



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

Client: Surrey Heath Borough Council

Site: Broadford Lane, Chobham

07.02.2023

Version 002



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Survey Data	Survey data are valid for 12 to 18 months from the date the survey was undertaken.		

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The information which we have prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.

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1. Summary

Site Details
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Address: Land South of Broadford Lane, Chobham, GU24 8EL. • OS grid reference: SU 9749 6118. • Approximate Area of Site: 1.663 ha.
Scope of Works
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aLyne Ecology Ltd. was commissioned by Surrey Heath Borough Council to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), comprising a data search and field survey to assess the baseline ecological conditions of the site and its potential to support protected species and species of conservation concern.
Development Proposals
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development proposals are for a change of land use to provide a traveller site, comprising up to sixteen pitches.
Key Ecological Constraints and Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The habitats recorded on site are as follows: other neutral grassland, other lowland mixed deciduous woodland, line of trees, dry ditch, bramble scrub, mixed scrub and developed land sealed surface (see Figure 1). • Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA) is located approximately 1.4 km to the south-east of the site. A further two parcels of land, which are jointly designated under the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Thames Basin Heaths SPA are located 1.8 km to the north and 2.9 km to the west of the site respectively. SPAs and SACs are European designated sites protected in the UK by Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). • There are four Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) located within 1 km of the site. SNCIs are afforded some protection via local planning policy. • Other lowland mixed deciduous woodland, which is a Priority Habitat, is present on site. There are also six types of Priority Habitats located within 1 km of the site, namely deciduous woodland, rivers/streams, hedgerows, traditional orchards, woodpasture and parkland and ponds. Priority Habitats are listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. Under the NERC Act, 2006, Local Planning Authorities are required to give due regard to biodiversity. • Himalayan balsam (see target note 5 on Figure 1) was recorded on site. This species is listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) as an invasive plant species. • The woodland and scrub habitats on site have potential to support stag beetles and European hedgehogs, both of which are Priority Species under the NERC Act, 2006. • Ponds are absent from the site, and the nearest pond to site is located approximately 355 m to the west (www.magic.gov.uk). However, the woodland and scrub habitats on site could support great crested newts during their terrestrial phase. The great crested newt and

its habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The habitats on site could also support the common toad, which is a Priority Species listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act, 2006.

- The woodland, scrub and log pile habitats have the potential to support reptiles. Reptiles are protected against killing and injury under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended. All reptile species are Priority Species as listed on Section 41 of the NERC Act, 2006.
- The woodland and scrub habitats on site could support nesting birds including birds of conservation concern. Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), it is illegal to take, damage or destroy the nests of wild birds whilst being built or in use.
- The woodland and scrub habitats on site could support foraging and commuting bats. Three trees with low potential to support roosting bats were identified at target note 1, on Figure 1. Bats, their roosts, and their habitats are strictly protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- The site supports active badger setts. Signs of foraging by badgers were also identified during the survey. Badgers are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992.
- The woodland and scrub habitats on site have low potential to support the hazel dormouse. The hazel dormouse and its habitats are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Recommendations for Avoidance, Mitigation and Enhancement

- The site is located within 5 km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. Housing developments, where there is a net gain of one or more houses, within 5 km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA are required to contribute towards avoidance measures (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, SANG and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring, SAMM), to offset the likely significant effects on the SPA. For developments of fewer than 100 new dwellings, it should be possible to use Council-provided SANGs, subject to availability.
- Woodland on site should be retained, protected, and enhanced. Any woodland lost should be replaced (offsite) with like-for-like or better habitat. This should be informed by a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment.
- Where removal of trees is required to facilitate the new traveller pitches, areas of the site that comprise poorer quality woodland should be selected. For example, woodland comprising a sparse cover of young growth trees, which lack an established understorey and diverse ground layer, should be favoured. Areas of the site which comprise grazed, other neutral grassland should be favoured for siting of the traveller pitches over areas of woodland or dense scrub.
- Buffer zones should be implemented between the location of the traveller pitches and retained woodland. There should be no direct access from the development into the woodland. The buffer should only be accessed for maintenance and materials/waste should not be stored in or near the buffer.
- Retained areas of woodland should be enhanced by planting native trees, shrubs, and bulbs, of local provenance and suited to the geology of the site.

- The proposals should not include planting of ornamental or otherwise non-native tree, shrub, and ground flora species.
- All brash and log piles should be retained and protected. All fallen and standing wood should be retained and protected.
- A sensitive lighting plan should be adopted, to ensure that outside lighting does not adversely affect habitats and wildlife, particularly bats when foraging and commuting.
- Trees and scrub should be retained, protected, and enhanced. The trees with low potential to support roosting bats (target note 1, Figure 1) should be retained and protected.
- Himalayan balsam (target note 5, Figure 1) should be removed from site and disposed of, in accordance with best practice guidelines.
- A fingertip search of the areas to be disturbed during site construction works should be carried out by a great crested newt licenced ecologist prior to works taking place. If any great crested newts are found, all works must cease immediately, and a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) should be obtained from Natural England.
- The removal of scrub and any brash/log piles should be carried out carefully by hand, to ensure that any stag beetles, common toads, reptiles, or European hedgehogs, which may be present, can escape unharmed.
- Any removal of vegetation should be undertaken outside of the bird breeding season (March to August inclusive) to avoid destruction/disturbance of nesting birds.
- Badger setts should be retained and protected.

Below is a summary of measures, which should be implemented on site to enhance biodiversity:

- The enhancement of retained woodland on site by planting native trees, shrubs, and bulbs.
- The enhancement of retained other neutral grassland
- Garden spaces should include a suitable wildflower seed mix.
- Construction of log piles for invertebrates and reptiles.
- The installation of appropriate bat and bird boxes.
- The installation of a hibernacula for invertebrates.
- The installation of a Royal Hedgehog House.
- Installation of a wildlife pond.

These recommendations, including measures to protect and enhance Priority Habitats on site, should be included in a Biodiversity Management and Maintenance Scheme.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment should be carried out for the site.

Further Survey Requirements

- Reptiles.
- Bats (Bat transects and deployment of automated bat detectors).
- Monitoring of badger setts.

2. Introduction

2.1 Site Details

Table 1 provides details of the site, intended as a summary of key features, derived from the data search and www.magic.gov.uk. The habitats recorded on site during the field survey are shown on Figure 1. Photographs of the site are provided in Appendix 1. A full species list, with target notes, is provided in Appendix 2.

Table 1. Site Details

Site Name	Broadford Lane, Chobham
Site Address	Land South of Broadford Lane, Chobham, GU24 8EL
OS Grid Reference	SU 9749 6118
Total Area of Site	1.663 ha
Landowner and Local Authority	Surrey Heath Borough Council
Geology and Soils	Loamy soils with naturally high groundwater
Hydrology	Naturally wet
Nature Conservation Designations	None on site
Other Designations	None on site
The Woodland Trust Ancient and Notable Tree Inventory	None on site
Biodiversity Opportunity Area	None on site
National Habitat Network	Network Expansion Zone Network Enhancement Zone 2
Primary Habitats	Other lowland mixed deciduous woodland, line of trees, other neutral grassland, bramble scrub, mixed scrub and developed land sealed surface.
Protected Species	Roosting/foraging/commuting bats, badgers (<i>Meles meles</i>), hazel dormice (<i>Muscardinus avellanarius</i>), stag beetles (<i>Lucanus cervus</i>), amphibians, reptiles, breeding birds, and European hedgehogs (<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>)
Current Land Use	Area of neglected land adjacent to Chobham wastewater treatment works.

An aerial plan showing the location of the site is provided below.



Site Location (© Google Earth Pro, accessed 19th September 2022).

2.2 Site Context

Table 2 provides details on the context of the site in terms of habitats, land use and connectivity to the wider landscape.

