Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

22 Bridge Place

Survey Date: 7th September 2026

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1. Introduction

1.1 Report rationale

This report has been prepared at the request of Mr Laurence Kelly. Eco 360 were commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal at 22 Bridge Place, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 2AB. The survey effort involved both a desktop study and field survey.

The main purpose of this assessment was to identify the broad habitats present within the survey area and to assess the site for evidence of protected species use and features of ecological interest. The field survey was carried out on 7th September 2026 by Nathan O'Shea BSc (Hons), Ecologist.

1.2 Site description and works

The site comprises a vacant, detached two-storey former station master's house with attached single-storey elements, together with surrounding garden, gravelled and bare-ground areas and boundary vegetation. The building is in a deteriorated condition, with broken windows and extensive localised damage to the roof coverings and external fabric. Habitats within the site include developed land, artificial unvegetated unsealed surfaces, unvegetated garden, introduced shrub, bare ground and individual trees.

The site occupies a constrained urban location beside Bridge Place and The Avenue, with major roads, parking and built development nearby. Trees and shrubs within and adjoining the site provide local shelter and limited habitat connectivity. The building and surrounding vegetation provide potential opportunities for roosting bats and nesting birds.

1.3 Proposals

This report is to inform a planning application for the renovation of the existing building, a single-storey extension to the northeast, rebuilding of the single-storey flat-roofed conservatory to the southeast, a proposed garden room, boundary alterations and formation of off-road parking. The supplied existing and proposed site layout is included in Appendix A.

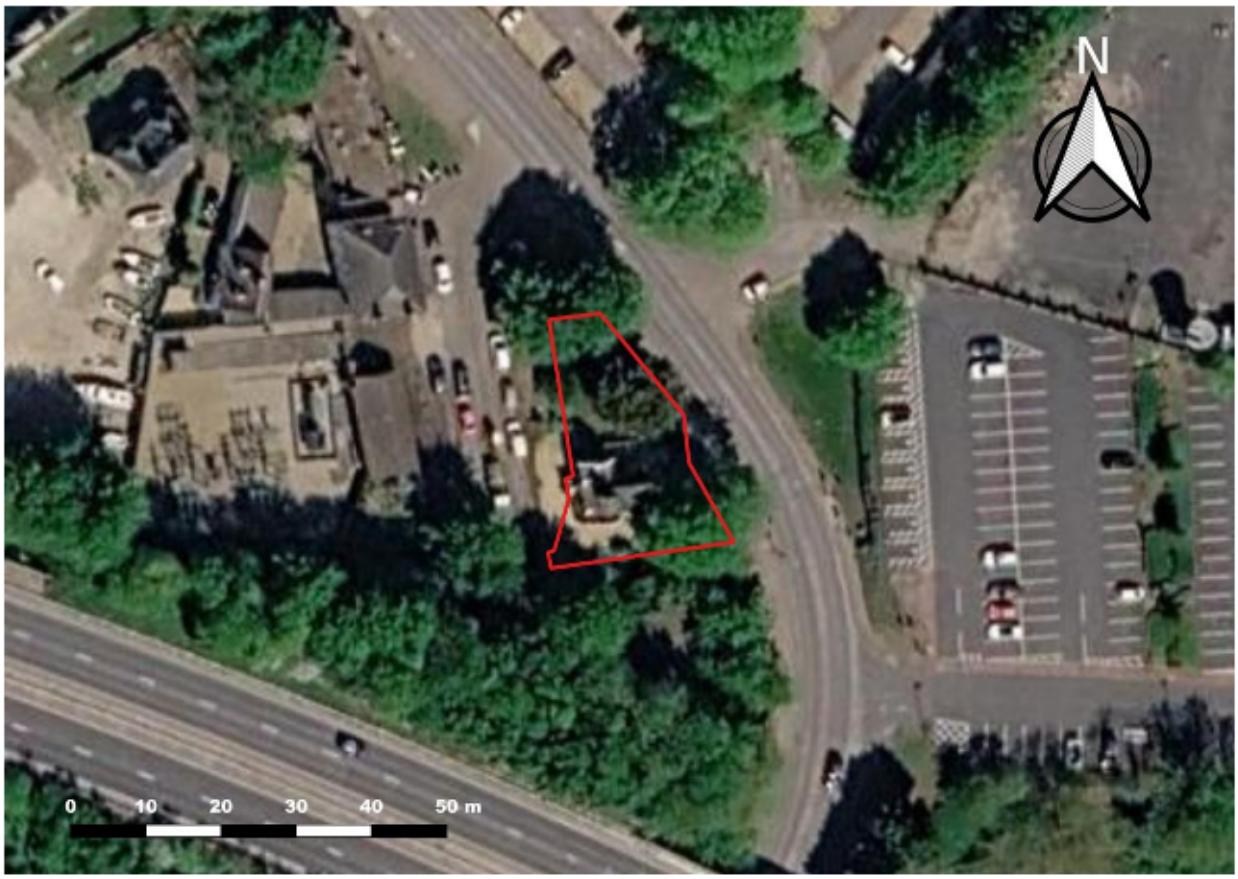

Figure 1: An aerial map showing the location of the land proposed for re-development (outlined in red) in relation to some of the local landscape.

