URBAN EDGE ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING

NATURAL PROGRESSION

Maybourne Rise, Woking, Surrey

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report

May 2026

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Client:	ADMG	
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Abbreviations

CEZ	Construction Exclusion Zone
CHS	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
EPS	European Protected Species
GCN	Great crested newt
HPI	Habitat of Principal Importance
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MMU	Minimum Mapping Unit
NERC	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
PRF	Potential (bat) Roost Feature
SAC	Special Area for Conservation
SBIC	Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre
SNCI	Site of Nature Conservation Interest
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
TN	Target Note
UKHab	UK Habitat Classification
WCA	Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

0 Executive Summary

0.1 Introduction

0.1.1 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken for the site of a proposed residential development at Maybourne Rise, Woking, Surrey. The report was prepared to establish the site's suitability for development, inform the design process for the proposal, record the ecological baseline and identify key ecological features within and around the Application Site.

0.2 Results

0.2.1 There are two internationally important wildlife sites, including one Special Area for Conservation and one Special Protection Area located within 5km of the survey area. One nationally important Site of Special Scientific Interest and a statutory Local Nature Reserve, and five non-statutory Sites of Nature Conservation Importance are located within 1km of the survey area. There are records of a range of protected or notable species in the locality, including amphibians, birds, invertebrates, terrestrial mammals, flowering plants and terrestrial reptiles, together with four Priority Habitats: Ancient Woodland, Deciduous Woodland, Lowland Heathland, and Traditional Orchard.

0.2.2 The survey area lies to the south of the town of Woking in Surrey. The survey area comprises c.2.35ha of mostly undeveloped land, currently dominated by other neutral grassland, with patches of tall forb vegetation and bramble scrub, rural trees and a section of road. The wider landscape is characterised by a patchwork of urban and suburban development, with the towns of Woking to the north and Guildford to the south, Sutton Green Gold Course, grassland and arable fields, many of which are set within hedgerows or other boundary vegetation, and small wooded areas. There are no ponds within 250m of the survey area but nine ponds lie within 500m.

0.3 Evaluation

0.3.1 Table 0.1 presents a summary of ecological constraints and opportunities identified within the survey area.

Table 0.1: Summary of ecological constraints and opportunities

Feature	Detail
Constraints:	
Designated sites	The survey area lies within the impact risk zones for Smart's and Prey Heaths and Whitmoor Common Sites of Special Scientific Interest, which also form part of the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Within these zones Natural England will be consulted on planning applications and because the site lies within 5km of the SPA a developer contribution, based on the number and size of dwellings, is required to the

Feature	Detail
	Strategic Access Management and Monitoring scheme to mitigate disturbance impacts on the bird species for which the Special Protection Area is designated. None of the other statutory or non-statutory wildlife sites within the desk-study search zone are likely to be affected by the Proposed Development, considering the likely size and scale of the proposal and its distance from the designated sites; the closest designation is c.500m west (Smart's and Prey Heaths Site of Special Scientific Interest).
Priority Habitats	An area of Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat is located adjacent to the northern boundary. This habitat will be protected during construction.
Other habitats	Permanent losses of up to c.2.35ha of other neutral grassland, tall forbs, bramble scrub and trees across the site, depending on the extent and layout of Proposed Development. These areas are of relatively low to moderate ecological value but provide habitats suitable for a number of protected species (e.g. nesting birds, bats and reptiles).
Great crested newt	Possible permanent loss of suitable terrestrial habitats (grassland, tall forbs, bramble scrub). No impact on aquatic habitats. However, great crested newt are considered unlikely to be present within the survey area as there are no suitable breeding ponds within 250m.
Birds (nesting)	Possible permanent loss of very small areas of suitable nesting habitats (scrub and trees).
Bats (roosting)	The trees at T1 and T2 contain features suitable for roosting bats (e.g. lifted bark, knot holes).
Bats (foraging / commuting)	Direct and indirect effects on low suitability habitats (grassland, scrub and trees) for foraging and commuting bats, including through increases in artificial light.
Hazel dormouse	Possible permanent loss of very small areas scrub habitat suitable for hazel dormouse.
Invasive non-native plants	Non-native invasive variegated yellow archangel listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was recorded in the survey area.
Reptiles	Possible permanent losses of suitable habitats (grassland, tall forbs, bramble scrub).
***Opportunities*:**	
Habitat creation	Habitat creation and enhancement opportunities include wildflower grassland, wetland and hedgerow creation, habitat piles, hedgehog houses and bird/bat boxes.

0.4 Recommendations

0.4.1 Recommendations are made for further protected species surveys, together with preliminary recommendations for the protection of important ecological features to avoid or mitigate ecological impacts, and to enhance the ecology of the survey area post-construction; these are summarised in Table 0.2. It is intended that these recommendations should be considered during future changes to the design of development proposals so that protection of important ecological features is secured and opportunities for ecological enhancement are realised. The recommendations should be reviewed following the completion of further ecological surveys.

Table 0.2: Summary of recommendations

#	Summary of recommendations
Botanical / protected species surveys	
R1	Aerial inspections for roosting bats within trees at T1 and T2 if they are affected by the Proposed Development, undertaken between May and August.
R2	Bat activity surveys, undertaken between April and October.
R3	Presence / absence surveys for reptiles, undertaken between April and September.
R4	If any of the above species are present and affected by the proposals, a full Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) of the effects of the Proposed Development should be carried out. The EcIA will include detailed advice on ecological avoidance, mitigation, enhancement and/or compensation measures. This is in line with the latest guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2017a, 2017b, 2018).
Precautionary measures	
R5	Removal of nesting bird habitats (including vegetation and buildings) will be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season, which runs from 1 March to 31 August. It will therefore be carried out between September and February, but should be planned and implemented in accordance with the findings of the further ecological surveys recommended above.
R6	Badger's use of the landscape is dynamic and can change rapidly. A repeat badger survey should be undertaken within two months prior to commencement of Proposed Development in order to determine if any new badger setts have established within the survey area. The survey area should include the construction zone plus a 30-metre buffer to ensure that disturbance to badgers occupying a sett does not occur during the works.
R7	Bramble scrub removal works will be undertaken in accordance with a Non-Licenced Method Statement to reduce the risk of killing/injury to hazel dormouse.
R8	Vegetation clearance works will be undertaken during the hedgehog active season (broadly April to October) and in accordance with a Precautionary Working Method Statement to reduce the risk of killing/injury to hedgehog.
R9	Removal of hedgehog hibernation habitats will be undertaken outside of the hibernation season, which runs from November to March, inclusive. It will therefore be carried out between April and October, but should be planned and implemented in accordance with the findings of the further ecological surveys recommended above.
Ecological protection measures	
R10	Hoardings / tree protection fencing will be installed at the construction zone perimeter for the duration of the works to protect the adjacent Deciduous Woodland priority habitat at the northern boundary from temporary impacts including noise, light and dust pollution.
R11	Areas of deadwood habitat presently within the developable area will be retained and repositioned on the boundary of the development site.
R12	Standard site procedures to prevent impacts on trees will be adhered to during construction.
R13	A method statement will be prepared to ensure adequate control measures are adopted to prevent the spread of invasive variegated yellow archangel during construction.
R14	Construction works (including demolition, ground works and vegetation clearance) will be carried out in accordance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

#	Summary of recommendations
R15	The use of external lighting will be avoided or minimised to prevent impacts to nocturnal species such as bats. Lighting will not be directed towards the boundary trees or the deciduous woodland priority habitat to the north of the boundary.
R16	To ensure amphibians, reptiles and other wildlife can escape from entrapment in drainage gullies, it is recommended that wildlife ladders are installed.
R17	Small access gaps will be provisioned at the base of new fence boundaries to enable continued dispersal of small mammals across the site.
R18	At the end of each working day excavations will be covered over and open pipework capped to prevent entrapment of mammals, amphibians and other fauna.
R19	Destruction of fox dens or rabbit warrens will be undertaken in accordance with the Mammals Act 1996 by a registered pest control company.
Ecological enhancement	
R20	Green spaces will be sown with a native wildflower grassland seed mix.
R21	Hedgerow creation and/or restoration will use a range of native fruit, seed, nut and nectar-bearing shrub species appropriate to the location.
R22	New wetland habitat will be created within the Proposed Development as part of the drainage strategy and to increase aquatic habitat availability.
R23	The landscaping plans for the survey area will utilise plant species which encourage bats by providing additional food sources or roosting opportunities.
R24	Habitat piles for amphibians, invertebrates and reptiles will be created at the edges of the survey area, within or adjacent to retained or newly created habitats.
R25	The value of the survey area for birds will be enhanced by installing a range of artificial nest boxes onto new buildings and retained trees.
R26	The value of the survey area for bats will be enhanced by installing a range of artificial roost boxes onto new buildings and retained trees.
R27	The value of the survey area for hedgehog will be enhanced by installing hedgehog houses to quiet, sheltered locations with plenty of natural vegetative cover.

0.5 Conclusions

0.5.1 The majority of the survey area is of low to moderate ecological value. Significant constraints to the Proposed Development were identified including adjacent Priority Habitat and the potential presence of nesting birds, roosting and foraging/commuting bats, hazel dormouse, invasive non-native species, and reptiles. Further ecological surveys and impact assessment are required prior to submitting a planning application, to determine the value of the site for these species and to formulate a suitable mitigation strategy. Precautionary and ecological protection measures are recommended on an interim basis to enable offences under the relevant legislation to be avoided, along with recommendations for ecological enhancement.

1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Report

1.1.1 This report presents a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for the site of a proposed residential development at Maybourne Rise, Woking, Surrey (Grid Reference: SU 99859 55308). The report has been prepared to establish the site's suitability for development, inform the design process for the proposal, record the ecological baseline and identify key ecological features within and around the Application Site.

1.2 Objectives and Approach of the Study

1.2.1 The objectives of the PEA were to:

- Identify features present on or adjacent to the Application Site which are ecologically significant and which may act as constraints or opportunities to the Proposed Development;
- Consider the need for further ecological surveys which may be necessary; and
- Make preliminary recommendations for the protection of important ecological features, to avoid or mitigate ecological impacts, and to enhance the Application Site for wildlife following construction.

1.2.2 The approach to establishing the ecological baseline found within this report has been achieved through:

- A desk study involving a review of statutory and non-statutory nature conservation sites, and records of habitats and species from the local area;
- An extended UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) survey identifying the main habitats on and adjacent to the Application Site, and the presence of, or potential for, protected and/or notable species; and
- A PEA of the effects of development proposals with respect to the nature conservation value of the site.

1.3 Survey Area

1.3.1 The Application Site boundary is expected to be the same as the survey area boundary.

1.3.2 The survey area lies to the south of the town of Woking in Surrey. The survey area comprises c.2.35ha of mostly undeveloped land, currently dominated by other neutral grassland, with patches of tall forb vegetation and bramble scrub, rural trees and a section of road.

1.3.3 The survey area is bounded to the north by a small woodland within a residential property, to the east by Sutton Green Golf Club, to the south by a mature treeline and residential properties, and to the west by Maybourne Rise and a footpath. The extent of the survey area is outlined in red on Figure 1.1.

1.3.4 The wider landscape is characterised by a patchwork of the urban and suburban land, with the towns of Woking to the north and Guildford to the south, Sutton Green Gold Course, grassland and arable fields, many of which are set within hedgerows or other boundary vegetation, and small wooded areas. There are no ponds within 250m of the survey area but nine ponds lie within 500m.

1.4 Proposed Construction Activities

1.4.1 The survey area was surveyed in order to assess its suitability for a proposed residential development. No indicative or proposed layout plans were available at the time of writing.

Maybourne Rise, Woking, Surrey

Survey area



Figure 1.1: Survey area

0 150 300

Metres

N

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Ordnance Survey AC0000808122

Scale (at A4): 1:5,000 **Created by:** MT

Date: Apr 2026 **Reviewed by:** NP

Drawing number:

UE0783ECOARB-MaybourneRise: Site location: 260424

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2 Survey Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

2.1.1 A desk-based study was undertaken to examine published information and biological records from within the search area (survey area centroid plus 2km for bats, and 1km for all other data). This was extended to 5km for internationally designated sites. The desk study established the presence of designated sites of nature conservation interest, or records of protected/notable habitats/species within and surrounding the survey area. This information was collected from the following sources:

- The 'MAGIC' (Multi-agency Geographic Information for the Countryside) website: www.magic.gov.uk; and
- Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre (SBIC).

