Elite Ecology

Passionate about Ecology

Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights



Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

July 2026

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Document Control			
Document Properties			
Organisation	Elite Ecology		
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Title	Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights Preliminary Ecological Appraisal		
Version History			
Date	Version	Status	Description/Changes
10/06/2026	V1	Draft	First Draft
06/07/2026	V1	Draft	Amendments
07/07/2026	V1	Final Report	Proofread

0. Executive Summary

This report has been prepared at the request of Mr. Paul Mason (Landowner). It relates to the proposed development works at Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE26 2RS (OS Grid Reference: TL 23776 84882). This survey effort involved a desktop study and a field survey.

The plans propose the construction of a Forestry Workers dwelling with a separate forestry workshop and open machinery shed. It should be noted that the site has been partially cleared prior to the production of this report and as a result, this report is considered to be retrospective. This development will result in both the permanent and temporary loss and/or alteration of some of the habitats located on the proposed re-development site.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Environmental Records Centre (CPERC) were commissioned to carry out an ecological data search of all protected species and sites recorded within a 2km radius of the site. Please see **Section 3** for a review of the records revealed.

The preliminary ecological appraisal survey revealed multiple habitats on site. The phase 1 habitat map, habitat codes and target notes for the site are located within **Appendix D**. The following habitats were recorded on site (in habitat code order):

On site:

- **g3c –** Other Neutral Grassland
- **h2a –** Native Hedgerow
- **h2b –** Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow
- **u1b5 -** Building
- **u1c –** Artificial Unvegetated, Unsealed Surface
- **u1e 612 –** Built Linear Feature; Fence

Designated Sites:
No designated sites that were revealed by the ecological data search provided by CPERC and MAGIC fell on the proposed re-development site itself or adjacent to the site. Therefore, the proposed re-development will have no impact upon any locally designated sites as the works are presumed to remain within the site boundary.

Habitats:
Priority Habitats: No habitats of conservation concern were located on the site itself. Therefore, the proposed scheme of works will not impact upon any rare or valuable habitats.

Species:

Amphibians: The site could be used by commuting amphibians as it is connected to the surrounding landscape and has twelve standing water body and thirty-one ditches within a 500m radius, with good connectivity between these water bodies. Therefore, a herptile method statement is required to ensure no harm to any specimens that may be using the site during the construction phase.



Birds: No birds were found to be utilising the habitats on site for nesting, so there are no recommendations for breeding birds. However, the hedgerows on the site margins are recommended to be retained under the current scheme. This will allow ample habitat for both breeding and wintering birds to utilise for foraging and commuting, and the construction and operational phases of the project will not impact bird species if this is adhered to.

If these hedgerow features are required to be altered during the bird breeding season, then a further inspection by a suitably qualified ecologist is required no more than twenty-four hours before this process commences. This is to ensure that no active nest site is illegally destroyed, due to the protection afforded to all active bird nests under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. If an active nest is found by a site inspection, an exclusion zone around the nest will be necessary to preserve this feature until the chicks have fledged the nest.

Hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*): If hedgerows are cleared between the 1st of November and the 31st of March then an inspection by a suitably qualified ecologist is required to ensure no hibernating hedgehogs are present on site.

It is recommended that precautionary measures are incorporated if construction is undertaken at other times of the year. This will be to create provisions for hedgehogs to escape from all trenches dug into the ground, by creating slopes or providing ramps at the end of each working day.

Additionally, any pipework left on site that is greater than 150mm in diameter will need to be planked off. Should this information be strictly adhered to, then the development works will not negatively impact on the local mammal populations.

Reptiles: The site could be used by commuting/dispersing reptiles via the garden and hedgerow habitats. Additionally, a pile of stones is present near the eastern margin of the site, which could be used as refugia. Therefore, a herptile method statement is required to ensure no harm to any specimens that may be using the site during construction.

Site Enhancements:

For the proposed site enhancements, please see **Section 5.4** of this report.

Biodiversity Net Gain:

Biodiversity net gain needs to be ensured within the scheme of work, and this will be devised utilising the latest DEFRA metric.

Contents

0. Executive Summary 3
1. Introduction 6
1.1 Report Rationale 6
1.2 Site Description and Works 6
2. Survey Methodology 9
2.1 Desktop Survey 9
2.2 Field Survey 9
3. Desktop Survey Results 10
3.1 Statutory Sites 10
3.2 Non-statutory Sites 10
3.3 Woodland Sites 10
3.4 Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) 10
3.5 Priority Habitats 11
3.6 Species Records 11
3.7 Retrospective Habitat Survey 13
3.8 Retrospective Species Survey 14
4. Field Survey 17
4.1 Habitats 17
4.2 Species 18
4.3 Potential Impacts of the Works 21
5. Recommendations 23
5.1 Designated Sites 23
5.2 Habitats 23
5.3 Species 23
5.4 Site Enhancements 24
5.5 Biodiversity Net Gain 27
6. References 28
7. Appendices 29
Appendix A: Site Plans 30
Appendix B: Desktop Study Tables 33
Appendix C: Desktop Study Maps 38
Appendix D: Phase 1 Habitat Map 39
Appendix E: Site Photographs 40
Appendix F: Biodiversity Legislation and Policy 43
Appendix G: Bats and Artificial Light 49
8. Notice to Readers: Conditions of this Report 50

1. Introduction

1.1 Report Rationale

This report has been prepared at the request of Mr. Paul Mason (Landowner). It relates to the proposed development works at Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE26 2RS (OS Grid Reference: TL 23776 84882). This survey effort involved a desktop study and a field survey.

The main purpose of this assessment was to identify the broad habitats (as stated in the UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0) and the flora species present within the survey area, with any further evidence of protected species usage and/or features of potential ecological interest, also included. The field survey was carried out on the 10th of March 2026 by **Mr. Connor Wild:** MSc, Senior Ecologist, Natural England Bat Survey Licence Number: 2025-86155-CL17-BAT. Bat Survey Level 1. Natural England Great Crested Newt Level 1 Survey Licence Number:2025-83605-SCI-CL08, and **Mr. Peter Royall:** BSc (Hons), Ecologist, Natural England Great Crested Newt Level 1 Survey Licence Number: 2025-83152-SCI-CL08.

1.2 Site Description and Works

The site is located in a rural setting in the village of Ramsey Heights within the civil parish of Ramsey, part of the Huntingdonshire district of Cambridgeshire.

The site for development measures approximately 0.36 ha and includes a range of habitats onsite. These include artificial unsealed surface, bramble scrub, and modified grassland. The habitats on site could have the potential to support several protected species. The photographs of the site are found within **Appendix E**.

Within the wider landscape, further habitats are present. These come in the form of arable land, buildings (and their associated gardens/yards), hard standing ground, hedgerow, grassland, running and standing watercourses, and woodland. The habitats that surround the site also have the potential to be utilised by a variety of protected species.

The plans propose the construction of a Forestry Workers dwelling with a separate forestry workshop and open machinery shed. This development will result in both the permanent and temporary loss and/or alteration of some of the habitats located on the proposed re-development site.

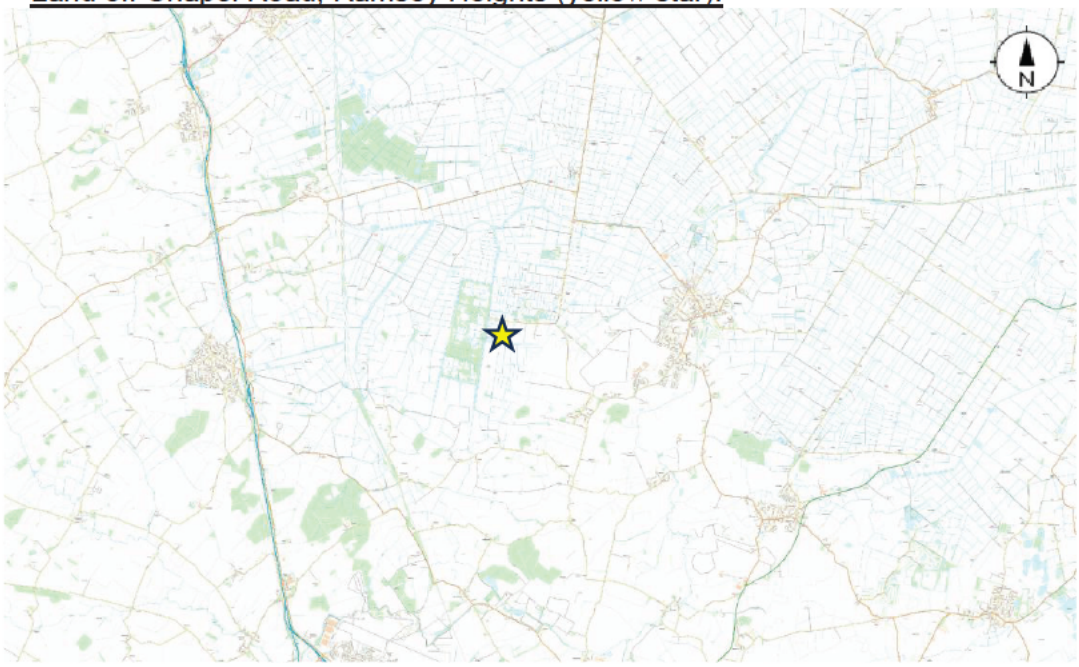
Figure 1: An aerial map showing the boundary of the site at Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights (as shown by the red outline)



Figure 2: An aerial map showing the boundary of the site at Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights (as shown by the yellow star) in relation to some of the local landscape



Figure 3: An ordinance survey map obtained from OS Maps showing the location of Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights (yellow star).