2. Survey Methodology

2.1 Desktop Survey

A variety of resources were independently consulted to assess the known local records within the nearby area and the importance of the site within the local landscape from an ecological perspective. The resources used were the Local Records Centre, www.naturalengland.org.uk, www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk, Google Maps, Google Earth and Bing Maps. A search of other relevant nature conservation information was made through the use of the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) database.

The local records centre was contacted to provide data on all protected species and designated sites within a 1km radius of the proposed development site. Where possible, species records were also sourced from open access records including nbnatlas.org and inaturalist.org.

2.2 Field Survey

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (previously referred to as an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey) was carried out using the method outlined in the JNCC Handbook for *Phase 1 Habitat Survey: a technique for environmental audit (2010)*. This method aims to map and describe the broad habitat types and notable features present on the surveyed site.

As part of the field survey, the floral species will be identified and noted down. This will consider the dominant, abundant, frequent, occasional and rare (DAFOR) species within each habitat on the survey site. The impacts of the proposed development scheme will be assessed by this report.

Each habitat will be assessed for the presence and/or the potential presence of protected species. The impacts of the proposed scheme of works on all potential protected species on site will be assessed. From this, either remedial action or recommended phase 2 presence/absence surveys will be devised.

Some of the classification codes and colours listed within the JNCC handbook may have been slightly modified for this project.

Habitat Surveys can be carried out at any time of the year, with the optimal time period falling between the months of April through until September. Eco 360 feels confident that the majority of the floral species located on the site were competently identified during the survey effort. In addition to this, Eco 360 feels confident that this report reflects an accurate representation of the sites suitability for protected species to be present.

All sites surveyed by Eco 360 will be run against the relevant Local Wildlife Site Criteria to assess whether or not they meet the required standards.

3. Desktop Survey Results

3.1 Sites

A search of the MAGIC database identified no statutory designated site overlapping the proposed works. Portholme Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Portholme Special Area of Conservation (SAC) are located within 1 km of the site. The proposed works are confined to the existing property and are separated from the designated site by intervening roads, built development and the River Great Ouse.

3.2 Species Records within 2km of the site

3.2.1 Amphibians

Within the ecological data search, three amphibian species have been identified within 2km from the survey site. These are the common frog (*Rana temporaria*), smooth newt *(Lissotriton vulgaris)* and great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*).

3.2.2 Birds

Within the ecological data search, a total of 64 bird species were revealed within 2km of the site. This includes several UKBAP priority species: the hedge sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*) and spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*).

3.2.3 Crustacean

Within the ecological data search, no invasive crustacean species have been revealed within 2km of the site.

3.2.4 Fish

Within the ecological data search, no fish species have been revealed within 2km of the site.

3.2.5 Flora

Within the ecological data search, multiple floral species have been revealed in the search radius.

3.2.6 Fungi

Within the ecological data search, multiple fungal species has been revealed within 2km of the site.

3.2.7 Invertebrates

Within the ecological data search, 334 species have been identified within a 2km radius of the site. This includes a UKBAP priority lepidoptera species; the knot grass moth (*Acronicta rumicis*).

3.2.8 Mammals

Within the ecological data search, 25 mammal species were revealed within 2km of the site. These include multiple deer species and the Eurasian badger (*Meles meles*). These also include multiple bat species identified within 2km of the site.

3.2.9 Molluscs

Within the ecological data search, 27 mollusc species have been revealed within 2km of the site. This includes one invasive freshwater species: the zebra mussel (*Dreissena polymorpha*).

3.2.10 Reptiles

Within the ecological data search, two reptile species were identified within 2km of the survey site. These are the grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) and common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*).

4. Field Survey

4.1 Habitats

The following habitats were recorded within the survey site. The Phase 1 habitat map is provided in Appendix B.

4.1.1 Developed land; sealed surface

Developed land comprises the detached two-storey former station master's house and its attached single-storey elements. The building is in a deteriorated condition, with broken windows and substantial localised damage to roof tiles, eaves and external walls.

4.1.2 Artificial unvegetated unsealed surface

Gravelled and other artificial unvegetated unsealed surfaces occur around the building and within the areas used for access and hardstanding.

4.1.3 Unvegetated garden and bare ground

Areas of unvegetated garden and bare ground are present, including bare ground to the south of the building before denser vegetation begins.

4.1.4 Introduced shrub

Introduced shrub is present within the garden and is dominated by Franchet's cotoneaster, with other ornamental and naturally established species including butterfly-bush and sycamore saplings.

4.1.5 Individual trees

Individual trees comprise immature silver birch and common hazel in the northwest, a large common yew to the north and a large sycamore to the east. The eastern sycamore displayed no evident potential roost features for bats and no bird nests were recorded within it.

4.2 Species

The field survey identified protected-species potential associated principally with the building and the site vegetation. The assessment below also considers the surrounding habitats and connectivity to the wider landscape.

4.2.1 Amphibians

No suitable aquatic habitat was identified within the application site. The existing building, gravelled surfaces, bare ground and unvegetated garden provide only limited terrestrial habitat for amphibians.

