

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

Glendale House, Coopers Lane, Aldington, TN25 7HH

Prepared by Fellgrove for: Redec Limited
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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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This report is valid for two years from the date of the survey visit. Should works be delayed to later than one year after the survey then a further update survey of the site would be required as habitats change over time, along with their potential to support protected species. Planning policy and legislation may affect the timing of works and operations described in this report.

It is accepted that this is a working document and may need to be updated with more detailed information added throughout the planning and development process. The interpretations and recommendations contained within this report represent our professional opinion in addition to using accepted industry practice based on current legislation. Fellgrove accept no responsibility for any use of this document outside that of which it is intended.

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DETAILED EVIDENCE MAY BE GIVEN THROUGHOUT THIS REPORT PERTAINING TO THE LOCATIONS OF PROTECTED SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS IS KEPT CONFIDENTIAL AND SHOULD BE REDACTED PRIOR TO PUBLIC CIRCULATION.

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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 A preliminary ecological appraisal (“PEA”) has been undertaken at Glendale House, Aldington, Ashford, Kent, TN25 7HH, as referred “the Site”.
- 1.2 The survey was undertaken by Fellgrove and was commissioned by Redec Limited in relation to the proposed development application ref PA/2023/2232.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to provide an updated preliminary overview in respect of ecology given a previously approved planning proposal following the updated design proposal for four residential new dwellings. It shall be noted that this document seeks to provide an update to expired ecological survey data obtained in 2022.
- 1.4 The PEA visit took place on 26th January 2024 with a walkover of the landscape, external of the site buildings and site boundaries. A desktop study was also conducted as part of the survey looking at the wider habitat, protected species within the area and designated/non designated sites within proximity to the site.
- 1.5 The majority of onsite habitat comprises tarmac with two commercial buildings, as referred “B1” and “B2”. Other notable habitat on site comprises a mixed scrub line to the west boundary, a small area of scrub to the east boundary and overhanging Walnut tree (*Juglans*) at the south boundary into the site.
- 1.6 Further protected species surveys are required for bats. Precautionary mitigation is required for Other notable species considered to be directly and indirectly impacted from the proposed development works. Possible contamination should be implemented as part of the proposed development and is recommended within this report (see section 6.0).
- 1.7 A full sitewide Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) report is recommended to accompany the application. This will outline the required mitigation and enhancement opportunities to be determined by the results of further surveys, as outlined below.

Table 1: Summary of Further Survey or Mitigation

Species	Survey Type	Seasonal Window / Optimal Timings	Mitigation
Bats	Emergence surveys (2) focusing on B1, B2, T1.	May – September (with at least 1 survey between May-August). Each survey subject to 3 week interval (<i>BCT Guidelines, 2023</i>).	To follow within EclA. See section 6 onwards for full details.
Flora	Floral assessment.	May to June.	

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Instruction and background

2.2 Fellgrove were commissioned by Redec Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal for the purposes of accompanying the planning application for proposed residential development at Glendale House, Aldington, Ashford, Kent, TN25 7HH. *See Appendix 1 – Site Proposal.*

2.3 Purpose

2.4 This report describes the PEA methodology and results within the context of this development proposal to inform further action, where necessary to be implemented, in accordance with relevant planning policy and ecological legislation.

2.5 Development proposal

2.6 This application seeks demolition of existing onsite commercial buildings B1, B2 to accommodate four new residential units with associated gardens, parking bays and driveways.

2.7 Scope

2.8 An evaluation has been made of the site habitat features and their suitability to support protected and notable wildlife species. Further surveys and precautionary mitigation are being recommended as relevant to the proposal for the four dwellings. The results and data obtained from the surveys will be used to inform recommendation for further surveys where necessary and establish opportunity for ecological enhancement and biodiversity measures where appropriate, following best practice timelines.

2.9 Acknowledgements

2.10 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was completed by suitably qualified ecologist Alexandra Marnerou. As a competent field surveyor with extensive experience in on-site habitat and species surveying, her training and experience have allowed her to undertake a sound assessment of data and compile various ecological reports. She is continuing her professional development through training and experience and is currently in the process of obtaining a GCN Level 1 license.

2.11 Ecological legislation

2.12 The species referred to within this report have been afforded legal protection in the United Kingdom, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and other relevant species-specific law. Alternative levels of afforded protection apply to other notable wildlife.

2.13 Relevant planning policy

2.14 In accordance with legislation, it is essential that the presence/absence of protected species on site and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before planning permission is determined to be granted.

2.15 This report is prepared in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework as issued 2023. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (GOV.UK, 2023a) especially Ch. 15 “*Conserving and enhancing the natural environment*” is also relevant to this application.

3.0 SITE CONTEXT

3.1 Location and scale

3.2 The Owner Site is located at approximate grid reference TR 040369. The Application Site covers approximately 0.10ha encompassing fencing on the north and south boundary and brick wall to the east of the property. The site is accessible from Coopers Lane in the village of Aldington. See Figure 1.

3.3 Figure 1: Indicative site location (red line)



3.4 Description

3.5 The site comprises two commercial buildings (B1 and B2). B1 is a two storey building which faces the east of the site with a single storey extension to the rear of the site west boundary. The landscape is comprised of hardstanding tarmac that has cracked and split in places allowing small succession of plants to grow through. A gate and brick wall create a barrier into the entrance of the site.

3.6 Coopers Lane features adjacent hedgerow with the site entrance facing east of the lane. To the side of the site, at the north and south, are residential properties with their associated gardens separated by a wooden fence. The residence to the south of the property is partly attached to site building B1. To the west of the site is a boundary of scrub that creates a separation between the site and the grassland area of Frith business centre.

3.7 Onsite habitats

3.8 Building 1 and Building 2 have suitability to support roosting bats. Building 1 has suitability to support opportunities for nesting birds. The east scrub has the potential to support nesting/foraging/commuting birds. The west scrub has the potential to support nesting/foraging/commuting birds, foraging/commuting/hibernating mammals and foraging/commuting bats.

3.9 Wider Landscape

3.10 Further east of the site are arable fields, and grasslands with the occasional residential dwelling. To the south of the site is a mosaic of arable fields with a few scattered residences. A woodland approx. 230m south of the site sits within the arable field mosaic. Further west and north are arable fields and roads.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Survey Methods

4.2 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal best practice methodology has been applied in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM), National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) and Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey, 2016).

4.3 Desk Study

4.4 Data searches were carried out using freely available online data and local data centres with an assessment of potential impacts from the proposed development made. The following features were accessed within an appropriate 2km influencing distance of the site (Zol) to establish information about the local area.

4.5 The following features were viewed within a 2km buffer radius of the site:

- Statutory and non-statutory designated sites and their Impact Risk Zones (IRZs)
- Habitat types and European Protected Species (EPS) license applications.
- Evidence of proximity (250m) waterbodies as potential amphibian and GCN breeding sites
- Great crested newt (GCN) Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) (DEFRA)

4.6 The GCN IRZ are developed by Natural England to identify areas where Great Crested Newts (GCN) distribution may likely be impacted by development in Kent. These zones are applied to Ashford Borough Council and classified into four categories (shown below) their GCN occurrence and will be assessed to determine District Level License scheme suitability.

RED	Highly suitable habitat – the most important areas for GCN
AMBER	Suitable habitat – GCN are likely to be present
GREEN	Moderate habitat suitability – GCN may be present
WHITE	Low habitat suitability – low probability of GCN presence

4.7 Recorded sightings for protected species within appropriate Zol to the site and most recent sighting date are used in evaluating results of species-specific categories. Bird species included within this assessment Zol are cross-referenced against the list of the Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1891, the Species of Principal Importance in England under section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) and the Birds of Conservation Concern (UK Red List). See Appendix 6 – Tables 6,7,8.