Table 2. Site Context

Surrounding Habitats and Land Use	Located to the south of Chobham and west of Mimbridge; the surrounding landscape comprises a mixture of agricultural and grazed pasture, woodland and scattered residential and light industrial buildings. There are at least eleven waterbodies located within 1 km of the site, the nearest being approximately 355 m west of the site. The Bourne stream is located 60 m to the east of the site.
Urban Context / Locality	The site is located off Broadford Lane directly adjacent to Chobham wastewater treatment works. The site can be accessed via a gated hard standing track to the south of Broadford Lane.
Connectivity to Wider Landscape	The site has good connectivity to valuable habitats located in the wider landscape, including woodland, scrub, open grassland, waterbodies, and streams.
Priority Habitats within 1 km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deciduous woodland • Rivers/streams • Hedgerows • Traditional orchards • Woodpasture and parkland • Ponds
Ancient Woodland within 1 km	One parcel, located approximately 475 m to the north-east of the site.
Non-Statutory Designated Sites within 1 km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Millbrook Meadows SNCI • Broadford Meadows by The Bourne SNCI • Chobham Meadows South of the Mill Bourne SNCI • Lovelands Farm Meadows SNCI
Statutory Designated Sites within 1 km	None
European Designated Sites within 5 km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thames Basin Heaths SPA is located approximately 1.4 km to the southeast of the site • A further two parcels of land, which are jointly designated under the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SAC and Thames Basin Heaths SPA, are located 1.8 km to the north and 2.9 km to the west of the site respectively
EPSLs within 2 km	<p>One EPSL has been granted for the damage and destruction of a great crested newt (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>) resting place, located approximately 430 m to the north-east of the site.</p> <p>Five granted EPSLs granted for roosting bats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destruction of a breeding and resting place for common pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>), soprano pipistrelle (<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>) and brown long-eared bats (<i>Plecotus auritus</i>) located approximately 430 m to the north-east of the site. • Destruction of resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats located approximately 1.1 km to the east. • Destruction of resting place for common pipistrelle bats located approximately 1.3 km to the north. • Destruction of resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats located approximately 1.3 km to the north-west. • Destruction of resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats located approximately 1.7 km to the north.

2.3 Proposed Development

The development proposals are for a change of land use to provide a traveller site comprising up to sixteen pitches.

2.4 Brief and Objectives

2.4.1 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- Map and identify the existing habitats within the survey area, using the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) system.
- Check for evidence of protected species and assess the potential for protected species to be present on site.
- Check for evidence of invasive species.
- Identify potential ecological impacts and constraints relating to the proposed works.
- Make recommendations for further survey work, as appropriate.
- Propose mitigation measures to avoid, mitigate or compensate for ecological impacts, as appropriate.

3. Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

This section provides a summary of legislation and planning policy for designated sites, Priority Habitats, ancient woodland, trees, and protected species, which are assessed to be present or potentially present on site, as detailed in Table 7, Section 6.

The legislation and planning policy detailed in this section is intended to be a summary only. The relevant pieces of legislation and planning policy should be referred to for full information. Legislation and planning policy pertaining to protected habitats and species can be found at the following websites:

- The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/birdsdirective/index_en.htm
- The Habitats Directive 1992/43/EEC:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm
- Water Directive Framework: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/water-framework/info/intro_en.htm
- Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended):
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (as amended):
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/pdfs/uksi_20100490_en.pdf
- Countryside Rights of Way Act, 2000: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>
- National Planning Policy Framework, 2021:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf
- OPDM Circular 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7692/147570.pdf
- Biodiversity 2020: A Strategy for England's Wildlife and Ecosystem Services:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69446/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf
- Surrey Heath Borough Council Core Strategy & Development Management Policies 2011-2028: <https://www.surreyheath.gov.uk/residents/planning/planning-policy/surrey-heath-current-local-plan/core-strategy-and-development>
- Biodiversity & Planning in Surrey:
<https://surreynaturepartnership.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/biodiversity-planning-in-surrey-revised-post-revision-nppf-mar-2019.pdf>

The valued ecological receptors, which could be impacted on by development are highlighted in blue in Table 3 and further details on relevant legislation and planning policy are provided in Appendix 3. A list of abbreviations is provided in Appendix 4.

3.1 Legislation and Planning Policy Relating to Valued Ecological Receptors

Table 3. Legislation and Planning Policy Relating to Valued Ecological Receptors

Key Ecological Receptor	Legislation and Planning Policy										
	Annex I (Habitats) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex II (Species) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex I of Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), Schedules 1, 5, 9	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000	The Protection of Badgers Act, 1996	NERC Act, 2006	NPPF	Relevant Regional Planning Policy	Relevant Local Planning Policy: Guildford Local Plan and 'Biodiversity and Planning in Surrey'
Statutory Designated Sites – SACs and SPAs	✓	✓		✓					✓		✓
Statutory Designated Sites – SSSIs					✓	✓			✓		✓
Statutory Designated Sites – LNRs									✓		✓
Non-Statutory Designated Sites – SNCIs, LWSs								✓	✓		✓
Priority Habitats								✓	✓		✓
Ancient Woodland									✓		✓
Trees											✓
Priority Species – Plants								✓			✓
Invasive Plant Species					✓ (Schedule 9)						✓
Priority Species – Invertebrates								✓	✓		✓

Key Ecological Receptor	Legislation and Planning Policy										
	Annex I (Habitats) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex II (Species) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex I of Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), Schedules 1, 5, 9	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000	The Protection of Badgers Act, 1996	NERC Act, 2006	NPPF	Relevant Regional Planning Policy	Relevant Local Planning Policy: Guildford Local Plan and 'Biodiversity and Planning in Surrey'
Great Crested Newts (<i>Triturus cristatus</i>)		✓		✓	✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓
Common Toads (<i>Bufo bufo</i>)								✓	✓		✓
Reptiles					✓			✓	✓		✓
Breeding Birds					✓				✓		✓
Priority Species – Birds								✓	✓		✓
Protected Bird Species					✓ (Schedule 1)				✓		✓
Roosting, Foraging and Commuting Bats		✓		✓	✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓
Hazel Dormouse		✓		✓	✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓
Badger					✓		✓				✓
European Hedgehog								✓	✓		✓
Brown hare (<i>Lepus europaeus</i>)								✓			✓
European Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)		✓		✓	✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓

Key Ecological Receptor	Legislation and Planning Policy										
	Annex I (Habitats) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex II (Species) Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC	Annex I of Birds Directive 2009/147/EC	Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019	The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), Schedules 1, 5, 9	Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000	The Protection of Badgers Act, 1996	NERC Act, 2006	NPPF	Relevant Regional Planning Policy	Relevant Local Planning Policy: Guildford Local Plan and 'Biodiversity and Planning in Surrey'
Water Vole (<i>Arvicola amphibius</i>)					✓ (Schedule 5)			✓	✓		✓

3.2 Biodiversity Enhancements

The NPPF, 2021 sets out policies for, inter alia, biodiversity and geological conservation directing those schemes should seek to protect and enhance, where possible, designated, and non-designated nature conservation sites and features.

Section 41 of the NERC Act, 2006 requires public bodies “to have regard to” the importance of conserving biodiversity in England when undertaking their functions. Local planning authorities should use the list of species and habitats of principal importance (section 41) to identify those that require special consideration when making decisions.

Circular 06/05 on Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact Within the Planning System provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England.

The following is a summary of relevant local planning policy and guidance, which relates to biodiversity enhancement and the achievement of biodiversity net gain on development sites.

3.2.1 Surrey Heath Borough Council Core Strategy & Development Management Policies 2011-2028

‘The Borough Council will seek to conserve and enhance biodiversity within Surrey Heath. Working with partners, new opportunities for habitat creation and protection will be explored in particular on biodiversity opportunity areas. Development that results in harm to or loss of features of interest for biodiversity will not be permitted.

Particular regard will be had to the following hierarchy of important sites and habitats within the Borough (as identified upon the Proposals Map):

- (i) Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) (European)*
- (ii) Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (National)*
- (iii) Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), other Ancient Woodland not identified in (ii) above (Local).*

Outside of these areas, new development will where appropriate be required to contribute to the protection, management and enhancement of biodiversity. On locally designated sites this will include those habitats and species listed in the Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

Within locally designated sites development will not be permitted unless it is necessary for appropriate on site management measures and can demonstrate no adverse impact to the integrity of the nature conservation interest. Development adjacent to locally designated sites will not be permitted where it has an adverse impact on the integrity of the nature conservation interest.