2.2 Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

2.2.1 The PEA (compliant to British Standard BS42020:2013) is based on a survey of the site undertaken on 21 April 2026 by an experienced ecologist. Weather conditions were cool (c.13°C), with a light north-easterly breeze (Beaufort Scale 1), 15% cloud cover and no precipitation.

2.2.2 Within the survey area every parcel of land was classified, recorded and mapped using standard colour codes, in accordance with the habitat types specified within the methodology for UKHab survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023). This allows rapid visual assessment of the extent and distribution of different habitat types. The UKHab System comprises a five-level Primary Habitat Hierarchy and a list of Secondary Codes. Each recorded habitat parcel is allocated a single Primary Habitat Code. Secondary Codes are associated with habitat parcels, where it is relevant to the whole parcel. UKHab guidance recommends that secondary codes are added to habitat parcels to:

- confirm the identity of habitat mosaic and complexes,
- add information about habitat origin and modifications; and
- add information on environmental context, management and land use in a consistent manner.

2.2.3 The divergence from this methodology is in relation to individual trees, whereby these features are recorded and mapped separately from the baseline habitat that they sit within.

2.2.4 No Minimum Mapping Unit (MMU) has been applied to the survey area and professional judgement has been used to define notable habitat parcels. Target notes were used to provide supplementary information on features which are of particular interest, significant to specific construction proposals, too small to map or to provide additional details, for example relating to species composition and structure.

2.2.5 This basic methodology was extended to provide more detail in relation to habitats with potential to support rare or protected fauna, as described by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's *Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal* (CIEEM, 2017b). The assessment of habitat suitability for protected, rare or priority species is based on current good practice guidance such as that presented in the *Herpetofauna Workers' Manual* (Gent and Gibson, 2003) and *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023). Where a species/group is not specifically evaluated, this indicates that no habitat of potential value for the species was identified during the survey.

Scope of the survey

2.2.6 The buffer zone for the desk study was set at 1km from the centre of the survey area (2km for bats and 5km for international sites) – a distance within which any notable ecological features likely to be affected by the Proposed Development would be identified.

2.2.7 All habitats within the survey area as indicated on Figure 1.1 were included in order to identify any ecological constraints that would be likely to apply to the scheme from within this zone. Adjacent habitats were also surveyed where appropriate in order to identify constraints falling outside of the Application Site and to place the survey area in its ecological context.

Evaluation criteria

2.2.8 Important ecological features were evaluated to the extent possible under the survey methods used, and in relation to a geographical frame of reference, i.e. international/European value being most important, then national, regional, metropolitan/county/district/borough, and lastly local (based on CIEEM, 2018).

2.2.9 Value judgements are based on various characteristics that contribute to the importance of ecological features. These include site designations (such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), or for undesignated features, the extent, naturalness, conservation status (local or national importance and so on), and quality of the ecological resource. Quality can refer to habitats (for instance if they are particularly diverse, are a good example of a specific habitat type, or provide for the requirements of important species or assemblages), other features (such as connectivity provided by wildlife corridors or mosaics of habitats) or the richness and abundance of species populations or assemblages.

2.3 Daytime Bat Walkover

Ground Level Tree Assessment

2.3.1 Trees within the survey area were subject to an external inspection for potential bat roost features (subject to safe access). All observable features potentially suitable for bats were noted and the overall suitability of the structure / tree for roosting bats was classified with reference to Table 2.1.

2.3.2 Trees were assessed from ground level for PRFs (Potential Roost Features) such as woodpecker holes, cavities, cracks or splits in major limbs (e.g. hazard beams, rot holes, frost cracks, knot holes,

occlusions, flush cuts, tear-outs, cankers or butt-rots), loose platey bark, aerial deadwood and dense ivy or epicormic growth.

Table 2.1: Potential suitability of trees for roosting bats (after Collins, J. (ed.), 2023)

Suitability	Roosting habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices / suitable shelter at all ground / underground levels).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

2.3.3 The surveys were carried out by two experienced surveyors with the aid of the following equipment: close-focusing binoculars to view areas inaccessible on foot; and digital camera with flash to record any evidence of bats or features suitable for use by bats.

2.4 Limitations

2.4.1 Biological records gathered during the desk study can provide an indication of the likely presence of a species on or adjacent to a site, however, the absence of records for protected species does not equate to evidence of their absence from the locality. Data search accuracy is variable and records are often georeferenced to the nearest 1km grid square.

2.4.2 Time of year when the survey was carried out and other variations will influence the results of the survey. Botanical species vary considerably in their flowering, seeding and fruiting periods, and surveys outside of these periods can confound accurate species identification. Where this is the case plants have been identified to lowest possible taxonomic group, normally genus. The possibility nonetheless exists for other species to be present within the survey area which were not recorded or otherwise indicated by the survey. Ornamental species are not included in botanical listings.

2.4.3 The survey reported herein was carried out in spring, prior to flowering for many botanical species. However, diagnostic vegetative characteristics are often still discernible, and the timing of the survey is not considered to be a significant limitation to meeting the report objectives.

2.4.4 There were no difficulties in gaining access to habitats within the survey area and assess protected species suitability. However, the adjacent residential gardens to the north, west and south could not be surveyed for signs of badger due to access restrictions.

2.4.5 This report aims to provide general advice on the ecological constraints associated with development proposals for the survey area and includes recommendations for further survey where appropriate. Where impacts are likely or further ecological surveys are recommended, a more detailed Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) of the effects of the Proposed Development

should be carried out based on the results of recommended surveys. The EcIA will include detailed advice on ecological avoidance, mitigation, enhancement and/or compensation measures. This is in line with the latest guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2017a, 2017b, 2018).

2.4.6 The details of this report will remain valid for a period of 18 months from the date of the survey (April 2026), after which the validity of this assessment should be reviewed to determine whether further updates are necessary (CIEEM, 2019). Note that the recommendations within this report should be reviewed (and reassessed if necessary) should there be any changes to the Application Site boundary or the Proposed Development upon which this report was based.

2.4.7 See Appendix VII for general Legal and Technical Limitations which apply to this document.

2.5 Personnel

2.5.1 The survey was carried out by Dr Richard Bickers BSc(Hons) PhD MCIEEM, an Associate Director of Ecology with more than fifteen years' professional consultancy experience in ecological field survey for a wide range of sites and development projects. Richard is a botanical specialist and keen birder and holds a Natural England Class Licence to survey for great crested newt (WML-CL09). Richard was assisted on site by Poppy Lankstead MSci(Hons) Qualifying CIEEM, an Assistant Ecologist with three seasons' survey experience. The report was extensively reviewed by Nick Pincombe BA(Hons) MSc CEnv MISEP MCIEEM, Director of Urban Edge Environmental Consulting, who has twenty years' experience in leading survey and impact assessment teams for a wide range of ecology and environmental planning projects. Nick holds Natural England Class Licences to survey for bats (WML-CL18) and great crested newt (WML-CL08).

3 Results

3.1 Desk Study

Statutory and non-statutory site designations

3.1.1 There are two internationally important wildlife sites, including one Special Protection Area (SPA) and one Special Area for Conservation (SAC), located within 5km of the survey area. One nationally important Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a statutory Local Nature Reserve (LNR), and five non-statutory Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) are located within 1km of the survey area. The information provided by SBIC regarding these sites is presented in Table 3.1, while Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 show their locations in relation to the survey area.

3.1.2 The survey area also lies within the impact risk zones for Smart's and Prey Heaths SSSI and Whitmoor Common SSSI.

Table 3.1: Nature conservation sites within the desk study search area

Site name	Location*	Description
International statutory sites		
Thames Basin Heaths (SPA)	c.1.4km south-west (closest site)	A complex of heathlands within the Thames Basin that support notable rare bird species, including Dartford warbler *Curruca undata*, nightjar and woodlark *Lullula arborea*.
Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham (SAC)	c.3.85km west	A mosaic of wet heath, valley bog, dry heath, scrub, woodland and acid grassland habitats. The fragmented heaths consist of several rare plant species including great sundew *Drosera anglica*, bog orchid *Hammarbya paludosa* and brown beak sedge *Rhynchospora fusca*. Notable animal species include sand lizard *Lacerta agilis*, smooth snake *Coronella austriaca* and European nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*. The site is also noted for its depressions on peat substrates.
National statutory sites		
Smart's and Prey Heaths (SSSI)	c.0.5km west	An area of 38.97-hectares consisting of a mosaic of heathland habitats including wet and dry heath, scrub, and fringing woodland. The heathland supports characteristic heathland birds, including occasional breeding Nightjar, a bird listed on Annexe I of the Birds Directive.
Local statutory sites		
Mayford Meadows (LNR)	c.0.8km north	Designated for its wet grassland, as well as marsh, swamp and tall-herb fen vegetation, and scrub and woodland.

Site name	Location*	Description
Non-statutory Designated Sites		
Hoe Stream (SNCI)	c.0.75km north-west	A stream selected as a link and habitat corridor for SNCI sites in the Hoe Valley. The stream is important in the Borough and provides a valuable link and habitat corridor for the SNCI sites in the How Valley SNCI corridor.
Mayford Meadows (SNCI)	c.0.8km north	Marsh, swamp, fen, scrub, woodland, and mesotrophic grassland supporting a range of wetland habitats. Important site for invertebrates, including nationally scarce invertebrates, and passerines of damp meadows.
Westfield Common (SNCI)	c.0.8km east	An area of 23.4-hectares consisting of woodland, scrub, wetland, grassland (cricket patch) and ponds. Supports Nationally Scarce plant species Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile*. Records of Great Crested Newts *Triturus cristatus* in two if the ponds. Species rich areas of wet woodland, drains and ponds.
Whitmoor Pond (SNCI)	c.0.85km south-west	Wet woodland, pond and wet tussocky grassland. Selected for its wet woodland and wet grassland habitat. The site supports two species shown on the Surrey Rare Plant Register as Surrey Scarce Water-violet *Hottonia palustris* and Spiked Water-milfoil *Myriophyllum spicatum*. The site is an important protective buffer for Whitmoor Common SSSI. Past records indicate it is an important bryophyte site.
Kemishford Bridge to Railway, Hoe Valley (SNCI)	c.1km west	11.9-hectares of damp meadows, pasture fields, rough grassland and streamside vegetation. Damp meadows support Common Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsia* and marsh orchids *Dactylorhiza spp.* as well as eleven species typical of grassland of conservation interest in Surrey. The site is a valuable link between Smarts Heath and Prey Heath SSSIs.

* Approximate distance and bearing from the survey area

Priority Habitats

3.1.3 Priority Habitats include those listed on local Biodiversity Action Plans and Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) listed under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC). SBIC and a search of the MAGIC database returned the following data on priority and other habitats within the desk study search area: Ancient Woodland, Deciduous Woodland, Lowland Heathland and Traditional Orchard; see Figure 3.3. None of these are shown as present within the survey area, but an area of Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat is adjacent to the north..

Records of protected, rare and notable species

3.1.4 Biological records were obtained from SBIC for the desk study search area and are summarised where relevant to the survey area in section 4.4.

