

Project

2 Western Road, West End SO30 3EL
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Project No

EC2174

Client

Joe Cross, Linkert Homes LTD

Site survey

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Project Manager Disclosure

The advice which we have prepared and provided is true to the best of our knowledge and utilises information available at the time. The advice has been prepared and provided in accordance with the CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct.

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Date

October 2025

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Contents

Summary	1
1 Introduction	2
1.1 Background to Commission	2
1.2 Scope of Report	2
1.3 Site Description	2
1.4 Project Overview	2
1.5 Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy	2
2 Methodology	5
2.1 Overview	5
2.2 Desk Study	5
2.3 Site Survey	5
2.4 Protected Species Assessment	6
2.5 Site Evaluation	7
2.6 Survey and Assessment Limitations	8
3 Results	9
3.1 Designated and Notable Sites	9
3.2 Habitats	9
3.3 Protected Species Assessment	9
3.4 Non-Native Invasive Species	11
4 Impact Assessment	12
4.1 Evaluation of Ecological Features	12
4.2 Discussion of Potential Ecological Impacts	12
5 Recommendations	14
5.1 Overview	14
5.2 Ecological Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Measures	14
5.3 Ecological Enhancement	15



6	Conclusion	16
7	References	17
	Appendix A: Application Site.....	18
	Appendix B: Legislation Information	19
	Appendix C: Survey Results	22

Summary

enims Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of 2 Western Road, West End, Southampton, Hampshire SO30 3EL (Grid Reference: SU 47170 14191). This is in order to support a planning application for the site. The proposed development is for the construction of a self-build 3-bedroom dwelling on the site.

A desk study was carried out to determine if any statutory land designations, Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI), Ancient Woodland and known ancient or veteran trees. A survey of the site was carried out on 10th October 2025, including a full walkover of the site, an assessment of the habitats present and an assessment of the potential presence of protected species.

The application site is a small residential garden with a temporary building and a garden shed. The site is not subject to any statutory nature conservation or notable habitat designations, although Priority Habitat deciduous woodland is present 30m south of the site. The habitats surrounding the buildings within the application site are of low value, being managed and including non-native invasive species in a garden setting. The application site may be used by commuting and foraging bats, reptiles and hedgehogs, and nesting birds.

Some standard pollution methods should be adhered to when construction activities are taking place to avoid impacts on the nearby Priority Habitat deciduous woodland. Removal of storage materials, trees and shrubs should be undertaken outside of the main bird nesting season (i.e., works should take place September through February) or preceded by a check by an ecologist, and consideration should be given to the potential presence of reptiles and hedgehog during site clearance and construction activities. Any lighting installed for the works or development should be bat sensitive. Clearance of non-native invasive plant species should be done in accordance with best-practice guidelines, with appropriate care taken to avoid spread of the plants.

The proposed works to the building provides the opportunity to enhance the application site by incorporating additional bat roosting spaces, nesting spaces for specialist bird species and nesting spaces for solitary bee species.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encourages projects to implement ecological enhancements to achieve positive outcomes for biodiversity. Possible opportunities to enhance wildlife potential, appropriate to this site, are given in this report.



1 Introduction

1.1 Background to Commission

enims Ltd was commissioned by Joe Cross, Linkert Homes Ltd in September 2025 to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at 2 Western Road, West End SO30 3EL. The appraisal was carried out to provide baseline ecological information about the site and to identify any potential ecological constraints associated with the proposed development of the application site. The information presented in this report will outline any necessary further survey requirements and serve to support a planning application.

A bat survey was undertaken on the property directly adjacent to the development site, which is under the same ownership.

1.2 Scope of Report

The purpose of this PEA is to establish the current biodiversity value of the site, identify and assess any potential ecological constraints/impacts associated with the proposed development, and to provide recommendations for additional survey work if required. Avoidance, mitigation/compensation and/or enhancement measures are recommended where necessary to ensure compliance. The assessment is based on the following information sources:

- A desk study of the site and up to a 1km surrounding radius.
- A Preliminary Roost Assessment of the building(s) to be impacted.
- A walkover of the application site in order to record habitats following UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd, 2023) and to identify features with potential to support protected or otherwise notable species.

1.3 Site Description

The site is 2 Western Road, an approximately 0.2ha area located in West End, Southampton, Hampshire SO30 3EL (Grid Reference: SU 47170 14191). The site is located within a residential area, adjacent to a property under the same ownership. The application site itself is a small, vegetated garden bounded by Western Road to the south, and residential properties and vegetated gardens to the north, east, and west. The application site falls under the administrative authority of Eastleigh Borough Council.

Plans showing the location of the site and surrounding landscape are included in Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix A.

1.4 Project Overview

The proposed development is for the construction of a self-build 3-bedroom dwelling on the site.