The Council will work in partnership to restore and enhance Biodiversity Opportunity Areas in particular those also designated as SPA or SAC which are of strategic importance.’

CP14B European Sites

‘The Council will only permit development where it is satisfied that this will not give rise to likely significant adverse effect upon the integrity of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and/or the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham Common Special Area of Conservation.

All new residential (net) development within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area is considered to give rise to the possibility of likely significant effect. Accordingly, only new development that complies with the following requirements will be permitted.

- (i) *No (net) new residential development will be permitted within 400m of the SPA.*
- (ii) *Non-residential development within 400m of the SPA will be required to demonstrate that it is not likely to have a significant effect either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.*

Proposals for residential development elsewhere in the Borough will be required to provide appropriate measures to avoid adverse effects upon the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area in accordance with the Borough Councils adopted Avoidance Strategy (or as subsequently amended)

Such measures shall include:

- (iii) *All net new residential development shall provide or contribute toward the provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGs).*
- (iv) *SANGS will be provided at a standard of at least 8ha per 1,000 new occupants.*
- (v) *Developments of 10 or more net new dwellings will only be permitted within the identified catchment areas of SANGs.*
- (vi) *All net new residential development shall contribute toward strategic access management and monitoring (SAMM) measures.*

The effective avoidance of any identified adverse effects must be demonstrated and secured prior to approval of the development.'

3.2.2 Biodiversity and Planning in Surrey

4c (Biodiversity within developments) states that 'developments are being built to ever-increasing environmental standards, and biodiversity should not be forgotten here. There are very simple steps that can be taken to provide nesting and roosting opportunities for species such as bats and birds within buildings. Nest boxes can be mounted on the outside of buildings, special bat or Swift bricks can be incorporated into the structure, and entire roof spaces can be designed to provide opportunities for bats to roost. A step further is to provide a 'green', or vegetated, roof, which can provide foraging opportunities for birds, and support a range of native plants. Thought should be given to the impact of lighting on wildlife, especially bats; areas of no or low level lighting along bat foraging routes should be considered'.

It also states that 'appropriate landscaping within developments can help reduce fragmentation of habitats by allowing wildlife to live within and move through built areas to the wider countryside. Landscaping should aim to retain and enhance existing biodiversity features'.

It encourages the use of native species, and consideration of using ponds and hedgerows in landscaping to link up areas supporting biodiversity.

4. Methods

This report has been produced with reference to current guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisals (CIEEM, 2017) and BS42020:2013: Biodiversity – Code of Practice for Planning and Development.

4.1 Data Search

Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre (SBIC) was contacted to provide a data search report for the site and land within 1 km of the site boundary (comprising information on protected species, species of conservation concern and statutory and non-statutory designated sites). The following published materials were also consulted:

- The Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (www.magic.gov.uk) (accessed 19th September 2022).
- Section 41: Priority Species in England (NERC Act, 2006) (www.jncc.defra.uk, accessed 19th September 2022).
- Surrey Heath Borough Council Core Strategy & Development Management Policies 2011-2028 (accessed 19th September 2022).

4.2 Field Survey

A field survey, using the UKHab system was undertaken of the site by Josh Brown BSc (Hons) on 8th September 2022. The weather conditions during the survey were rainy, 16°C, wind force 0, and 100% cloud cover. The site boundary is shown in Figure 1.

The field survey technique used is detailed in the UK Habitat Classification User Manual, Version 1.0. The UK Habitat Classification Working Group, May 2018. The principle aim of the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) system is to provide a rapid system for recording and classifying habitats, which can be used for both earth-based and field-based surveys. The system comprises a principal hierarchy (the Primary Habitats), which include ecosystems, broad habitats, Priority Habitats and Annex 1 habitats, and non-hierarchical Secondary Codes.

The UKHab 'Professional Edition' has been used, with the use of Level 5 Primary Habitats and Secondary Codes, as detailed in the UK Habitat Classification-V1 (May 2018) Excel workbook. Primary Habitats and Secondary Codes follow the UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions – V1.0 (May 2018). The Secondary Codes selected are appropriate to the site and habitats recorded. The Minimum Mapping Unit used is 25 m² and 5 m in length.

Where possible, prior to carrying out the field survey, habitats on site were identified using www.magic.gov.uk, Google Earth Pro, 2020 and previous surveys reports, if available. Pre-survey maps were compiled using QGIS 3.16 Hannover. Evidence of habitat management was also noted.

During the field survey, habitat types were recorded using QField on a tablet (Samsung Galaxy Tab S6). GIS symbology used is as recommended in the UK Habitat Classification symbology files for QGIS, presented as Level 4 Primary Habitat, with Level 5 labelled as a code.

4.3 Protected Species Assessment

As part of the PEA, the site was assessed for its potential to contain protected or notable species. The assessment was made based on the habitats present within the site and their suitability for protected species (information on the legislation of protected species can be found in Section 3 and Appendix 4). Protected species assessed for, but not limited to, were:

- Plants of conservation concern.
- Invertebrates of conservation concern.
- Great crested newts.
- Common toad.
- Reptiles.
- Breeding birds.
- Bats.
- Hazel dormice.
- Badgers.
- European hedgehog.
- Brown hare.
- Otters.
- Water voles.

In addition, a search was undertaken for evidence of non-native, invasive species.

4.4 Survey Limitations

The data search should not be taken as a definitive list of the protected species and species of conservation concern that occur within the search area.

The site was visited over the period of one day, as such seasonal variations cannot be observed and only a selection of all species that potentially occur within the site have been noted. Therefore, the survey provides a general assessment of potential nature conservation value.

The field survey was undertaken at the optimal time of year. There were no limitations to the survey in terms of the following:

- The site could be fully accessed.
- Weather conditions.
- Personal competence (qualifications, training, skills, and experience).
- Time spent surveying.

Multiple badger sett entrances were recorded on site. However, as some areas of the site comprise dense scrub, this vegetation could potentially conceal additional badger sett entrances. Further survey for badgers, as recommended in this report, should ensure that all areas of the site are searched for badger setts.

5. Baseline Ecological Conditions

5.1 Data Search

5.1.1 Designated Sites

The site is not located within or directly adjacent to a designated site for nature conservation and there are no statutory designated sites located within 1 km of the site. However, the Thames Basin Heaths SPA is located approximately 1.4 km to the southeast of the site, which is designated for supporting 1% or more of the Great British populations of the following species listed in Annex 1 in any season: nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*); 7.8%, woodlark (*Lullula arborea*); 9.9% and Dartford warbler (*Sylvia undata*); 27.8%. A further two parcels of land, which are jointly designated under the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SAC and Thames Basin Heaths SPA, are located 1.8 km to the north and 2.9 km to the west of the site respectively. There are also four non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation located within 1 km of the site.

Table 4 provides details on designated sites, which are present within 1 km of the site.

Table 4. Designated Sites within 1 km of the Site

Site Name and Designation	Central Grid Reference	Approximate Distance from Site (m)	Area (Ha) / Length (KM)	Description
Millbrook Meadows SNCI	SU975608	363	8.1	Semi-improved grassland, semi-natural woodland. Main interest of site is damp semi-improved grassland, a declining habitat in Surrey due to drainage and agricultural improvement, which supports a rare Surrey plant – Water Violet (<i>Hottonia palustris</i>). Grassland provides habitat for reptiles, invertebrates, small mammals, birds, and bats. Hobby (<i>Falco subbuteo</i>) is known to have bred on the site in the past.
Broadford Meadows by The Bourne SNCI	SU969614	504	10.5	The site is selected for its floodplain grazing marsh habitat with a diversity of plant species. 21 species typical of grassland of conservation interest in Surrey have been recorded on the site. In addition, a band of wet woodland straddles part of the Bourne Stream. The site is likely to be important for invertebrate populations and the birds, reptiles, and mammals they support. There are a number of mature oaks by the river and on the boundaries. The site's position is important falling within a network of similar sites along the Bourne.
Chobham Meadows South of the Mill Bourne SNCI	SU981618	647	8.5	Herb rich meadow. Species rich meadows are a rare resource within Surrey many having been lost to agricultural improvement and development.
Lovelands Farm Meadows SNCI	SU961607	927	8.9	The site is selected for its species rich rush dominated pasture. Twelve species typical of grassland of conservation interest in Surrey have been recorded on the site. The site's position is important falling within a network of similar sites along the Bourne.