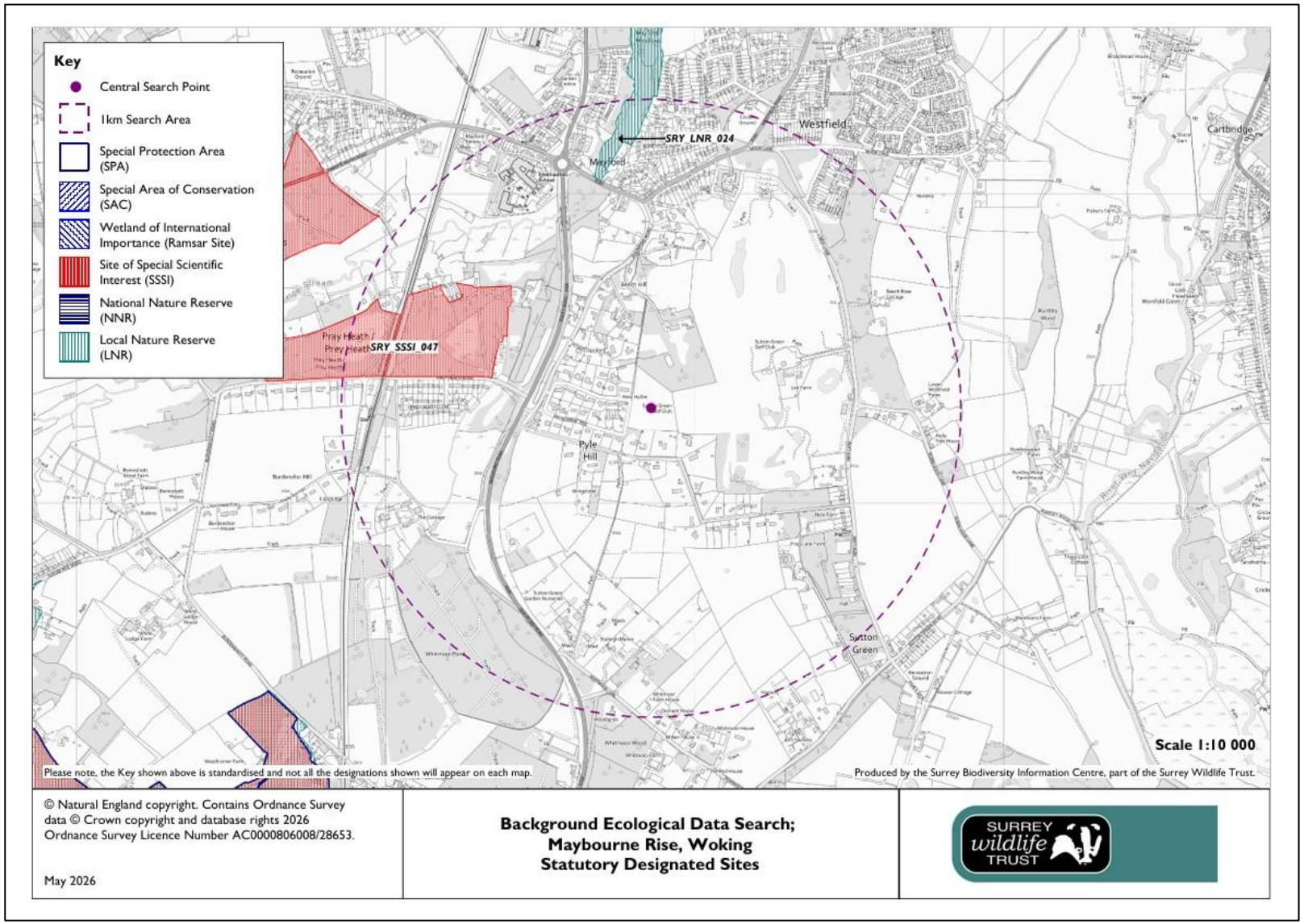


Figure 3.1: Statutory nature conservation sites within the desk study search area

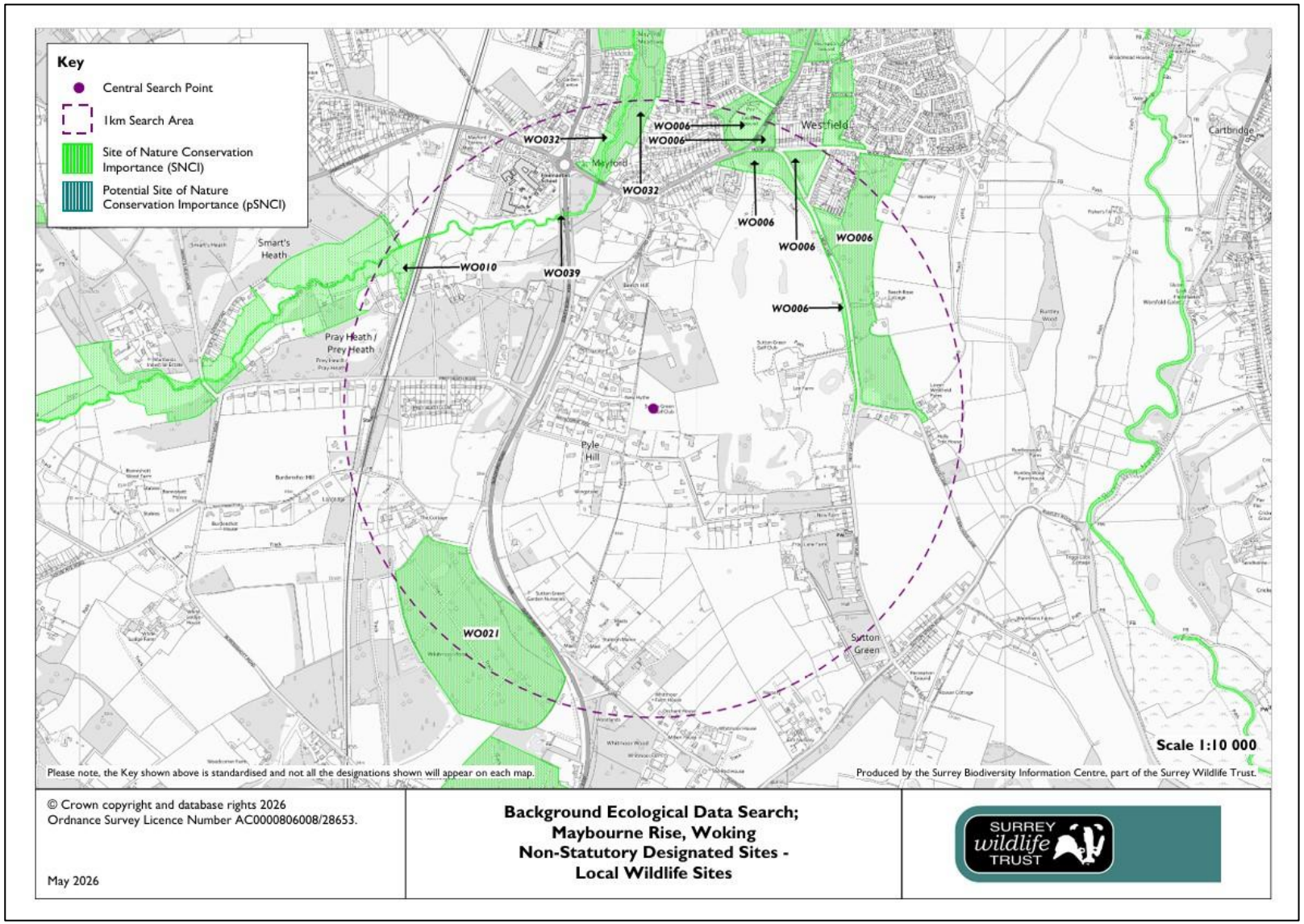


Figure 3.2: Non-statutory nature conservation sites within the desk study search area

Maybourne Rise, Woking, Surrey

Survey area

1km buffer

Priority Habitats

Deciduous woodland

Lowland fens

Lowland heathland

No main habitat but additional habitats present

Traditional orchard

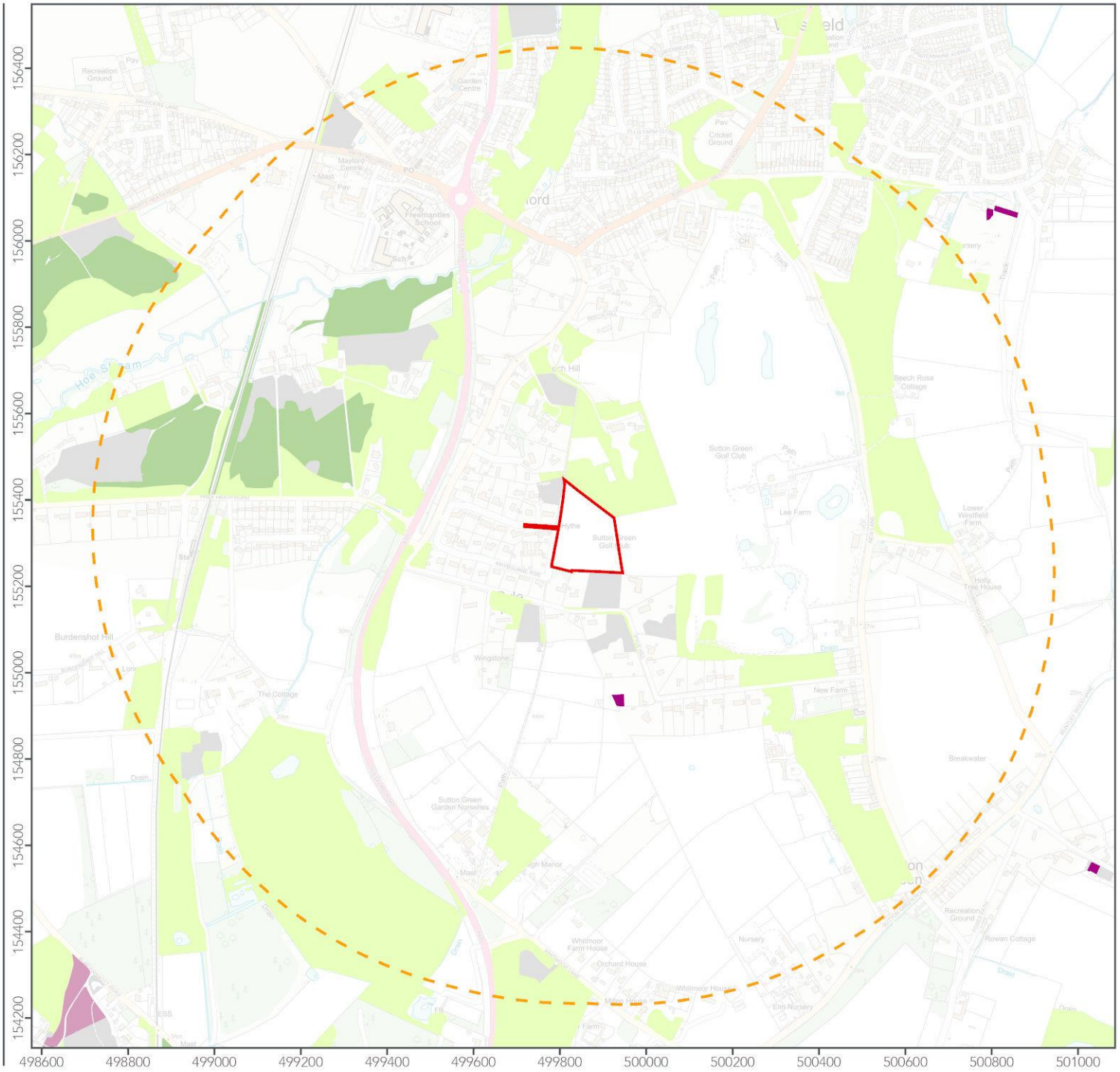


Figure 3.3: Priority Habitats within the desk study search area

0 410 820

Metres

N

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Ordnance Survey AC0000808122

Scale (at A4): 1:13,000 **Created by:** EM

Date: May 2026 **Reviewed by:** NP

Drawing number:

UE0783ECOARB-MaybourneRise: NE open data: 260515

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3.2 Habitats

3.2.1 The following UKHab habitats were identified within or adjacent to the survey area and are shown on the UKHab habitats plan at Appendix I. The habitats are described below broadly in the order of their extent, and Table 3.2 provides the area / length of each habitat type recorded within the survey area.

Table 3.2: Area / Lengths of habitat types recorded within the survey area

Habitat type*	Measurement
Area habitats	
Other neutral grassland	2.02ha
Tall forbs	0.17ha
Bramble scrub	0.12ha
Individual trees	n/a
Developed land; sealed surface	0.04ha

*secondary codes listed where relevant e.g. 10 – scattered scrub

Habitat type

Other neutral grassland

3.2.2 The survey area primarily consisted of other neutral grassland which showed evidence of being topped periodically with a sward height of around 5-50cm, although the majority of the site consists of a relatively homogenous sward height of around 25cm.