Taking account of the habitat types, their management and the site's urban setting, the potential for impacts upon amphibians, including great crested newts, is considered negligible.

4.2.2 Badgers

No evidence of badger activity or setts was identified within the application site.

Several holes were recorded within the northern garden area; however, these were considered consistent with rabbit warrens. The enclosed garden and surrounding urban environment provide limited opportunities for badgers. The potential for impacts upon badgers is considered negligible.

4.2.3 Bats

The building, trees and garden habitats were assessed for their potential to support roosting, foraging and commuting bats.

Building Survey

One principal building is present within the application site: the detached two-storey former station master's house (B1), including its attached single-storey elements.

B1 – Former Station Master's House

External

B1 is a detached two-storey building beneath pitched tiled roofs, with dormer windows, chimney stacks and attached single-storey elements. The building is in a deteriorated condition, with broken windows and extensive localised damage to the roof coverings and external fabric.

Potential roosting features are present on all elevations and include damaged and displaced roof tiles, gaps at the eaves, openings around the dormers and other gaps within the external building fabric. A crack within the northeastern wall provides access to a cavity close to the location of the proposed extension. A suspected bat dropping was recorded in association with this feature.

The southeastern single-storey flat-roofed element is extensively damaged and open to light and wind. This part of the building is considered unsuitable for use by roosting bats.

Given the numerous potential access points, the sheltered setting and the suspected bat dropping, B1 is assessed as having High potential to support roosting bats.

Internal

The building contains an open upper-floor and loft arrangement. Roofing membrane remains locally around the western dormer windows and beneath part of the eastern roof slope. The northern and southern roof slopes are predominantly unlined, with the roof tiles and supporting timbers internally visible.

The accessible internal areas were inspected for bats and evidence of use, including droppings, staining and feeding remains. Suspected bat droppings were recorded internally near the eastern gable wall.

On the basis of the identified external potential roosting features and suspected bat droppings, B1 is assessed as having High potential to support roosting bats.

Trees

The individual trees within the site were assessed from ground level where accessible. These include immature silver birch and common hazel within the northwestern garden, a large common yew to the north and a large sycamore to the east.

No potential roosting features were identified within the eastern sycamore. No trees containing potential roosting features were identified within the areas assessed.

The potential for impacts upon roosting bats associated with trees is considered negligible, provided the trees are retained and protected during the works.

Foraging and Commuting Habitat

The trees and introduced shrubs provide some sheltered foraging and commuting habitat for bats. However, the site is small and is surrounded by roads, parking areas and built development. It does not form a significant linear habitat connection within the wider landscape.

The retained trees and shrubs nevertheless contribute to the local habitat structure and should be retained where practicable.

Potential impacts upon roosting bats associated with B1 are considered High. Potential impacts upon foraging and commuting bats are considered low, subject to the retention of trees and shrubs and the use of sensitive external lighting.

4.2.4 Birds

Two inactive bird nests were recorded within the building. One nest was situated within damaged walling at first-floor level, while the second was present at ground-floor level beneath the timber ceiling members. The nests appeared old and may date from a period when the building was more open.

The damaged building, trees and introduced shrubs provide suitable nesting habitat for common bird species. No active bird nests were identified during the survey.

4.2.5 Hazel Dormouse

The site lacks the extent, diversity and connectivity of woody habitat required to provide suitable habitat for hazel dormouse.

The potential for impacts upon hazel dormouse is considered negligible.

4.2.6 Invertebrates

The trees, introduced shrubs, leaf litter and other garden habitats may support common invertebrates. However, no features indicating likely use by protected or notable invertebrate species were identified.

The potential for impacts upon protected or notable invertebrates is considered negligible.

4.2.7 Reptiles

The gravelled surfaces, bare ground and unvegetated garden provide little dense ground cover or suitable shelter for reptiles. The site is small, disturbed and poorly connected to more extensive areas of suitable reptile habitat.

The potential for impacts upon reptiles is considered negligible.

4.2.8 Water Voles

No suitable aquatic or riparian habitat is present within or immediately adjacent to the application site. The potential for impacts upon water voles is considered negligible.

4.2.9 White-clawed Crayfish

No suitable aquatic habitat is present within the application site. The potential for impacts upon white-clawed crayfish is considered negligible.

4.3 Potential impacts of the works

Based upon the results from the desktop survey, field survey and using a degree of academic supposition, the uncompensated development impacts have been summarised as follows:

- Amphibians – **Negligible**
- Badgers – **Negligible**
- Bats – **High**
- Birds – **Low**
- Flora – **Negligible**
- Hazel Dormouse – **Negligible**
- Invertebrates – **Negligible**
- Reptiles – **Negligible**
- Water Voles - **Negligible**
- White-clawed crayfish – **Negligible**

5. Recommendations

5.1 Designated Sites

Portholme SSSI and Portholme SAC are located within 1 km of the site. Given the small scale of the works, their confinement to an existing developed property and the intervening roads, built development and River Great Ouse, no direct or significant indirect effect on these designated sites is anticipated. Standard pollution-prevention controls should nevertheless be implemented throughout construction.