5.1.2 Ancient Woodland

The site is not located within an area of ancient woodland or plantation on ancient woodland. There is one parcel of ancient woodland located within 1 km of the site, approximately 475 m to the northeast.

5.1.3 Priority Habitats

Six types of Priority Habitats are located within 1 km of the site, as detailed in Table 5.

Table 5. Priority Habitats within 1 km of the Site

Habitat Type	Approximate Number of Land Parcels	Nearest Land Parcel to Site (Approximate m)
Deciduous woodland	32	0 (on site)
Rivers/streams	1	60
Hedgerows	Unknown	157
Traditional orchards	2	286
Woodpasture and parkland	3	355
Pond	11	355

5.1.4 Protected Species and Species of Conservation Concern

Examples of protected species and species of conservation recorded in the data search from the previous 10 years, which could potentially occur on, or in the vicinity of the site are provided below. The data search report should be referred to for the full list of species, which occur within 1 km of the site.

- Brown long-eared bat.
- Common pipistrelle.
- Common toad (*Bufo bufo*).
- English bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*).
- Great crested newt.
- *Myotis* sp.
- Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*).
- Palmate newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*).
- Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*).
- Smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*).
- Soprano pipistrelle.
- Stag beetle.
- West European hedgehog.

The following invasive species have been recorded within 1 km of the site:

- Eastern grey squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*).
- Few-flowered garlic (*Allium paradoxum*).
- Giant rhubarb (*Gunnera tinctoria*).
- Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*).
- Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*).
- Montbretia (*Crocasmia pottsii x aurea = C. x crocosmiiflora*).
- Parrot's-feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*).
- Variegated yellow archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon subsp. argentatum*).

5.2 Field Survey – Habitats

The results of the field survey undertaken on 8th September 2022 are presented in map form on Figure 1 and described in Table 6. Priority Habitats are in bold, where applicable. Photographs of the site are provided in Appendix 1 and a full list of species, with scientific names, is provided in Appendix 2. The following habitats (Level 5 Primary Habitat labels and codes, where applicable) were recorded on site:

- Other neutral grassland – g3c.
- Other lowland mixed deciduous woodland – w1f7.
- Line of trees – w1g6.
- Bramble scrub – h3d.
- Mixed scrub – h3h.
- Developed land; sealed surface – u1b.

Table 6. Results of Field Survey – Habitats

Primary Habitat Level 4 Label and Code	Primary Habitat Level 5 Label and Code	Approximate Area (ha) / Length (m)	Location in Site	Main Common Plant Species	Rare/Scarce or Protected Plant Species	Secondary Code – Habitat Mosaic	Secondary Code – Origin	Secondary Code – Management	Secondary Code – Environmental Qualifier	Secondary Code – Species Feature	Secondary Code – Green Infrastructure	Signs of and Potential for Protected Species
Other neutral grassland – g3c	N/A	0.67 ha	Other neutral grassland on site comprises a previously grazed area to the west of the hard standing access track which is species-poor. Further areas of other neutral grassland to the east of the hard standing track comprise a more unmanaged,	Annual meadow-grass, broad-leaved dock, common nettle, creeping cinquefoil, selfheal, silverweed, soft rush, false oat-grass	None recorded	Scattered scrub (10) Scattered trees (11) Scattered rushes (14) Tall herb (16)	N/A	Grazed (58) Fence (69) Bare ground (73) Neglected (77)	Wet (120)	Sward type mosaic (160)	N/A	Potential for reptiles, amphibians, and European hedgehogs Badger snuffle holes and guard hairs were recorded at target notes 2 and 3 on Figure 1 respectively. A log pile with potential for reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates was recorded at target note 4 on Figure 1.

Primary Habitat Level 4 Label and Code	Primary Habitat Level 5 Label and Code	Approximate Area (ha) / Length (m)	Location in Site	Main Common Plant Species	Rare/Scarce or Protected Plant Species	Secondary Code – Habitat Mosaic	Secondary Code – Origin	Secondary Code – Management	Secondary Code – Environmental Qualifier	Secondary Code – Species Feature	Secondary Code – Green Infrastructure	Signs of and Potential for Protected Species
			neglected sward with an abundance of scattered scrub and tall ruderal vegetation encroaching across the site. There are also damper areas of grassland where rushes are present and areas of bare ground beneath the line of trees along the southern site boundary.									
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland – w1f	Other lowland mixed deciduous woodland – w1f7	0.41 ha	Comprises small, scattered parcels of woodland mainly along the northern site boundary with a good mixture of native deciduous trees on loamy soils. The woodland lacks an established understorey and diverse ground layer. A dry ditch runs along the northern site boundary adjacent to the woodland.	Canopy: ash, English oak, Scot's pine, sycamore Understorey: English elm, hawthorn, hazel, holly, willow Ground layer: bracken, bramble	None recorded	Scattered scrub (10)	Secondary woodland (38)	Fence (69)	Wet (120)	N/A	N/A	Potential for nesting birds, roosting/ foraging/commuting bats, reptiles, amphibians, and European hedgehogs Multiple badger sett entrances were recorded on site. Three ivy-clad trees with low potential for roosting bats were recorded at target note 1 on Figure 1.
Other woodland;	Line of trees – w1g6	0.11 km	A single line of native trees is located along the	English oak	None recorded	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Potential for nesting birds,

Primary Habitat Level 4 Label and Code	Primary Habitat Level 5 Label and Code	Approximate Area (ha) / Length (m)	Location in Site	Main Common Plant Species	Rare/Scarce or Protected Plant Species	Secondary Code – Habitat Mosaic	Secondary Code – Origin	Secondary Code – Management	Secondary Code – Environmental Qualifier	Secondary Code – Species Feature	Secondary Code – Green Infrastructure	Signs of and Potential for Protected Species
broadleaved – w1g			southern boundary of the site where it abuts the Chobham wastewater treatment works									foraging/commuting bats
Bramble scrub – h3d	N/A	0.18 ha	Sections of dense bramble scrub are located adjacent to the grazed grassland in the northwest corner of the site and also within the unmanaged areas to the east of the hard standing track. Himalayan balsam was recorded at target note 5 on Figure 1.	Bramble, bracken	None recorded	Tall herb (16)	N/A	Neglected (77)	N/A	N/A	N/A	Potential for nesting birds, foraging/commuting bats, reptiles, amphibians, and European hedgehogs
Mixed scrub – h3h	N/A	0.32 ha	Mixed dense bramble scrub is located on the western site boundary where the woodland edge is encroaching onto the grassland. Large areas of mixed scrub are also located in the centre of the site including a large suckering aspen tree.	Bramble, blackthorn, dog-rose, elder, hawthorn, hazel, willow	None recorded	Scattered trees (11) Scattered rushes (14) Tall herb (16)	N/A	Young trees – self-set (57) Neglected (77)	Wet (120)	N/A	N/A	Potential for nesting birds, foraging/commuting bats, reptiles, amphibians, and European hedgehogs
Developed land; sealed surface – u1b	N/A	0.05 ha	A narrow hard standing track intersects the site from the northern boundary to the southern boundary.	N/A	None recorded	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	None recorded

5.3 Field Survey – Species

The following fauna was recorded during the survey:

Birds:

- Barn swallow.
- Blackbird.
- Blackcap.
- Blue tit.
- Carrion crow.
- Chiffchaff.
- Great-spotted woodpecker.
- Great tit.
- Jackdaw.
- Long-tailed tit.
- Magpie.
- Nuthatch.
- Ring-necked parakeet.
- Robin.
- Woodpigeon.

6. Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Assessment

Table 7 sets out known and potential ecological constraints to development, derived from the data search and field survey, including designated sites, ancient woodland, Priority Habitats, and protected species/species of conservation concern. Where a potential ecological constraint has been identified, further survey work and/or appropriate avoidance, mitigation, and compensation (as appropriate) is likely to be required to address the issue. **Further survey and/or mitigation measures are required for the valued ecological receptors highlighted in blue.**

Table 7. Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Assessment

Valued Ecological Receptor	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
Designated Sites	Thames Basin Heaths SPA located approximately 1.4 km from the site & Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SAC located approximately 1.8 km from the site	<p>The site is not located within or directly adjacent to a designated site for nature conservation and there are no statutory designated sites located within 1 km of the site. However, the Thames Basin Heaths SPA is located approximately 1.4 km to the southeast of the site. A further two parcels of land, which are jointly designated under the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SAC and Thames Basin Heaths SPA, are located 1.8 km to the north and 2.9 km to the west of the site respectively.</p> <p>In the absence of avoidance and mitigation measures, construction and development operation activities could result in adverse ecological effects on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SAC, which has, therefore, been addressed in Section 7.1.</p> <p>There are also four non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation located within 1 km of the site.</p> <p>The development should not result in significant adverse impacts on non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation for the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed development site is separated from the nearest locally designated site by 363 m of existing residential development and woodland. • The proposed development will be confined to the site and impacts will be confined to habitats within the site. • The proposed development will comply with legislation relevant to reducing the impacts of construction, namely the Control of Pollution Act, 1974, the Environmental Protection Act, 1990, The Clean Air Act, 1993, The Environment Act, 1995 and the Pollution Prevention and Control Act, 1999.

Valued Ecological Receptor	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed development will conform to British Standards on noise and vibration (BS 5228-2009. Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites). <p>For the above reasons, locally designated sites for nature conservation should not be impacted upon by the development and further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and non-statutory designated sites.</p>
Priority Habitats	Present on site	The site comprises other lowland mixed deciduous woodland, which is a Priority Habitat. Further areas of deciduous woodland are located directly adjacent to the site. Providing the measures recommended in Section 7.2 are strictly adhered to, it should be possible to avoid significant adverse ecological effects on Priority Habitats.
Ancient woodland	None present on site	The site is not located within an area of ancient woodland or plantation on ancient woodland. There is one parcel of ancient woodland located within 1 km of the site, approximately 475 m to the northeast. For the same reasons given for locally designated sites, further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and ancient woodland.
Trees	Present on site	Mature native trees are located on site. In the absence of avoidance and mitigation measures, construction and development operation activities could result in significant adverse effects on trees. Recommendations for avoidance and mitigation measures relating to trees have, therefore, been provided (see Section 7.3).
Plants of conservation concern	Negligible potential	Protected or notable rare plant species were not noted during the survey. The habitats on site are very unlikely to support plants of conservation concern. Therefore, further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and plants of conservation concern. However, there are opportunities for biodiversity enhancements on site, including the creation of habitats, which could support a higher diversity of plant species (see Section 9).
Invasive plant species such as rhododendron, Japanese knotweed (<i>Reynoutria japonica</i>) and giant hogweed (<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>)	Present on site	Himalayan balsam (see target note 5 on Figure 1) was recorded on site, which is listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). As it is an offence to cause invasive species to spread in the wild, recommendations to eradicate and dispose of Himalayan balsam have been provided in Section 7.4.
Invertebrates of conservation concern	Potential for stag beetles	The woodland and scrub habitats on site have potential to support the stag beetle, which is a Priority Species. The stag beetle was also recorded in the data search. Therefore, avoidance measures relating to stag beetles have been provided in Section 7.5.

Valued Ecological Receptor	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
Great crested newts	Low potential	<p>Ponds are absent from the site but eleven are located within 1 km of the site, the closest being approximately 355 m west of the site. One EPSL has been granted for the damage and destruction of a great crested newt resting place, located approximately 430 m to the north-east of the site. The great crested newt as well as the smooth newt and palmate newt were recorded in the data search.</p> <p>However, further survey for great crested newts is not considered necessary as there are no ponds on site and great crested newts are more likely to favour habitats adjacent to the ponds in the wider landscape. Therefore, it is considered appropriate to take a precautionary approach to ensure great crested newts are not harmed during the works, in the unlikely event that they are encountered (see recommendations in Section 7.6).</p> <p>There are opportunities for biodiversity enhancements on site, including the incorporation of features for great crested newts (see Section 9).</p>
Common toads	Low potential	<p>For the same reasons given for great crested newts, it is considered possible that common toads are present within the site. Recommendations for avoidance and mitigation measures relating to common toads have, therefore, been provided (see Section 7.6).</p>
Reptiles (such as slow worms- <i>Anguis fragilis</i> , common lizards - <i>Zootoca vivipara</i> , and grass snakes- <i>Natrix helvetica</i>)	Potentially present	<p>The woodland and scrub habitats on site as well as the log pile (recorded at target note 4 on Figure 1) could support common species of reptiles. As reptiles are protected against killing and injury, and could be impacted on by the development proposals, further survey for reptiles is required (see Section 8.1).</p>
Nesting birds	Potentially present	<p>The site comprises woodland and scrub, which could support common species of nesting birds. As nesting birds are protected, recommendations to avoid disturbing nesting birds are provided in Section 7.7.</p>
Birds of conservation concern (such as barn owl – <i>Tyto alba</i> , peregrine falcon – <i>Falco peregrinus</i> and black redstart – <i>Phoenicurus ochruros</i>)	Potentially present	<p>Birds of conservation concern could potentially breed on site. Avoidance measures for breeding birds are provided in Section 7.7, which also relate to birds of conservation concern.</p>
Bats	Woodland and scrub habitats on site could support roosting, foraging and commuting bats	<p>There are no buildings on site with potential to support roosting bats. Three trees have been assessed as having low potential to support roosting bats (see target note 1 on Figure 1). Further survey for trees with low potential to support roosting bats is not required (Collins, 2016).</p> <p>The woodland and scrub habitats on site have high potential to support foraging/commuting bats and at least six species of bat were recorded in the data search. As the development proposals could impact on suitable foraging/commuting habitats for bats, a sensitive lighting plan has been recommended in Section 7.8 and further survey for foraging and commuting bats is recommended in Section 8.2.</p>

Valued Ecological Receptor	Potentially Present / Known to be Present on Site	Assessment and Justification for Potential/Likely Impacts of Development on Value Ecological Receptor
		There are opportunities for biodiversity enhancements on site, including the incorporation of features for bats (see Section 9).
Badger	Active setts on site	Badger setts and evidence of badger foraging was recorded on site. Further information on the status of the setts is required, to help inform the proposals and determine whether a licence from Natural England will be required. For these reasons, further survey for badgers has been recommended in Section 8.3.
Hazel dormouse	Low potential	The woodland and scrub habitats on site have low potential to support hazel dormice, mainly for foraging and commuting. However, further survey for dormice is considered inappropriate in this case as the woodland on site lacks an established understorey and diverse age structure, which reduces its suitability for hazel dormice. The hazel dormouse was also not recorded in the data search and no EPSL's have been granted for dormice within 2 km of the site. Measures to protect the site, as given in Section 7.2, will also help protect potential hazel dormice habitats on site. Therefore, further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and hazel dormice.
Brown hare	Negligible potential	The site does not contain any habitats, which could support the brown hare, i.e., agricultural fields and open pasture. Therefore, the brown hare is considered to be absent from the site, and further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and brown hares.
Water vole and European otter	Negligible potential	The site does not contain any habitats, which could support the water vole and European otter, i.e., rivers and streams. Therefore, the water vole and European otter are considered to be absent from the site, and further survey and avoidance/mitigation measures are not required in relation to the proposed development and water voles and European otters.
European hedgehog	Potentially present	The woodland and scrub habitats on site could support the European hedgehog, which is a Priority Species. The European hedgehog was also recorded in the data search. As the European hedgehog could be present in areas of the site, which would be impacted on by the proposals, avoidance measures for European hedgehogs have been recommended in Section 7.5, in accordance with the duty placed on Local Planning Authorities to have due regard for biodiversity.