3.2.3 The grassland was moderately rich, with more than 8 species per m^2, based on the mean from five randomly placed quadrats across the grassland. The dominant grasses were common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, with perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne* and sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* also frequent. Cover of broadleaved herbs and sedges was greater than 20%, with several very common and widespread species such as creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, but also including several species of less 'improved' grassland, such as common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, lesser stitchwort *Stellaria graminea*, bird's foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*. Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* was locally frequent on the southern and eastern edges of the grassland. Cover of ryegrasses and white clover was less than 30%. A full species list and those found within each quadrat can be found in Appendix IV.

Tall forbs

3.2.4 A mixture of tall forbs was present along the northern section of the western boundary, within the south-western corner, and around the base of the dead tree toward the centre of the site. These areas were dominated by green alkanet *Pentaglottis sempervirens*, cleavers *Galium aparine* and common nettle *Urtica dioica* and occasionally featured red campion *Silene dioica*.

Developed land; sealed surface

3.2.5 Developed land; sealed surface comprised a section of the Maybourne Rise road.

Bramble scrub

3.2.6 Small areas of bramble scrub had colonised in places. This included along the fenceline on the western boundary and around the fallen tree in the north-eastern corner. Large patches were also located next to the access gate on the western boundary, in the north-eastern corner, and a large dense patch in the north-western corner where several trees also stood.

Individual trees

3.2.7 A variety of trees were scattered around the site, particularly in the -western part of the survey area. They included dead and mature pedunculate oaks *Quercus robur*, as well as silver birch *Betula pendula*, non-native false acacia *Robinia pseudoacacia*, elm *Ulmus spp.*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and goat willow *Salix caprea*.



View of the other neutral grassland from the western boundary.



Example of sward height and structure within the other neutral grassland.



Example of shorter sward height within the other neutral grassland.



Tall forbs located in north-western corner.



Patch of bramble scrub in the north-western corner.



Patch of tall forbs and some scattered trees at the north-western corner of the site.



Fenceline along southern boundary.



Patches of bramble scrub in the north-eastern corner; one patch surrounding a fallen dead tree at centre of image.

Daytime Bat Walkover

Ground Level Tree Assessment

3.2.8 No observable PRFs were identified on the majority of trees located within the survey area. However, PRFs were identified upon a large dead tree toward the centre of the survey area and a mature Pedunculate oak in the south-western corner (see Table 3.2 for full details).

Table 3.2: Classification of trees with bat roosting suitability

Tree #	Suitability	Species	Grid reference	Potential roosting features
T1	PRF-M	Dead tree	SU 99849 55342	▸ Large sections of lifted bark around stem and main limbs. ▸ Split/cracked deadwood limbs.
T2	PRF-M	Pedunculate oak	SU 99798 55254	▸ Split deadwood limb on southern aspect. ▸ Multiple small knot holes on limbs on the western aspect.



T2 – View from western aspect.



T2 – Example of split deadwood limb.



T1 – View from western aspect.



T1 – Example of loose bark and cracked deadwood limbs.

4 Evaluation

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section evaluates the survey area in terms of the habitats and species present or potentially present on site or its immediate vicinity, in the context of relevant legislation and planning policy. See Appendix VI for a review of the legislation and planning context.

4.2 Designated Sites

4.2.1 The survey area lies within the impact risk zones for Smart's and Prey Heaths SSSI and Whitmoor Common SSSI. Within these zones all planning applications (except householder applications) where the proposed development is outside or extends outside existing settlements/urban areas and will increase lighting levels or affect greenspace, farmland, semi natural habitats, trees/woodland, waterbodies, rural buildings/structures (manmade or natural) or linear landscape features such as hedgerows, streams and rivers through direct loss, fragmentation or change of use are required to consult Natural England. Residential developments of 50 or more dwellings (or of 10 or more units for rural residential developments) outside existing settlements/urban areas are required to consult Natural England on the likely effects the proposals might have on the designated sites.

4.2.2 These sites also form part the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. As the survey area also lies within 5km of the SPA a developer contribution, based on the number and size of dwellings, is required to the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) scheme to mitigate disturbance impacts on the bird species for which the SPA is designated.

4.2.3 None of the other statutory or non-statutory wildlife sites within the desk-study search zone are thought likely to be directly affected as a result of development of the survey area, due the likely scale of the development and its distance from the sites. Whilst there is some risk of a small increase in disturbance associated with greater recreational use of some of these sites arising from the development the effect is likely to be very small in relation to existing use.

4.3 Habitats

Evaluation

4.3.1 Table 4.1 presents a preliminary evaluation of the habitats recorded within or adjacent to the survey area, with reference to the criteria defined at section 2.2.8. It is important to note that these preliminary evaluations may be updated following completion of more detailed botanical or protected species surveys.

Table 4.1: Preliminary evaluation of habitats within the survey area

Habitat	Evaluation	Rationale
Other neutral grassland	Local	A small area of moderately diverse neutral grassland. Value also lies in the potential to support protected or notable species, including reptiles.
Bramble scrub	Negligible	Small patches of common and widespread habitat. Value also lies in the potential to support protected or notable species, including reptiles and breeding birds.
Tall forbs	Negligible	Small patches of common and widespread habitat but including non-native and invasive species. Value also lies in the potential to support protected or notable species, including reptiles.
Trees	Local	Few scattered trees, including two large mature and dead trees with suitability for bat roosting and nesting birds.
Developed land; Sealed surface	Negligible	Little or no potential to support protected or notable species.

Priority Habitats

4.3.2 There are no Priority Habitats within the survey area which could be affected by the development proposals.

4.3.3 A area of Deciduous Woodland Priority Habitat is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. During the survey, the woodland was observed to lack a shrub layer or characteristic woodland ground flora and appeared to be highly managed, reducing its ecological value for protected species. However, the woodland still has potential, for example, to be suitable for commuting and roosting bats. This habitat would be protected during construction.

Other habitats

4.3.4 The Proposed Development has potential to result in permanent losses of up to c.2.31ha of other neutral grassland, tall ruderals, bramble scrub and trees across the site, depending on the extent and layout of proposals. These areas are of relatively low ecological value and of not more than local importance but provide habitats suitable for a number of protected species (e.g. bats and reptiles).

4.4 Species

Great crested newt

4.4.1 SBIC returned ten records of great crested newt (GCN) *Triturus cristatus* from within the desk-study search zone, mostly from 2016 to 2025. The most recent record was located c.350m east of the survey area.

4.4.2 The survey area contains suitable terrestrial habitat for GCN, dominated by grassland of variable sward height and structure which is suitable for foraging. There are patches of bramble scrub and areas of tall forbs providing small sections of foraging, shelter and hibernation habitat.

4.4.3 There are no ponds within the survey area, and analysis of Ordnance Survey maps and aerial photography indicated that there are no ponds within 250m of the survey area, although nine ponds are present within 500m; see Appendix III for a pond plan.

4.4.4 Research undertaken by Natural England (Cresswell & Whitworth, 2004) suggests GCN will rarely move further than 200-250m from a breeding pond, with much reduced distances recorded where adjacent habitats are of good quality. Jehle (2000) also determined a terrestrial zone of 63m, within which 95% of summer GCN refuges were located. In addition, following the breeding season, Jehle and Arntzen (2000) recorded 64% of newts within 20m of the pond edge. As all ponds were more than 250m from the survey area any GCN present within them are considered more likely to use adjacent terrestrial habitats than migrate towards the habitat within the survey area. In conclusion, GCN is unlikely to be present within the survey area and is not considered to present a constraint to the Proposed Development. No further surveys for this species are required.

Birds (nesting)

4.4.5 SBIC returned records of 15 notable bird species from within the desk-study search zone during a date range of 1996 to 2016. The trees and scrub within the survey area are suitable for nesting birds such as wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, dunnock *Prunella modularis* (an Amber-listed bird of conservation concern (BoCC5); Stanbury *et al.*, 2021), and robin *Erithacus rubecula*. The grassland is unlikely to support ground-nesting species such as skylark *Alauda arvensis* (BoCC5 Red-listed) due to the small field size and tall boundary or adjoining vegetation, including frequent trees and woodland. Precautionary measures for nesting birds are recommended at section 5.3.

Invertebrates

4.4.6 SBIC returned ten records of protected invertebrate from within the desk-study search zone, during a date range of 1998 to 2016, including stag beetle *Lucanus cervus* (NERC s41 species of principal importance).

4.4.7 The habitats present are likely to be of moderate value for a range of common and widespread invertebrates. The presence of dead trees also provides potential habitat for saproxylic species such as stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*. Invertebrates are not considered to present a constraint to the Proposed Development and no further surveys for this group are required, but retention of the dead wood habitat is recommended in section 5.4.

Mammals (terrestrial)

Badger

4.4.8 SBIC did not return any badger *Meles meles* records.

4.4.9 The survey area provides suitable foraging habitat for badger but limited sett creation potential. A search for badger setts and signs of their presence was undertaken within a 30m radius of the survey area boundary but did not include the adjacent private properties to the north, south and west. Infrequent signs of potential badger foraging and commuting were observed within the grassland at the eastern boundary. Sett building habitats were restricted to pockets of scrub,

and no setts were found despite extensive searching. There was no other observable evidence of badger activity within or around the survey area, such as footprints, latrines, dung pits, or badger hairs caught at fence lines. Badger is not considered to present a constraint to the development proposals and no further surveys for this species are required. General ecological protection and precautionary measures for badgers and other mammals are advised in section 5.4.

Bats

4.4.10 SBIC returned 165 records of nine species of bat from within 2km of the survey area, during a date range of 1993 to 2023, including serotine *Eptesicus serotinus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*, whiskered *M. mystacinus*, Natterer's bat *M. nattereri*, Leisler's bat *Nyctalus leisleri*, noctule *N. noctula*, common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus,* soprano pipistrelle *P. pygmaeus,* Nathusius' pipstrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* and brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*. Most of these records were of bats in flight but included five roost sites, the closest to the survey area being located c.300m south in 2021.

4.4.11 The daytime bat walkover concluded that the mature oak tree and dead standing tree at T1 and T2 were of PRF-M suitability for roosting bats due to the range of PRFs exhibited and their proximity to good foraging and commuting habitat. Felling or arboricultural works to T1 and T2, if required to facilitate the proposals, could result in destruction of a bat roost or present a risk of killing, injury or disturbance if bats are present during the works. Further surveys for bats roosting in trees are recommended at section 5.2.

4.4.12 The neutral grassland habitat which dominates the survey area is unlikely to host an abundant invertebrate fauna due to the lack of diversity in forb and flowering plant species and is considered to be of low suitability as foraging habitat for bats. However, the tree lines adjacent to the boundaries to the north, east, and south and the scrub and tall forbs in the north-western corner may serve as navigation routes or foraging features for bats and are better quality. The majority of the grassland resource within the survey area (c.2.02ha) is expected to be lost and it is possible that the boundary trees will experience an increase in artificial lighting following development, which may render them less suitable for foraging/commuting in future. Activity surveys for foraging and commuting bats are recommended in section 5.2.

Hazel dormouse

4.4.13 SBIC returned no records of hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* within the desk study search area.

4.4.14 The bramble scrub in the north-west of the survey area provides potential habitat for dormouse. However, it is considered to be largely sub-optimal as it is species-poor and unlikely to provide sufficient year-round food availability, as well as being relatively isolated from other suitable habitat in the local landscape. No further surveys for this hazel dormouse are required but precautionary measures for the removal of small areas of potentially suitable habitat area recommended in section 5.3.

Water vole and otter

4.4.15 SBIC returned one record of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* and no records of otter *Lutra lutra* from within the desk study search area.

4.4.16 There are no riparian habitats running through or adjacent to the survey area, nor in the local landscape, making it unlikely that either species would be present. Neither species is considered to present a constraint to Proposed Development and further surveys are not required.