4.8 Badgers, hazel dormice, amphibians, reptiles and other mammals records are not listed but are discussed within section 5.0.

4.9 Field Survey

4.10 This report outlines the methods and the results of the PEA undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecological Environmental Management (CIEEM). The PEA follows the methodology as outlined within JNCC (2016) Handbook for Phase 1 Surveying alongside the UK Habitats Classification System (UKHAB). The habitat types are available within Para 5.13 Table 4 where the onsite habitat types are described and cross referenced against the Species of Principal Importance in England under section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) - UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP).

- 4.11 UK Habitat methodology can be applied to inform a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and the current onsite habitat if a requirement at a later stage.
- 4.12 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (“PEA”) survey was undertaken to determine the presence of notable or significant ecological features and habitats and to assess potential for any such features or habitats to support protected wildlife species.
- 4.13 The site was surveyed within the context of this proposal, and its surrounding wider local area Friday 26th January 2024 at 09:00am. The conditions were slightly windy with no cloud cover and an average temperature of 7 °C. The site as well as its boundaries were surveyed, with an external of B1 and B2.
- 4.14 **Protected and notable wildlife species**
- 4.15 The protected wildlife species most commonly found on potential development sites are bats, birds, reptiles, amphibians, great crested newts and other terrestrial mammals such as badgers, hazel dormice and water voles.
- 4.16 The judgement of the competent ecological surveyor combined with knowledge of habitats present, signs, sightings and evidence from records was used to give an estimated likelihood of presence, with full evaluated assessment following best practice guidelines. Based on this judgement, where no suitable habitats are identified, further surveying is being reasonably be ruled out, as shown below in Table 3.
- 4.17 **Note: details may be given within this report pertaining to the described locations of protected species and their habitats. This must be redacted prior if planned for circulation of public viewing.**

Table 3 : Terms Used to Indicate Likelihood of Species Presence	
CONFIRMED	Species presence observed directly on site and with clear evidence. Suitable habitat observed directly on site with clear evidence of usage.
HIGH	Important features of use for breeding or refuge present. Significant high-quality foraging habitat present Site adjacent to wider habitat landscape Site connected to linear features of use to commuting species Site close to known offsite species populations
MEDIUM	Some features suitable features / foraging habitat for breeding or refuge present. Site connected to suitable offsite areas of habitat
LOW	Small areas of low-quality habitat for refuge / breeding / foraging Site not connected to suitable offsite habitats and species not likely to enter site.
NEGLIGIBLE	No species observed on site with no suitable habitats identified on site.

- 4.18 **Plants, Fungi and Lichens**
- 4.19 All plant species were checked against the protected plant species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 2018 (schedule 8), Species of Principal Importance in England under section 41 of the NERC Act (2006), the rare species listed under Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland checklist, the Weeds Act of 1959 and Invasive Non-Native Species within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA).
- 4.20 **Limitations to survey**
- 4.21 A full plant list could not be concluded given the time of year with vegetation die back. An internal view of the buildings was not conducted. Both limitations are discussed in section 6.0.

5.0 RESULTS AND EVALUATION

5.1 STATUTORY AND NON-STATUTORY DESIGNATED SITES

5.2 Desk study

5.3 The study identified the application site being within the Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) of three statutory designated sites within a 2km radius. These are described below (*see also Appendix 5: Figure 2*).

5.4 Poulton Wood Aldington (LNR)

5.5 Distance from site: Approx.. 1.55km, southeast

5.6 *Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) – were established under the Environmental Act 2021. They are an area of natural heritage that are at least locally important.*

5.7 Poulton Wood was designated as a Local Nature Reserve in 2001 and is managed by the Canterbury Oast Trust. The woods are set within 28 acres of woodland characteristically copied via traditional coppicing practices and the woods contain species such as Oak, Hornbeam and Ash thus providing habitats for a diverse mix of flora and fauna including blue bells.

5.8 Ham Street Woods (SSSI, NNR)

5.9 Distance from site: Approx.. 3.44km, southwest.

5.10 *A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is the land notified as an SSSI under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), as amended. Sites notified under the 1949 Act only are not included in the Data set. SSSI are the finest sites for wildlife and natural features in England, supporting many characteristic, rare and endangered species, habitats and natural features.*

5.11 *National Nature Reserve (NNRs) were established to protect some of our most important habitats, species, and geology, and to provide ‘outdoor laboratories’ for research. They are open for the public to enjoy. There are currently 219 NNRs in England with a total area of over 109,000 hectares.*

5.12 Ham Street Woods SSSI, NNR site forms a nationally important representative of its main woodland type, and includes a series of broadleaved woodlands to the northeast of Ham Street village. It supports outstanding bird and invertebrate communities.

5.13 Hatch Park (SSSI)

5.14 Distance from site: Approx.. 3.66km, northeast.

5.15 Hatch Park SSSI is of special interest for its unimproved acidic grassland, a scarce habitat in Kent, and its ancient pollard woodlands, the latter supporting the richest epiphytic lichen community in the county.

5.16 Evaluation

5.17 The site is located within the Impact Risk Zones of three statutory sites to the northeast, southwest and southeast of the site over 1km in distance from the site boundary.

5.18 The habitat connectivity from the designated sites to the site borders are barriered by residential dwellings and main roads. On-site habitat substantially differs to the habitat noted within the designated sites.

5.19 Therefore, possible habitat fragmentation from the project site to the designated sites, and terrestrial species crossover, is considered minimal. Additionally, the relatively small scale of this proposal does not significantly increase recreational pressure to these designated sites.

5.20 The following is to be highlighted to the LPA for development within the IRZs “*Any discharge of water or liquid waste of more than 20m³/day to ground (i.e to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream*”. The proposal must address this in respect of additional water and waste within this area that the development proposal may add.

5.21 HABITATS

5.22 The desktop study results identified the site sits within a mosaic of residential and arable field with a group of woodlands approx. 230m south of the site boundary (see Appendix 5: Figure 4).

5.23 The PEA site visit identified that the main habitat on site is hardstanding and buildings. A map is available in Appendix B – UKHAB. Table 4 below details the habitat types on site.

Table 4: Habitat Assessment (see Appendix C for visual references).

Habitat ID	Coding		Description
	Level 2	Other	
Urban			
Building B1	u	Level 5 Code: u1b5 815	<p><u>Exterior:</u> Tiled roof and brick-built wall made of a two-storey building to the front of the site (east) with a single storey extension building to the back forming an overall 'L' shaped building. Multiple gaps noted under tiles and within broken tiling (see photos B1)</p> <p>Cladding to the top half of the front of the building. Double glazed windows.</p> <p>Part of the south of the building attached to adjacent building (Photo 18).</p> <p>Slight gap between the two buildings exists to the back of the front facing (east facing) two storey building (Photo 6).</p> <p>Bird's nest noted behind flood light to the front (see Photo 8).</p> <p>Extensive moss build-up on the roof area of the single storey extension.</p>
Building B2	u	Level 5 code ub15 815	<p>Single storey, tiled roof and brick-built building which has been built into two sections. The west part of the building has been built on a slightly elevated foundation.</p> <p>The front door is located in the centre of the west and east sections (south side) where the two halves of the buildings meet. PRF's noted along roof space (see Photos 2-5, 7).</p> <p>The north side of the building, which forms the back of the building, sits parallel to the wooden fence that divides the site from the neighbouring land. Common ivy has grown along the length of the wall that is parallel to the fence (see Photo 15).</p> <p>The west side of B2 is approx. 2m away from the west boundary ground ivy understory and scrubline. PRF noted on roof apex (see Photo 13).</p>
Wooden Fence (5 -6ft)	u	U1e 612	<p><u>North Boundary:</u> Divides the north of the site from a neighbouring dwelling. Small gap under the northeast area of the fence noted during site visit. Three trees (T4-T6) are within the neighbouring garden and flush to the fence. Two trees (T5 and T6) have overhanging branches into the site with common ivy growing over the main trunk. (see Photo 13 and 24).</p>