7. Recommendations for Avoidance and Mitigation

7.1 Designated Sites

The site is not located within or directly adjacent to a designated site for nature conservation and there are no statutory designated sites located within 1 km of the site. However, the Thames Basin Heaths SPA is located approximately 1.4 km to the southeast of the site. A further two parcels of land, which are jointly designated under the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham SAC and Thames Basin Heaths SPA, are located 1.8 km to the north and 2.9 km to the west of the site respectively. This is outside of the 400 m buffer zone where no new residential development is permitted, but within 5 km. Housing developments, where there is a net gain of one or more houses, within 5 km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA are required to contribute towards avoidance measures (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace, SANG and Strategic Access Management and Monitoring, SAMM), to offset the likely significant effects on the SPA. For developments of fewer than 100 new dwellings, it should be possible to use Council-provided SANGs, subject to availability.

7.2 Priority Habitats

Other lowland mixed deciduous woodland, which is a Priority Habitat, is located on site and directly adjacent to the site. The following avoidance and mitigation measures relating to Priority Habitats are strongly recommended. These recommendations should be adhered to following the conclusion of further surveys for protected species as outlined in Section 8 of this report.

- Woodland on site should be retained, protected, and enhanced. Any woodland lost should be replaced (offsite) with like-for-like or better habitat. This should be informed by a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment.
- Where removal of trees is required to facilitate the new traveller pitches, areas of the site that comprise poorer quality woodland should be selected. For example, woodland comprising a sparse cover of young growth trees, which lack an established understorey and diverse ground layer, should be favoured. Areas of the site which comprise grazed, other neutral grassland should be favoured for siting of the traveller pitches over areas of woodland or dense scrub.
- Buffer zones should be implemented between the location of the traveller pitches and retained areas of woodland. There should be no direct access from the development into the woodland. The buffer should only be accessed for maintenance and materials/waste should not be stored in or near the buffer.
- Retained areas of woodland should be enhanced by planting native trees, shrubs, and bulbs, of local provenance and suited to the geology of the site.
- The proposals should not include planting of ornamental or otherwise non-native tree, shrub, and ground flora species.
- All brash and log piles should be retained and protected. All fallen and standing deadwood should be retained and protected.
- A sensitive lighting plan should be adopted, to ensure that outside lighting does not adversely affect adjacent habitats and wildlife, particularly bats when foraging and commuting (see Section 7.8).

7.3 Trees

Native trees and scrub should be retained, and any trees lost as a result of the proposed development, should be replaced with equivalent numbers of native species.

To prevent damage to retained trees during development, a buffer zone should be put in place to protect the rooting area (Root Protection Area, which is calculated in accordance with British Standard 5837, 'Trees in Relation to Construction'), in which no construction activities should be permitted.

7.4 Invasive Plants

Himalayan balsam (see target note 5 on Figure 1) was recorded on site. When this species escapes into the wild, it can be detrimental to native habitats as it out-competes native plants that are beneficial for wildlife. Eradication of this species, prior to site clearance is required in order to avoid committing an offence. Further information on how to prevent Himalayan balsam from spreading and how to dispose of it, can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-the-spread-of-harmful-invasive-and-non-native-plants#types-of-invasive-non-native-plants>.

7.5 Stag Beetles and European Hedgehogs

An Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) should be present on site during any site clearance activities, which are likely to involve the removal/disturbance of any vegetation, particularly the scrub and any brash/log piles on site. Any stag beetles or European hedgehogs found, should be allowed to move away into adjacent habitats unharmed, of their own accord.

7.6 Amphibians

As a precautionary approach to ensure great crested newts, common toads and other amphibians are not harmed during the proposed works, it is recommended that a fingertip search of the works area is carried out by a great crested newt licenced ecologist immediately prior to the commencement of the works, to search for great crested newts and other amphibians. An ECoW should be present on site during any site clearance activities, which are likely to involve the removal/disturbance of any vegetation, as well as the removal of any log piles.

If a great crested newt is found during the search, works would need to cease immediately and an EPSL for great crested newts should be obtained from Natural England before works continue.

7.7 Nesting Birds

If works which are likely to damage bird nests need to be carried out during the nesting period, there is potential that nesting birds could be harmed and disturbed. To ensure legal compliance, a check should be undertaken by an ecologist within 48 hours of works commencing, to confirm the presence/absence of nest sites. If nests sites are identified, works to that feature should be delayed until the nest site becomes inactive (species specific, but approximately 4-6 weeks maximum).

7.8 Bats

Recommendations to minimise the potential impacts of artificial external lighting on bat activity, are provided below (Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, 2006: Institute of Lighting Engineers, 2007 and Bat Conservation Trust, 2018):

- Avoid prolonged use of outside lighting during the period dusk to dawn, particularly during the bat active season (April to September).

- Security lighting should be avoided or be on a motion sensor and short duration timer (1 minute).
- Lighting that is required for security or safety reasons, should use a lamp of no greater than 2000 lumens (150 Watts) and should comprise sensor activated lamps.
- LED luminaires with a warm white spectrum (<2700 Kelvin) are the preferred option and should be used where possible. Luminaires should feature peak wavelengths higher than 550 nm to minimise disturbance to bats. All luminaires should lack UV elements, metal halide and fluorescent sources should not be used.
- Lighting should be directed to where it is needed with minimal light spillage. This can be achieved by limiting the height of the lighting columns and by using as steep a downward angle as possible and/or a specialist bollard that directs the light below the horizontal plane.
- Artificial lighting should not directly illuminate any potential bat roosting features or habitats of value to foraging bats, i.e., woodland, and trees.

The trees identified to have low potential to support roosting bats (target note 1, Figure 1) should be retained and protected.

8. Recommendations for Further Ecological Surveys

8.1 Reptiles

The woodland, grassland margins, and scrub habitats, as well as the log pile (recorded at target note 4 on Figure 1), could support common species of reptiles. Further survey for reptiles is recommended to determine whether the development will impact on reptiles. It is recommended that a reptile presence/absence survey is undertaken, in accordance with best practice guidelines (Froglife, 1999), using artificial refugia such as roofing felt or corrugated tin. The survey should comprise a minimum of seven visits during optimal weather conditions, during April to June or September.

8.2 Bats

Seven bat transects of the site should be undertaken, and the deployment of two static bat detectors on at least seven separate occasions for five consecutive nights. The bat activity surveys should focus on the woodland edge habitats, where bat activity is likely to be high. The bat activity surveys, and deployment of static bat detectors should be undertaken during April to October, with one visit per month.

8.3 Badgers

Further survey is recommended during February to April (the active badger season) to determine the level of use of the active badger setts, using hair and sand traps, to be checked every two to three days over a period of at least one month. A further search of the site for sett entrances and signs should be carried out, to ensure all setts and signs have been recorded.

9. Biodiversity Enhancements

Below are a set of measures, which should be implemented to enhance biodiversity on site. These suggestions take into account current planning policy and guidance, as detailed in Section 3.2 of this report. These measures are in addition to avoidance and mitigation measures, as detailed in Section 7.

- The enhancement of retained woodland on site by planting native trees, shrubs, and bulbs.
- The enhancement of retained other neutral grassland.
- The installation of log piles along site boundaries, to provide habitat for invertebrates and reptiles.
- Garden spaces should include a wildflower mix suitable for the geology of the site, is available from www.wildseed.co.uk.
- The installation of Schwegler 2F Boxes (or similar) on trees and buildings, would be beneficial to common and widespread bat species that are likely to be present on site (www.arkwildlife.co.uk).
- The installation of RSPB Robin and Wren Diamond Nest boxes and Apex Open-Front Nest boxes on buildings and trees would be beneficial to garden bird species. These nest boxes can be purchased from www.rspb.co.uk.
- The installation of 2GR Schwegler nest boxes on trees, would be beneficial to garden bird species and birds of conservation concern known to occur in the locality. These nest boxes can be purchased from www.nhbs.com.
- The installation of a Royal Hedgehog House, which can be purchased from www.arkwildlife.co.uk.
- The installation of a hibernacula for invertebrates, such as the Bug Box 2000, which can be purchased from www.arkwildlife.co.uk.
- The installation of a wildlife pond would be of benefit to a range of wildlife including the amphibians recorded in the data search.

These recommendations, including measures to protect and enhance Priority Habitats on site, should be included in a Biodiversity Management and Maintenance Scheme.

A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment should be carried out for the site.