Plants, native

4.4.17 SBIC returned records of nine protected plant species from within the desk-study search zone during a date range of 1993 to 2016.

4.4.18 Small amounts of native bluebell were scattered along the southern and eastern edges of the survey area. The species is listed on schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which affords it protection against possession, transport and trade. No other rare or protected species of flora were recorded within the survey area. Given the nature of the grassland affected no further surveys are considered necessary.

Plants – invasive non-native species and injurious weeds

4.4.19 A small area of Variegated Yellow Archangel, an invasive non-native species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, was noted in the south-western corner of the survey area (TN2). This will require treatment and removal prior to the Proposed Development, and recommendations with respect to this are given at section 5.4. No other schedule 9 plants were recorded.

Reptiles (terrestrial)

4.4.20 SBIC returned 410 records of terrestrial reptile species from within the desk-study search area, during a date range of 1991 to 2025. Three of the four widespread species have been recorded in the vicinity; slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica* and common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*. The closest record to the site was a grass snake located c.620m east in 2025.

4.4.21 The survey area contains suitable habitats for reptiles, dominated by grassland with variable sward height and structure which is suitable for foraging. Bramble scrub and tall ruderals also provide shelter and dispersal habitat, while also offering hibernation potential. Construction works would potentially involve site clearance, creation of access tracks and materials storage compounds, vehicle movements and groundworks, which together could present a risk of killing or injury for reptiles if present within the survey area. Further surveys for reptiles are recommended at section 5.2.

Other protected, rare or notable species

4.4.22 SBIC returned one record of hedgehog *Erinaceous europaeus* from within the desk-study search zone located c.970m south-west from the survey area in 2000. The survey area contains habitats suitable for this species, including grassland and scrub. Hedgehog is listed as a species of

principal importance under the NERC and is undergoing a significant population decline. Works within suitable habitat should be undertaken in accordance with a Precautionary Working Method Statement to reduce the risk of killing/injury to hedgehogs, as recommended at section 5.3. Measures should be taken to continue accommodating this species within the survey area post-development (see section 5.4).

5 Recommendations and Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 With regard to the objectives of this PEA, recommendations are made below for further protected species survey where necessary. Preliminary recommendations are also made for the protection of important ecological features, and/or to avoid or mitigate ecological impacts, and to enhance the survey area for wildlife following construction. It is intended that these recommendations should be considered during future changes to the design of development proposals so that protection of important ecological features is secured and opportunities for ecological enhancement are realised. The recommendations should be reviewed following the completion of further ecological surveys.

5.2 Protected Species Surveys

5.2.1 The following species / groups (Table 5.1) will require additional surveys prior to refining development designs and formulating a suitable avoidance and mitigation strategy (if required).

Table 5.1: Recommendations for further ecological surveys

#	Recommendations for further ecological survey
R1	Aerial inspections for roosting bats within trees T1 and T2 if they are affected by the Proposed Development, undertaken between May and August.
R2	Bat activity surveys, undertaken between April and October.
R3	Presence / absence surveys for reptiles, undertaken between April and September.
R4	If any of the above species are present and affected by the proposals, a full Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) of the effects of the Proposed Development should be carried out. The EcIA will include detailed advice on ecological avoidance, mitigation, enhancement and/or compensation measures. This is in line with the latest guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2017a, 2017b, 2018).

Roosting bats

5.2.2 The Proposed Development may require felling or arboricultural works to trees T1 and T2. These works could result in destruction of a bat roost or killing, injury or disturbance to roosting bats, and more detailed inspection of these features is recommended in line with current guidelines (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023). Aerial inspections aim to closely investigate potential bat roost features, using an endoscope to search for evidence of bats and investigate the depth, extent and quality of PRFs. Aerial inspections must be undertaken/supervised by surveyors licensed to use endoscopes, and are either completed by qualified tree climbers or from a cherry picker. In some cases, aerial inspection will show that a PRF does not extend into a cavity and therefore is not of roosting potential. In such cases the tree may be removed without further constraints. An initial

aerial inspection can be undertaken at any time of year and in some cases can rule out the need for further survey. The following survey effort is required:

- PRF-M: Three aerial inspections, with at least two in the period May to August.
- PRF-I: No further survey required but compensate for lost PRFs and fell under precautionary methods.

5.2.3 Where aerial access is not possible or features are too extensive to adequately inspect, substitute aerial inspections with emergence surveys as described below.

Foraging and commuting bats

5.2.4 Bat activity surveys are recommended due to the relatively large area of low and moderate quality foraging and commuting habitats (open and wooded) which may be directly or indirectly affected by development proposals. Bat activity surveys should follow current guidelines (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023), combining transect surveys with static automated monitoring and supplementary methods as appropriate, and can be carried out between April and October. Transect surveys should begin at sunset and continue for 2–3hrs, or begin 2 hours before dawn and continue at least until sunrise, or continue through the night. The level of survey[1] effort required is dependent on overall habitat suitability, as follows:

- Moderate/high suitability: One survey visit per season (spring/summer/autumn), combined with static detector monitoring for five consecutive nights per month (April to October).
- Low suitability: One survey visit per season (spring/summer/autumn), combined with static detector monitoring for five consecutive nights per season.

Reptiles

5.2.5 The survey area contains habitats suitable for reptiles including grassland, tall ruderals, scrub. There is hence a risk of killing or injury to reptiles and further surveys by an experienced herpetologist are required to establish their presence or likely absence within the proposed construction footprint. The survey should involve a minimum of seven visits to the site in suitable weather conditions during the active season (broadly April to September), following current guidelines (Froglife, 1999; Gent & Gibson, 2003). Methods include visual encounter surveys (i.e. targeted transects) and searches of artificial and natural refuges.

5.3 Precautionary Measures

5.3.1 The following species/groups (Table 5.2) require specific precautionary measures to be adhered to prior to and during construction to ensure that an offence under the relevant legislation is avoided.

[1] Additional survey visits may be required if survey data reveals activity of interest that requires more observation.

Table 5.2: Recommended precautionary measures

#	Recommended precautionary measures
R5	Removal of nesting bird habitats (including vegetation and buildings) will be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season, which runs from 1 March to 31 August. It will therefore be carried out between September and February, but should be planned and implemented in accordance with the findings of the further ecological surveys recommended above, as other protected species may still be present outside of the bird breeding season. Any construction works undertaken within the bird breeding season where suitable bird breeding habitat exists will require a site check for nesting birds by a suitably qualified ecologist. This will take place no more than two days prior to works commencing. This is to ensure that no disturbance to active bird nests occurs. If a nest is found it must be cordoned off and works adjacent to the nest must be delayed until such time that the chicks have fledged from the nest. This will be supervised by a suitably qualified ecologist.
R6	Badger's use of the landscape is dynamic and can change rapidly. A repeat badger survey should be undertaken prior to commencement of development works in order to determine if any new badger setts have established within the survey area. The survey area should include the construction zone plus a 30 metre buffer to ensure that disturbance to badgers occupying a sett does not occur during the works.
R7	Works to remove sections of bramble scrub will be undertaken in accordance with a Non-Licenced Method Statement to reduce the risk of killing/injury to hazel dormouse. The Method Statement will specify reasonable avoidance measures including progressive reduction of vegetation height by hand (initial cut to 15cm max during November to March, stump removal from May) to enable any dormice present to disperse into suitable surrounding areas of retained habitat, and will be carried out under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist.
R8	Vegetation clearance works in areas of long grass, tall forbs and bramble scrub within the survey area will be undertaken in accordance with a Precautionary Working Method Statement to reduce the risk of killing/injury to hedgehog. The Method Statement will specify reasonable avoidance measures including and timing restrictions (works to be carried out during the hedgehog active season, broadly April to October) and progressive reduction of vegetation height to displace any hedgehog present will be carried out. Where possible, rotational clearance should be employed, with scrubby patches left to provide nesting habitat. If rotational clearance is not possible, temporary piles of dead wood and brash piles can be created in undisturbed areas on site for nesting. Areas of high traffic (vehicle movements), should be blocked off to prevent hedgehog access, whilst maintaining connectivity throughout the rest of the survey area.
R9	Removal of hedgehog hibernation habitats will be undertaken outside of the hibernation season, which runs from November to March, inclusive. It will therefore be carried out between April and October, but should be planned and implemented in accordance with the findings of the further ecological surveys recommended above, as other protected species may still be present outside of the hedgehog hibernation season.

5.4 Ecological Protection Measures

5.4.1 The following protection measures (Table 5.3) will be carried out as part of the Proposed Development scheme, alongside any specific measures that are recommended following the protected species surveys described above.

Table 5.3: Recommended ecological protection measures

#	Recommended ecological protection measures
R10	Hoardings / tree protection fencing will be installed at the construction zone perimeter for the duration of the works to protect the adjacent Deciduous Woodland priority habitat at the northern boundary from temporary impacts including noise, light and dust pollution. The exact location of hoarding will be led by the root protection zones of surrounding trees, to be confirmed by the arboricultural report for the survey area.
R11	Areas of deadwood habitat presently within the developable area will be retained and, if necessary, repositioned towards the boundaries of the development site. This includes a single fallen tree and a large standing dead tree. Deadwood habitats provide an important source of food and shelter for a variety of bats, birds, invertebrates, plants and fungi. In particular, deadwood is an important feature for stag beetle which have been recorded in the local area.
R12	British Standard BS 5837:2012 will be followed at all times during construction when working in close proximity to trees or shrubs which are to be retained. According to BS 5837:2012 the root protection area is 12x diameter of the trunk (diameter is measured around the trunk at a height of 1.5m above ground level), which will constitute the construction exclusion zone (CEZ). The distance is measured from the centre of the trunk to the nearest part of any excavation or other work. If a separate tree survey is carried out for the proposed development, works will be undertaken in accordance with the approved arboricultural method statement.
R13	Non-native invasive variegated yellow archangel is present within the south-western corner of the survey area at TN1. A method statement will be prepared to ensure adequate control measures are adopted during construction to prevent it spreading from the survey area. Control measures can comprise a variety of options including: hand digging/removal, foliar herbicide application and hand pulling of any seedlings.
R14	Construction works (including demolition, ground works and vegetation clearance) will be carried out in accordance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP: Biodiversity). The CEMP will specify: potentially damaging construction activities; "biodiversity protection zones"; measures to avoid or reduce impacts during construction (including protective fences, exclusion barriers, pollution control and methodological or seasonal restrictions); location and timing of sensitive works; periods during which ecological supervision is required; and the role & responsibilities of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW).
R15	The use of external lighting will be avoided or minimised to prevent impacts to nocturnal species such as bats. Lighting will not be directed towards the boundary trees or the deciduous woodland priority habitat to the north of the boundary. The use of external lighting will be avoided or reduced to the minimum required for its intended purpose, during both construction and operation. This will be of benefit to nocturnal species e.g. bats. Where external lighting is to be provided, it will be low-level, directional lighting with minimal spill and glare, and consideration will be given to reduced hours of operation and/or a movement responsive system of control. Use narrow-spectrum bulbs and light sources that emit minimal UV light, avoiding white and blue wavelengths of the spectrum. Use glass lantern covers instead of plastic to filter UV light. Lighting will not be directed towards the boundary trees or the deciduous woodland priority habitat to the north of the boundary.
R16	To ensure amphibians, reptiles and other wildlife can escape from entrapment in drainage gullies, it is recommended that wildlife ladders are installed. Ladders are usually constructed

#	Recommended ecological protection measures
	from a mesh material, allowing a stable footing for animals to escape. Examples include the ACO wildlife gully ladder[2].
R17	To enable continued dispersal of hedgehogs (which require large territory sizes) and other small mammals across the site and within the local area following the Proposed Development, small access gaps to measure c.13x13cm are recommended to be provisioned at the base of all new fence boundaries. These will allow easy passage for small mammals to continue foraging in the area while still being small enough to contain pets.
R18	All excavations left overnight will either be covered over, or provided with a ramp to enable easy escape of badgers, hedgehogs, small mammals, amphibians and other fauna, and inspected each morning prior to recommencement. Open pipework greater than 150mm outside diameter will be blanked off at the end of each working day.
R19	Where fox dens or rabbit warrens are to be damaged or destroyed as part of the proposed works, this will be undertaken in accordance with the Mammals Act 1996 by a registered pest control company.

