they face away from prevailing wind, the chances of occupation are higher if there is a good tree or hedge cover nearby.

7. References

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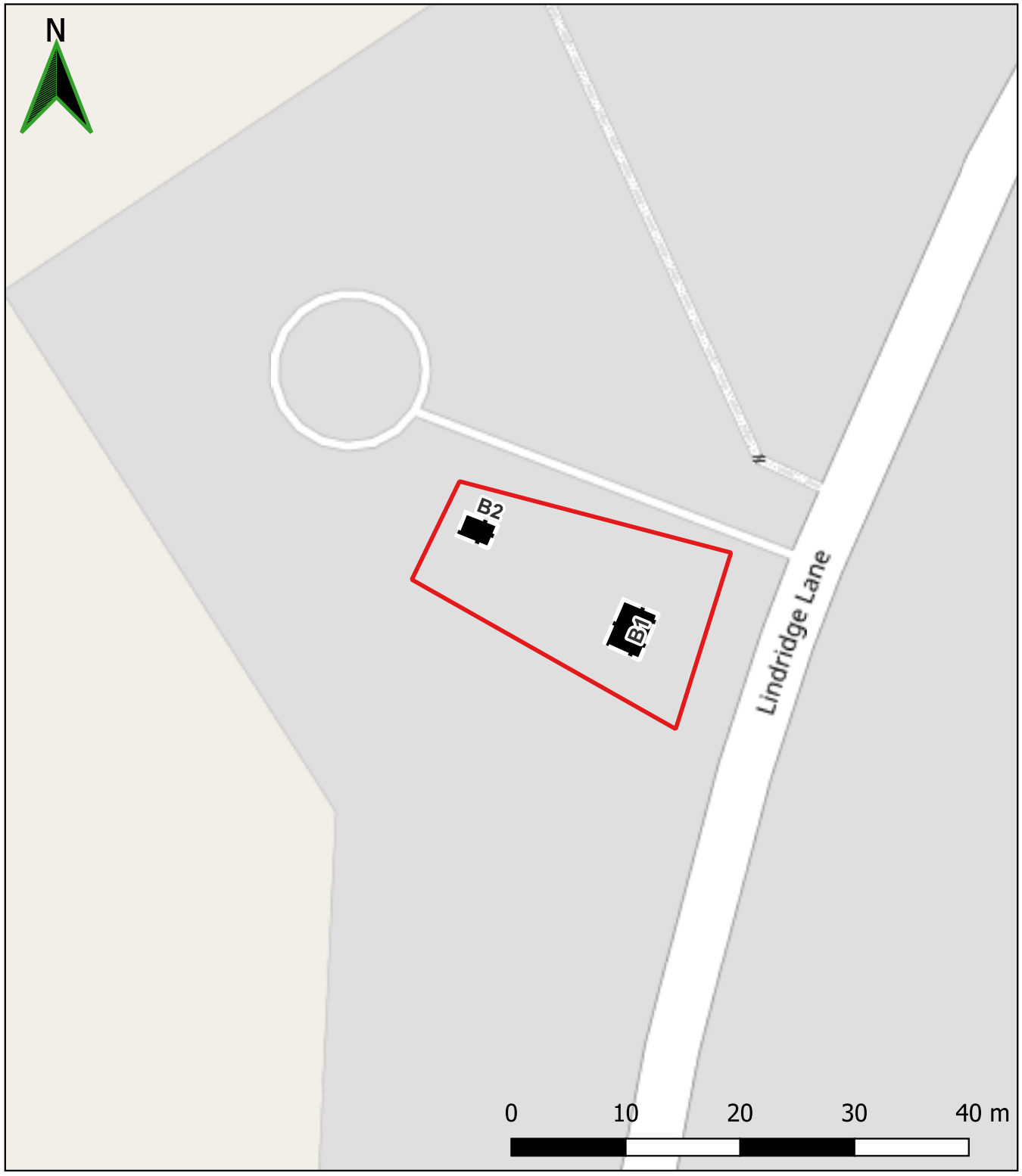
8. Figures