			<p>South Boundary: The south boundary fence sits flush to a mature Walnut tree (T1) within the neighbouring garden. Although the tree base does not sit within the site, the branches hang over the into the south of the site. Multiple potential bat roosting features noted on this tree (<i>see photos - T1</i>).</p> <p>Two shorter trees (T2 and T3) noted further along the boundary towards the west boundary scrub within the same neighbouring garden. A great tit was noted perched on a branch of T3 (<i>see Photo 26</i>).</p>
Hardstanding	u	U1b6 804	<p>The landscape area within the site is entirely made of hardstanding tarmac material. It has bulged and cracked in several areas with plant growth beginning to form clusters. Including the following species: <i>petty spurge, guernsey fleabane, ground ivy, little lovegrass, silvergreen bryum moss, butterfly bush, spear thistle</i>.</p> <p>A larger cluster of vegetation has grown through the hardstanding material in front of B1 with patches of <i>red valerian, smooth cat's ear and lamb's ear</i>.</p> <p>The east, south and west boundaries have wet leaf litter, ground ivy and bramble scrub growing over it (<i>see Photo 23</i>).</p>
Brick boundary wall	u	U1e	<p>East Boundary: Brick and stone wall that lines approx. 40% of the east boundary of the site at approx. 4ft in height. The other 40% of the east boundary is the double metal gated entrance into the site on the southern most area (<i>see Photo 18</i>).</p> <p>A small section to the north most area of this boundary is made of a scrub patch making up approx.. 20% of the boundary with noted <i>Elmleaf blackberry, elder and common hawthorn with a common ivy understory</i> (<i>see Photo 21</i>).</p> <p>Visible mammal trails. Hedgerow noted directly next to the scrub and runs the length of the main road on both sides.</p>
Mixed Scrub	h	Level 4 code: H3h 32	<p>West Boundary: Scrub line mixed with some taller standing trees makes the west boundary. An understory of thick ground ivy sits to the base of the scrubline of <i>elder, plum, elmleaf bramble, deadwood and common hawthorn</i>.</p> <p>Mammal trail observed to the southernmost corner of the understory leading into the grassland area to the rear (<i>see Photo 31</i>).</p>

5.24 Evaluation

- 5.25 The site does not contain habitats that fit the criteria to be classed as key habitat areas as the majority of the area is hard standing landscape.
- 5.26 The hard standing landscape and brick wall both offer little ecological value.
- 5.27 B1 and B2 both have several gaps that can be possible access and sheltering points for bats. B1 also featured a disused bird's nest behind a flood light.
- 5.28 The small scrub patch to the front (east boundary) offers some additional habitat for arboreal species and possible cover for commuting terrestrial species to the wider hedgerows noted along both sides of Coopers Lane.

- 5.29 A gap to the north of B2 could provide a commuting route for mammals to the scrub line that runs parallel to the west boundary.
- 5.30 The west boundary scrub features mammal trails in the common ivy understory and bird activity. This particular habitat type links to more scrub further north and south forming a long continuous linear feature that spans the back of both neighboring gardens. It also continues further north and south and linking to a wider scrub line that wraps around arable fields and grassland. The scrub further north then links to scrub that lines arable fields and crossing Frith Road will meet the wider woodlands to the south of the site.
- 5.31 The scrub habitat may be a locally important connecting corridor for commuting mammals and foraging birds.
- 5.32 Seven connected ancient, semi natural/natural woodlands sit approx. 230m south of the site boundary within a 2km ZoI. These woodlands also feature a water course. These habitats are not directly linked to the site however their close proximity and hedges that line the roads and arable fields would allow some arboreal species cross-over.
- 5.33 Terrestrial species crossover from the woodland is less likely given the differing habitat on site and grassland and arable fields that sit in between the woodlands and site.

5.34 **PLANTS**

- 5.35 A full plant species list could not be achieved. *For species obtained see Appendix 6.*
- 5.36 **Evaluation**
- 5.37 **All Plant Species**
- 5.38 Majority species are low-lying early succession that have established through the hard standing material.
- 5.39 The taller standing vegetation noted in the neighboring gardens and along the west boundary offer food sources and commuting corridors for arboreal and terrestrial species.
- 5.40 **Invasive / Non-Native Plant Species**
- 5.41 No evidence of Invasive Non-Native Species within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) such as Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed or Himalayan balsam found on site at the time of the survey. No local records of invasive species within 500m ZoI.
- 5.42 1 species (*Spear thistle*) is listed as an invasive weed species under the Weeds Act 1959. This weed is known to be destructive to pastures and agriculture fields and prevention of its spread should be sought. The site does sit within close proximity to farmland fields just eastwards of the site boundary.
- 5.43 1 rosette noted during the site visit, control and spread prevention should therefore be easily achieved.
- 5.44 **Rare Plant Species**
- 5.45 No rare plant species noted onsite against the BSBI checklist (Kent).

5.2 PROTECTED SPECIES AND WILDLIFE

5.3 The species-based results of the desktop study in combination with the onsite visit observations are listed and evaluated below. Refer Table 3 - Terms Used in Report to Indicate Likelihood of Species Presence.

Table 5: Species Assessment (see also Appendices 6 and 7)

Species Type	Likely presence	Supporting data or evidence
Bats	Moderate (roosting and commuting)	6 species records (5km radius), as recent as 2022 1 bat protected species (2km radius) in Clap Hill, east of the site. Walnut tree in south neighbouring garden has several possible roosting features (see photos – T1) Scattered trees within the scrub line to the west boundary which continues as a linear features past the boundaries of the site boundaries. Ancient woodland located approximately 230m south of the site boundary.
	Low (foraging)	B1 and B2 both exhibited multiple cracked/loose tiles, gaps under tiling and gaps between adjoining buildings (see B1 and 2 photos). Previous bat survey data and report notes noctule and common pipistrelle bats commuting across the site. No functioning lighting observed onsite. No street lighting on the Lane.
Evaluation	<p>Given the number of species present in the area, and the notable PRF on the site boundaries and site itself, roosting potential for the site is considered moderate.</p> <p>Bats can travel up to 10km in one night foraging trip. The scrubland that wraps into further wider arable fields and lack of streetlights would offer suitable foraging route to the wider landscape providing a moderate level of presence on site.</p> <p>There is a lack of available onsite suitable foraging habitat as it is mostly hardstanding and man-made structures. Foraging opportunity is focused to the west of the site which would put the site at an overall low likelihood of foraging bat presence.</p>	