5.5 Recommendations for Ecological Enhancement

5.5.1 The following ecological enhancements (Table 5.4) should be considered to improve the value of the survey area for biodiversity after construction, but should be reviewed and specified further following the completion of recommended protected species surveys.

Table 5.4: Preliminary recommendations for ecological enhancement

#	Preliminary recommendations for ecological enhancement
R20	New green spaces will be sown with a native wildflower grassland seed mix (e.g. wildflower meadow, flowering lawn).
R21	Hedgerow creation and/or restoration as part of the landscaping plan for the survey area will use a range of native shrub species. Fruit, seed, nut and nectar-bearing species will be used preferentially when selecting species for landscape planting, so that food sources are available throughout the year (e.g. hazel *Corylus avellana*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, field maple *Acer campestre*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, privet *Ligustrum vulgare*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus* and honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*). If an evergreen hedge is required for landscape screening, suitable native species include holly *Ilex aquifolium*, yew *Taxus baccata*, although both can be rather slow growing. Beech *Fagus sylvatica* and hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* are also widely used as hedging plants and, although not evergreen, these will keep their brown leaves through winter if trimmed in late summer.
R22	New wetland habitat will be created within the Proposed Development as part of the drainage strategy and to increase habitat availability for species such as grass snake, amphibians and invertebrates such as dragonflies.
R23	The landscaping plans for the survey area will utilise plant species which encourage bats. The table at Appendix V lists species of plants that can provide benefit for bats either by providing a food source for insects on which bats feed, or providing additional roosting opportunities

[2] https://www.aco.co.uk/products/wildlife-gully-ladder#:~:text=ACO's%20new%20Wildlife%20Gully%20Ladder,often%20fall%20into%20road%20gullies.

#	Preliminary recommendations for ecological enhancement
	(Gunnell *et al.*, 2012). The plant species are predominantly native to Britain, but not all species will be suitable in all situations. The aim is to encourage a diverse range of invertebrate food sources and increased bat roost potential.
R24	Habitat piles will be created within areas of retained rough grassland or marginal vegetation, at the edges of the survey area close to boundary woodland. These will provide additional hibernation and shelter resources for amphibians, invertebrates, reptiles, and a range of other wildlife, and egg-laying substrate for grass snakes. Hibernacula can be created by partially burying logs and stones in sheltered areas away from flood risk, and covering over with earth or turf. Breeding habitats can be created by collecting grass clippings and other prunings arising from landscape management of the site, and composting them in a secluded corner of the site. Deadwood piles can be created using arisings from site clearance to provide shelter and breeding opportunities for invertebrates, particularly saproxylic species which are dependent on deadwood.
R25	The value of the survey area for birds will be enhanced by installing a range of artificial nest boxes. These will be placed on retained mature trees within the development or at the site boundaries, or incorporated within building facades. For instance: ▪ New buildings: nest boxes can be installed under the eaves for birds that utilise buildings for nesting, e.g. house sparrow *Passer domesticus* and swift *Apus apus* (compliant to British Standard BS 42021:2022). These species are of principal importance, of conservation concern and/or are notable in Surrey. ▪ Trees: nest boxes with entrance holes suitable for tit species, woodpeckers and nuthatches, and open-fronted boxes suitable for spotted flycatcher *Muscicapa striata* or song thrush *Turdus philomelos*, and treecreeper *Certhia familiaris* boxes.
R26	The value of the survey area for bats will be enhanced by installing a range of artificial roost boxes. These will be placed on retained mature trees within the development or at the site boundaries, or incorporated within building facades. Boxes suitable for a range of species should be used, for instance: ▪ New buildings: integral bat tubes can be installed within buildings which face vegetated areas, particularly towards the north, south and west boundaries of the site. Bat tubes can be incorporated into the design of the building so that only the access holes are visible from the exterior of the building. The Schwegler 1FR or 2FR Bat Tube is designed to meet the characteristic requirements of the types of bats that inhabit buildings such as pipistrelles *Pipistrellus spp.* or serotines *Eptesicus serotinus*. It is designed to be installed on the external walls of buildings, either flush or beneath a rendered surface. ▪ Pipistrelles: bat boxes suitable to install on mature trees either within or at the edges of the development include the Schwegler 1FF Flat Bat Box, or other manufacturer's equivalent. ▪ Noctules *Nyctalus spp.* and brown long eared bats *Plecotus auritus*: bat boxes suitable to install on mature trees either within or at the edges of the development include the Schwegler 2F General Purpose Bat Box or the 2FN Woodland Bat Box, or other manufacturer's equivalent. Bat boxes on buildings should ideally be located south-facing (between south-east and south-west) and above 4m from ground level. They should be installed facing vegetation features such as mature hedgerows or trees, but with a clear line of flight for bats exiting the roost, and away from sources of artificial light.

#	Preliminary recommendations for ecological enhancement
R27	The value of the survey area for hedgehog will be enhanced by installing hedgehog houses. Ready-made hedgehog homes can be purchased, but placement is key if hedgehogs are encouraged to use these resources. Hedgehog houses should be placed in a quiet, shady, sheltered, dry spots (for example, against a wall, fence or hedge), with plenty of natural cover from vegetation. Entrances should not face north or north-east to ensure any occupants are protected against cold winter winds. An entrance tunnel or dividing walls inside will help prevent access by predators. Hedgehog houses placed in public areas may be at risk of vandalism unless placed in very discrete locations and covered with natural materials, such as beneath a brash or log pile. An alternative cost effective and natural technique for a site is discrete log piles, appropriately located and which provide suitably sized openings at the base and a void inside that acts as a chamber.

5.6 Conclusions

5.6.1 The majority of the survey area is of low to moderate ecological value. Significant constraints to the Proposed Development were identified including adjacent Priority Habitat and the potential presence of nesting birds, roosting and foraging/commuting bats, hazel dormouse, invasive non-native species, and reptiles. Further ecological surveys and impact assessment are required prior to submitting a planning application, to determine the value of the site for these species and to formulate a suitable mitigation strategy. Precautionary and ecological protection measures are recommended on an interim basis to enable offences under the relevant legislation to be avoided, along with recommendations for ecological enhancement.

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Appendix I: UKHab Habitats Plan

Maybourne Rise, Woking, Surrey

- Survey area
- Other neutral grassland
- Bramble scrub
- Developed land, sealed surface
- Tall forbs
- Rural tree (small)
- Rural tree (medium)
- Rural tree (large)
- Rural tree (very large)
- Target note



0 40 80

Metres

N

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Ordnance Survey AC0000808122

Scale (at A4): 1:1,300 **Created by:** EM

Date: May 2026 **Reviewed by:** NP

Drawing number:

UE0783ECOARB-MaybourneRise: HabitatsPreDev: 260521

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Appendix II: Target Notes

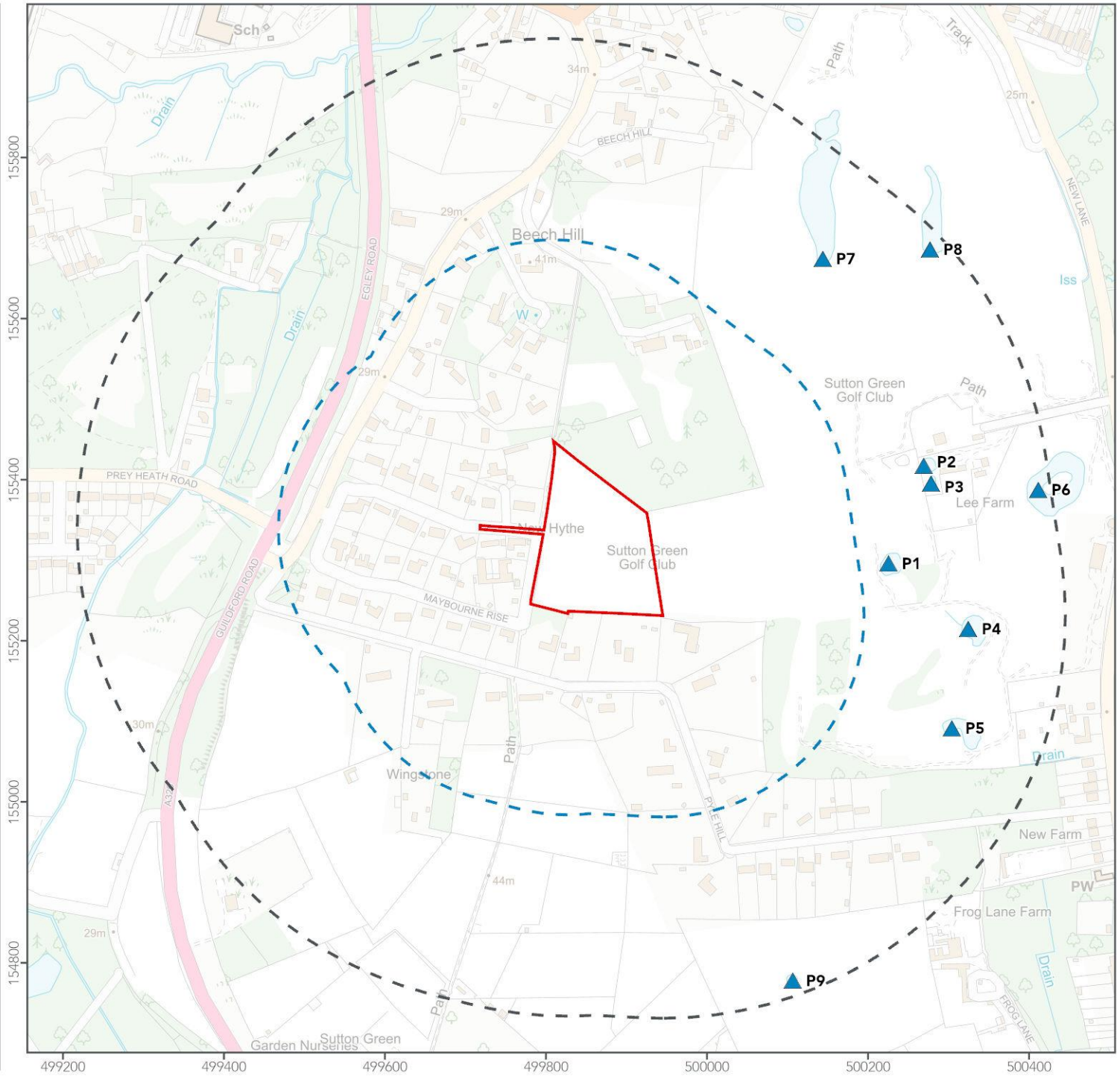
Target Note	Photo
1. Small patches of variegated yellow archangel.	
2. Mammal paths and push throughs along the southern end of the eastern boundary.	 