5.2 Habitats

No habitat of principal importance or other habitat of significant conservation value was identified within the proposed development footprint. Existing trees and shrubs should be retained where practicable. Any removal should be limited to that required by the approved plans, and replacement landscaping should use suitable native or wildlife-beneficial species.

5.3 Species

5.3.1 Bats

The main building has high potential to support roosting bats and suspected bat droppings were recorded. Three dusk emergence surveys are required before works affecting the building proceed. Surveys should be undertaken during the appropriate active season, in suitable weather conditions and with a minimum interval of three weeks between survey visits. The results must inform any necessary avoidance, mitigation, compensation and Natural England licensing requirements.

Until surveys are complete, roof coverings, wall cavities, eaves, dormers and other potential roost features must not be removed, opened or obstructed. If a bat or further evidence of bats is encountered, works must stop immediately and advice must be obtained from a suitably qualified bat ecologist.

External lighting should be avoided where practicable. Any required lighting should be low-level, warm in colour and directed away from rooflines, potential access points and retained trees and shrubs.

5.3.2 Birds

Building works affecting the recorded nest locations and any clearance of trees or shrubs should be undertaken outside the main nesting bird season of March to August inclusive where practicable. If this is not possible, a suitably qualified ecologist should inspect the affected areas no more than 24 hours before work begins. Any active nest must be protected from disturbance until the young have fledged and the nest is no longer in use.

5.4 Site Enhancements

For the proposed development works, the following site enhancement measures could be incorporated into the site post-development. These measures are optional but are bespoke to the site surveyed for the enhancement of biodiversity.

5.4.1 Bats and Birds

Integrated bat roosting features or externally mounted crevice-style bat boxes should be incorporated into the renovated building. These should be positioned at an appropriate height, away from windows and artificial lighting, with clear flight access. The final number, type and location should be informed by the results of the recommended bat surveys.

Integrated bird boxes suitable for common urban species, including house sparrow and swift boxes, should also be incorporated into the renovated building. Boxes should be positioned away from frequently disturbed areas and should not be installed directly above windows or doors.

5.4.2 Flora

Native and wildlife-beneficial species should be incorporated into the proposed landscaping. Nectar-rich and night-scented flowering plants should be included to increase resources for pollinating insects and foraging bats. Where existing trees or shrubs are removed, replacement planting should be provided using appropriate native or wildlife-beneficial species.

5.4.3 Invertebrates

An insect hotel or bumblebee box could be installed within a sheltered and partially sunny location. These features would complement the proposed native and flowering planting and provide additional nesting and sheltering opportunities for common invertebrates.

5.4.4 Amphibians and Reptiles

A compact log and brash pile could be created within a quiet area of retained or newly established garden vegetation. This would provide shelter for amphibians, reptiles, hedgehogs and invertebrates.

5.4.5 Hedgehogs

A hedgehog nesting box could be installed within suitable retained or newly established boundary vegetation.

Where new boundary fencing is proposed, gaps measuring approximately 13 cm × 13 cm should be incorporated at ground level to maintain access for hedgehogs between suitable areas of habitat.