Species Type	Likely presence	Supporting data or evidence
Birds	Moderate	100 different bird species records (5km radius) as follows: (20) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, (21) Species of Principal Importance in England under section 41 of the NERC Act (2006), Birds of Concern List Red (22), Amber (38). Scrubland to the west of the site noted to include fruit producing plant species such as elmleaf blackberry and common hawthorn. Blue tits and robins seen on the north and south boundaries of the site with flight to the west. Blue tit noted on the oak to the south neighbouring garden (see Photo 17). Disused nest on a flood light to the front of B1 (see Photo 8).
Evaluation	<p>Small garden birds are evidently using the boundaries of the site for foraging and commuting. The nest located above the flood light also indicates that there has at least been an attempt to utilise the site for nesting by one bird species. This, along with the local records puts the site at a moderate likelihood for bird presence on site.</p>	

Species Type	Likely presence	Supporting data or evidence
Reptiles	Low / likely absent	<p>No local records for reptiles (2km radius) of the site. No good habitat with mainly hardstanding and buildings onsite.</p> <p>There is a scrub line with common ivy to the west of the site boundary and a grassland on the other side. The scrub line is to be retained in the development plans and is outside of the owner site boundary.</p>
Evaluation	<p>Specific habitat requirements vary between species, the Common lizard favours rough grassland, however they can be found in woodland glades, pastures and walls. Slow worms use similar habitats to common lizards and are often found in gardens and derelict land.</p> <p>The site does not contain suitable foraging/commuting/refugia habitat for reptiles. The scrub and common ivy to the west boundary may offer some suitable hibernating habitat with a grassland to other side of this boundary. The scrubland area is also to be retained and does not fall within the development footprint or in the client's boundary. This along with the lack of local sighting records puts the site at low likelihood for the presence of reptiles.</p>	

Species Type	Likely presence	Supporting data or evidence
Amphibian (including GCN)	Low / likely absent	<p>No local records for reptiles (2km radius) of the site. No good habitat with mainly hardstanding and buildings onsite. 10 waterbodies within 250m of the site. <i>1 just outside 250m</i>. None onsite.</p> <p>The site habitat and its surrounding area is within an Amber GCN IRZ. 1 GCN EPS license just outside 2km Zol (east to the site within Clap Hill).</p>
Evaluation	<p>Amphibians spend the majority of the year within terrestrial habitat. Suitable terrestrial habitats for amphibians generally include rough grassland, scrubland and woodland especially for their foraging habits and overwintering period. This is preferred with good linking connectivity to ponds and waterbodies where they can commute to for the breeding season.</p> <p>Although there are several ponds within 250m radius of the site and the area is with an amber zone for good connecting habitat for GCN, the physical onsite habitat is unsuitable for hibernating or breeding amphibians given the tarmac and building landscape and lack of waterbodies on site.</p> <p>There is the scrubland to the west boundary, but as with the reptiles, this scrub does not fall within the site boundary or development footprint and it is too be retained during development. The site is low/likely absent likelihood for amphibian and GCN presence within the site habitat.</p>	

Species Type	Likely presence	Supporting data or evidence
Badgers	Low	<p>19 sightings of badgers (5km radius), most recent 2023.</p> <p>No hairs, latrines or setts were identified within the site and immediate surrounding vegetation. Mammal trails noted within the scrubland area to the west boundary and east scrub (see <i>Photo 2 and 28 and 31</i>).</p>
Evaluation	<p>Badger territories can vary from 70 – 120ha in size and they can travel up to a mile from their main sett depending on food availability whilst foraging at night. Potential areas to identify are earth banks, woodlands, hedgerows, rough grasslands and additional signs such as mammal paths, hairs and latrines.</p> <p>Records suggest a local badger population within 5km radius of the site. As the site itself offers no foraging or dwelling opportunity for badgers given the tarmac landscape and buildings, the site has an overall low likelihood for badgers to be present.</p> <p>Mammal trails noted on the west and east boundary which may indicate that the site is being used as a commuting corridor to the wider arable field landscape but as there are alternative greener landscapes for this, this is likely to be used irregularly.</p>	

Species Type	Likely presence	Supporting data or evidence
Dormouse (Hazel)	Negligible	2 local records within an area of hedgerow approx. 1.71km northeast (2021). The long-term established scrub line (est.1940's) to the west boundary continues north and south and wraps around further arable fields. It has a thick common ivy understory and a few standing trees.
Evaluation	<p>Dormice generally use areas of dense woody vegetation and are more likely to be found in deciduous woodland, hedgerows, scrub along with areas where there is a variety of plants suitable for nest-building material and habitat connectivity. They rarely move much further from their nests and tend to stay within 70m from their nesting site as a foraging range.</p> <p>There is low quality habitat available along the scrub that lines the west boundary.</p> <p>No woodland is directly linked to the site or its boundaries. There is no direct link to the site with roads and arable field barriers.</p> <p>Given the above, and the relative short life span of the dormouse, the likely presence of hazel dormice presence on site is considered negligible.</p>	

Species Type	Likely presence	Supporting data or evidence
Other mammals and wildlife	Moderate	2 hedgehogs sightings (2km radius), most recent 2021. Mammal trails observed leading to the west and east boundaries (<i>see Photos 28 and 31</i>). Gaps to the bottom of the north lying fence. Scrub and common ivy growth next to the west border and small scrub patch to the east northmost corner adjacent neighbouring hedgerow.
Evaluation	<p>Hedgehogs nest all year round and produce different types of nests for day resting, breeding and hibernation. Day time nests are temporary and usually found in areas of rough grassland, loose leaf piles or garden vegetation. Breeding and hibernation nests are sturdier and rely on deciduous medium sized leaves and a structure to hold the nest in place, areas such as bramble patches, log piles and open compost heaps are common breeding/hibernating locations.</p> <p>Hedgehogs have been sighted in the area and mammal trails and digging evident within the boundaries of the sight. Common ivy and scrub to the west boundary could also be a hibernation area for hedgehogs with possible commute route to the north gap between the fence and B2.</p>	

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 On evaluation as above, further surveys and mitigation are advised as follows. Presence of any protected species or their habitats found during development must require a consulted ecologist.

6.2 Further survey

6.3 Bats

6.4 **2 emergence survey visits are required for B1, B2 and T1 and incorporating internal visual inspection during survey visit 1.**

6.5 Both surveys must be conducted during May-August with at least three weeks intervals (*BCT Guidelines, September 2023*) and can be undertaken by a team of suitably qualified ecological surveyors assisted by IR camera equipment to adequately cover all survey focus areas of B1, B2 and T1 to monitor bat activity.

6.6 Both the buildings are to be demolished. The walnut tree overhangs from the neighbouring property and may require pruning. Therefore, this poses a potential direct and indirect developmental impact to roosting bats which may be utilizing these habitats.

6.7 These surveys will determine the presence/absence of bats within these structures to advise further mitigation, enhancement or compensation as appropriate for this proposal.

6.8 Mitigation/Precautions

6.9 Statutory and non-statutory designations

6.10 The site poses very little increased recreational pressure to the designated sites noted within the report and there is no direct link between designated site habitat and onsite habitat. Therefore, no further recommendations on these matters are required.

6.11 **There is a note to the LPA based on an increase in water and waste from development in this area. This issue has been addressed within the *Planning, Design and Access Statement of Para 5.20*. which should be reviewed accordingly to ensure it adequately meets any mitigation requirements.**

6.12 Habitats

6.13 Scrubland to the west boundary is part of a wider connecting corridor for birds and mammals. The stability and integrity of the scrub should be protected against any adverse development impact with an appropriate protective fence places along the boundary where works should be avoided until a permanent garden fence has been installed. Both installations should be conducted under ecologist supervision.

6.14 Any small clearance of the common ivy and scrub overgrowth that has encroached into the site to be removed under a watching brief to provide an ECoW with ecologist supervision. This should be completed outside of hibernation period for mammals (typically October – March).