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 using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) database.

The local records centre was contacted to provide data on all protected species and sites within 2km of the proposed development site. Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Environmental Records Centre (CPERC) were the relevant local record centre for this project.

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 UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0. 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.

The classification of the habitats themselves was done using the definitions outlined in the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) in *The UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (2023).*

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.

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. This survey was carried out in May 2026, which is within the optimal time period for flora surveys. Elite Ecology feels confident that this report reflects an accurate representation of the site's suitability for protected species to be present.

All sites surveyed by Elite Ecology 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 Statutory Sites

The ecological data received from CPERC and MAGIC revealed two statutory protected sites (e.g., LNR, SSSI, SPA, SAC, or Ramsar) within the 2km radius of the site. These relate to a National Nature Reserve (NNR) a Ramsar site, and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), as well as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and were as follows:

Site Name	Designation	Approx. Distance (m)	Heading
Fenland	SAC	318	W
Woodwalton	NNR, SSSI, Ramsar	318	W

3.2 Non-statutory Sites

The ecological data received from CPERC and MAGIC confirmed the presence of two non-statutory protected site within 2km of the site. These were in the form of a County Wildlife Site (CWS) and Protected Road Verge (PRV) and were as follows.

Site Name	Designation	Approx. Distance (m)	Heading
Ramsey Heights Nature Reserve	CWS	644	E
Upwood	PRV	1,790	SE

3.3 Woodland Sites

The information provided by CPERC and MAGIC revealed NO Ancient and Semi-natural Woodland (ASNW) site within the 2km search radius.

3.4 Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS)

The information provided by CPERC revealed one RIGS within the 2km search radius. This was a Local Geological Site (LGS) and was as follows:

Site Name	Designation	Approx. Distance (m)	Heading
Ramsey Heights Brick Kiln and Clay Pits	LGS	644	E

3.5 Priority Habitats

MAGIC confirms the presence of six priority habitats within 500m of the site. These are detailed as follows:

Broad Habitat	Habitat Name	Approx. Distance (m)	Heading
Woodland	Deciduous Woodland	335	W
Woodland	Deciduous Woodland	219	NE
Woodland	Deciduous Woodland	249	NE
Woodland	Deciduous Woodland	499	E
Grassland	Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture	368	W
Wetland	Lowland Fens	554	E

3.6 Species Records

3.6.1 Amphibians

Within the ecological data search provided by CPERC, two amphibian species were identified within 2km of the site. These were great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*), and common frog (*Rana temporaria*). The closest occurrence to the site was of great crested newt, located approximately 45m from the site.

3.6.2 Birds

Within the ecological data set received by CPERC, thirty-one bird species were revealed. The closest record to the site is of marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) A table with the collated bird species recorded can be found within **Appendix B**.

3.6.3 Bony Fish (Actinopterygii)

Within the ecological data search provided by CPERC, one bony fish species was recorded within 2km of the site. This is of spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*) and was recorded 310m to the east of the site.

3.6.4 Crustaceans

Within the ecological data search provided by CPERC, no crustacean species were revealed within 2km of the site.

3.6.5 Flora

Within the ecological data search provided by CPERC, twenty-two species were revealed within 2km of the site, of which none were invasive. The closest occurrence to the site was of Marsh Sow-thistle (*Sonchus palustris*), located approximately 270m to the east of the site. A table with the collated flora species recorded can be found within **Appendix B**.

3.6.6 Fungi

Within the ecological data search provided by CPERC, no fungal species were recorded within 2km of the site.

3.6.7 Invertebrates

Within the ecological data search provided by CPERC, ninety-seven invertebrate species records were identified within a 2km radius of the site. The closest records to the site are of blood-vein (*Timandra comae*), bloody cranesbill weevil (*Zacladus exiguus*), garden dart (*Euxoa nigricans*), ghost moth (*Hepialus humuli*), giant water-veneer (*Schoenobius gigantella*) all located 70m to the north of the site. A table with the collated invertebrate species recorded can be found within **Appendix B**.

3.6.8 Mammals

The ecological data search provided by CPERC revealed six mammal species within the 2km search radius. These were badger (*Meles meles*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*) bat, common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) bat, otter (*Lutra lutra*), unidentified bat species (*Chiroptera*) and water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*). The closest record to the site was of otter, located approximately 360m to the west of the site.

3.6.9 Molluscs

Within the ecological data search provided by CPERC, no mollusc species have been identified within 2km of the site.

3.6.10 Reptiles

Within the ecological data search provided by CPERC, two reptile species have been identified within 2km of the survey site. These are of common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) and grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*). The closest record to the site was of grass snake, located approximately 360m to the west of the site.

3.7 Retrospective Habitat Survey

As parts of the site had already been cleared prior to the ecological assessment, the following provides an informed interpretation of the habitats likely present before works commenced. This has been based on a review of historic satellite imagery, with March 2022 identified as the most representative baseline using Google Earth.

Figure 4: An aerial map of the site at Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights (red outline) during the relevant date of March 2022.



Figure 5: A 1960's map of the site (red outline), demonstrating that the site used to have building's present.

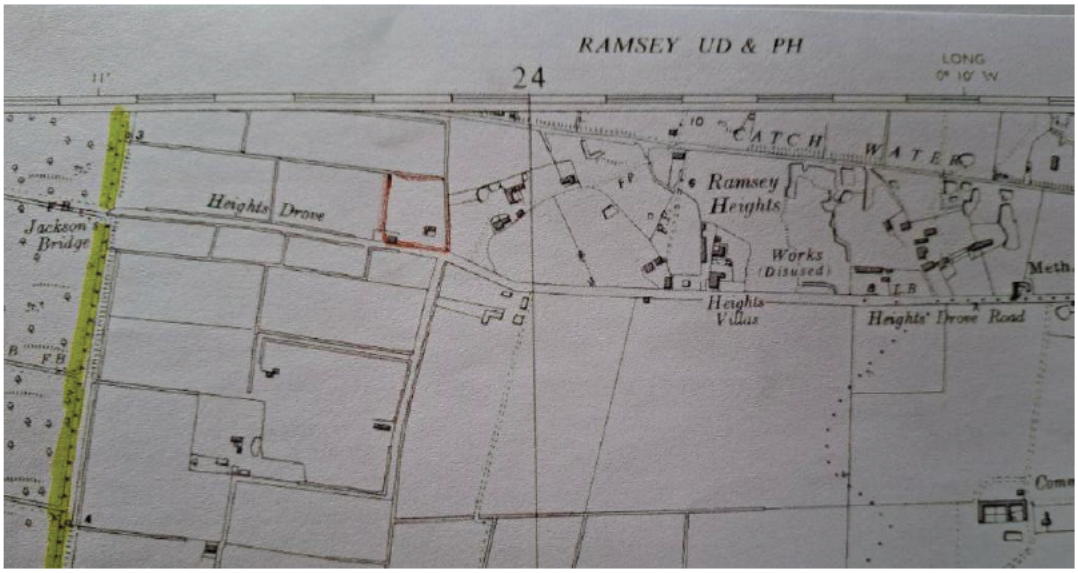


Figure 6: A photograph of the site, demonstrating the habitats present prior to the site being tidied.



3.7.1 **c1 – Arable and Horticulture**

Prior to clearance, the majority of the site appears to have comprised arable land, consistent with the surrounding agricultural landscape. Tramlines visible in historic imagery suggest routine cultivation. As is typical of arable fields, vegetation structure would have varied seasonally and the habitat would have offered general opportunities for foraging and movement for a range of common wildlife species.