1.5 Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

The following key pieces of nature conservation legislation are relevant to this appraisal. A more detailed description of relevant legislation is provided in Appendix B:

- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2017 (as amended) /Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 (commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations);
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended); and
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.



Bats are of particular relevance to the application site due to the presence of buildings, as these can support bat roosts. All bats species are protected under Schedule 2 of the Habitat Regulations and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. In brief, these legislative instruments make it an offence to deliberately or recklessly capture, injure, or kill any bat. Roosts are protected from damage or destruction. Furthermore, it is an offence to deliberately disturb a bat, whether roosting or otherwise. In addition, the following native bats are identified as Species of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:

- Barbastelle Bat - *Barbastella barbastellus*
- Bechstein's Bat - *Myotis bechsteinii*
- Noctule - *Nyctalus noctula*
- Soprano Pipistrelle - *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*
- Brown Long-eared Bat - *Plecotus auritus*
- Greater Horseshoe Bat - *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- Lesser Horseshoe Bat - *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

The National Planning Policy Framework (DfCLG, 2024) requires local authorities to avoid and minimise impacts on biodiversity and, where possible, to provide positive outcomes in biodiversity when making planning decisions. Paragraph 174 states that:

“Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geographical value and soils”.

Paragraph 180 sets out the principles that local planning authorities should apply when determining planning application and states that:

“development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around development should be integrated as part of their design”.

Other planning policies at the local level, which are of relevance to this development, include the Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2016-2036, which satisfies the council's obligations under the NERC Act. Policy DM11, Nature conservation states that:

“The Council will work with statutory and voluntary agencies and developers, and will determine planning applications, to:

a. protect, conserve and enhance all:

i. international, national and local nature conservation designations; and

ii. networks of natural habitats and features, including the Local Ecological Network, Priority Biodiversity Areas and Priority Biodiversity Links, watercourses, wetland complexes, woodland trees, and trees and hedgerows important to biodiversity and local character;

and facilitate their adaptation to climate change wherever possible;

b. assist in achieving national, county and local biodiversity targets as set out in Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs);

c. seek a net gain of biodiversity on all development sites (including sites for redevelopment) through the protection, enhancement and connection of existing and provision of new habitats and features of nature conservation interest compatible with the native biodiversity characteristics of the Borough, having regard to local geodiversity and soils; and



d. contribute to major elements of the PfSH Green Infrastructure Strategy and other strategies for the provision and enhancement of multifunctional green infrastructure including green routes, ecological networks and biodiversity enhancements.”



2 Methodology

2.1 Overview

This PEA has been prepared with reference to best practice as published by the Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2017 & 2018), the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023) and British Standard 42020:2013 (BSI, 2013).

2.2 Desk Study

A search was carried out using the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (www.magic.gov.uk) for any Statutory nature conservation designations located on site and/or within 1km. Where relevant, consideration was also given to Statutory sites located further distances away. Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) and Ancient Woodland sites on site and/or within 500m were also identified. The Woodland Trust online Ancient Tree Inventory (<http://ati.woodlandtrust.org.uk>) was reviewed for the locations of any known ancient and veteran trees on or adjacent to the site.

Records of granted Natural England species licenses from within 1km of the application site were also searched for using the MAGIC website. Online maps and aerial imagery were used to identify the presence of water bodies within 250m of the site, in order to establish if the application site could be used by great crested newts.

Given the small-scale and localised nature of the development proposals, the web-based data resources and search areas set out above are considered appropriate for this assessment (CIEEM, 2018).

The status of species is taken directly from the relevant legislation; the 'UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework', local Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and Birds of Conservation Concern (Stanbury et al., 2021)¹.

Scientific names are given following the species first mention. Thereafter, only common names are used.

2.3 Site Survey

The site survey was conducted on 10th October 2025. The survey was undertaken under optimum conditions and during the recommended period, April through October (JNCC, 2010). Weather conditions on that day were overcast with temperatures around 15 °C.

The site survey was undertaken by Fraser Gurney and Rachel Forster. Fraser is a senior consultant ecologist within enims Ltd and an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (ACIEEM). Fraser is experienced in carrying out protected species surveys and holds a Level 1 Bat Licence. Rachel is an assistant ecologist for enims Ltd.

An assessment of the buildings was carried out to gather evidence to determine whether the buildings either had the potential to support bat roosts or showed direct indications of current/previous use by roosting bats. All surveys were carried out in strict accordance with Good Practice Guidelines published by the Bat Conservation Trust (Collins, 2023). External inspections of the buildings were undertaken whereby a search was made for direct evidence of bat activity, such as corpses, droppings, urine stains

¹ The Red and Amber lists of Birds of Conservation Concern refer to bird species of particular conservation concern for a number of reasons. In general terms, red list species are globally threatened showing severe recent declines in population. Amber list species are species either with unfavorable conservation status or those species showing moderate recent declines in population; they may also include particularly localised species.



and scratch marks. Potential access points, particularly those free of cobwebs and other obstructions, were also recorded, irrespective of whether there was direct evidence of use in the vicinity. Equipment included a high-powered torch.