6.15 Plants (inc. invasive and rare species)

6.16 A floral assessment should be conducted during optimal season (May/June) to obtain a full plant community list of the scrub areas and vegetation growth through the hard standing.

6.17 *Spear Thistle* weed rosettes must be dug and/or destroyed whilst the plant is young and soil is damp. *Red Valerian* should be dug out fully and properly disposed of to avoid contamination.

6.18 **Bird species**

6.19 East scrub: An ecologist should conduct a nest search 24 hours before work is planned to remove or cut back this area. If a nest is found, the scrub and any nests that are found must be left intact until the chicks have fledged whilst being regularly monitored by the ecologist during the nest breeding season (typically between March – September). If no nests are found 24 hours before the planned works, the planned works should go ahead under a watching brief supervised by the ecologist.

6.20 West Scrub: A day before planned works on site, a site walkover should take place to check for nests and a 5m buffer placed around the nest. Works should work eastwards towards a buffer zone around the west scrub. Regular checks of the west scrub should take place by an ecologist before moving flush to the scrub for clearance.

6.21 Building and Landscape: A site walkover should take place 24 hours before any works are planned onto the site to check for active nests. If any nests are found, the nest and structure should be left intact until the chicks have fledged with monitoring of the nest until the chicks have fledged at the end of the nesting season (typically between March – September).

6.22 **Badgers**

6.23 During constructional phases, trenches or utility holes must be covered securely. If this is not plausible, an escape route (ramp) must be implemented to allow escape.

6.24 Chemicals should be stored away following COSHH safety procedures.

6.25 Soil piles can present as opportunity for badgers to establish setts within them, therefore, consideration of this feature and therefore avoidance of them should be accounted for. Fencing can assist in prevention of badger access to the site, however badgers are excellent excavators. No fencing should restrict a badger's territory or sett and enabling a suitable bottom gap (30cm) for free movement is advised.

6.26 **Reptiles**

6.27 Clearance of scrub and common ivy that has encroached into the site area to the west boundary should be cleared under a watching brief and following a destructive search by an ecologist to provide an ECoW outside of the hibernation period (typically October – March).

7.0 Enhancement

7.1 To minimise potential adverse risk of impact to protected species, mitigation and enhancement requirements will be informed by the results of the recommended further surveys.

7.2 A site Ecological Impact Assessment will ensure the necessary information has been obtained to provide accurate mitigation advice and enhancement opportunities (i.e., lighting design) that are relative and tailored to the application site and its proposal.

7.3 Biodiversity Net Gain ("BNG")

7.4 Small site applications (0.5ha/9 units or less) do not currently require mandatory BNG assessment.

7.5 Examples of how we can achieve other gains in biodiversity include (but are not limited to) increasing opportunities for wildlife with areas such as green spaces, hedgerows, grasslands, wildflower meadows.

7.6 Where plausible and reasonably applicable within the scale and context of a development, the following can be considered:

- Enhancements to retained areas of habitat (such as hedgerow, grassland, scrubland);
- If possible and/or practical, parking areas instead of concrete or tarmac can use permeable material that allows vehicle access but also allows plants to penetrate;
- Tree planting associated with the proposed development to include native, standard, flower rich species including those which flowers late and early seasons to benefit pollinators (i.e., Alder, Silver Birch, Field Maple, Common Oak, Wild Cherry, Elder);
- Native hedgerow planted to create corridors of habitat (i.e. Hawthorn, Holly, Hazel);
- Retained scrub and trees should be managed for the benefit of local wildlife with inclusion of native, flower rich annual and perennial species (i.e., birds foot trefoil, cowslip, field scabious meadow vetchling, meadow buttercup).

8.0 Conclusion

- 8.1 The survey has achieved the initial objectives and meets the brief by providing an assessment of the broad habitat types and the potential for protected species, plus explanation of methods used and further recommendation made where appropriate to allow for progression of application reference PA/2023/2232.
- 8.2 The results of both desk and field-based aspects of this survey have been evaluated and further surveys are recommended as an appropriate level of further action for this proposal, to be scheduled within the appropriate seasonal timings.
- 8.3 Further surveys are required for bats and flora which will conclude appropriate mitigation and enhancement recommendations and inform requirement for further surveys and/or facilitate further action where necessary.
- 8.4 In accordance with the latest National Planning Policy Framework, in order to protect and enhance biodiversity proposed development plans should promote the protection and recovery of priority species and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

9.0 References

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A PROPOSED SITE PLAN



APPENDIX B
PHASE ONE HABITAT MAP (UKHAB)