3.7.2 **h3 – Dense Scrub;**

Historic imagery indicates that a small area of dense scrub was present in the south-eastern corner of the site. As this habitat was removed prior to survey, its precise species composition cannot be confirmed. Dense scrub typically provides cover and foraging opportunities for a range of common wildlife species.

3.7.3 **u1b5 – Building**

Historic mapping shows that a small farm cottage and a low shed were once present. The cottage was abandoned approximately 50-60 years ago, and the shed had deteriorated to the point of collapse. Due to its low height and open condition. As the structures are no longer present, their former suitability for protected species cannot be assessed.

3.8 Retrospective Species Survey

3.8.1 **Amphibians (including great crested newts)**

Before the works commenced, the site would likely have had moderate potential to support amphibian species in foraging and commuting, and as refugia. This is due to the presence of the arable field, and scrub on the site, as well as the various waterbodies present within 500m of the site (see **Section 4.2**).



3.8.3 **Bats**

Baseline habitats such as scrub would have contributed to general foraging and commuting opportunities for bats.

3.8.4 **Birds**

Several habitats on site may have had the potential to support breeding birds, such as the arable land, and scrub.

3.8.5 **Crustaceans**

There were no habitats present at the baseline with the potential to support crustacean species.

3.8.6 **Fish**

There were no habitats present at the baseline with the potential to support fish species.

3.8.7 **Flora**

At the baseline condition, the site was not considered to feature any rare or protected floral species. Although vegetation has been cleared, it is unlikely that rare or protected floral species were present on the site following the field survey and reviewing the historic satellite imagery.

3.8.8 **Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*)**

Hazel dormouse were reintroduced to Cambridgeshire at Brampton Wood, approximately 15km south-west of the site. Although the site previously supported some potentially suitable features such as scattered scrub, the intervening landscape is dominated by open, intensively managed farmland with no continuous woodland or species-rich hedgerow networks to facilitate dispersal. Given the species' limited mobility and reliance on connected arboreal habitat, natural colonisation of the site from Brampton Wood is highly unlikely, and the site is therefore considered to have held negligible potential for hazel dormouse.

3.8.9 **Hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*)**

The mix of arable land and small patches of scrub would have provided occasional foraging and sheltering opportunities for hedgehogs. Although arable land offers limited food resources, the presence of scrub would have increased habitat diversity. Hedgehogs are capable of moving across farmland, so the species may have used the site opportunistically.

3.8.10 **Invertebrates**

Baseline habitats would have supported a range of common invertebrate species typical of intensively managed agricultural environments.

3.8.11 **Molluscs**

There were no habitats present at the baseline with the potential to support mollusc species.

3.8.12 **Otter (*Lutra lutra*)**

The site did not feature any suitable habitats, which may have had the potential to support otters in foraging and commuting, and as refugia.

3.8.13 **Reptiles**

The arable land and scrub present prior to clearance may have offered limited potential for dispersing or commuting reptiles, although high-quality reptile habitat was not evident.

3.8.14 **Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*)**

The site did not feature any suitable habitats, which may have had the potential to support water voles in foraging and commuting, and as refugia.

4. Field Survey

4.1 Habitats

The preliminary ecological appraisal survey revealed multiple habitats on site. The phase 1 habitat map, habitat codes and target notes for the site are located within **Appendix D**. The following habitats were recorded on site and in the surrounding area (in habitat code order):

On Site:

4.1.1 g3c – Other Neutral Grassland

Other neutral grassland is present on the west half of the site that has been planted by the client using the nectar-rich bronze mix from Oakbank, as a proactive habitat enhancement. This habitat features frequent occurrences of black grass (*Alopecurus myosuroides*) and black medic (*Medicago lupulina*), and common penny cress (*Thlaspi arvense*). Occasionally occurring species include annual meadowgrass (*Poa annua*), bristly oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), and poison hemlock (*Conium maculatum*). Rarely occurring species consist of bladder campion (*Silene latifolia*), common burdock (*Arctium minus*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), crimson clover (*Trifolium incarnatum*), goosefoot (*Chenopodium album*), knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), mallow (*Malva sylvestris*), mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*), perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), petty spurge (*Euphorbia peplus*), poppy (*Papaver* spp.), purple dead nettle (*Lamium purpureum*), shepherd's purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*), spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*), vetch (*Vicia sativa*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). This habitat appears unmanaged and thus has a varied sward height, and as such has the potential to support a variety of protected species in foraging, commuting, and as refugia.

4.1.2 h2a – Native Hedgerow

A newly planted native hedgerow can be seen boarding the north, west, and south boundaries joining with the two small sections of mature hedgerow along the south boundary. These are dominated by hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), with English ivy (*Hedera helix*) rarely occurring. It is likely that this habitat has the potential to support several protected species in foraging and commuting, and as refugia.

4.1.3 h2b – Non-native and Ornamental Hedgerow

Two small sections of non-native hedgerow are seen on the south and east boundaries. This habitat is dominated by cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) and is the only species present in this habitat. This hedge is recently planted and at this growth stage does not have the potential to support a variety of protected species in foraging, commuting, and as refugia.

4.1.5 **u1b5 – building**

The remnants of a chimney breast and fireplace is located on site. This chimney is constructed with brick. Mortar has weathered away in place but the gaps are too shallow and exposed to be used as potential roosing features. The flue of the chimney is partially rendered and no gaps can be seen within the brick work. The flue is heavily cobwebbed indicating that there is no use by local bat populations. Ivy is present on the top of the chimney. However, this is not dense enough to support roosting bats. No evidence of bats was identified during the survey. No evidence of birds was identified during the survey.

4.1.5 **u1c – Artificial Unvegetated; Unsealed Surface**

The east half of the site consists of artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface in the form of bare earth. No floral species were identified within the habitat; this is potentially due to the preparation of groundworks commencing before the site visit.

dominant habitat present on site is unsealed surface in the form of bare earth. In much of these areas, some secondary succession has occurred, leaving grass species growing on some of the earth banks. These species could not be identified due to the short sward height. In addition, some areas of this bare earth is heavily waterlogged. Overall, this habitat has the potential to support several species in foraging and commuting, albeit in a limited capacity.

4.1.6 **u1e – Built Linear Feature; Fence**

A post and wire fence is present on all boundary elevations with a wooden gate at the south-east corner. This habitat provides no potential to support protected species and is not an ecological barrier to species accessing the site.

4.1.7 **Target Notes**

Log piles, rubble piles and soil heaps have been identified on site that can be used as potential refugia for protected species.

4.2 Species

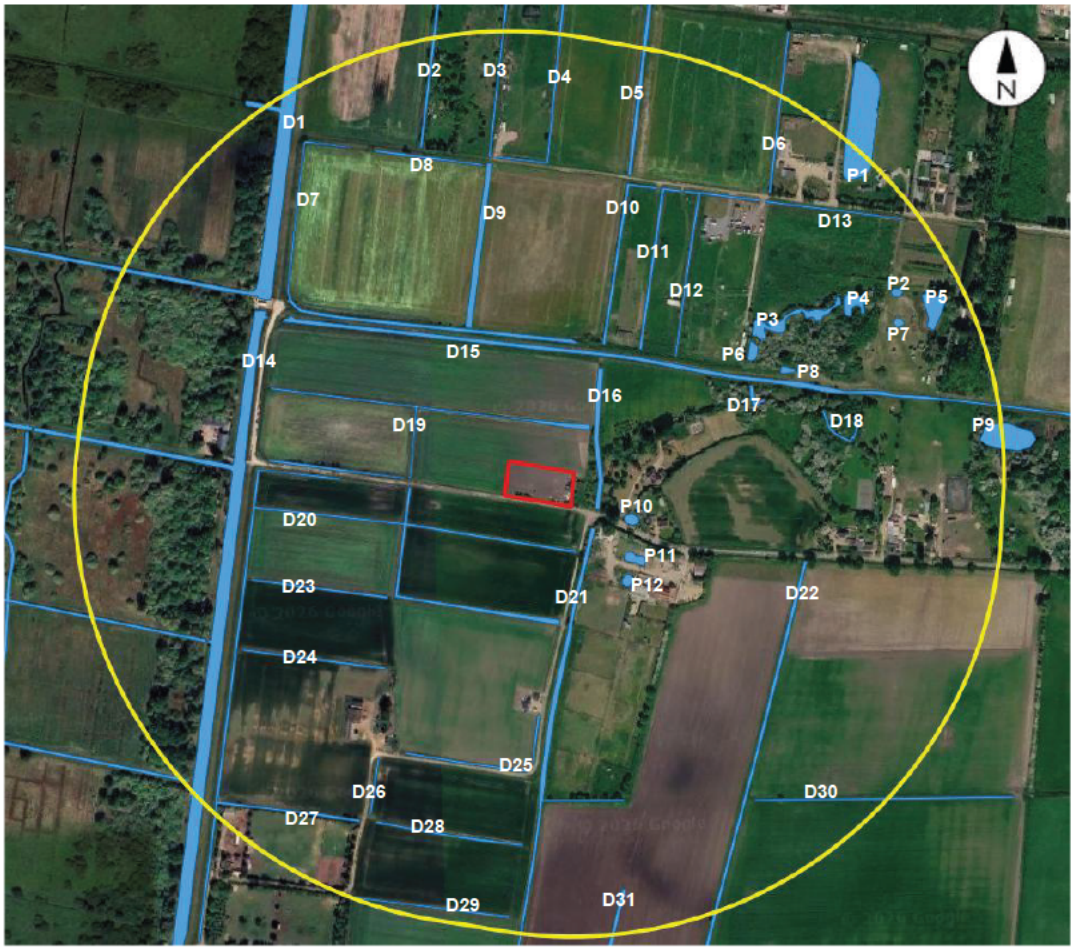
The preliminary ecological appraisal survey revealed that the habitats that have been outlined for the proposed development area do contain protected species potential. The following assessment has also considered the adjacent habitats and connectivity to the wider landscape for all protected and rare species.