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7. Appendices

Appendix A: Site Plans

Appendix B: Phase 1 Habitat Map

Appendix C: Site Photographs

Appendix D: Biodiversity Legislation and Policy

Appendix E: Bats and Artificial Light

Appendix A: Site Plans

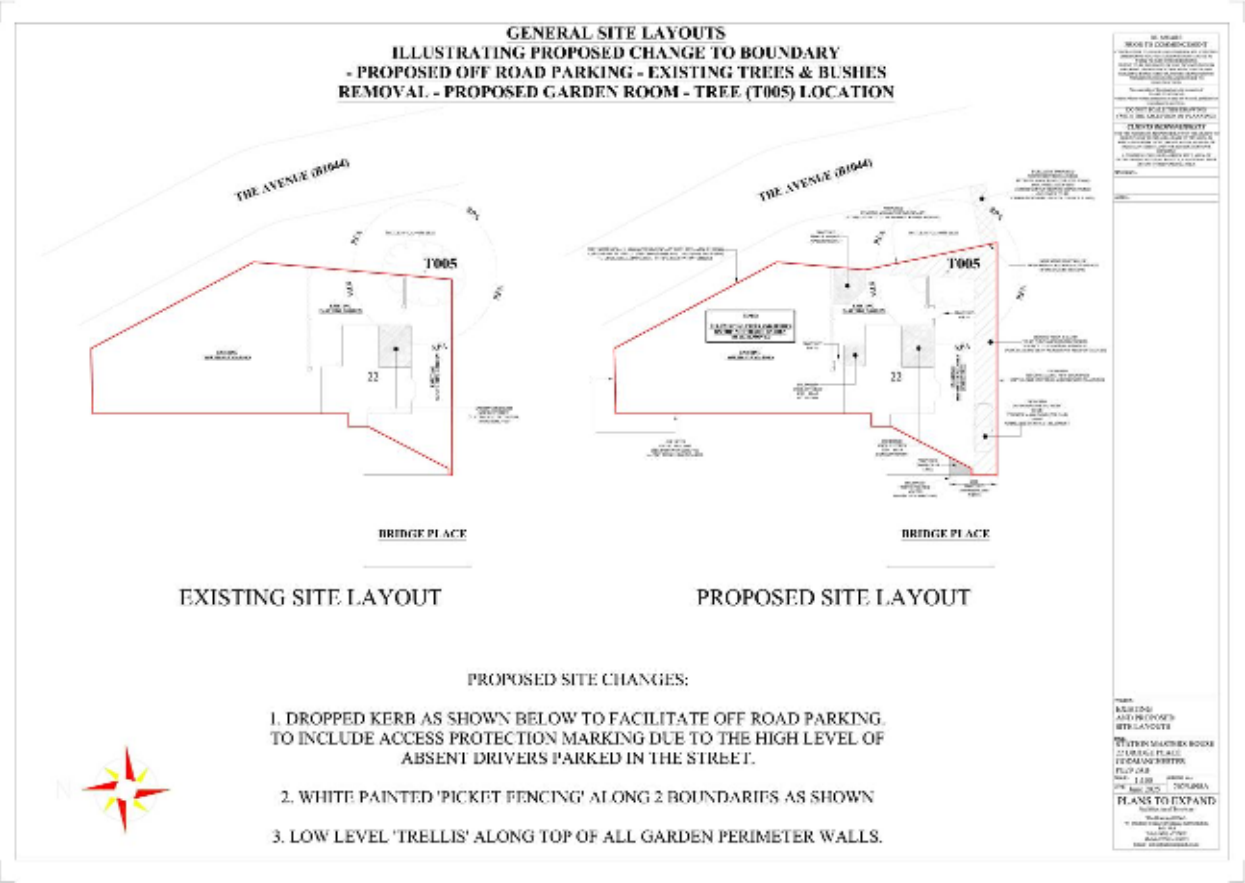

Figure A1: Existing and proposed site layouts supplied for the development.

Appendix B: Phase 1 Habitat Map

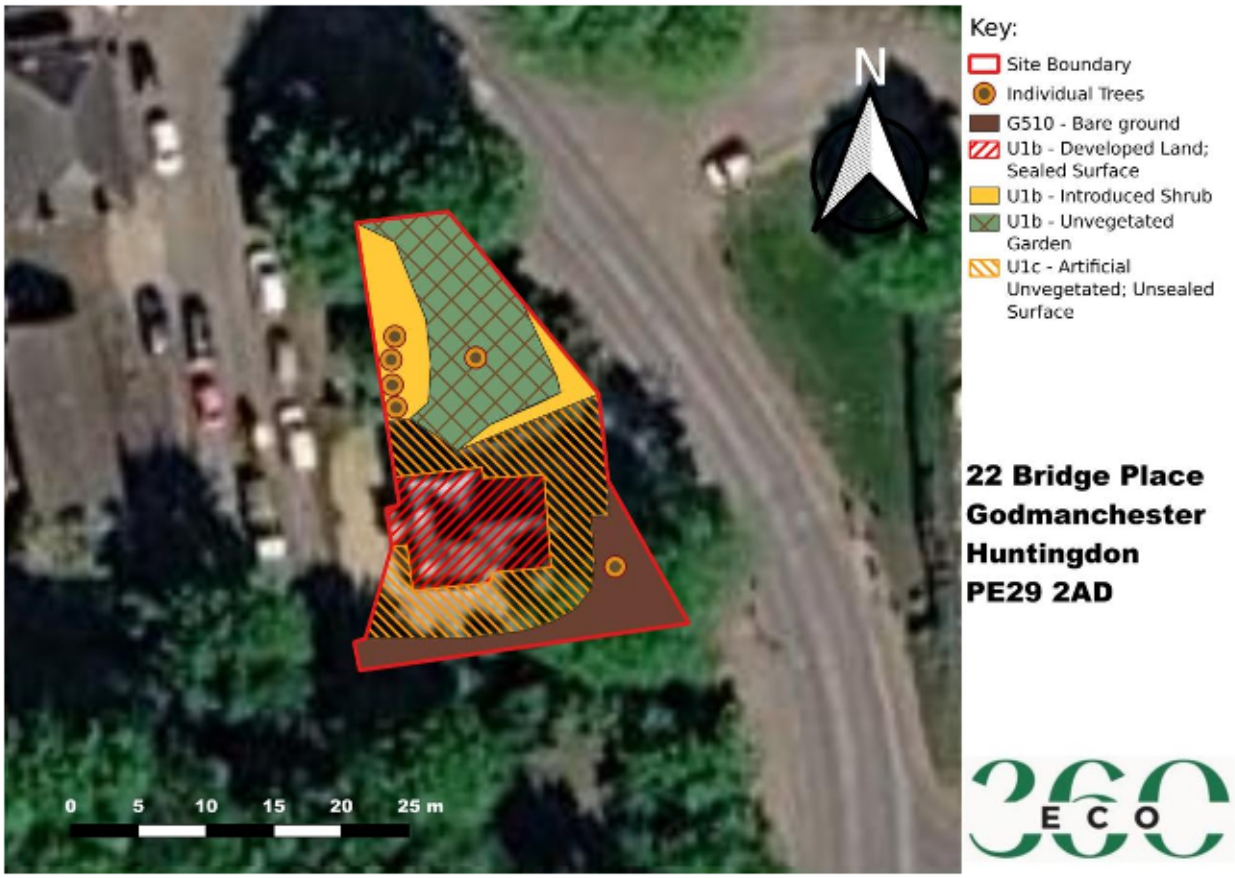

Figure B1: Phase 1 habitat map for the survey site.