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Appendix III: Pond Plan

Maybourne Rise, Woking, Surrey

- Survey area
- 250m buffer
- 500m buffer
- Pond



0 220 440

Metres

N

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Ordnance Survey AC0000808122

Scale (at A4):	1:7,000	**Created by:**	EM
Date:	Apr 2026	**Reviewed by:**	NP

Drawing number:
UE0783ECOARB-MaybourneRise: Ponds: 260427

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Appendix IV: Grassland Species List

Species		DAFOR	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Agrostis capillaris	Common bent	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alopecurus pratensis	Meadow foxtail	O					
Anisantha sterilis	Barren brome	O/LF					
Anthoxanthum odoratum	Sweet vernal grass	F		✓	✓		✓
Arrhenatherum elatius	False oat grass	O/LF				✓	
Dactylis glomerata	Cocksfoot	O/LF					
Festuca rubra	Red fescue	O/LA					✓
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire fog	F/LA	✓		✓		
Lolium perenne	Perennial rye grass	F	✓				
Poa pratensis	Smooth meadow grass	O/LF				✓	
Schedonorus arundinaceus	Tall fescue	R					
Carex divulsa	Grey sedge	R					
Carex pendula	Pendulous sedge	R					
Juncus conglomeratus	Compact rush	LF					
Juncus effusus	Soft rush	LF					
Luzula campestris	Field woodrush	O/LF					
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow	O/LF					
Aegopodium podograria	Ground elder	LF/LA					
Centaurea nigra	Common knapweed	O					
Cirsium arvense	Creeping thistle	O					
Ficaria verna	Lesser celandine	O					
Galium aparine	Cleavers	O					
Geranium dissectum	Cut-leaved cranesbill	F				✓	✓
Glechoma hederacea	Ground ivy	O					
Heracleum sphondyllium	Hogweed	O					
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Bluebell	LF					
Hypericum perforatum	Perforate St John's wort	O					
Hypochaeris radicata	Cat's ear	LF					
Lamiastrum galeobdolon argenteum	Variegated yellow archangel	LF					
Lamium album	White deadnettle	O					
Lamium purpureum	Red deadnettle	R					
Leucanthemum vulgare	Ox eye daisy	O					
Lotus corniculatus	Bird's foot trefoil	O					✓
Pentaglottis sempervirens	Green alkanet	O/LA					
Plantago lanceolata	Ribwort plantain	O				✓	
Potentilla reptans	Creeping cinquefoil	O				✓	
Ranunculus repens	Creeping buttercup	F	✓	✓			✓
Rubus fruticosus agg.	Bramble	O/LF					
Rumex acetosa	Common sorrel	F			✓	✓	✓
Rumex crispus	Curled dock	O/LF				✓	
Rumex obtusifolius	Broadleaved dock	F					

Species		DAFOR	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Stellaria graminea	Lesser stitchwort	F	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Stellaria holostea	Greater stitchwort	LF					
Taraxacum officinale agg.	Dandelion	F	✓				
Urtica dioica	Common nettle	O/LA					
Veronica chamaedrys	Germander speedwell	F	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Vicia sativa	Common vetch	F	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Vicia tetrasperma	Smooth tare	F	✓		✓	✓	
Violoa odorata	Sweet violet	R					
No. species/quadrat			**9**	**6**	**8**	**12**	**8**
Mean species/quadrat					**8.6**		

UK Habs Lowland Meadows Priority Habitat indicator species

Non-native species

Invasive non-native species (i.e. listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act)

DAFOR scale
D Dominant
A Abundant
F Frequent
O Occasional
R Rare
L Locally or patchily

Appendix V: Plant Species Which Encourage Bats

Please see following pages which are drawn from Gunnell *et al*. (2012).

Plant Species	Common name	Native	Type	Benefit	Soil	Light	Extensive green roofs	Living walls	Rain Gardens	Hedges/ trees	Beds/ borders
Acer campestre	Field maple	N	T/S	C	Any	Sun / shade				Y	
Acer platanoides	Norway maple		T	S	Well drained / alkaline	Sun / shade				Y	
Acer saccharum	Sugar maple		T	S	Any	Sun / shade				Y	
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow	N	HP	C,F	Well drained	Sun	Y				
Ajuga reptans	Bugle	N	HP	C,F	Any	Sun / shade	Y				
Anthyllis vulneraria	Kidney vetch	N	HP	F	Well drained	Sun	Y				
Aubrieta deltoidea	Aubrieta		H	F	Well drained	Sun / shade		Y			
Betula pendula	Silver birch	N	T	C	Sandy / Acid	Sun				Y	
Cardamine pratensis	Cuckoo-flower	N	HP	F	Moist	Sun / shade					Y
Carpinus betulus	Hornbeam	N	T	C	Clay	Sun				Y	
Centaurea nigra	Common knapweed	N	HP	C,F	Dry, not acid	Sun	Y				Y
Centranthus ruber	Red valerian		HP	F	Well drained / alkaline	Sun	Y				Y
Clematis vitalba	Old man's beard	N	C	F	Well drained / alkaline	Sun				Y	
Corylus avellana	Hazel	N	S	C	Any dry	Sun / shade		Y		Y	
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	N	S	S,C	Any	Sun / shade				Y	
Daucus carota	Wild carrot	N	Bi	S,C,F	Any	Sun	Y				Y
Dianthus spp.	Pinks	N	A-Bi	F	Well drained	Sun	Y	Y			Y
Digitalis purpurea	Foxglove	N	Bi	C	Well drained	Shade / partial shade				Y	Y
Erica cinerea	Bell heather	N	S	F	Sandy	Full sun					Y
Erysimum cheiri	Wallflower		Bi-P	F	Well drained	Sun		Y			
Eupatorium cannabinum	Hemp agrimony	N	H	F	Moist	Sun / shade					Y
Fagus sylvatica	Beech	N	T	C,R	Well drained / alkaline	Sun / shade				Y	
Foeniculum vulgare	Fennel		H	F	Well drained	Sun					Y
Fraxinus excelsior	Common ash	N	T	C,R	Any	Sun / shade				Y	
Hebe spp.	Hebe species		S	F	Well drained	Sun / shade				Y	Y
Hedera helix	Ivy	N	C	F,C	Any	Sun / shade		Y		Y	Y
Hesperis matrionalis	Sweet rocket		H	F	Well drained / dry	Sun / shade					Y
Hyacinthoides non-scripta	Bluebell	N	B	F	Loam	Shade / partial shade		Y		Y	Y
Ilex aquifolium	Holly	N	T	C	Any	Sun / shade				Y	

Plant Species	Common name	Native	Type	Benefit	Soil	Light	Extensive green roofs	Living walls	Rain Gardens	Hedges/ trees	Beds/ borders
Jasminum officinale	Common jasmine		C	F	Well drained	Sun		Y			Y
Lavandula spp.	Lavender species		S	F	Well drained / sandy	Sun		Y			Y
Linaria vulgaris	Toadflax	N	HP	C	Well drained / alkaline	Sun	Y				Y
Lonicera periclymenum	Honeysuckle	N	C	F	Well drained	Sun		Y		Y	
Lotus corniculatus	Bird's foot trefoil	N	HP	F	Well drained / dry	Sun	Y				Y
Lunaria annua	Honesty		Bi	F	Any	Sun / partial shade	Y				
Malus spp.	Apple		T	C	Any	Sun				Y	
Matthiola longipetala	Night-scented stock		A	F	Well drained/ moist	Sun			Y		
Myosotis spp.	forget-me-not	N	A	F	Any	Sun	Y	Y			
Nicotiania alata	Ornamental tobacco		A	F	Well drained/ moist	Sun / partial shade			Y		
Oenothera spp.	Evening primrose species		Bi	F	Well drained/ dry	Sun	Y				
Origanum vulgare	Marjoram	N	HP	F	Well drained/ dry	Sun	Y	Y			
Populus alba	White poplar	N	T	C	Clay loam	Sun				Y	
Primula veris	Cowslip	N	HP	F	Well drained/moist	Sun / partial shade	Y				
Primula vulgaris	Primrose	N	HP	F	Moist	Partial shade	Y	Y		Y	
Prunus avium	Wild cherry	N	T	C	Any	Sun				Y	
Prunus domestica	Plum		T	C	Well drained/ moist	Sun				Y	
Prunus spinosa	Blackthorn	N	S	C	Any	Sun / partial shade				Y	
Quercus petraea	Sessile oak	N	T	C,R	Sandy loam	Sun / shade				Y	
Quercus robur	Common oak	N	T	C,R	Clay loam	Sun / shade				Y	
Rosa canina	Dog rose	N	S	C	Any	Sun			Y	Y	
Salix spp.	Willow species	N	S	S,C	Moist	Sun / shade			Y	Y	
Sambucus nigra	Elder	N	T	C	Clay loam	Sun				Y	
Saponaria officinalis	Soapwort	N	HP	F	Any	Sun					
Saxifraga oppositifolia	Saxifrage	N	HP	C	Well drained	Sun	Y	Y			
Scabiosa columbaria	Small scabious	N	HP	F	Well drained/ alkaline	Sun	Y				
Sedum spectabile	Ice plant		HP	F	Well drained/ dry	Sun	Y				
Silene dioica	Red campion	N	HP	F	Any	Shade / partial shade		Y	Y	Y	
Sorbus aucuparia	Rowan	N	T	C	Well drained	Sun				Y	

Plant Species	Common name	Native	Type	Benefit	Soil	Light	Extensive green roofs	Living walls	Rain Gardens	Hedges/ trees	Beds/ borders
Stachys lanata	Lamb's ears		HP	F	Well drained/dry	Sun	Y				
Symphotrichum spp.	Michaelmas daisies		HP	F	Any	Sun					
Tegetes patula	French marigold		A	F	Well drained/moist	Sun					
Thymus serpyllum	Creeping thyme	N	HP/S	F	Well drained/dry	Sun	Y	Y			
Tilia x europaea	Common lime		Type	C	Any	Sun / shade				Y	
Trifolium spp.	Clover species	N	HP	F	Any	Sun	Y				
Veleriana spp.	Valerian species	N	HP	F	Moist	Sun / partial shade			Y		
Verbascum spp	Mulleins	N	Bi,HP	C	Well drained	Sun	Y				
Verbena bonariensis	Verbena		HP	F	Well drained/moist	Sun					
Viburnum lantana	Wayfaring tree	N	S	C	Any	Sun / shade				Y	
Viburnum opulus	Guelder rose	N	S	C	Moist	Sun / shade			Y	Y	
Viola tricolor	Pansy	N	A	F	Well drained/moist		Y	Y			

The table above is derived from the BCT publication Landscape and Urban Design for Bats and Biodiversity (Gunnell et al., 2012) and lists suggested plant species that can provide benefit for bats either by providing a food source for insects or roost potential. The plants listed are predominately native to Britain. The small group of non-native plants is included for their documented value for wildlife. This list has been checked against Natural England's list of invasive non-native plants.

HP: Herbaceous perennial
Bi: Biennial
BiP: Biennial perennial

T: Tree
S: Shrub
H: Herb

A: Annual
B: Bulb
C: Creeper/climber

Benefit:
C: Moth caterpillar food plant
S: Sap sucking insects (e.g. whiteflies)

F: Flowers attract adult moths
R: Good roost potential

Appendix VI: Legislation and Planning Context

Legislation

General

The main legislative instruments for ecological protection in England and Wales are: the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA; as amended); Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW; as amended); Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC; as amended); the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations; as amended); and the Environment Act 2021.

WCA 1981 consolidated and amended pre-existing national wildlife legislation in order to implement the Bern Convention and the European Union Wild Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC). It complements the Habitats Regulations, offering protection to a wider range of species than the latter. The Act also provided for the designation and protection of nationally important conservation sites of value for their floral, faunal or geological features, termed Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Schedules of the act list protected species of flora and fauna, as well as invasive species, and detail the possible offences that apply to these species.

The CROW Act 2000 amended and strengthened existing wildlife legislation detailed in the WCA. It placed a duty on government departments & the National Assembly for Wales to have regard for biodiversity, provided increased powers for the protection and maintenance of SSSI, and created a right of access to parts of the countryside. The Act contained lists of habitats and species (Section 74) for which conservation measures should be promoted, in accordance with the recommendations of the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio Earth Summit) 1992.

The NERC Act 2006 consolidated and replaced aspects of earlier legislation. Section 40 of the Act places a duty upon all local authorities and public bodies in England and Wales to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity in exercising all of their functions, including by restoring or enhancing habitats and species populations. Sections 41 (England) and 42 (Wales) list habitats and species of principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity (otherwise known as Priority Habitats/species as listed in the now superseded UK Biodiversity Action Plan). These lists supersede Section 74 of the CRoW Act 2000. These species and habitats are a material consideration in the planning process.

The Habitats Regulations 2017 are the principal means by the European Union Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) was transposed into English and Welsh law, and place a duty upon the relevant authority of government to identify sites which are of importance to the habitats and species listed in Annexes I and II of the Habitats Directive. Those sites which meet the criteria in Europe are designated as Sites of Community Importance by the European Commission, and subsequently identified as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) by the European Union member states. Since the UK's departure from the European Union the European Commission no longer has a role in designating SACs in the UK. The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 establish a single stage designation process, where the appropriate authority is the decision maker. The selection and designation of SACs is based on the criteria set out in Annex III of the Habitats Directive insofar as it applies to the UK, and having regard to the advice of the appropriate nature conservation body.