4.2.1 **Amphibians (including great crested newts)**

There were no habitats on site with the potential to support amphibians whilst in their aquatic phases. In addition, the grassland on site may have the potential to support amphibians in their terrestrial phases, but it should be noted that this would be in a limited capacity due to the limited extent of these habitats. There are a total of twelve ponds and thirty-one ditches present within 500m of the site, all with good connectivity to the site due to the lack of roads and other impassable barriers between them (see **Figure 5**). Therefore, further precautionary action is recommended for the site (see **Section 5.3**).

There has been eighteen Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns located within 2km of the site, the closest of which is located approximately 406m from the site. Great crested newts were recorded as present in all of these in from 2014 to 2017. There have been zero great crested newt pond surveys within a 2km radius of the site.

Figure 5: An aerial map of the site at Land off Chapel Road, Ramsey Heights (red outline) with the location of ponds (**P1 – P12**) and ditches (**D1 – D31**) within a 500m buffer zone of the site (yellow outline).



[redacted]

4.2.3 Bats

The site has a **negligible** potential to support commuting and foraging bat species due to the lack of suitable habitats following the site clearance. In addition, the site was deemed as having a **negligible** potential to support roosting bats due to the lack of potential roosting features found on the site. Due to this, no further surveying is required.

4.2.4 **Birds**

The grassland and hedges have the potential to support birds in foraging, commuting, and refugia, albeit in a limited capacity. As such, further precautionary action is recommended for the site (see **Section 5.3**).

4.2.5 **Crustaceans**

The habitats are not considered likely to support any protected crustacean species. As such, the potential for protected crustacean species to be affected is **negligible**. Therefore, no additional survey work is required to ascertain the impacts of the works on crustaceans.

4.2.6 **Fish**

The habitats are not considered likely to support any protected fish species. As such, the potential for protected fish species to be affected is **negligible**. Therefore, no additional survey work is required to ascertain the impacts of the works on fish.

4.2.7 **Flora**

The site contains no protected floral species, and as such, there will be no detriment to legally protected flora. In addition, no invasive non-native species (INNS) are present on the site. Therefore, no further surveying or precautionary measures are required.

4.2.8 **Hazel Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*)**

No hazel dormice were recorded within 2km of the site according to the ecological data search from CERPC. In addition, the site has been cleared, and as such there is no remaining suitable habitat for them on site. As such, the potential for hazel dormouse to be affected is **negligible**. Therefore, no additional survey work is required to ascertain the impacts of the works on hazel dormouse.

4.2.9 **Hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*)**

The grassland and hedges have the potential to support hedgehogs in foraging and commuting, or as refugia. As such, further precautionary action is recommended for the site (see **Section 5.3**).

4.2.10 **Invertebrates**

The habitats are not considered likely to support any protected invertebrate species. As such, the potential for protected invertebrate species to be affected is **negligible**. Therefore, no additional survey work is required to ascertain the impacts of the works on invertebrates.

4.2.11 **Molluscs**

The habitats are not considered likely to support any protected mollusc species. As such, the potential for protected mollusc species to be affected is **negligible**. Therefore, no additional survey work is required to ascertain the impacts of the works on molluscs.

4.2.12 Otter (*Lutra lutra*)

The habitats are not considered likely to support otters. In addition, no evidence of otter was found on site. As such, the potential for otters to be affected is **negligible**. Therefore, no additional survey work is required to ascertain the impacts of the works on otters.

4.2.13 Reptiles

The habitats on site such as the hedgerows have the potential to support commuting/dispersing reptile species. Additionally, the log piles and rubble on site, can be used as refugia. As such, further action is required to ensure that no reptiles are harmed during the construction phase (please see **Section 5.3**).

4.2.14 Water Vole (*Arvicola amphibius*)

The habitats are not considered likely to support water voles. In addition, no evidence of water vole was found on site or within 50m of the site. As such, the potential for water voles to be affected is **negligible**. Therefore, no additional survey work is required to ascertain the impacts of the works on water voles.

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:

Species	Impact & Justification	
	Construction Phase	Operational Phase
Amphibians	**Low** Minor risk of death, injury and/or disturbance of amphibians on-site during construction phase caused by workers, materials, plant, vehicles and/or machinery etc.	**Low** Minor reduction in suitable foraging and commuting habitat during the operational phase due to the expansion of the gravel access road on site.
Badgers	**Low** Minor risk of damage/disturbance to any new badger setts during the construction phase that may have become established on site or immediately off site after the most recent ecological survey visit.	**Negligible** Little to no reduction in suitable foraging habitat during the operational phase.
Bats	**Negligible** There are no suitable habitats for the potential to support bat species in foraging and commuting. No PRFs have been identified.	**Negligible** There are no suitable habitats for the potential to support bat species in foraging and commuting. No PRFs have been identified.
Birds	**Low** low risk of destruction and/or disturbance of active bird nest(s) during construction, within on-site and adjacent habitats.	**Negligible** Little to no reduction in suitable bird foraging habitat during the operational phase.
Crustaceans	**Negligible** Little to no risk of adverse effects to crustaceans during construction.	**Negligible** Little to no adverse impacts to crustaceans during the operational phase.

Fish	**Negligible** The works will not impact any fish or fish habitats	**Negligible** No adverse impacts to fish during the operational phase.
Flora (Invasive)	**Negligible** No Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedule 9 invasive flora identified on site.	**Negligible** No Wildlife and Countryside Act Schedule 9 invasive flora identified on site.
Flora (Protected)	**Negligible** The habitats on site were deemed to have negligible potential to support rare/protected floral species.	**Negligible** The habitats on site were deemed to have negligible potential to support rare/protected floral species.
Hazel Dormice	**Negligible** The habitats on site were deemed to have negligible potential to support this species.	**Negligible** The habitats on site were deemed to have negligible potential to support this species.
Hedgehogs	**Low** Minor risk of death and/or injury of foraging/commuting hedgehogs on site during construction caused by the potential presence of pipework on the ground. Minor risk of death, injury and/or disturbance of nesting/hibernating hedgehogs during construction.	**Low** Minor reduction in suitable foraging and commuting habitat during the operational phase due to the expansion of the gravel access road on site.
Invertebrates	**Negligible** Little to no risk of adverse effects to protected invertebrates during construction.	**Negligible** Little to no risk of adverse effects to protected invertebrates during construction.
Molluscs	**Negligible** Little to no risk of adverse effects to molluscs during construction.	**Negligible** Little to no adverse impacts to molluscs during the operational phase.
Otters	**Negligible** The works will not impact any otters or otter habitats.	**Negligible** Little to no risk of adverse effects to otters during the operational phase.
Reptiles	**Low** Destruction/disturbance of suitable commuting routes for reptiles, such as the garden. Minor risk of death, injury and/or disturbance of reptiles on-site during construction phase caused by workers, materials, plant, vehicles and/or machinery etc.	**Low** Minor reduction in foraging and commuting areas due to the expansion of the gravel access road.
Water Voles	**Negligible** The works will not impact any water voles or water vole habitats.	**Negligible** Little to no risk of adverse effects to water voles during the operational phase.