Appendix C: Site Photographs



Plate 1: Northern and western elevations of the former station master's house, showing the tiled roof, dormers and chimney stacks.



Plate 2: Close view of a dormer and adjoining tiled roof, showing displaced and damaged roof coverings.



Plate 3: Damaged roof edge and eaves providing potential access features for roosting bats.



Plate 4: Eastern gable elevation and attached single-storey entrance structure.



Plate 5: Roof slope and wall junction on the main two-storey building.



Plate 6: Tiled roof slopes, chimney stacks and sheltered vegetation adjoining the building.



Plate 7: Roof and wall junction showing ivy growth and potential crevice features.



Plate 8: Close view of the eaves and external brickwork.



Plate 9: Damaged southeastern single-storey roof, open to light and weather.



Plate 10: Boundary wall and garden vegetation adjoining the building.



Plate 11: Guttering, eaves and ivy growth along an external elevation.



Plate 12: Internal view of the open upper floor and exposed roof structure.



Plate 13: Internal roof space showing exposed rafters and roof coverings.



Plate 14: Suspected bat dropping recorded internally.



Plate 15: Internal view of roof timbers and unlined roof tiles.











Plate 16-20: Photos of surrounding vegetation and trees.

Appendix D: Biodiversity Legislation and Policy

General Legislation and Policy:

The framework of legislation and policy which underpins nature conservation in England. This is a material consideration in the planning process in England.

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations 2010 as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 consolidate and update the Conservation Regulations 1994 and the conservation of habitats and species regulations 2010 (and all their amendments). The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 are the principal means by which the EEC Council Directive 92/43 (The Habitats Directive) as amended is transposed into English and Welsh law.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 place 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 are, in conjunction with the European Commission, designated as Sites of Community Importance, which are subsequently identified as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) by the European Union member states. The regulations also place a duty upon the government to maintain a register of European protected sites designated as a result of EC Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (The Birds Directive). These sites are termed Special Protection Areas (SPA) and, in conjunction with SACs, form a network of sites known as Natura 2000. The Habitats Directive introduces for the first time for protected areas, the precautionary principle; that is that projects can only be permitted having ascertained no adverse effect on the integrity of the site. Projects may still be permitted if there are no alternatives, and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 also provide for the protection of individual species of fauna and flora of European conservation concern listed in Schedules 2 and 5 respectively. 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 these species. Schedule 5 plant species are protected from unlawful destruction, uprooting or trade under the regulations.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (As amended)

The WCA, as amended, consolidates and amends pre-existing national wildlife legislation in order to implement the Bern Convention and the Birds Directive. It complements the Conservation (Natural Habitats. & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), offering protection to a wider range of species. The Act also provides for the designation and protection of national conservation sites of value for their floral, faunal or geological features, termed Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

Schedules of the act provide lists of protected species, both flora and fauna, and detail the possible offences that apply to these species.

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000

The CROW Act, introduced in England and Wales in 2000, amends and strengthens existing wildlife legislation detailed in the WCA. It places a duty on government departments and the National Assembly for Wales to have regard for biodiversity, and provides increased powers for the protection and maintenance of SSSIs.

The Act also contains 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 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

Section 40 of the NERC Act places a duty upon all local authorities and public bodies in England and Wales to promote and enhance biodiversity in all of their functions. Sections 41 (England) and 42 (Wales) list habitats and species of principal importance to the conservation of biodiversity. These lists supersede Section 74 of the CRoW Act 2000. These species and habitats are a material consideration in the planning process.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

The Hedgerow Regulations make provision for the identification of important hedgerows which may not be removed without permission from the Local Planning Authority.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan

The United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP), first published in 1994 and updated in 2007, is a government initiative designed to implement the requirements of the Convention of Biological Diversity to conserve and enhance species and habitats. The UKBAP contains a list of priority habitats and species of conservation concern in the UK, and outlines biodiversity initiatives designed to enhance their conservation status. Lists of Broad and Local habitats are also included. The priority habitats and species correlate with those listed on Section 41 and 42 of the NERC Act.

The UKBAP requires that conservation of biodiversity is addressed at a County level through the production of Local BAPs. These are complementary to the UKBAP, however 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. UKBAP and Local BAP targets with regard to species and habitats are a material consideration in the planning process.

Planning Policy (England) and National Planning Policy Framework

In early 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) replaced much previous planning policy guidance, including Planning Policy Statement 9: Biological and Geological Conservation. The government circular 06/05: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation - Statutory Obligations and Their Impact within the Planning System, which accompanied PPS9, still remains valid. A presumption towards sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF. This presumption does not apply however where developments require appropriate assessment under the Birds or Habitats Directives. The latest National Planning Policy Framework was updated in February 2019, with the section in relation to conserving the natural environment being located within section 15.