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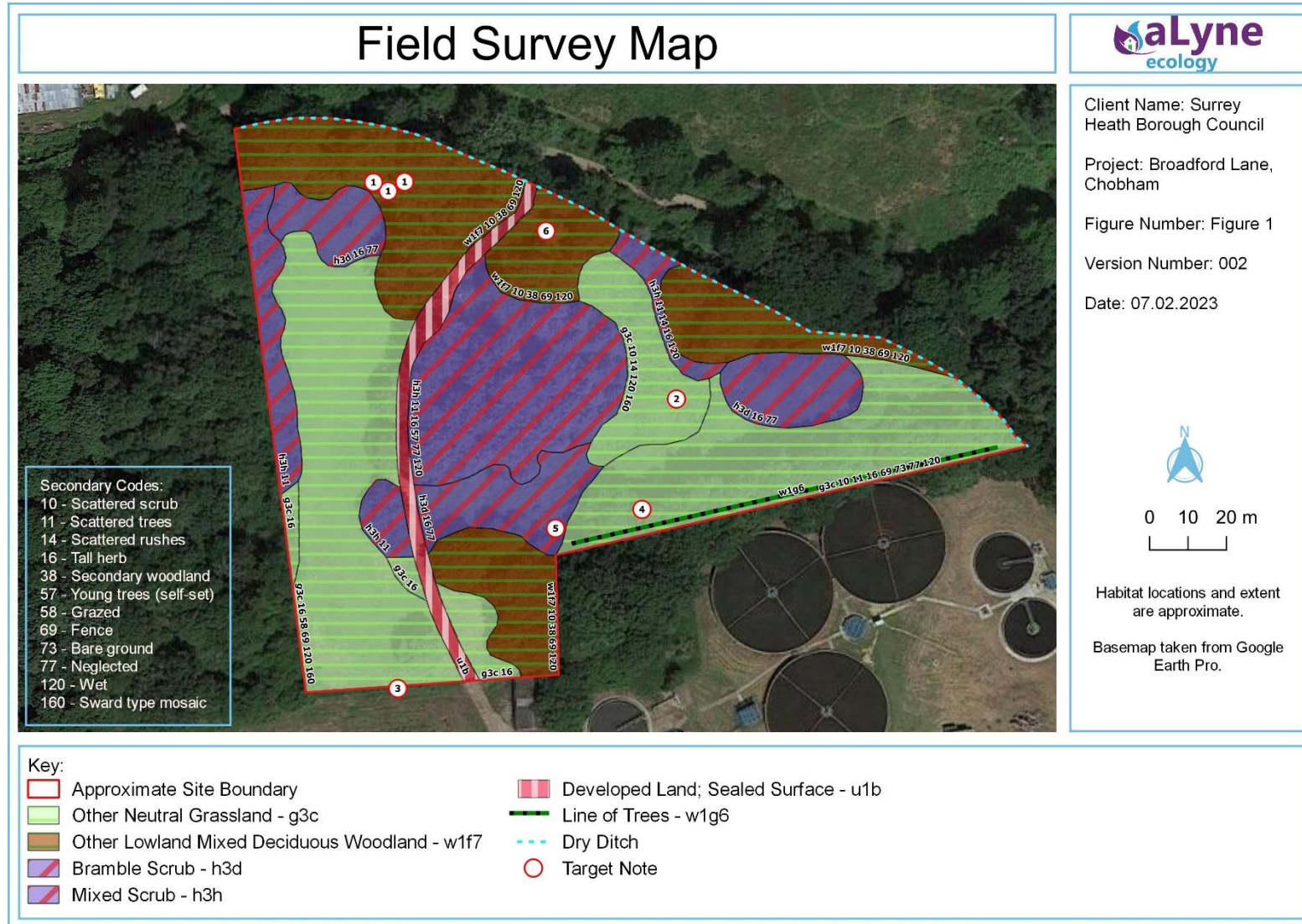
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11. Figure 1 – Results of Field Survey



12. Appendix 1 – Site Photographs



Photograph 1 — Gated entrance located on the northern site boundary and to the south of Broadford Lane.



Photograph 2 — Small parcel of woodland located in the north-western corner of the site



Photograph 3 — Himalayan balsam recorded at target note 5 on Figure 1.



Photograph 4 — Area of grazed, other neutral grassland and encroaching dense scrub, located adjacent to the western site boundary.



Photograph 5 — Area of dense bramble/mixed scrub located in the centre of the site.



Photograph 6 — Eastern half of the site comprising a line of native trees adjacent to Chobham wastewater treatment works and areas of unmanaged other neutral grassland, tall herb and scattered/dense scrub vegetation.



Photograph 7 — Three ivy clad trees with low potential to support roosting bats (see target note 1 on Figure 1).

13. Appendix 2 – Full Species List and Target Notes

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name
Other Neutral Grassland – g3c	Agrimony Annual meadow-grass Bird's-foot trefoil Bramble Bristly oxtongue Broad-leaved dock Common dandelion Common nettle Creeping buttercup Creeping cinquefoil Creeping thistle False oat-grass Greater burdock Ground-ivy Lesser stitchwort Perennial rye-grass Ragwort Red campion Ribwort plantain Selfheal Silverweed Spear thistle Soft rush Teasel White clover Wood avens Yorkshire-fog	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i> <i>Poa annua</i> <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. <i>Helminthotheca echioides</i> <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> <i>Taraxacum officinalis</i> <i>Urtica dioica</i> <i>Ranunculus repens</i> <i>Potentilla reptans</i> <i>Cirsium arvense</i> <i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i> <i>Arctium lappa</i> <i>Glechoma hederacea</i> <i>Stellaria graminea</i> <i>Lolium perenne</i> <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i> <i>Silene dioica</i> <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> <i>Prunella vulgaris</i> <i>Potentilla anserina</i> <i>Cirsium vulgare</i> <i>Juncus effusus</i> <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i> <i>Trifolium repens</i> <i>Geum urbanum</i> <i>Holcus lanatus</i>
Other Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland – w1f7	Ash Broadleaved dock Bracken Bramble Common nettle English elm English oak Goat willow Hawthorn Hazel Holly Ivy Scot's pine Sycamore Wood avens	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> <i>Rumex obtusifolius</i> <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. <i>Urtica dioica</i> <i>Ulmus procera</i> <i>Quercus robur</i> <i>Salix caprea</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> <i>Corylus avellana</i> <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> <i>Hedera helix</i> <i>Pinus sylvestris</i> <i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i> <i>Geum urbanum</i>
Line of Trees – w1g6	English oak Hawthorn	<i>Quercus robur</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Bramble Scrub – h3d	Bracken Bramble Common nettle	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. <i>Urtica dioica</i>
Mixed Scrub – h3h	Aspen Blackthorn Bramble Common nettle Dog-rose Elder Hawthorn Hazel	<i>Populus tremula</i> <i>Prunus spinosa</i> <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. <i>Urtica dioica</i> <i>Rosa canina</i> <i>Sambucus nigra</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> <i>Corylus avellana</i>

Habitats	Common Name	Species Name
	Hedge bindweed Himalayan balsam Willow	<i>Calystegia sepium</i> <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i> <i>Salix</i> sp.
Birds	Barn swallow Blackbird Blackcap Blue tit Carrion crow Chiffchaff Great-spotted woodpecker Great tit Jackdaw Long-tailed tit Magpie Nuthatch Ring-necked parakeet Robin Woodpigeon	<i>Hirundo rustica</i> <i>Turdus merula</i> <i>Sylvia atricapilla</i> <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i> <i>Corvus Corone</i> <i>Phylloscopus collybita</i> <i>Dendrocopus major</i> <i>Parus major</i> <i>Corvus monedula</i> <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i> <i>Pica pica</i> <i>Sitta europaea</i> <i>Psittacula krameri</i> <i>Erithacus rubecula</i> <i>Columba palumbus</i>

Target Note	Notes
1	Tree with low potential for roosting bats
2	Badger snuffle hole
3	Badger guard hair caught on fencing
4	Log pile
5	Himalayan balsam
6	Standing deadwood

14. Appendix 3 – Legislation and Planning Policy

14.1 Habitats Directive, EC Council Directive 92/43/EEC

The following information has been taken from ec.europa.eu.

Natura 2000 is a network of sites selected to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. How a site is chosen depends on what it aims to protect.