During the survey visit, a walkover of the site was also carried out, covering the entire area within the redline boundary and including any boundary features of interest. Habitats were described and recorded broadly in accordance with UK Habitat classification Version 2.0 (UKHab Ltd, 2023) Habitats were also assessed using the Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI) criteria, as set out by JNCC (BRIG, ed. A. Maddock, 2011). HPI are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Incidental records of birds and other fauna noted during the course of the habitat survey were also compiled. The presence of non-native invasive plant species were also recorded and locations of stands mapped.

2.4 Protected Species Assessment

The habitats were assessed for their potential to support protected species using a combination of desk study information and field observations carried out during the habitat survey. The assessment was based on professional judgement and best practice survey guidance methodology for identifying field signs of protected species. The potential for protected species presence was based on the following criteria:

- **Present** – Confirmed presence through first hand survey evidence or recent verified records
- **High Potential** – Local records highlight presence in the local vicinity. The site and immediate surrounds support good quality habitat or good connectivity to such habitat
- **Moderate Potential** – Habitat within the site provides key elements for any species or species group, although may be limited by factors including habitat area, isolation or disturbance. Desk study records highlight presence in proximity to site
- **Low Potential** – On-site habitat is of low or moderate quality for any species or species group, lacking key elements and limited by factors including habitat fragmentation and habitat area. Few or absence of local records, but within national distribution and thus cannot be completely discounted.
- **Negligible Potential** – Habitats within the site are very poor quality or completely absent for any species or species group. Desk study records are absent, the site is outside of the normal range of the species or species group, and the surrounding habitat is unlikely to support wider populations. Presence cannot be completely ruled out but it is considered 'reasonably unlikely' to support any species or species group.

When assigning a level of bat roosting potential (negligible, low, moderate or high) to a feature, the descriptions in Table 1 were considered.

Table 1. Criteria for the potential of features and habitats to support roosting and foraging/commuting bats (Collins, 2023).

Suitability	Description of roosting habitat	Commuting or foraging habitat
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels.)	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).



Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one of more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e., unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could still be used by individual hibernating bats).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of commuting bats such as a gapped hedgerow or un-vegetated stream, but isolated, i.e., not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only – the assessments in this table are made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for commuting such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.	Continuous, high quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by commuting bats such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

2.5 Site Evaluation

An evaluation of the site was carried out in accordance with guidance issued by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM, 2018), which ranks the nature conservation value of a site according to a geographic scale of reference. The scale that measures conservation value is as follows: international, national, regional, county/metropolitan, district/borough, local/parish, or of value at the site scale. In evaluating the nature conservation value of the site, the following factors are also considered: nature conservation designations, rarity, naturalness, fragility, connectivity and



relevant nature conservation aims and objectives for a given area, as contained in national and local biodiversity action plans and planning policies.

2.6 Survey and Assessment Limitations

The data and conclusions presented within this report are an evidence-based assessment of the current status of the application site. The data and conclusions do not provide a full and definitive survey of any protected species group. Evaluations have been made based on the results of this ecological assessment. The likely ecological constraints to the proposed development are detailed, as well as any need for further ecological survey and mitigation measures.

Ecological surveys are limited by factors which affect the presence of plants and animals, such as the time of year, migration patterns and behaviour. Therefore, the absence of evidence of a particular species should not be taken as conclusive proof that the species is not present, or that it will not be present in the future.

The data provided in this report is valid for 18 months from the date of survey.



3 Results

3.1 Designated and Notable Sites

3.1.1 Statutory Sites of Nature Conservation

Consultation with the MAGIC Maps database showed Moorgreen Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as the only Statutory Site of Nature Conservation within a 1km radius of the site boundary. The Moorgreen Meadows SSSI (14.32 hectares) is 0.9km northeast from the application site. It was designated as a site of exceptional scientific importance for its populations of marsh orchids (*Dactylorhiza*). In particular, the site includes a geographically isolated population of the Northern Marsh Orchid (*D. purpurella*), the nearest other localities being in Wales, Staffordshire, and Yorkshire.

3.1.2 NERC Act HPI / Local BAP Priority Habitats

Within 500m of the development site there is one NERC Act HPI / Local BAP Priority Habitat in the form of two parcels of Priority Habitat deciduous woodland, the closest of which is 30m south of the site.

3.1.3 Other Notable Designations

There are no other notable designations within 1km of the site boundary.

Consultation with the Woodland Trust Ancient Tree Inventory showed no ancient or veteran trees within 50m of the site, although there are multiple within the wider landscape.