Section 15, on conserving and enhancing the natural environment, sets out how the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and, where possible, provide net gains in biodiversity. Opportunities to incorporate biodiversity gains into a development should be encouraged.

If a proposed development would result in significant harm to the natural environment which cannot be avoided (through the use of an alternative site with less harmful impacts), mitigated or compensated for (as a last resort) then planning permission should be refused.

Species Specific Legislation

This section contains a summary of legislation with relation to the species present or potentially present in the survey area. The reader should refer to the original legislation for definitive interpretation.

Nesting and Nest Building Birds

Nesting and nest building birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act WCA 1981 (as amended). Some species (listed in Schedule 1 of the WCA) are protected by special penalties.

Subject to the provisions of the act, if any person intentionally:

- kills, injures or takes any wild bird;
- takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or
- takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

'Reckless' offences with regard to the disturbance of nesting wild birds included in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act were added by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on Government Departments to have regard for the conservation of biodiversity and maintains lists of species and habitats which are of principal importance for the purposes of conserving biodiversity in England and Wales. These lists include a number of bird species.

The reader is referred to the original legislation for the definitive interpretation.

Badger

The main legislation protecting badgers in England and Wales is the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (the 1992 Act). Under the 1992 Act it is an offence to:

- wilfully kill, injure, take or attempt to kill, injure or take a badger;
- possess a dead badger or any part of a badger;
- cruelly ill-treat a badger;
- use badger tongs in the course of killing, taking or attempting to kill a badger;
- dig for a badger;
- sell or offer for sale or control any live badger;
- mark, tag or ring a badger; and
- interfere with a badger sett by:
- damaging a sett or any part thereof;
- destroying a sett;
- obstructing access to a sett;
- causing a dog to enter a sett; and
- disturbing a badger while occupying a sett.

The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as: "any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger".

Bats

All species of bat are fully protected under a variety of domestic, European and international legislation and conventions. These include:

- Bern Convention (Appendix II)
- Bonn Convention (Appendix II)
- Conservation Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000

- Eurobats Agreement
- Habitats Directive (Annexes IV and II)
- Habitats Regulations 1994 (as amended) Scotland
- NERC Act 2006
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Wild Mammals Protection Act

In addition to this, some species have additional protection by being listed on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP).

The legislation afforded to bats makes it illegal to possess or control any live or dead specimens, to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter, protection or breeding, and to intentionally disturb a bat while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which protects birds, nests, eggs and nestlings from harm. In addition to this, some rarer species, such as barn owls are afforded extra protection.

National Planning Policy Framework, Section 15:

The published framework in 2018 replaces the previous Planning Policy Statement 9 and National Planning Policy (dated 2012).

Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment reaffirms the government's commitment to maintaining green belt protections and preventing urban sprawl, retains the protection of designated sites and preserves wildlife. It also aims to improve the quality of the natural environment and halt declines in species and habitats, protects and enhances biodiversity and promotes wildlife corridors.

Biodiversity 2020:

This sets out to halt overall biodiversity loss and support healthy well-functioning ecosystems by establishing coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature, to the benefit of wildlife and people. The government's policy is aimed at individuals, communities, local authorities, charities, business and government, which all have a role to play in delivering Biodiversity 2020.

Freshwater White-clawed Crayfish

The white-clawed crayfish is partially protected under Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is listed on schedule 5 and therefore afforded protection under Section 9 (1 and 5). Therefore, it is an offence to take white-clawed crayfish and to sell, or attempt to sell, any part of the species, alive or dead, or intend to buy or sell.

Great Crested Newt

The great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) is fully protected under a variety of legislation and conventions. These include:

- Bern Convention (Appendix II)
- Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended)
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010
- EU Habitats Directive (Annex II and IV)
- Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004

- NERC Act 2006 (Section 41 England; Section 42 Wales)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

In addition to this, the great crested newt has been listed as a priority species on the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP).

This legislation covers all aspects of newt life stages (eggs, efts and adult newts) and makes it illegal to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter, protection or breeding, and to intentionally disturb a great crested newt while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

Licenses can be obtained from Natural England (DEFRA) under the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations 1994, to permit activities for the purposes of:

- Regulation 44(2)(e): Preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment, or
- Regulation 44(2)(f): Preventing the spread of disease
- Regulation 44(2)(g): Preventing serious damage to any form of property or fisheries

Or

- If there is no satisfactory alternative.

The above regulations allow people to carry out activities which would otherwise be illegal.

Hazel Dormouse

Hazel Dormouse and their habitats are protected by:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- Countryside Rights of Way (CROW) 2000
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010

These make it an offence to:

- Capture, injure or kill a Hazel Dormouse
- Disturb a Hazel Dormouse
- Damage or destroy breeding or nesting sites in use by Hazel Dormice
- Disturb a Dormouse whilst it is occupying a structure or place that they use for shelter or protection
- Obstruct access to any structure or place that the Dormouse uses for shelter and protection.
- To possess or control any live or dead specimens.