5. Recommendations

5.1 Designated Sites

No designated sites that were revealed by the ecological data search provided by CPERC and MAGIC fell on the proposed re-development site itself or adjacent to the site. Therefore, the proposed re-development will have no impact upon any locally designated sites as the works are presumed to remain within the site boundary.

5.2 Habitats

5.2.1 Priority Habitats

No habitats of conservation concern were located on the site itself. Therefore, the proposed scheme of works will not impact upon any rare or valuable habitats. Despite this, it is recommended that no further clearance of any of the woodland habitats occurs as part of the works. If this is adhered to, then no further actions will be required for the site.

5.3 Species

The site was found to contain the potential to support protected and/or rare species. Therefore, the following recommendations are required for the site:

5.3.1 Amphibians

The site could be used by commuting amphibians as it is connected to the surrounding landscape and has twelve standing water body and thirty-one ditches within a 500m radius, with good connectivity between these water bodies. Therefore, a herptile method statement is required to ensure no harm to any specimens that may be using the site during the construction phase.

[redacted]

5.3.3 Birds

No birds were found to be utilising the habitats on site for nesting, so there are no recommendations for breeding birds. However, the hedgerows on the site margins are recommended to be retained under the current scheme. This will allow ample habitat for both breeding and wintering birds to utilise for foraging and commuting, and the construction and operational phases of the project will not impact bird species if this is adhered to.

If these hedgerow features are required to be altered during the bird breeding season, then a further inspection by a suitably qualified ecologist is required no more than twenty-four hours before this process commences. This is to ensure that no active nest site is illegally destroyed, due to the protection afforded to all active bird nests under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. If an active nest is found by a site inspection, an exclusion zone around the nest will be necessary to preserve this feature until the chicks have fledged the nest.

5.3.4 **Hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*)**

If hedgerows are cleared between the 1st of November and the 31st of March, then an inspection by a suitably qualified ecologist is required to ensure no hibernating hedgehogs are present on site.

It is recommended that precautionary measures are incorporated if construction is undertaken at other times of the year. This will be to create provisions for hedgehogs to escape from all trenches dug into the ground, by creating slopes or providing ramps at the end of each working day.

Additionally, any pipework left on site that is greater than 150mm in diameter will need to be planked off. Should this information be strictly adhered to, then the development works will not negatively impact on the local mammal populations.

5.3.5 **Reptiles**

The site could be used by commuting/dispersing reptiles via the garden and hedgerow habitats. Additionally, a pile of stones is present near the eastern margin of the site, which could be used as refugia. Therefore, a herptile method statement is required to ensure no harm to any specimens that may be using the site during construction.

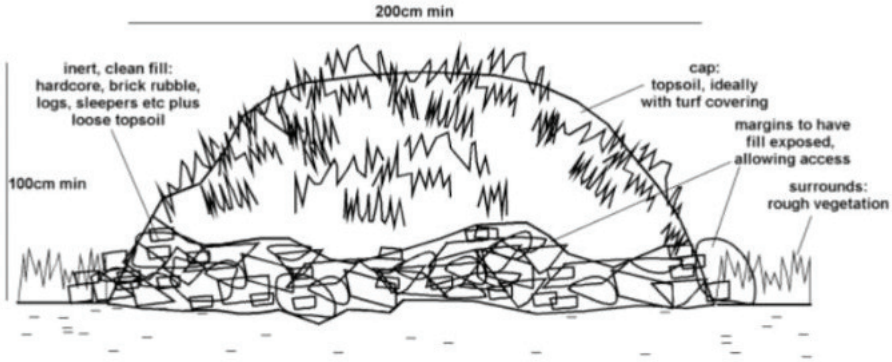
5.4 **Site Enhancements**

For the proposed development works, the following site enhancement measures could be incorporated into the site post-development. These measures have been recommended based on the mitigation required for the loss of potential habitats following the retrospective PEA. Once the options have been finalised, the locations of these features should be placed on a master plan.

5.4.1 **Amphibians**

It is recommended that at least one hibernacula is included into the design scheme in order to mitigate the loss of the grassland habitat. These are usually comprised of rubble, rock, log piles, and earth banks. An example design for the hibernacula can be seen within **Figure 6**. These hibernacula will provide cover and refugia opportunities for herptiles in the local area.

Figure 6: A diagram illustrating the recommended hibernacula (GCN Mitigation Guidelines)



5.4.2 Bats

In order to enhance the potential of bat roosting features on site, it is recommended that a minimum of two Bat Boxes are implemented into the design scheme. These are recommended to be comprised of the following models or similar:

- Integrated Eco Bat Boxes

These can be purchased by contacting admin@eliteecology.co.uk.

No breathable roofing membrane is to be used on the structure. This is due to all breathable membranes containing features which lead to the bat's demise.

The site can be enhanced by introducing a bat friendly planting scheme in the soft landscaping plan. The table below outlines species recommended by the Bat Conservation Trust, all of which could be incorporated into the site post development.

Flowers for borders	Trees, shrubs & climbers
Aubretia	Bramble
Candytuft	Common alder
Cherry pie	Dogrose
Corncockle	Elder
Corn marigold	English oak
Corn poppy	Gorse
Echniacea	Guelder rose
English bluebell	Hawthorn
Evening primrose	Hazel
Field poppies	Honeysuckle (native)
Honesty	Hornbeam
Ice plant 'pink lady'	Ivy
Knapweed	Jasmine
Mallow	Pussy willow
Mexican aster	Rowan
Michaelmas daisy	Silver birch
Night-scented stock	**Herbs**
Ox-eye daisy	Angelica
Phacelia	Bergamot
Poached egg plant	Borage
Primrose	Coriander
Red campion	English marigolds
Red valerian	Fennel
Scabious	Feverfew
St. John's Wort	Hyssop
Sweet William	Lavenders
Tobacco plant	Lemon balm
Verbena	Marjoram
Wallflowers	Rosemary
Wood forget-me-not	Sweet Cicely
Yarrow	Thyme

5.4.3 Birds

In order to enhance the site for nesting birds, it is recommended that a minimum of three Bat Boxes are implemented into the design scheme. These are recommended to be comprised of the following models or similar:

- Large Bird Nest Box
- Sparrow Terrace Nest Box
- Manthorpe Swift Nesting Brick

Boxes can be ordered by contacting Elite Ecology at: admin@eliteecology.co.uk.

Bird boxes installed on buildings should face between north and east to avoid the strong sunlight and wet winds. Boxes installed on trees can face any direction as the trees will provide shelter; however, the entrance must be kept clear of branches and vegetation. All bird enhancements must be situated in a way that prevents access to predators such as cats.

5.4.4 Flora

At present, the site is not considered to have a wide range of native flora. The incorporation of native species would greatly enhance the biodiversity potential. Therefore, it is recommended that the native hedgerow species are increased and trees be planted on site to provide habitats for terrestrial mammals and birds. The recently planted hedgerow should incorporate at least five native species per 30m. A typical mix of shrubs to create a traditional hedgerow is: 50% hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), 25% hazel (*Corylus avellana*), 15% field maple (*Acer campestre*), 2% holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), 2% wild privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), 2% guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*), 2% dog rose (*Rosa canina*), and 2% buckthorn (*Rhamus frangula*) for every 30m of the hedge. Native broadleaf tree species, such as silver birch (*Betula pendula*), cherry plum (*Prunus cerasifera*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), and oak (*Quercus robur*), could be planted within the proposed garden area to improve nesting and roosting opportunities.

5.4.5 Hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*)

The site could be enhanced for the local hedgehog population by installing at least two Hedgehog Nest Boxes on the site. These can be ordered by contacting Elite Ecology at: admin@eliteecology.co.uk. This will create more opportunities for hedgehogs within the local landscape.

5.4.6 Invertebrates

The site could be enhanced for invertebrates by incorporating at least two Bumblebee Boxes into the scheme, along with at least two Bug Hotels. These can be ordered by contacting Elite Ecology at: admin@eliteecology.co.uk. This will enhance the site for the local invertebrate populations, which will thus attract species further up in the trophic level.

The site would benefit from plants rich in a pollen source throughout the year to enhance the area for the potential of bees. In order to ensure a nectar source year-round it is important to use plants that are relevant to the season. The table below includes just a few examples of which plants thrive through the different seasons to ensure a bee friendly area.