Legend

- Site boundary
- Buildings with reference number

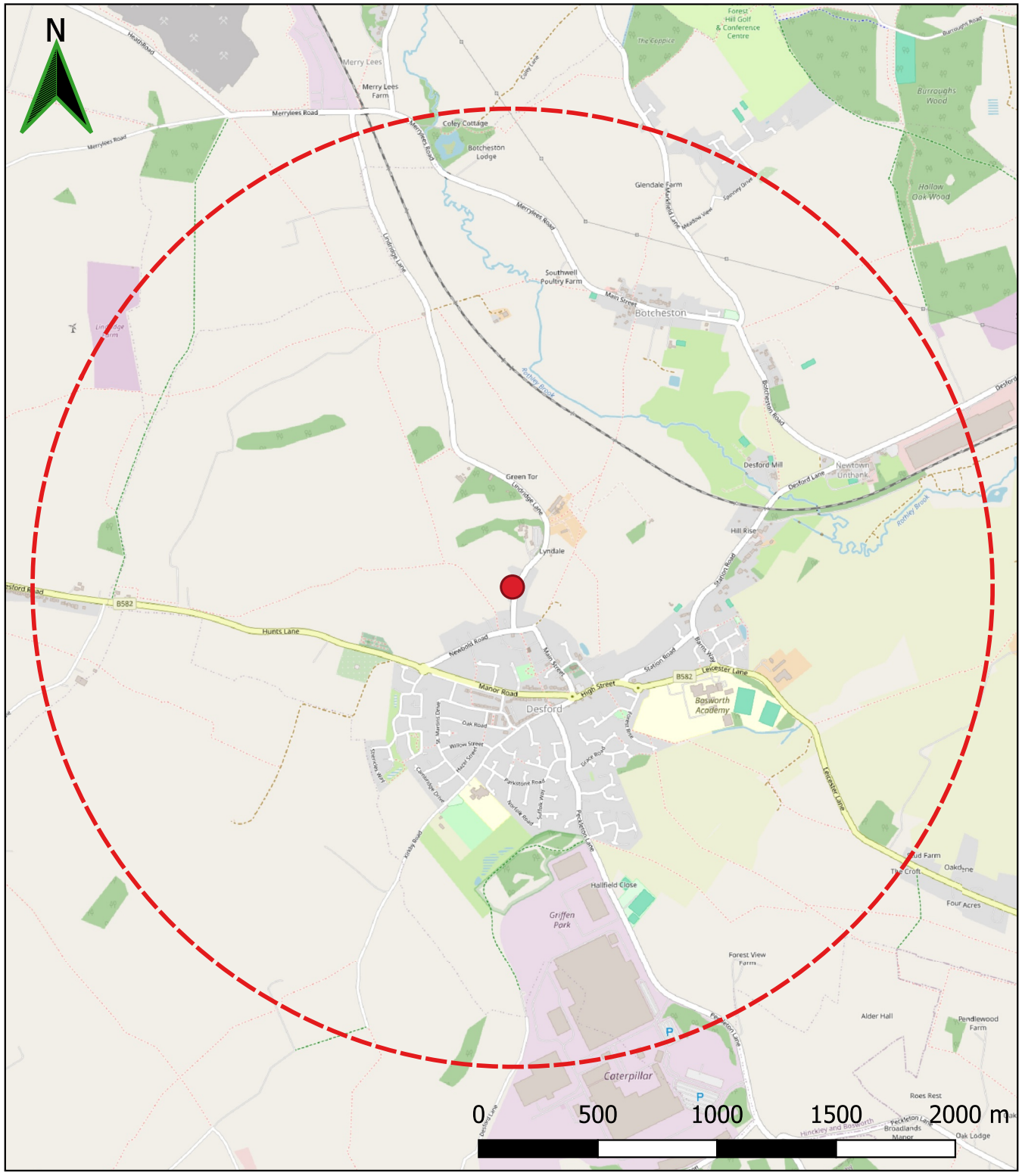
Project:
Land to the north of 25 Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 9GN