Status

Planning

Project

Glendale House

Drawing title

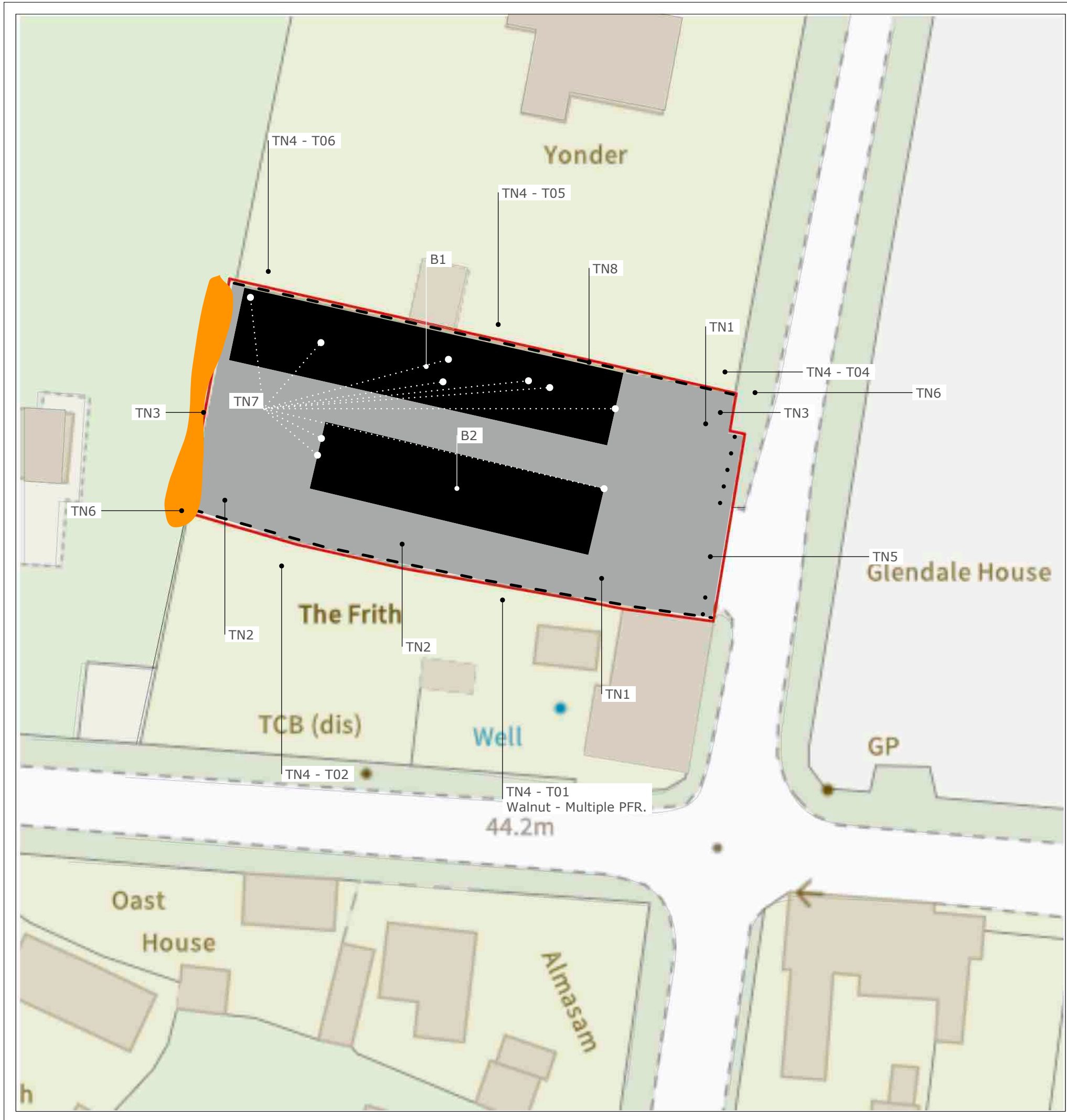
UKHabs Map - Appendix B

Rev	Description	Date
-	-	-
-	-	-
-	-	-

Scale	Date	Drawing Number
NTS	11/03/2024	7017_01

Legend	Parcel No
Site Boundary	NA
Fence	1
Building	2
Brick Wall	3
Scrub & Ground Ivy	4
Developed land.	5

Target	Description
TN1	Vegetation growing through hardstanding
TN2	Bramble & Leaf litter
TN3	Ground Ivy on tree base
TN4	Trees
TN5	Gate
TN6	Mammal Trails
TN7	PRF
TN8	Common Ivy & Scarlet Firethorn climbing on fence



APPENDIX C SITE PHOTOGRAPHS (FELLGROVE, 26/01/2024)

Building 1 (B1):



PHOTO 1: West View (back view) of B1 and T1.



PHOTO 2: B1 gaps (circled) and chimney stack.



PHOTO 3: Missing tile to the south back corner of the building.



PHOTO 4: Gap into lead flashing corner of building (circled).



PHOTO 5: Evidence of a wasp nest to the north section of the building.



PHOTO 6: Gap between the extension and main walls of building.



PHOTO 7: Gaps (tiles)

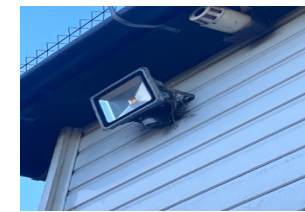


PHOTO 8: Bird's nest behind the flood light to the east of the building.



PHOTO 9: North of the building view.



PHOTO 10: Vegetation growth to the east view of building.



PHOTO 11: Wear and tear gap to the back of building.



PHOTO 12: Vegetation flush to the east (front) of the building.

Building 2 (B2):



PHOTO 13: Gap between barge board and soffit.



PHOTO 14: Broken ridge tiles (circled) on top of the building.



PHOTO 15: North side of the building with common ivy growth and fence.



PHOTO 16: East section of the building with gaps under gable point.

Landscape and Borders:



PHOTO 17: Blue tit in garden to south boundary.



PHOTO 18: Hardstanding and gate to the entrance to the site (east area).



PHOTO 19: East boundary scrub and ivy understory.



PHOTO 20: Scrub patch to the east boundary.



PHOTO 21: Scrub to east boundary and hardstanding.



PHOTO 22: East boundary common ivy growing over hardstanding.



PHOTO 23: Moss and scrub growth to the south area of the site.



PHOTO 24: Pathway along north fence and trees sitting to north boundary in neighbouring garden.



PHOTO 25: Common ivy understory.



PHOTO 26: South boundary fence and hardstanding.



PHOTO 27: Scrub growth and tiles to the back of B1.



PHOTO 28: Hardstanding and vegetation growth next to north fence.



PHOTO 29: Tall standing scrub, trees and common ivy growth.



PHOTO 30: Scrub and vegetation growth (hardstanding south of B2).



PHOTO 31: Mammal trail gap to the understory, west south corner.



PHOTO 32: West scrub view.

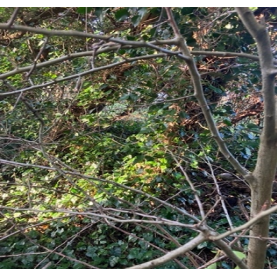


PHOTO 33: West scrub understory.



PHOTO 34: West scrub and trees.



PHOTO 35: More of west scrub canopy.



PHOTO 36: Common ivy growth to few scattered trees in west boundary scrub.

T1 (walnut tree in south neighbouring garden)



PHOTO 37: knot hole and split (circled).



PHOTO 38: T1 knot hole (circled).



PHOTO 39: Smaller knot hole on tree (circled).



PHOTO 40: Small knot hole on branch (circled).



PHOTO 41: Split hole on thick branch (circled).



PHOTO 42: Tear away and split (circled).



PHOTO 43: Splits in tree trunk.

APPENDIX 4

PROTECTED SPECIES LEGALISATION AND POLICY

(UNITED KINGDOM)

This section contains details of legislation and planning policy applicable in the United Kingdom and is provided for general guidance only. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, this section should not be relied upon as a definitive statement of the law.

PLANTS AND HABITAT

There is a list of species of principle importance as set on in section 42 of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC 2006). These species are regarded a material consideration in planning applications and are usually protected by planning policies.

Some plants, such as Japanese knotweed are listed under Schedule 9, Part 2 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. This states that it is an offence to "plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild" any plant listed in the schedule. "In the wild" is generally taken to mean any area outside the landowner's site. It is therefore an offence to allow it to spread onto neighbouring sites or to allow some listed plants to be removed offsite without proper disposal, as this could also allow them to spread offsite.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 provide protection for some types of hedgerows. Under the regulations most hedges require submission of a 'hedgerow removal notice' and approval by the local authority before they can be removed. All 'important' hedgerows are to be retained and protected from destruction and damage. There are several rules determining how a hedgerow is classified as 'Important'. In most cases the hedgerow is required to be more than 30 years old and to contain specific indicator plants. An individual hedge, or more likely, the trees within a hedge can also be subject to a Tree Preservation Order, or TPO, under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Habitats and plant species of principle importance are listed in section 41 of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC 2006). These habitats are regarded a material consideration in planning applications and are usually protected by planning policies.

Weeds Act 1959 classifies certain species of weed that grow in the UK for specific control. These currently include Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), Spear Thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), Creeping/Field Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Curled Dock (*Rumex crispus*) and Broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*). Responsible control and removal from land must be adhered to with advice available from the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs.

BATS

All species of British bat are listed in Appendix II of the Berne Convention and various appendices of the Habitats Directive. They are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations 2017 (Regulation 43) it is therefore illegal to kill, injure or handle any bat or obstruct access to, destroy or disturb any site that they use. AN unlimited fine and/or 6 months imprisonment per offence is the maximum penalty. Where a bat roost will be affected by development a licence to carry out the work will be required (issued by Natural England). This will be granted only if suitable mitigation for any adverse impacts on bats is to be carried out.

Seven species (barbastelle, Bechstein's, Noctule, soprano pipistrelle, Brown long-eared, Greater horseshoe and Lesser horseshoe) are Priority Species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and under the Species of Principle Importance in England under section 41 NERC Act (2006).

BADGERS

Badgers and their sets are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. All the following are criminal offences: to wilfully kill, injure, take, possess, or cruelly ill-treat a badger, or to attempt to do so; to interfere with a sett intentionally or recklessly. Sett interference includes disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, as well as damaging or destroying a sett or obstructing access to it. A badger sett is defined in the legislation as 'any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger'. Badger setts can be disturbed by a multitude of operations which include excavation and coring. (English Nature, 2002).