SPRING	SUMMER	AUTUMN	WINTER
• Alliums Bugle • Crab Apple • Daffodils • Flowering Cherry • Hawthorn • Sea Thrift	• Angelica sylvestris • Campanula latifolia • Comfrey • Echinops • Foxgloves • Scabious	• Aster tripolium • Common Ivy • Sedums	• Hellebores foetidus, • Salix aegyptica • Salix caprea • Winter-flowering heather

5.5 Biodiversity Net Gain

Biodiversity net gain needs to be ensured within the scheme of work, and this will be devised utilising the latest DEFRA metric.

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7. Appendices

Appendix A: Site Plans

Appendix B: Desktop Study Table

Appendix C: Desktop Study Maps

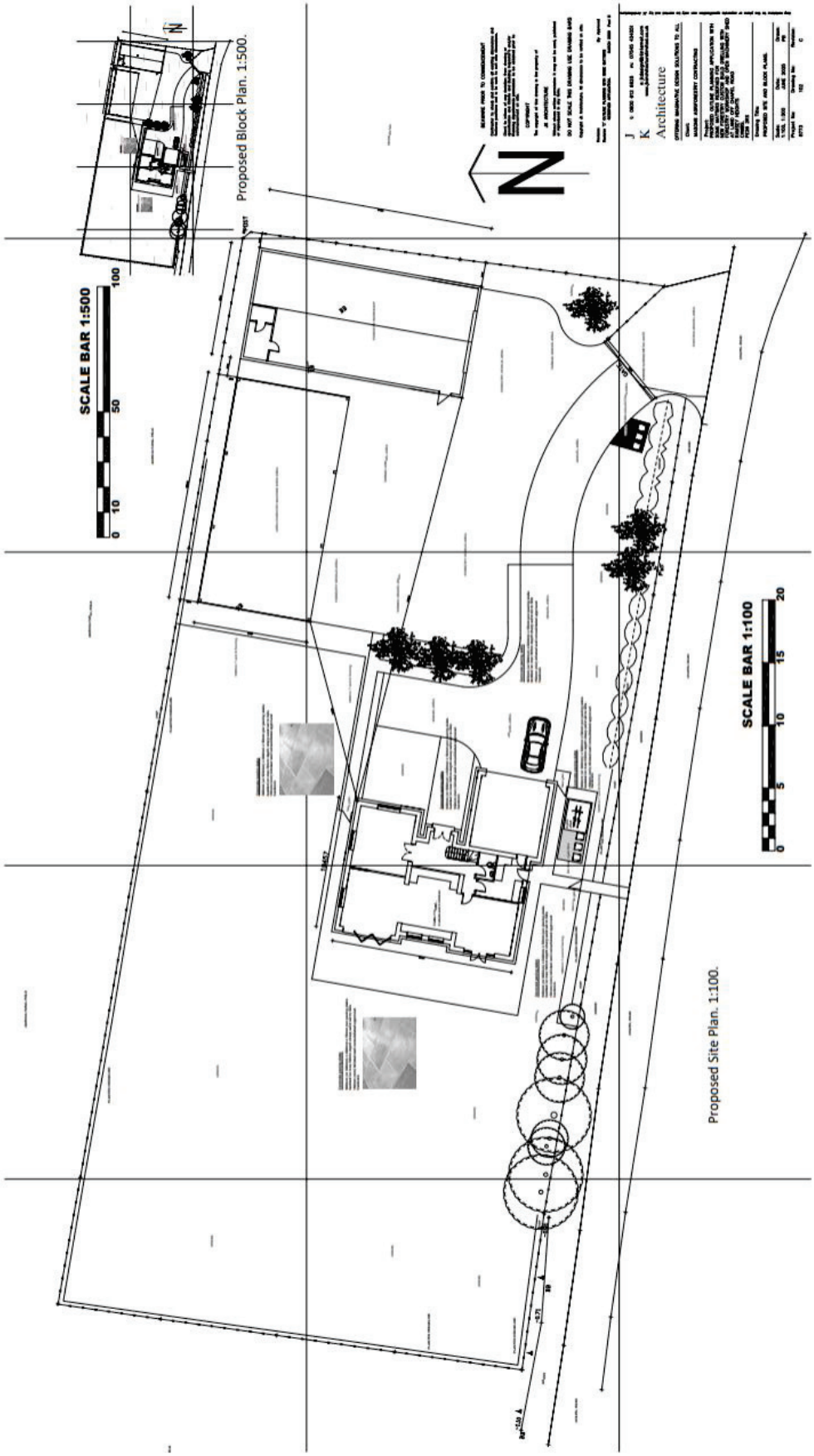
Appendix D: Phase 1 Habitat Map

Appendix E: Site Photographs

Appendix F: Biodiversity Legislation and Policy

Appendix G: Bat and Artificial Light

Appendix A: Site Plans





Proposed West Elevation. 1:100.



Proposed North Elevation. 1:100.



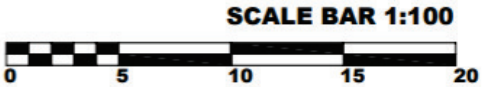
Proposed South Elevation. 1:100.

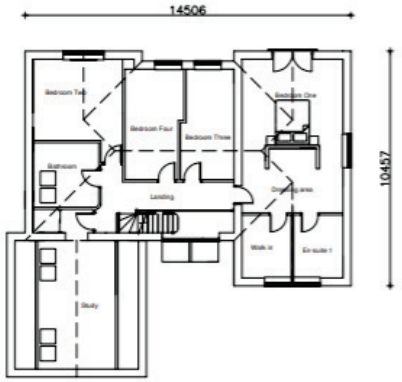


Proposed East Elevation. 1:100.

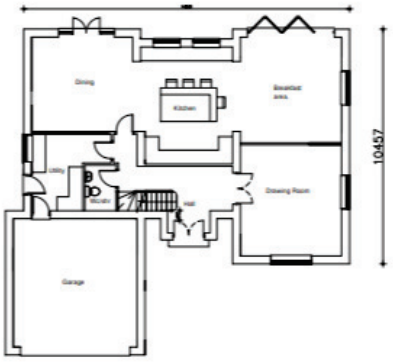
ELEVATIONAL MATERIALS

NEW BRICKWORK TO BE VANDERSANDEN FLEMISH ANTIQUE UNLESS AGREED OTHERWISE.
NEW REDLAND GREY INTERLOCKING OR SLATE TYPE UNLESS AGREED OTHERWISE.
NEW WINDOWS TO BE ALUMINUM OR PVC CREAM WINDOWS UNLESS AGREED OTHERWISE.
NEW EXTERNAL DOORS TO BE TIMBER , COMPOSITE OR GREY PVC UNLESS AGREED OTHERWISE.
NEW RAINWATER GOODS TO BE BLACK AND SQUARE UNLESS AGREED OTHERWISE.





Proposed Ground Floor Plan. 1:100.



Proposed First Floor Plan. 1:100.



BEAWARE PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT

Contractor to check and confirm all existing dimensions and features positions and is to work to suit site dimensions.

Client to inform of any deviation from drawing or specification and Clients and Building Inspector's and/or Planning departments permission to be obtained prior to commencement on site.

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Revision 'B' OUTLINE PLANNING WITH SOME MATTERS RESERVED APPLICATION. By Approved MARCH 2026 Paul B