The 2019 Amendment Regulations have created a new national site network on land and at sea, including both the inshore and offshore marine areas in the UK. The national site network includes existing SACs, existing Special

Protection Areas (SPA) originally designated as a result of Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds, and any new SACs and SPAs designated under the 2019 Regulations. SACs and SPAs in the UK therefore no longer form part of the EU's Natura 2000 ecological network.

The Habitats Regulations also provide for the protection of individual species of fauna and flora of European conservation concern listed in Schedules 2 and 5 respectively (European Protected Species (EPS)). Schedule 2 includes species such as otter and great crested newt for which the UK population represents a significant proportion of the total European population. It is an offence to deliberately kill, injure, disturb or trade in these species. Schedule 5 plant species are protected from unlawful destruction, uprooting or trade under the regulations. Under the Habitats Regulations disturbance includes any activity which is likely to: impair the ability of a EPS to survive, breed, reproduce, or rear/nurture its young; impair the ability of a EPS to migrate or hibernate; or significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species.

The Environment Act 2021, among other things: established an Office for Environmental Protection; introduced a mandatory requirement for all new development requiring planning permission to achieve a net gain for biodiversity of at least 10% (although implementation of this is transitionary); amended the NERC Act duty to conserve biodiversity by explicitly adding a duty to enhance; and requires local authorities to produce local nature recovery strategies.

Great crested newt (Triturus cristatus; GCN) (and natterjack toad Bufo calamita)

GCN is fully protected by the WCA and the Habitats Regulations. The legislation makes it an offence, *inter alia,* to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a GCN (including its eggs).
- Possess or control a live or dead GCN, any part of, or anything derived from a GCN.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place that a GCN uses for shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a GCN while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

Wild birds

Wild birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take away any wild bird. It is also an offence to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built or to take or destroy the egg of any wild bird. In addition, certain species are listed on Schedule 1 of the WCA (such as kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*). This makes it an additional offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb the adults while they are in and around their nest or intentionally or recklessly disturb their dependent young. Such species are considered to be in greater need of legal protection or of high nature conservation priority.

Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC5) are included on Red and Amber lists (Stanbury *et al.*, 2021). Birds on the Red list are those of highest conservation priority due significant and sustained population decreases and/or range contractions (e.g. house sparrow *Passer domesticus* and starling *Sturnus vulgaris).* Birds on the Amber list are the next most critical group and include species whose population/range have shown moderate declines, or which have recovered to some extent from historical decline, such as dunnock *Prunella modularis.*

Badger (Meles meles)

Badgers are listed under Schedule 6 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act which grants them partial protection. This protection is extended by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (Badger Act) which makes it an offence to take, injure or kill a badger, interfere with a sett, sell or possess a live badger, or mark or ring a badger without a licence. Under the Act disturbance is illegal without a licence. Natural England has published guidelines to be adopted when determining whether an activity is 'disturbing' i.e. a licence is required when, for example, using heavy machinery (generally tracked vehicles) within 30m of any entrance to an active sett. Licences are not normally issued during the badger breeding season (December – June inclusive).

Bats (Chiroptera)

Bats and their roosts are fully protected by protected by the WCA and the Habitats Regulations, and seven species of bats are species of principal importance. The legislation makes it an offence, *inter alia*, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a bat.
- Possess or control a live or dead bat, any part of a bat, or anything derived from a bat.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place that a bat uses for shelter or protection. This is taken to mean all bat roosts whether bats are present or not.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.
- Make a false statement in order to obtain a licence for bat work.

Under the Habitats Regulations disturbance includes any activity which is likely to:

- Impair the ability of a bat to survive, breed, reproduce, or rear/nurture its young.
- Impair the ability of a bat to migrate or hibernate.
- Significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species.

Eurasian beaver (Castor fiber)

From October 2022 Eurasian beavers are protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- Deliberately disturb a beaver – this includes any action likely to impair their ability to survive, breed or rear their young.
- Deliberately injure, capture or kill a beaver.
- Damage or destroy the breeding site or resting place of a beaver.

It is also an offence to:

- Possess, control or transport a beaver.
- Sell or exchange a beaver.
- Offer a beaver for sale or exchange.

This applies whether the beaver is alive or dead and includes beaver parts and derivatives.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) prohibits the release of beavers into the wild except with a licence. It also makes it an offence to use any trap or snare for the purpose of killing, taking or restraining beavers. It is also an offence to set a trap or snare in place to cause injury to a beaver.

Some management activities near or in a site of special scientific interest may need permission from Natural England under this legislation.

Beavers are protected from unnecessary suffering and cruel treatment under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

Hazel dormouse (Muscardinus avellanarius)

Dormouse is fully protected by the WCA and the Habitats Regulations. The legislation makes it an offence, *inter alia*:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a dormouse.
- Possess or control a live or dead dormouse, any part of, or anything derived from a dormouse.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place that a dormouse uses for shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a dormouse while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

Otter (Lutra lutra)

Otter is fully protected by the WCA and the Habitats Regulations. The legislation makes it an offence, *inter alia*, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take an otter.
- Possess or control a live or dead otter, any part of, or anything derived from an otter.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place that an otter uses for shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb an otter while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

Water vole (Arvicola amphibious)

Water vole is fully protected by the WCA. The legislation makes it an offence, *inter alia*, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a water vole.
- Possess or control a live or dead water vole, any part of, or anything derived from a water vole.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place that a water vole uses for shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a water vole while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

Reptiles

The four common species (slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*, common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, adder *Vipera berus* and grass snake *Natrix helvetica*) are partially protected under the WCA. They are protected, *inter alia*, against intentional killing and injuring. The handling and translocation of these reptiles does not require a licence.

Smooth snake *Coronella austriaca* and sand lizard *Lacerta agilis* are fully protected by the WCA and the Habitats Regulations. The legislation makes it an offence, *inter alia*, to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a smooth snake or sand lizard.
- Possess or control a live or dead smooth snake or sand lizard, any part of, or anything derived from a smooth snake or sand lizard.
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place that a smooth snake or sand lizard uses for shelter or protection.
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a smooth snake or sand lizard while it is occupying a structure or place that it uses for shelter or protection.

Weeds Act 1959 / Ragwort Control Act 2003

This legislation provides for orders to be made for control where notifiable weed species such as ragwort are said to be a problem. The act does not make it illegal to have ragwort (or other weed species) on your land, make it illegal to allow ragwort to spread, or force landowners automatically to control it. However, if DEFRA is satisfied that there are injurious weeds to which this Act applies growing upon any land it may serve upon the occupier of the land a notice in writing requiring them, within the time specified in the notice, to take such action as may be necessary to prevent the weeds from spreading.

Planning context

National Planning Policy Framework (Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in December 2024, outlines the Government's commitment to the conservation of wildlife and natural features. It is concerned with:

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological conservation 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;
- Maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
- Minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current & future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;
- Preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
- Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.

The NPPF requires that local 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 scape across local authority boundaries".

To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, the NPPF states that planning policies 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, local planning authorities should aim to protect 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.

The following wildlife sites should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

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

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site. The policies within the NPPF (and additional guidance contained within Circular 06/2005) are a material planning consideration.

UK/Local Biodiversity Action Plan Designations and Birds of Conservation Concern and Red Data Book Listings

Note that BAP designations and status as RSPB Birds of Conservation Concern or Red Data Book species does not offer any further legal protection, but planning authorities are required to prevent these species from being adversely affected by development in accordance with National Planning Policy and the CROW and NERC Acts. The United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP), first published in 1994 and updated in 2007, was a government initiative designed to implement the requirements of the Convention of Biological Diversity to conserve and enhance species and habitats. The UKBAP contained a list of Priority Habitats and species of conservation concern in the UK, and outlined biodiversity initiatives designed to enhance their conservation status.

However, as a result of devolution, and new country-level and international drivers and requirements, much of the work previously carried out by the UK BAP is now focussed at a country-level rather than a UK-level, and the UK BAP was succeeded by the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework' in July 2012. The UK lists of Priority Habitats and species nonetheless remain an important reference source and were used to draw up statutory lists of Priority Habitats and species in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The Priority Habitats and species correlate with those listed on Section 41 and 42 of the NERC Act.

The UKBAP required that conservation of biodiversity be addressed at a County level through the production of Local BAPs. These are targeted towards species of conservation concern characteristic of each area. In addition, a number of local authorities and large organisations have produced their own BAPs. Where they exist, Local BAP targets with regard to species and habitats are a material consideration in the planning process.

Local Planning Policy

The following policies relating to wildlife and biodiversity are contained within the adopted Woking Local Development Document, Woking Core Strategy (Woking Borough Council, 2012):

CS7 Biodiversity and nature conservation

The Council is committed to conserving and protecting existing biodiversity assets within the Borough. It will require development proposals to contribute to the enhancement of existing biodiversity and geodiversity features and also explore opportunities to create and manage new ones where it is appropriate. This will include those habitats and species listed in the Surrey Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). Any development that will be anticipated to have a potentially harmful effect or lead to loss of features of interest for biodiversity will be refused.

The Council will pay particular consideration to the following hierarchy of important sites and habitats in the Borough.

1. *Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) (European).*
2. *Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves (National).*
3. *Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), and other Ancient Woodland not identified in 1 and 2 above (Local).*

These sites are identified on the Proposals Map.

Within locally designated sites development will not be permitted unless it is necessary for appropriate on-site management measures and can demonstrate no adverse impacts 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 that cannot not be mitigate.

The Council will encourage new development to make positive contribution to biodiversity trough the creation of green spaces, where appropriate, and the creation of linkages between sites to create a local and regional biodiversity network of wildlife corridors and green infrastructure. It will seek to retain and encourage the enhancement of significant features of nature conservation value on development sites.

Any development with potential impact on the SPA or SAC will be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment to determine the need for Appropriate Assessment.

Appendix VII: Legal and Technical Limitations

- This report has been prepared by Urban Edge Environmental Consulting Ltd (UEEC Ltd) with all reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the contract made with the Client to undertake this work, and taking into account the information made available by the Client. No other warranty, expressed or implied, is made as to the professional advice included in this report or any other services provided by us.
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- The advice provided in this report does not constitute legal advice. As such, the services of lawyers may also be considered to be warranted.
- Unless otherwise stated in this report, the assessments made assume that the sites and facilities that have been considered in this report will continue to be used for their current planned purpose without significant change.
- All work carried out in preparing this report has utilised and is based upon UEEC Ltd's current professional knowledge and understanding of current relevant UK standards and codes, technology and legislation. Changes in this legislation and guidance may occur at any time in the future and may cause any conclusions to become inappropriate or incorrect. UEEC Ltd does not accept responsibility for advising the Client or other interested parties of the facts or implications of any such changes;
- Where this report presents or relies upon the findings of ecological field surveys (including habitat, botanical or protected/notable species surveys), its conclusions should not be relied upon for longer than a maximum period of two years from the date of the original field surveys. Ecological change (e.g. colonisation of a site by a protected species) can occur rapidly and this limitation is not intended to imply that a likely absence of, for instance, a protected species will persist for any period of time;
- This report has been prepared using factual information contained in maps and documents prepared by others. No responsibility can be accepted by UEEC Ltd for the accuracy of such information;
- Every effort has been made to accurately represent the location of mapped features, however, the precise locations of features should not be relied upon;
- Populations of animals and plants are often transient in nature and a single survey visit can only provide a general indication of species present on site. Time of year when the survey was carried out, weather conditions and other variables will influence the results of an ecological survey (e.g. it is possible that some flowering plant species which flower at other times of the year were not observed). Every effort has been made to accurately note indicators of presence of protected, rare and notable species within and adjacent to the site but the possibility nonetheless exists for other species to be present which were not recorded or otherwise indicated by the survey;
- Any works undertaken as a consequence of the recommendations provided within this report should be subjected to the necessary health & safety checks and full risk assessments.

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