BIRDS

There are three levels of protection for wild birds. Those listed under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) Schedule 1 are protected from disturbance during the breeding season. The breeding season for most species is generally considered to extend between 1st March and 31st July inclusive, although some species may breed slightly earlier in the year or later.

Site operations should be phased where possible to occur outside the breeding season. Within this period, clearance of structures and vegetation can only take place if either:

- Likely nesting areas are first checked by an ecologist / suitably qualified person and no nesting is found.
- Vegetation or structures are clearly visible, and no sign of nesting can be seen.

If nests are found, work will have to be delayed in that area until chicks have left the nest. For birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act the protection is increased and it is also an offence to disturb them whilst in the process of nest building or at a nest containing eggs or young. It is an offence also to disturb dependent young.

There are certain species listed on the Species of Principal Importance in England under section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) which are protected from adverse effects of any development. Birds of Conservation Concern is commonly referred to as the UK Red List which reviews the status of birds within the UK and identifies if a bird population is declining.

**APPENDIX 5:
FIGURES**

Figure 2: Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites (MAGIC, 2km)

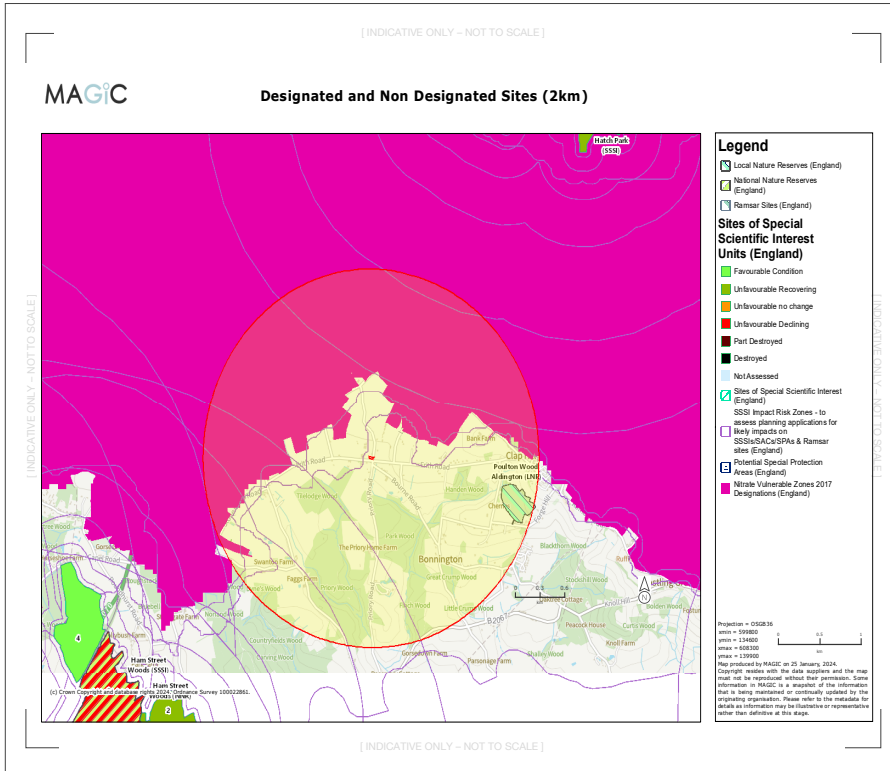


IMAGE REF	FIGURE 1
IMAGE TITLE	STATUTORY AND NON STATUTORY SITES
SEARCH RADIUS	2KM
SITE REF:	FEL/7017
IMAGE SOURCE:	MAGIC
DATE:	25.01.2024

Figure 3: Habitats (2km)

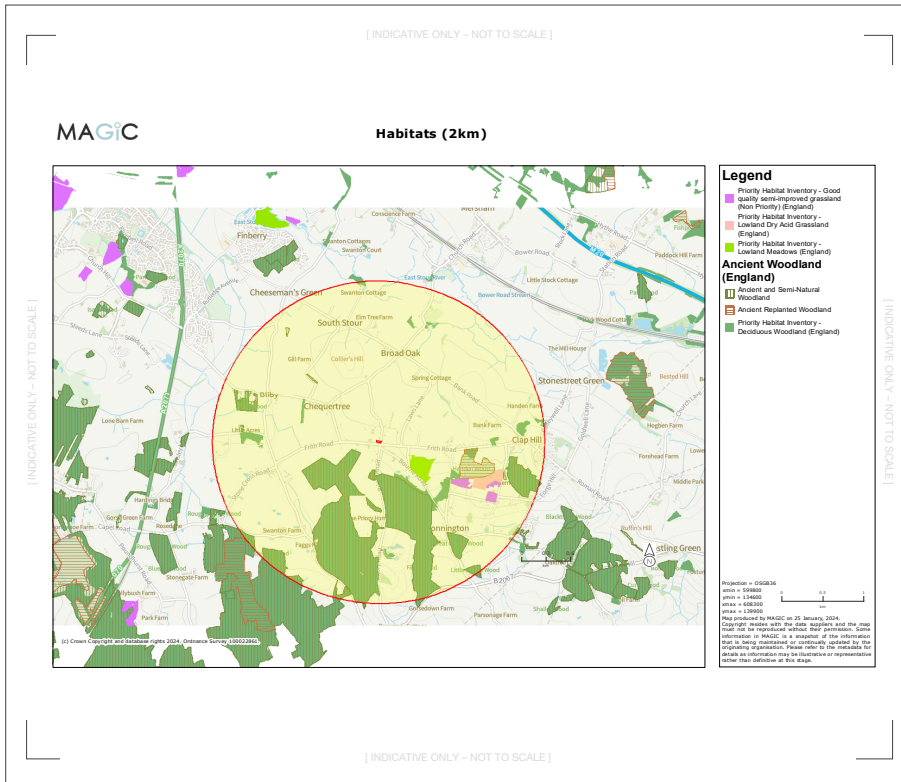


IMAGE REF	FIGURE 2
IMAGE TITLE	HABITATS
SEARCH RADIUS	2KM

SITE REF: FEL/7017
SOURCE: MAGiC
DATE: 25.01.2024



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Figure 4: License Applications (Protected Species) (2km)