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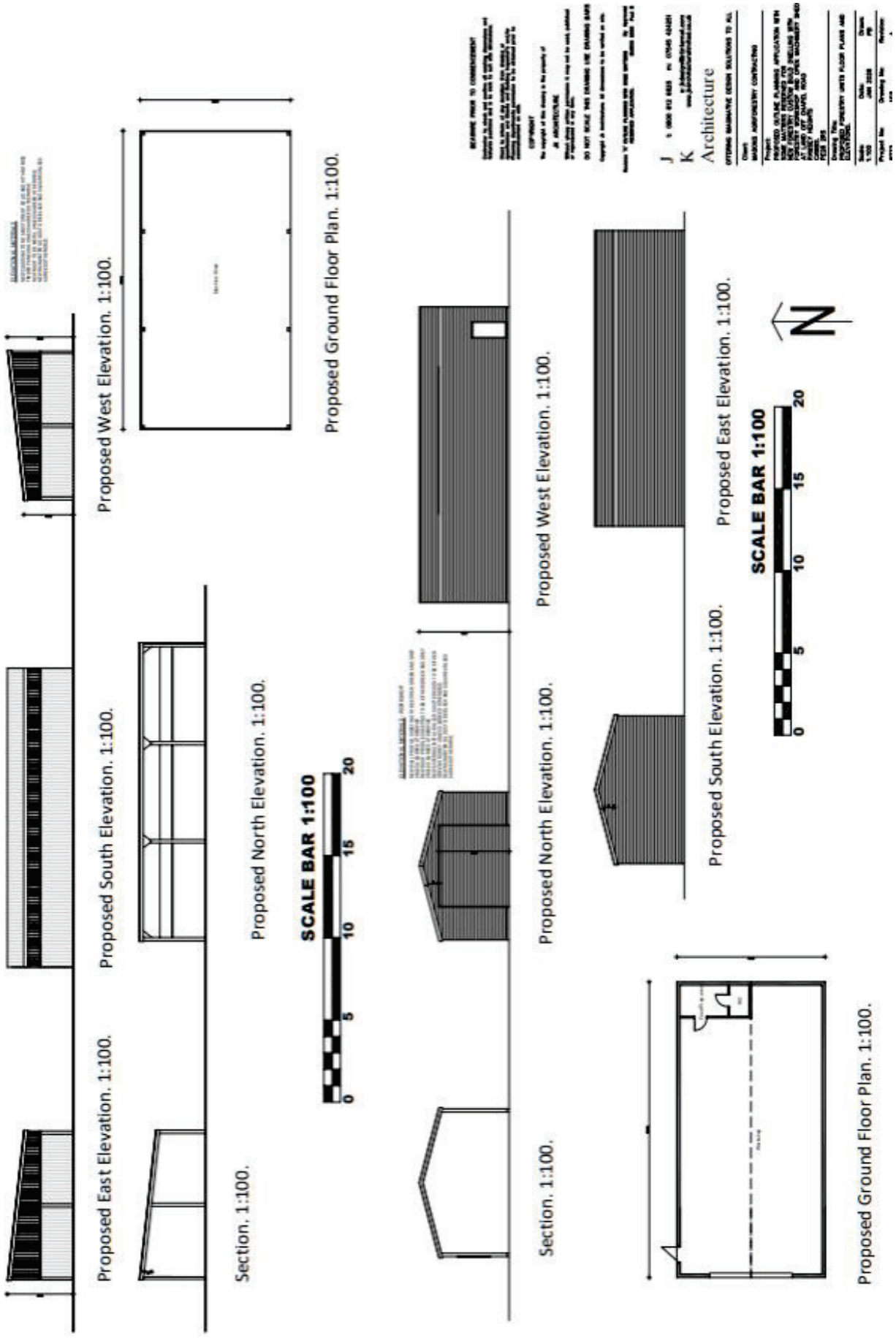
Client:
MASONS AGRIFORESTRY CONTRACTING

Project:
PROPOSED OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION WITH SOME MATTERS RESERVED FOR NEW FORESTRY CUSTOM BUILD DWELLING WITH FORESTRY WORKSHOP AND OPEN MACHINERY SHED AT LAND OFF CHAPEL ROAD RAMSEY HEIGHTS CAMBS. PE26 2RS

Drawing Title:
PROPOSED FLOOR PLANS AND ELEVATIONS.

Scale:	Date:	Drawn:
1:100	JAN 2026	PB
Project No:	Drawing No:	Revision:
8773	101	B

Any revisions to the plans or separate specification can only be carried out by JK Architecture


Proposed West Elevation. 1:100.
Proposed Ground Floor Plan. 1:100.
Proposed East Elevation. 1:100.
Proposed South Elevation. 1:100.
Proposed North Elevation. 1:100.
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Proposed West Elevation. 1:100.
Proposed North Elevation. 1:100.
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Proposed East Elevation. 1:100.
Proposed South Elevation. 1:100.
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Proposed Ground Floor Plan. 1:100.

Appendix B: Desktop Study Tables

The results within the following table are a collation of the species identified within the desktop search, undertaken by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Environmental Records Centre (CPERC).

Amphibians	
Common Name	**Latin Name**
Common Frog	*Rana temporaria*
Great Crested Newt	*Triturus cristatus*
Birds	
Common Name	**Latin Name**
Barn Owl	*Tyto alba*
Brambling	*Fringilla montifringilla*
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*
Corn Bunting	*Emberiza calandra*
Crossbill	*Loxia curvirostra*
Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus*
Dunnock	*Prunella modularis*
Fieldfare	*Turdus pilaris*
Golden Oriole	*Oriolus oriolus*
Golden Plover	*Pluvialis apricaria*
Greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*
Grey Partridge	*Perdix perdix*
Hen Harrier	*Circus cyaneus*
Hobby	*Falco subbuteo*
House Sparrow	*Passer domesticus*
Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*
Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*
Lesser Redpoll	*Acanthis flammea cabaret*
Linnet	*Linaria cannabina*
Marsh Harrier	*Circus aeruginosus*
Marsh Tit	*Poecile palustris*
Merlin	*Falco columbarius*
Red Kite	*Milvus milvus*
Reed Bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus*
Short-eared Owl	*Asio flammeus*
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*
Song Thrush	*Turdus philomelos*
Tree Sparrow	*Passer montanus*
Turtle Dove	*Streptopelia turtur*
Yellow Wagtail	*Motacilla flava*
Yellowhammer	*Emberiza citronella*

Flora	
Common Name	**Latin Name**
Annual Knawel	*Scleranthus annuus*
Corn Mint	*Mentha arvensis*
Fen Pondweed	*Potamogeton coloratus*
Field Pepperwort	*Lepidium campestre*
Fine-leaved Water-dropwort	*Oenanthe aquatica*
Frogbit	*Hydrocharis morsus-ranae*
Good-King-Henry	*Blitum bonus-henricus*
Grape-hyacinth	*Muscari neglectum*
Grass-wrack Pondweed	*Potamogeton compressus*
Greater Bladderwort	*Utricularia vulgaris*
Greater Spearwort	*Ranunculus lingua*
Hoary Plantain	*Plantago media*
Large-flowered Hemp-nettle	*Galeopsis speciosa*
Marsh Sow-thistle	*Sonchus palustris*
Night-flowering Catchfly	*Silene noctiflora*
Pale Poppy	*Roemeria argemone*
Sand Soft-brome	*Bromus hordeaceus subsp. thominei*
Stinking Chamomile	*Anthemis cotula*
Treacle-mustard	*Erysimum cheiranthoides*
Tufted-sedge	*Carex elata*
Water-violet	*Hottonia palustris*
Wild Pansy	*Viola tricolor*
Invertebrates	
Common Name	**Latin Name**
Agnocoris reclairei	*Agnocoris reclairei*
August Thorn	*Ennomos quercinaria*
Beaded Chestnut	*Agrochola lychnidis*
Berosus luridus	*Berosus luridus*
Black Hairstreak	*Satyrium pruni*
Blood-vein	*Timandra comae*
Bloody Cranesbill Weevil	*Zacladus exiguus*
Brindled Beauty	*Lycia hirtaria*
Broom Moth	*Ceramica pisi*
Brown Hairstreak	*Thecla betulae*
Brown-spot Pinion	*Anchoscelis litura*
Buff Ermine	*Spilosoma lutea*
Bulrush Veneer	*Calamotropha paludella*
Centre-barred Sallow	*Atethmia centrago*

Ceutorhynchus rapae	*Ceutorhynchus rapae*
Chequered Skipper	*Carterocephalus palaemon*
Chlorops gracilis	*Chlorops gracilis*
Cinnabar	*Tyria jacobaeae*
Colobaea punctata	*Colobaea punctata*
Comfrey Ermine	*Ethmia quadrillella*
Common Fan-foot	*Pechipogo strigilata*
Concolorous	*Photedes extrema*
Crescent	*Helotropha leucostigma*
Dark Brocade	*Mniotype adusta*
Dark Spinach	*Pelurga comitata*
Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet	*Xanthorhoe ferrugata*
Deep-brown Dart	*Aporophyla lueneburgensis*
Dingy Skipper	*Erynnis tages*
Dorytomus filirostris	*Dorytomus filirostris*
Dot Moth	*Melanchra persicariae*
Double Dart	*Graphiphora augur*
Dusky Brocade	*Apamea remissa*
Dusky Thorn	*Ennomos fuscantaria*
Dusky-lemon Sallow	*Cirrhia gilvago*
Ear Moth	*Amphipoea oculea*
Feathered Gothic	*Tholera decimalis*
Fen Crest	*Brachmia inornatella*
Figure of Eight	*Diloba caeruleocephala*
Flounced Chestnut	*Anchoscelis helvola*
Galium Carpet	*Epirrhoe galiata*
Garden Dart	*Euxoa nigricans*
Garden Tiger	*Arctia caja*
Ghost Moth	*Hepialus humuli*
Giant Water-veneer	*Schoenobius gigantella*
Goat Moth	*Cossus cossus*
Green Hairstreak	*Callophrys rubi*
Green-brindled Crescent	*Allophyes oxyacanthae*
Grey Dagger	*Acronicta psi*
Grizzled Skipper	*Pyrgus malvae*
Hedge Rustic	*Tholera cespitis*
Helophorus granularis	*Helophorus granularis*
Helophorus nanus	*Helophorus nanus*
Hydrochus crenatus	*Hydrochus crenatus*
Hydrochus elongatus	*Hydrochus elongatus*
Knot Grass	*Acronicta rumicis*
Laccornis oblongus	*Laccornis oblongus*
Lackey	*Malacosoma neustria*
Large Nutmeg	*Apamea anceps*
Large Wainscot	*Rhizedra lutosa*