Otter

Otters are fully protected by the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) by being incorporated in annex II of the legislation. In addition to this, otters are listed on schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence to:

- To intentionally kill, injure or take an otter.
- To possess or control any live or dead specimens.
- To intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure, feature or place of shelter in use by otters.

- To intentionally or recklessly disturb an otter whilst it is in occupation of a feature or structure.
- To sell, possess or transport for the purpose of sale or publicly declare the desire to buy or sell otters.

Reptiles

All six native reptiles within Great Britain are legally protected, with the extent of protection varying dependent upon their rarity and conservation importance.

Those that receive full protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are the rare sand lizard and smooth snake. These species also receive protection under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (also referred to as the Habitats Directive). This means that they are protected from deliberate disturbance, killing, injury or capture and the habitat in which they live is also fully protected against damage or destruction. Any activity involving disturbance or damage to habitats utilised by sand lizards or smooth snakes would require a licence issued by the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) following consultation with the statutory nature conservation organisation (Natural England).

The remaining four reptile species are 'partially protected' under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), with these species being slow-worm, common lizard, grass snake and adder. This means that these species are protected against intentional killing, injuring and against sale, but their habitat is not protected. In planning terms this means that the presence of these species is a material consideration and there is a requirement to ensure that any reptile interest is safeguarded. If a proposed development is likely to have an impact on these reptiles, then the statutory nature conservation organisation must be notified, particularly if capture and translocation is being proposed. In some parts of the UK, sites that support common reptile species such as common lizards and slow-worms can qualify as County Wildlife Sites. Sites of this designation may receive protection in planning policy.

Water Voles

Water Voles are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence to:

- To intentionally kill, injure or take a water vole.
- To possess or control any live or dead specimens.
- To intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure, feature or place of shelter in use by water voles.
- To intentionally or recklessly disturb a water vole whilst it is in occupation of a feature or structure.
- To sell, possess or transport for the purpose of sale or publicly declare the desire to buy or sell water voles.

Non-Native Floral Species

It is an offence under schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to plant or otherwise cause non-native flora to grow in the wild. This includes the transportation of earth that has previously had non-native species growing and includes the spread of the species.

All stands of non-native floral species need to be disposed of safely at a licenced landfill site according to the Environmental Protection Act (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991.

Appendix E: Bats and Artificial Light

Artificial lighting is known to affect bat's roosting and foraging behaviour, with lighting resulting in a range of impacts that includes roost desertion (BCT, 2009), delayed emergence of roosting bats (Downs et al., 2003), increased activity of some bat species and decreased activity by others (Stone et al., 2012).

An experimental approach using LED units, demonstrated that relatively fast-flying bat species, including the common pipistrelle, showed no significant impacts as a result of new artificial lighting, even when lighting was set at relatively high levels close to 50 lux.

In contrast, slow flying bats such as the myotid bats (Myotis spp.) showed sharp reductions in presence, even at low light levels of 3.6 lux (Stone et al., 2012).

Current recommendations for all bat species specifies that no bat roost should be directly illuminated.

Due to the impacts of lighting, mitigation and sensitive lighting design schemes are required for projects where bats are present. These should include bat friendly lighting plans that should aim to avoid lighting wherever possible. If this is not possible, then the minimisation of any lighting impacts is required by adopting the following measures:

- To introduce lighting curfews or use of PIR sensors.

  Lighting curfews can be an effective way of avoiding impacts on bats. These curfews may involve either turning off lighting or dimming light units at specific times of the night, dimming units at key times of the year, providing the luminaire allows for this option via a control unit. Lighting to be triggered by PIR sensors can be expected to be illuminated only when required and for a low proportion of time.

- To consider no lighting solutions where possible.

  Options such as white lining, good signage and LED cats eyes should be considered as preferable. Reflective fittings may help make use of headlights to provide any necessary illumination in some areas.

- To use only high pressure sodium or warm white LED lamps where possible.

  High pressure sodium and warm white LED lamps emit lower proportions of insect attracting UV light than mercury, metal halide lamps and white LED lighting. Generally, lamps should have a lower proportion of white or blue wavelengths, with a colour temperature <4200 kelvin recommended (BCT, 2014).

- To minimise the spread of light.

  The light spread should be kept at or near horizontal to ensure that only the task area is lit. Flat cut-off lanterns or accessories should be used to shield or direct light to where it is required. Baffles, hoods, louvres and shields should be used where necessary to reduce light spill.

- To consider the height of the lighting column.

  While downward facing bollard lighting is often preferable, it should be noted that a lower mounting height does not automatically reduce impacts to bats as bollard lighting can often be designed to provide up-lighting. Where bollard lighting is considered to be the most appropriate system, bollard spacing or unit density should be kept to a minimum and units should be fitted with the appropriate hoods/deflectors to reduce any up-lighting.

- To avoid reflective surfaces below lights.

  The polarisation of light by shiny surfaces attracts insects increasing bat activity (BCT, 2012). Consequently, surface materials around lighting require consideration.

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No reliance should be made on any such comments in relation to the structural integrity of the features located on the surveyed site. All information within the report is based solely on evidence that has been found on site during the service provided. No individual opinion or inference will be made other than that of the suitably qualified ecologist appointed to the project.