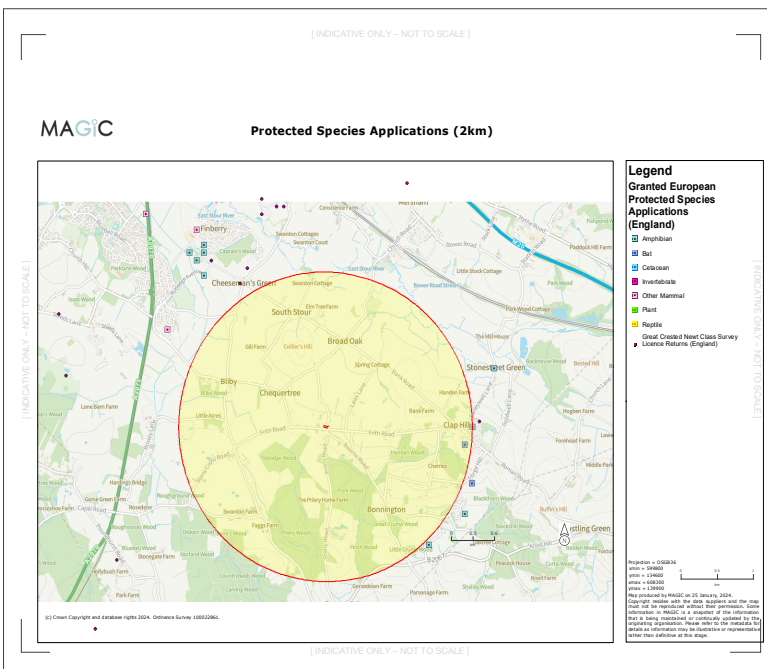


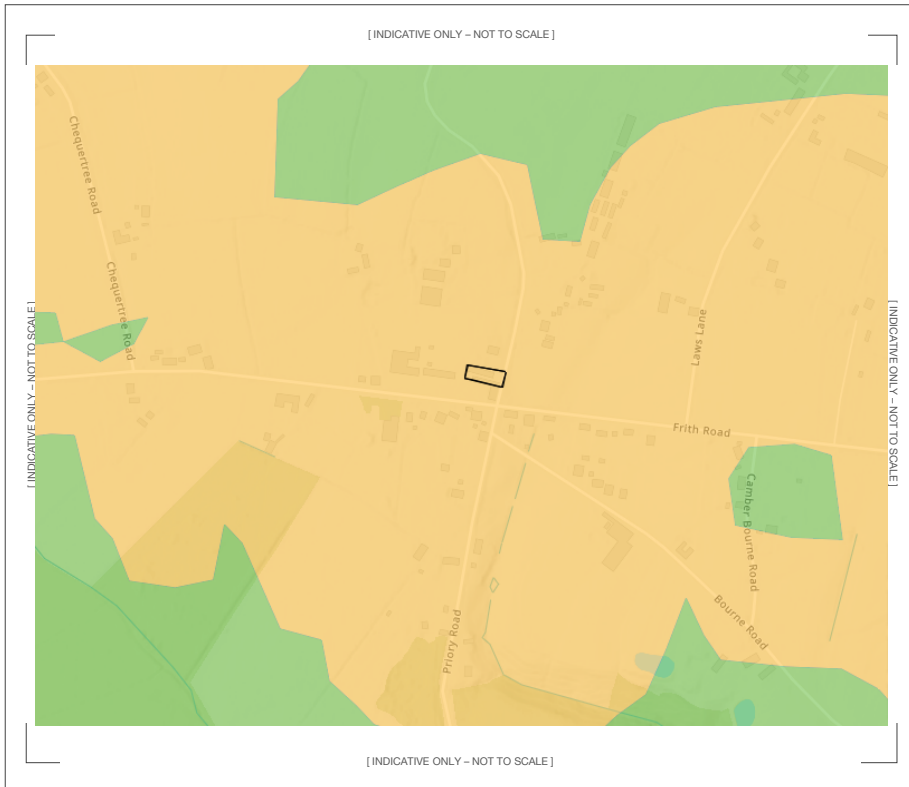
IMAGE REF	FIGURE 2
IMAGE TITLE	PROTECTED SPECIES LICENCE APPLICATIONS
SEARCH RADIUS	2KM

SITE REF: FEL/7017
SOURCE: MAGiC
DATE: 25.01.2024



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Figure 5: Great Crested Newt Impact Risk Zones (IRZ, DEFRA)



DRAWING REF	FIGURE 3
DRAWING TITLE	GCN IMPACT RISK ZONES

KEY	
	SITE BOUNDARY
	RED ZONE
	AMBER ZONE
	GREEN ZONE
	WHITE ZONE

SITE REF: FEL/7017
SOURCE: DEFRA
DATE: 25.01.2024

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Figure 6: Waterbodies (250m)



IMAGE REF	FIGURE 4
IMAGE TITLE	WATERBODIES
SEARCH RADIUS	250M

KEY	
	SITE BOUNDARY
	Waterbodies within 250m radius of the site.
	Waterbodies outside of 250m radius of the site.

SITE REF: FEL/7017
SOURCE: MAGIC
DATE: 25.01.2024

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APPENDIX 6:
TABLES

DESKTOP STUDY SPECIES RECORDS

Common Name	Scientific Name	Most Recent Recordings
Brown Long-eared bat	<i>Plecotus auratus</i>	2022
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	2022
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	2022
Natterer's bat	<i>Myotis nattereri</i>	2019
Daubenton's bat	<i>Myotis daubentonii</i>	2022

Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	Avocet (2018), Barn Owl (2021), Black Redstart (2019), Brambling (2019), Cetti's Warbler (2019), Cormorant (2019), Crossbill (2020), Fieldfare (2019), Firecrest (2019), Green sandpiper (2019), Hobby (2017), Kingfisher (2019), Little ringed plover (2019), Mediterranean gull (2019), Peregrine (2019), Quail (2019), Redshank (2019), Redwing (2019), Reed bunting (2019), Wood sandpiper (2019),
Species of Principle Importance in England under section 41 of the NERC Act (2006)	Bittern (2020), Bullfinch (2021), Cuckoo (2020), Dunnock (2021), Herring Gull (2021), House Sparrow (2021), Lapwing (2019), Lesser Redpoll (2018), Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (2017), Linnet (2019), Marsh tit (2016), Reed bunting (2019), Ring Ouzel (2019), Skylark (2021), Song Thrush (2021), Spotted flycatcher (2018), Starling (2021), Tree sparrow (2017), Wood warbler (2019), Yellow wagtail (2018) and Yellowhammer (2021).
Birds of Concern Red and Amber List 2023	<u>Red:</u> Common Redpoll (2023), Cuckoo (2020), Fieldfare (2019), Herring Gull (2021), House Martin (2019), Lapwing (2019), Lesser spotted woodpecker (2017), Linnet (2019), Marsh tit (2016), Mistle Thrush (2021), Nightingale (2021), Ring Ouzel (2019), Skylark (2021), Spotted flycatcher (2018), Starling (2021), Swift (2019), Tree sparrow (2017), Turtle dove (2018), Whinchat (2019), White-fronted goose (2018), Yellow wagtail (2018) and Yellowhammer (2021). <u>Amber:</u> Avocet (2018), Bittern (2020), Black Redstart (2019), Black-headed Gull (2019), Bullfinch (2021), Common Gull (2019), Common Sandpiper (2019), Curlew Sandpiper (2019), Gadwall (2019), Great Black-backed gull (2019), Green sandpiper (2019), Grey wagtail (2019), Greylag goose (2019), Kestrel (2019), Lesser black-backed gull (2019), Mallard (2019), Meadow pipit (2019), Mediterranean gull (2019), Moorhen (2021), Oystercatcher (2016), Pied Flycatcher (2018), Redshank (2019), Redwing (2019), Reed bunting (2019), Rook (2021), Sedge Warbler (2019), Shelduck (2019), Shoveler (2019), Song Thrush (2021), Stock Dove (2021), Tawny owl (2021), Teal (2019), Wheatear (2019), Whitethroat (2021), Willow warbler (2020), Wood sandpiper (2019), Wood pigeon (2021) and Wren (2021).

Common Name	Scientific Name
Common Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Himalaya Blackberry	<i>Rubus armeniacus</i>
Common Walnut Tree	<i>Julgans regia</i>
Butterfly Bush	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>
Common Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Petty Spurge	<i>Euphorbia peplus</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Lamb's ear	<i>Stachys byzantina</i>
Little lovegrass	<i>Eragrostis minor</i>
Silvergreen bryum moss	<i>Bruym argenteum</i>
Red valerian	<i>Centranthus ruber</i>
Smooth cat's ear	<i>Hypochaeris glabra</i>
Scarlet firethorn	<i>Pyracantha coccinea</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>