Drawing:
Figure 1: Site Location & Building Plan

Date: 25-09-2025 Version: FINAL

Author: EKJ Job No: P2865_02

Elton Ecology



Legend

- 2km buffer
- Site location

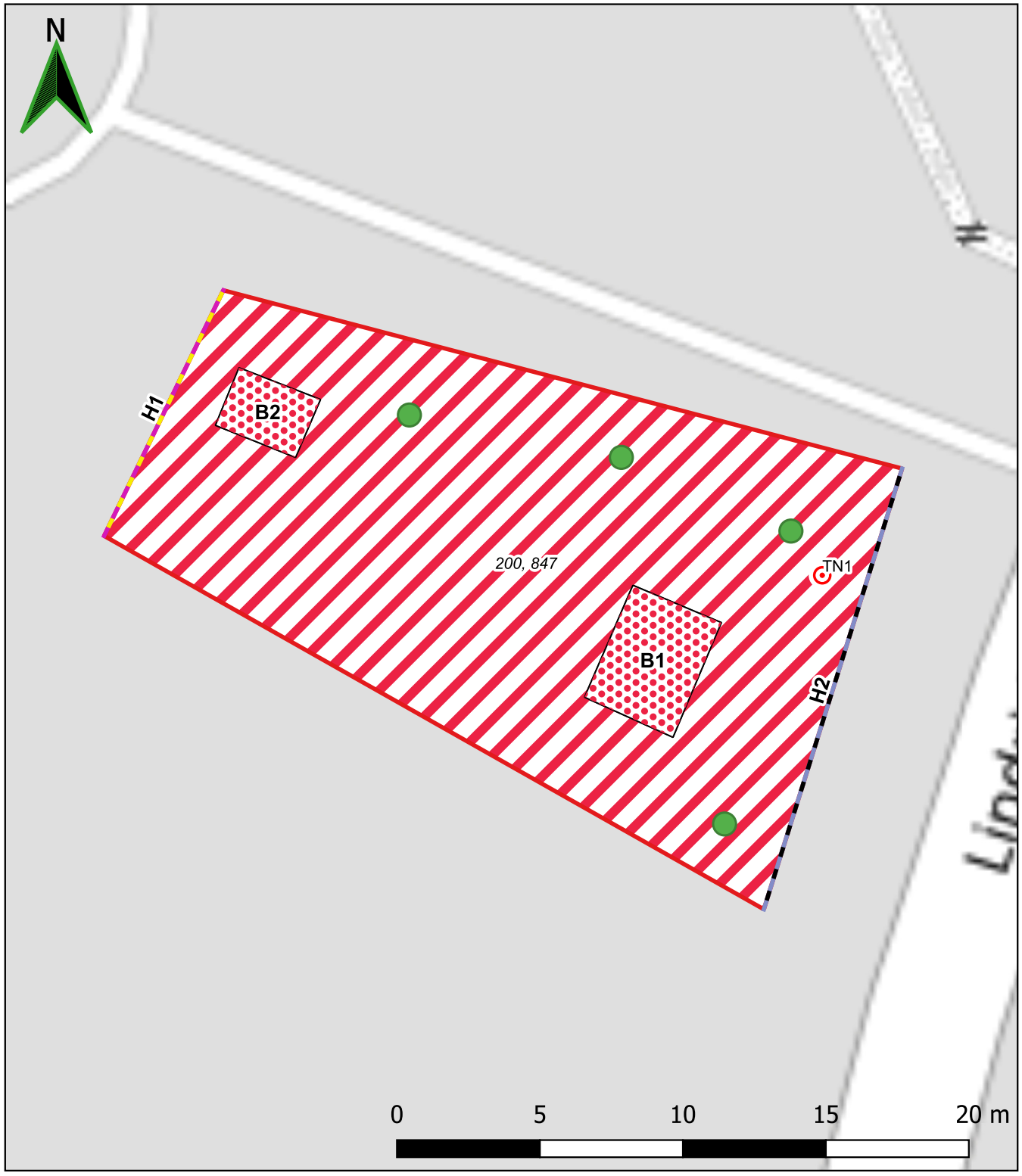
Project:
Land to the north of 25 Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 9GN