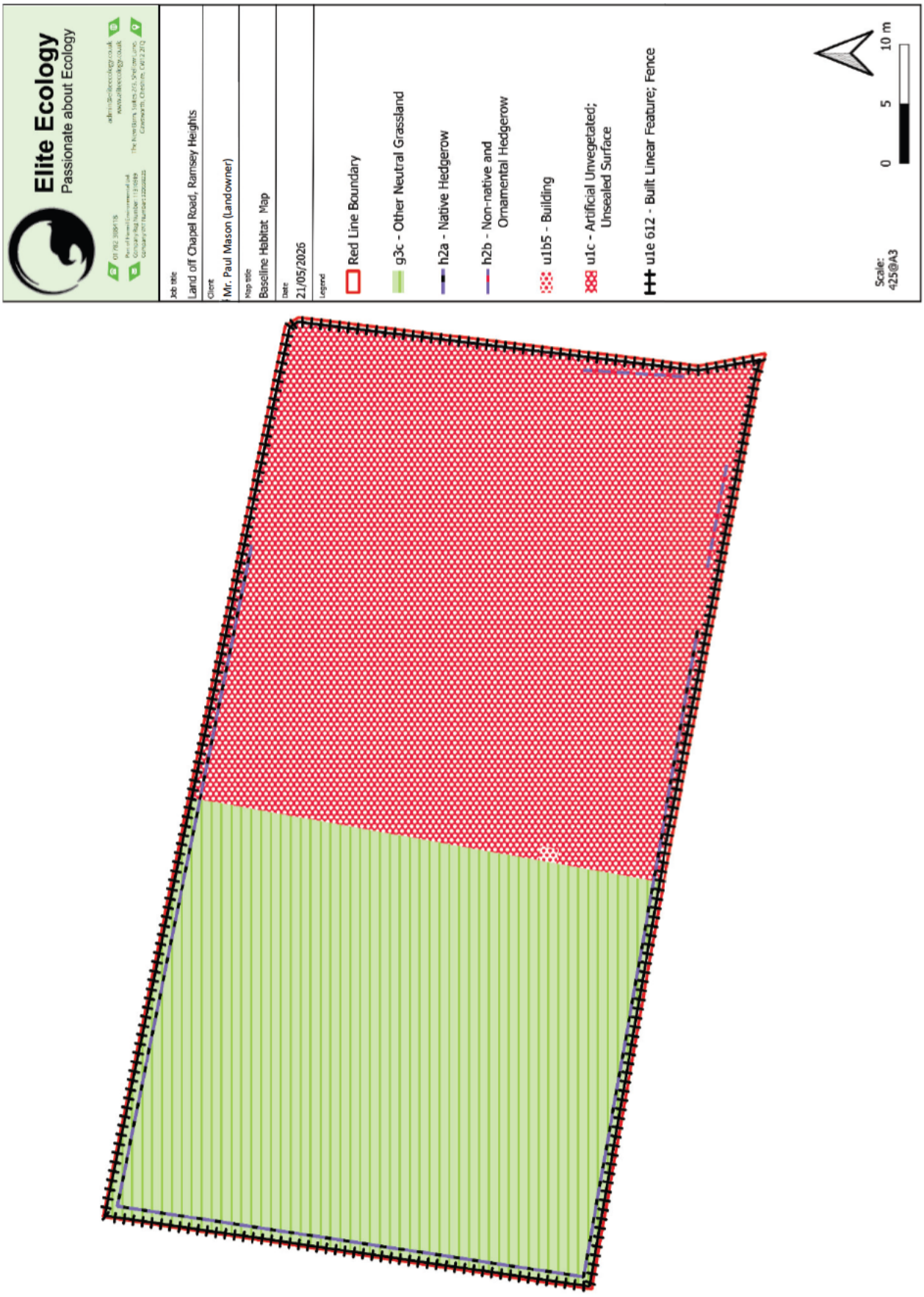
Latticed Heath	*Chiasmia clathrata*
Limnebius papposus	*Limnebius papposus*
Magdalis cerasi	*Magdalis cerasi*
Marsh Carpet	*Gagitodes sagittata*
Minor Shoulder-knot	*Brachylomia viminalis*
Mottled Rustic	*Caradrina morpheus*
Mouse Moth	*Amphipyra tragopoginis*
Mullein Wave	*Scopula marginepunctata*
Musk Beetle	*Aromia moschata*
Oak Hook-tip	*Watsonalla binaria*
Oblique Carpet	*Orthonama vittata*
Pale Eggar	*Trichiura crataegi*
Pale Shining Brown	*Polia bombycina*
Pearl-bordered Fritillary	*Boloria euphrosyne*
Poecilium alni	*Poecilium alni*
Populicerus nitidissimus	*Populicerus nitidissimus*
Powdered Quaker	*Orthosia gracilis*
Purple Emperor	*Apatura iris*
Rosy Minor	*Litoligia literosa*
Rosy Rustic	*Hydraecia micacea*
Rustic	*Hoplodrina blanda*
Sallow	*Cirrhia icteritia*
Scarce Chaser	*Libellula fulva*
Scarodytes halensis	*Scarodytes halensis*
September Thorn	*Ennomos erosaria*
Shaded Broad-bar	*Scotopteryx chenopodiata*
Shoulder-striped Wainscot	*Leucania comma*
Small Emerald	*Hemistola chrysoprasaria*
Small Heath	*Coenonympha pamphilus*
Small Phoenix	*Ecliptopera silaceata*
Small Square-spot	*Diarsia rubi*
Smaller Noterus	*Noterus crassicornis*
Spinach	*Eulithis mellinata*
Sprawler	*Asteroscopus sphinx*
Sword-grass	*Xylena exsoleta*
Wall	*Lasiommata megera*
White Ermine	*Spilosoma lubricipeda*
White-spotted Pinion	*Cosmia diffinis*
Mammals	
Common Name	**Latin Name**
Badger	*Meles meles*
Bat	*Chiroptera*

Brown Long-eared Bat	*Plecotus auritus*
Common Pipistrelle	*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*
Otter	*Lutra lutra*
Water Vole	*Arvicola amphibius*
Reptiles	
Common Name	**Latin Name**
Common Lizard	*Zootoca vivipara*
Grass Snake	*Natrix helvetica*

Appendix C: Desktop Study Maps

No maps have been produced by CPERC. Mr. Paul Mason (Landowner)

Appendix D: Phase 1 Habitat Map



Appendix E: Site Photographs

Plate 1: Image of the site entrance and the wooden gate within the post and wire fencing.



Plate 2: Image of the artificially unvegetated; unsealed surface on site having been cleared.



Plate 3: Image of the other neutral grassland on the site.



Plate 4: Image of the newly planted native hedgerow connecting to the existing hedgerow with post and wire fencing behind.



Plate 5: Image of the newly planted non-native hedgerow near the site entrance.



Plate 6: Image of what is remaining of the previous building onsite.



Appendix F: 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.

Huntingdon Local Plan Biodiversity Action Plan

The Huntingdonshire Local Plan was adopted in 2019 to address existing biodiversity assets which could be enhanced. Huntingdonshire has a rich and varied ecology with a number of sites of significant biodiversity value, such as Woodwalton Fen and Portholme Meadow. The district's green spaces and previously used land also provide a variety of habitats wildlife. There are opportunities to create more resilient and better connected ecological networks to enhance biodiversity and natural capital.

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) was adopted as part of the Environment Act 2021 and aims to set priorities for nature conservation and recovery in Cambridgeshire. The priorities of the LNRS are to give a description of the biodiversity within the county and to provide opportunities for recovering and/or enhancing biodiversity in the county in order to prioritise areas or species for biodiversity recovery and enhancement.

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 December 2024, 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 2017
- 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 2017
- 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 2017

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 G: 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 specify 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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