Under the Habitats Directive (Art. 3 and 4), Member States designate Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to ensure the favourable conservation status of each habitat type and species throughout their range in the EU. Under the Birds Directive (Art. 4), the network must include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated for 194 particularly threatened species and all migratory bird species.

Member States designate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) according to scientific criteria such as '1% of the population of listed vulnerable species' or 'wetlands of international importance for migratory waterfowl'.

The choice of sites is based on scientific criteria specified in the directive, to ensure that the natural habitat types listed in the directive's Annex I and the habitats of the species listed in its Annex II are maintained or, where appropriate, restored to a favourable conservation status in their natural range.

14.2 The Birds Directive 2009/147/EC

The following information has been taken from ec.europa.eu.

The Birds Directive aims to protect all of the 500 wild bird species naturally occurring in the European Union. The 500 wild bird species naturally occurring in the European Union are protected in various ways:

- **Annex 1:** 194 species and sub-species are particularly threatened. Member States must designate Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for their survival and all migratory bird species.
- **Annex 2:** 82 bird species can be hunted. However, the hunting periods are limited, and hunting is forbidden when birds are at their most vulnerable: during their return migration to nesting areas, reproduction, and the raising of their chicks.
- **Annex 3:** overall, activities that directly threaten birds, such as their deliberate killing, capture or trade, or the destruction of their nests, are banned. With certain restrictions, Member States can allow some of these activities for 26 species listed here.
- **Annex 4:** the directive provides for the sustainable management of hunting, but Member States must outlaw all forms of non-selective and large scale killing of birds, especially the methods listed in this annex.
- **Annex 5:** the directive promotes research to underpin the protection, management, and use of all species of birds covered by the Directive, which are listed in this annex.

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

Under these Regulations, the UK Government and Devolved Administrations are required to establish a network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the habitats and species identified in Annexes I and II, respectively, of European Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora, known as the Habitats Directive. The listed habitat types and species are those considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds). Of the Annex I habitat types, 78 are believed to

occur in the UK. Of the Annex II species, 43 are native to, and normally resident in, the UK (www.jncc.gov.uk). Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), together with Special Protection Areas (SPAs), are the UK's contribution to the Bern Convention's Emerald Network of protected areas, known as Areas of Special Conservation Interest (ASCIs).

14.4 The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act

Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, 1949 provides discretionary powers to enable local authorities to establish and manage Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019 Regulations, these powers have been extended from preserving flora and fauna to include enabling or facilitating its recovery or increase.

14.5 The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (As Amended)

The following information was taken from www.jncc.gov.uk and www.ukwildlife.com.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) is the primary national legislation, which protected animals, plants, and habitats in the UK. The act contains four parts and 17 schedules, which cover:

- Part 1: Wildlife (includes protection of birds, animals, and plants; and measures to prevent the establishment of non-native species which may be detrimental to native wildlife).
- Part 2: Nature conservation, the countryside, and National Parks (including the designation of protected areas).
- Part 3: Public rights of way.
- Part 4: Miscellaneous provisions of the act.

All naturally occurring wild birds in Great Britain are protected from persecution. It is illegal to kill, injure or 'take' any wild bird, take, or damage the nest of any wild bird whilst in use or being built. The eggs of all wild birds are also protected. If you have in your possession any live wild birds, egg(s), or any part of a wild bird you are committing an offence. The birds listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are further protected by Special Penalties all year round for those in Part 1 and during a specified closed season for those listed in Part 2.

Schedule 5 lists Animals Species that are protected under Section 9. Section 9 prohibits the intentional killing, injuring, or taking of the species listed in Schedule 5 and also prohibits their possession and the trade in the wild animals listed. The species listed are also further protected from disturbance by prohibiting actions that affect places they use for shelter.

Animals listed in Schedule 6 are protected from being killed or taken by certain methods under Section 11(1) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The methods listed are self-locking snares, bows, crossbows, explosives (other than ammunition for a firearm), or live decoys. The species listed are also protected from the following activities: trap, snare or net, electrical device for killing or stunning, poisonous, poisoned, or stupefying substances or any other gas or smoke, automatic or semi-automatic weapon, device for illuminating a target or sighting device for night shooting, artificial light, mirror or other dazzling device, sound recording, and mechanically propelled vehicle in immediate pursuit.

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the country nature conservation bodies have a duty to notify any area of land which in their opinion is 'of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features' – these areas are known as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

14.6 Countryside & Rights of Way Act, 2000

The CRoW Act gives a public right of access to land mapped as 'open country' (mountain, moor, heath and down) or registered common land. The protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) is strengthened in this legislation. The CRoW Act also allows for the prosecution of third parties that damage or destroy a SSSI.

14.7 Hedgerow Regulations 1997

These regulations fall under the local authority and are intended to protect important hedgerows from removal. Owners and managers must request permission from their local authority before removing a hedgerow, and permission may not be granted if it supports a diverse range or protected species.

14.8 The Protection of Badgers Act, 1992

Badgers are fully protected in the UK by the Protection of Badgers Act, 1992 and by Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence (amongst other things) to:

- Wilfully kill, injure, take, possess, or cruelly treat a badger.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett.
- Disturb a badger while it is occupying a sett.

14.9 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006

The site comprises deciduous woodland, which is a Priority Habitat. Priority Habitats are listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, 2006. Section 40 (1) of the NERC Act, 2006 imposes a duty to conserve biodiversity:

- *“Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity.”*

Section 40(3) of the Act explains that:

- *“Conserving biodiversity includes, in relation to a living organism or type of habitat, restoring or enhancing a population or habitat”.*

The duty applies to all local authorities and extends beyond just conserving what is already there to carrying out, supporting, and requiring actions that may also restore or enhance biodiversity.

14.10 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Section 15 of the NPPF (paragraphs 174 to 182) considers the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment including habitats and biodiversity (paragraphs 179-182) Paragraph 174 states that planning 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; and
- Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures”

Paragraph 175 states that plans should distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

Paragraph 179 states that in order to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, 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 biodiversity; 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.”

When determining planning applications, Paragraph 1780 states that local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by applying 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.”

As stated in paragraph 181 the following 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 182 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the planned project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitat site (alone or in combination with other plans or projects) unless an appropriate assessment has concluded the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

14.11 Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) Circular 06/2005

ODPM Circular 06/05 provides guidance on applying legislation in relation to nature conservation and planning in England. Part I considers the legal protection and conservation of internationally designated sites (namely candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs), SACs, potential Special Protection Areas (pSPAs), SPAs and Ramsar sites) and Part II considers the legal protection and conservation of nationally designated sites, namely Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

Part III considers the protection of habitats and species outside of designated areas (particularly UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats, which it states are capable of being a material consideration in the preparation of local development documents and the making of planning decisions.

Part IV considers species protected by law and states that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration in the consideration of a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat and 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.

14.12 Water Framework Directive

The Water Framework Directive (Directive 2000/60/EC) became law in England and Wales in 2003 via the Water Environment (WFD) (England and Wales) Regulations. The Water Framework Directive has four main goals: (1) to prevent deterioration in water status, (2) all water bodies achieve good ecological status, good chemical status, and good groundwater status (or potential), (3) reduce and eliminate sources of pollution and (4) contribute to achieving objectives of sites protected by other EU legislation.

14.13 Bern Convention

The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (the Bern Convention) was ratified by the UK Government in 1982. The principal aims of the Convention are to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats (listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention), to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species) listed in Appendix III. To this end, the Convention imposes legal obligations on contracting parties, protecting over 500 wild plant species and more than 1,000 wild animal species.

14.14 Wild Mammals (Protection) Act, 1996

The Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996, makes provision for the protection of wild mammals from certain cruel acts by stating that any person who mutilates, kicks, beats, nails or otherwise impales, stabs, burns, stones, crushes, drowns, drags or asphyxiates any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering shall be guilty of an offence.

15. Appendix 4 – List of Abbreviations

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
CSZ	Core Sustenance Zone
CWS	County Wildlife Site
EcIA	Ecological Impact Assessment
EPSL	European Protected Species Licence
GCN	Great Crested Newt
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Importance
SPA	Special Protection Area
UKHab	UK Habitat Classification System