Drawing:
Figure 2: Surrounding Landscape Plan

Date: 25-09-2025 Version: FINAL

Author: EKJ Job No: P2865_02

Elton Ecology



Legend

- Site boundary
- u1 - built-up areas and gardens
- u1b5 - buildings
- h2b - non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- h2a6 - other native hedgerow
- Target note with reference number
- Tree

Secondary codes:
200 - tree
847 - introduced shrub

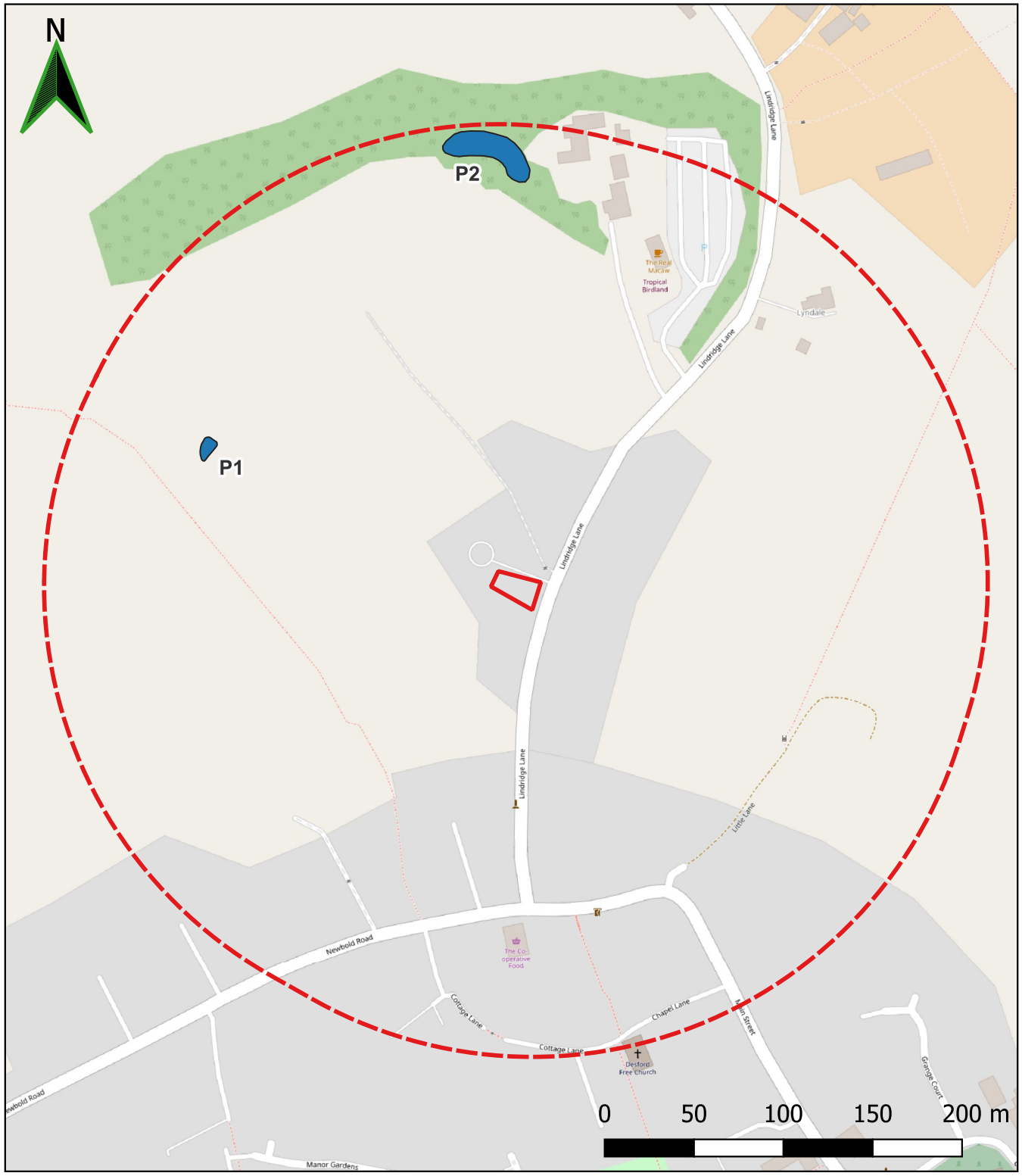
Project:
Land to the north of 25 Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 9GN

Drawing:
Figure 3: UKHab Habitat Plan

Date: 25-09-2025 Version: FINAL

Author: EKJ Job No: P2865_02

Elton Ecology



Legend

- Site boundary
- 250m buffer
- Pond with reference number

Project:

Land to the north of 25 Lindridge Lane, Desford, Leicester, LE9 9GN

Drawing:

Figure 4: Pond Plan

Date: 25-09-2025 Version: FINAL

Author: EKJ Job No: P2865_02

Elton Ecology

Appendix 1: Planning Policy & Legislation Summary

This appendix serves as a summary of relevant policy and legislation. It is not intended to supersede the policy or legislation documents to which it refers, and the relevant full documents should always be consulted prior to decision making.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

Biodiversity is a material consideration under the National Planning Policy Framework (2023). Relevant text to biodiversity from the NPPF is described below.

In Section 2 of the NPPF 'Achieving sustainable development', paragraph 8(c), the NPPF sets an environmental objective:

"*to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*"

In Section 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment', the NPPF states that:

"187. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- *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);*
- *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;* […]
- *minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.* […]"

The NPPF, in paragraph 192 sets out that to protect and enhance biodiversity, plans should:

- "*Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity65; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation; and*
- *promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.*"

In determining planning applications, the NPPF paragraph 193 sets guidance that local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- "*if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- *development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with*

other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest […]*;*

- *development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*

- *development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*"

Paragraph 194 states that the following sites should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- "*potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;*

- *listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and*

- *sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.*"

Paragraph 195 states that "The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or projects will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site."

Paragraph 198 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure new development is appropriate to its location and take into account likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:

- "*Mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development* […]*;* […] *and*

- *limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.*"

Government Circular ODPM 06/05 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

The government circular provides administrative guidance on the application of statutory obligation and legislation relating to planning and nature conservation in England. It complements the National Planning Policy Framework. The document includes guidance on designated sites (international and national), habitats, and protected species.

Relating to protected species and the requirement for their consideration in planning applications, the government circular, in paragraph 98 details that:

"The presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat. Local authorities should consult English Nature [now Natural England] before granting planning permission. They should consider attaching appropriate

planning conditions or entering into planning obligations under which the developer would take steps to secure the long-term protection of the species. They should also advise developers that they must comply with any statutory species' protection provisions affecting the site concerned."

Paragraph 99, relating to the requirement and timing of protected species survey and mitigation, the government circular states that:

"It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision. The need to ensure ecological surveys are carried out should therefore only be left to coverage under planning conditions in exceptional circumstances, with the result that the surveys are carried out after planning permission has been granted. However, bearing in mind the delay and cost that may be involved, developers should not be required to undertake surveys for protected species unless there is a reasonable likelihood of the species being present and affected by the development. Where this is the case, the survey should be completed and any necessary measures to protect the species should be in place, through conditions and/or planning obligations, before the permission is granted. In appropriate circumstances the permission may also impose a condition preventing the development from proceeding without the prior acquisition of a [Natural England] licence."

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019

The term 'European Protected Species' (EPS) is used to describe species listed on Schedule 2 of the The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Regarding these species, Regulation 43 of the Regulations make guilty of an offence a person who:

- "Deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species;
- Deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species;
- Deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or;
- Damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal […]"

Regulation 43 defines that the disturbance of animals includes any disturbance which is likely to:

- Impair their ability:
    - to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or
    - in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; or
    - to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

A person guilty of an offence under Regulation 43 is liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or to a fine, or to both.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (As Amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) lists species on Schedule 5 for which the Act make it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take;
- Recklessly or intentionally damage or destroy, or obstruct access to any structure or place which any wild animal included uses for shelter or protection;
- Recklessly or intentionally disturb any such animal while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection.

Some species receive partial protection under the Act, which limits their protection under the Act to intentional killing or injury.

All wild nesting birds are protected under the Act, making it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird; and
- Take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs of any wild bird.

Some bird species are afforded special protection via their inclusion in Schedule 1 of the Act, which makes an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any schedule 1 bird building a nest or which is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or to disturb dependent young of such a bird, or whilst such a bird 'leks' (i.e. congregates for community courtship behaviour).

Schedule 9 of the Act makes it an offence to cause any plant listed to grown in the wild, unless all reasonable steps were taken to prevent an offence and due diligence was exercised.

The Act sets out provisions to protect Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 40 of the Act places a legal duty on public authorities (including planning authorities) to have regard to biodiversity conservation in their normal functions (including planning applications).

Under Section 41 of the Act, lists of Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) and Species of Principal Importance (SPI), of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity, are produced which serve to guide public authorities in carrying out their functions with consideration for biodiversity conservation.

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996 (as amended)

The Act protects wild mammals against certain cruel acts, including intentional crushing, downing or asphyxiation.

Appendix 2: Photographs

Photo 1: The southwest elevation of building B1.

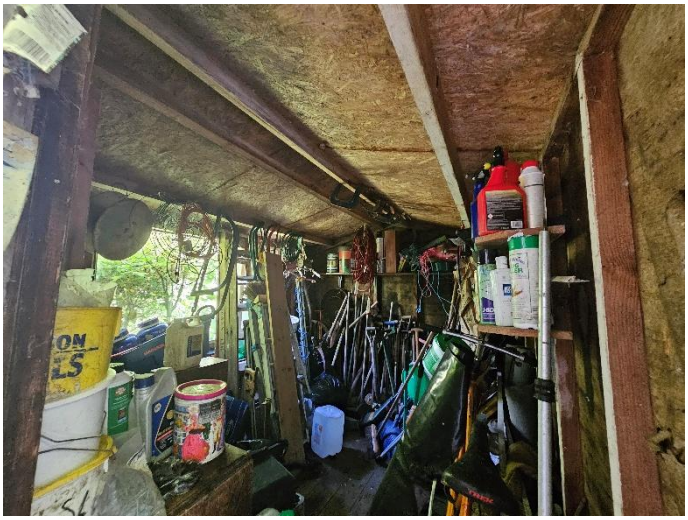


Photo 2: The internal of building B1.

Photo 3: The east elevation of building B2.

Photo 4: The southern elevation of building B2.

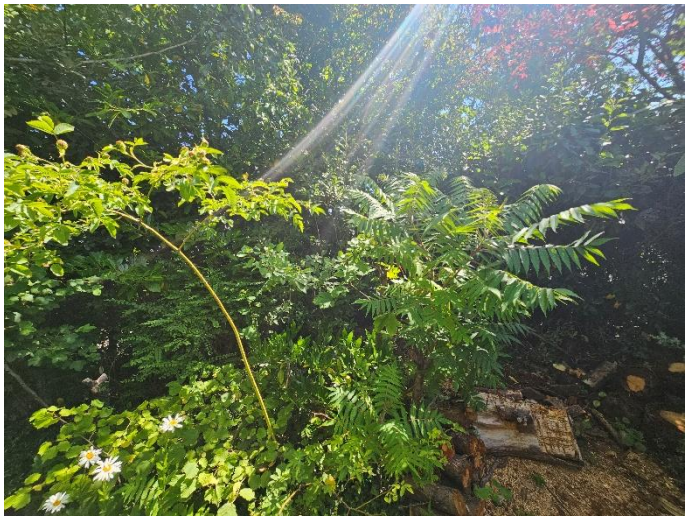


Photo 5: The introduced shrub on site.

Photo 6: The conifer tree on site.

Photo 7: The field maple on site.

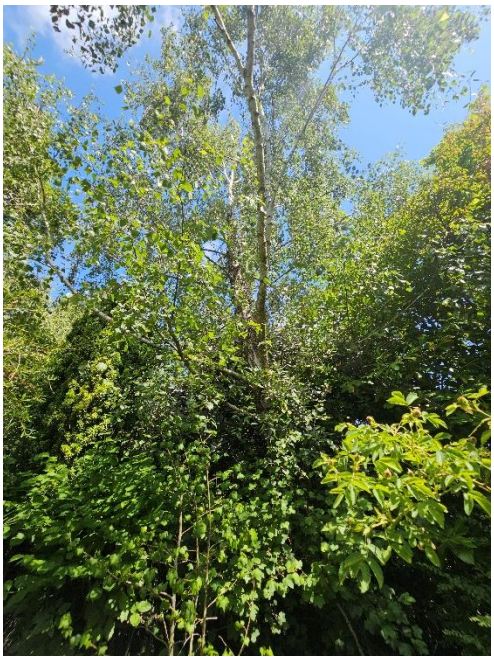


Photo 8: The silver birch on site.

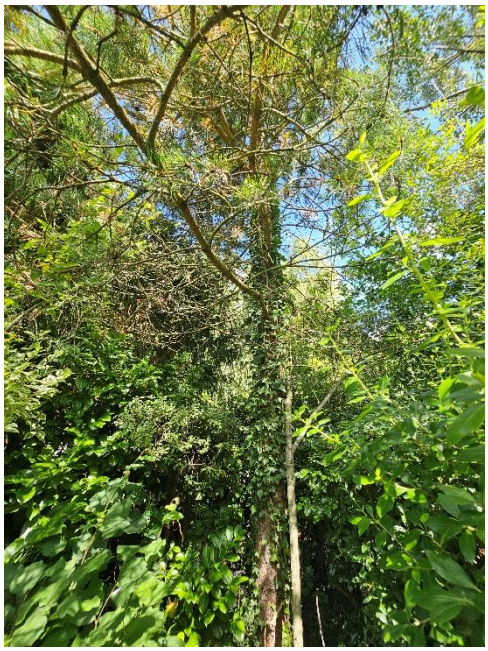


Photo 9: The Scot's pine on site.

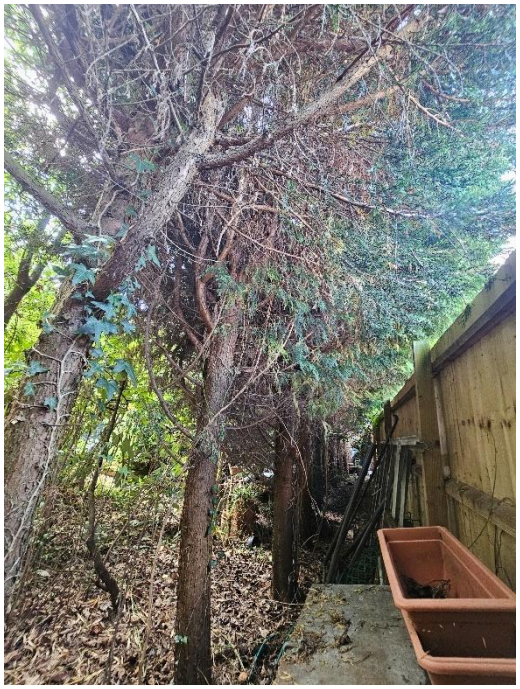


Photo 10: Hedgerow H1.

Photo 11: Hedgerow H2.

Photo 12: The log pile at target note TN2.