3.2 Habitats

The results of the site visit are presented in Figure 3, Appendix C.

There are two small buildings on the application site: a temporary cabin (B1) and a garden shed (B2). B1 is a static caravan with metal walls and a wood base, with no loft spaces. B2 is a small garden shed with wooden walls and a slanted tiled roof, with no loft spaces. Most of the site is a grass lawn fringed by ornamental planting (u1 – built-up areas and gardens), with a small patch of gravel (u1c – artificial unvegetated unsealed surface) on the east boundary and four individual trees in the southwest corner. A temporary fence has been erected parallel to the southern boundary of the application site, beyond which is a hedge (h2b – other hedgerows) of cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*) and beech (*Fagus sylvatica*).

3.3 Protected Species Assessment

3.3.1 Badger

No signs of badger (*Meles meles*) were seen during the site visit. Habitat suitability for badger on the site is low. The site is in a highly urban area and foraging and commuting badger are highly unlikely to pass through the site. Therefore, badger are considered likely absent from the site and are not considered further in this report.

3.3.2 Bats

Consultation with the MAGIC maps database showed two European Protected Species Mitigation Licences (EPSML) for bats granted within a 1km radius of the site:

- 2016-22944-EPS-MIT: The damage and destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle and brown long eared bat in 2016, 0.4km northeast of the site.
- 2019-42509-EPS-MIT: The destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) and serotine bat (*Eptesicus serotinus*) in 2019, 0.9km north of the site.



Both B1 and B2 lacked external roosting features and loft spaces and therefore had negligible potential for roosting bats. Similarly, the trees on site were deemed unsuitable for roosting bats as they contained no features suitable for roosting bats. However, the site is well connected with tree lines and therefore presents high suitability to support foraging and commuting bats.

Previous bat surveys on the adjacent property (under the same ownership) were undertaken by enims Ltd in July-September 2024. Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, and serotine bat (*Eptesicus serotinus*) were recorded on all three survey visits, with common pipistrelle being by far the most common species on each visit. Noctule and brown long-eared bat were also recorded during the second survey visit, while barbastelle and a *Myotis* sp. were also recorded during the third survey visit. During all three survey visits, particularly the first two, multiple bats were observed passing or foraging along the row of large trees south of the application site, with many of these bats moving between the northwest and southeast corners of the site.

The application site has negligible potential for roosting bats and is confirmed to support foraging and commuting bats.

3.3.3 Dormouse

Consultation with the MAGIC Maps database showed two EPSML for hazel dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) granted within a 1km radius of the site:

- EPSM2012-4209: The destruction of a breeding and resting place for dormouse in 2013, 0.9km southeast of the site.
- 2014-636-EPS-MIT: The destruction of a breeding and resting place for dormouse in 2014, 0.9km southeast of the site. The license was modified in 2015 (2014-636-EPS-MIT-1).

The habitat on the application area has no suitability for hazel dormouse and is not connected to suitable habitat in the wider landscape. Therefore, hazel dormouse are considered likely absent from the site and are not considered further in this report.

3.3.4 Otter and Water Vole

Consultation with the MAGIC Maps database showed no EPSML for otter (*Lutra lutra*) within 1km of the site. No habitat suitable for otter or water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) was present on or near the application site, therefore these species are considered likely absent from the site and are not considered further in this report.

3.3.5 Nesting Birds

The vegetation on the application site, consisting of trees, hedges, and ornamental plants, had high potential to support a range of common nesting bird species.

3.3.6 Great Crested Newt

Consultation with the MAGIC Maps database showed no EPSML, class survey licence returns or pond surveys for great crested newt within a 1km radius of the site. Consultation with the MAGIC maps and aerial imagery showed one pond within 250m of the site, approximately 225m southeast of the site boundary. However, this pond was separated from the site by a busy road (Telegraph Road) which would act as a barrier to great crested newt dispersal.

There were no ponds onsite, and the highly modified artificial and garden habitats of the site were unsuitable terrestrial habitat for great crested newt. This lack of suitable habitat, as well as the lack of connected ponds in the surrounding landscape, means great crested newt are considered likely absent from the site and are not considered further in this report.



3.3.7 Reptiles

Consultation with the MAGIC Maps database showed no EPSML for rare reptile species within 1km of the site.

The urban and garden habitats were largely unsuitable for both rare and common reptile species. Common reptiles may occasionally use the site for foraging and commuting, although the site lacked opportunities for sheltering or hibernating reptiles.

The application site has low potential to support foraging and commuting reptiles.

3.3.8 NERC Act SPI/Local BAP Species

The garden habitats of the site were potentially suitable for hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), although they lacked opportunities for sheltering or hibernating hedgehog. Hedgehog may occasionally use the site for foraging and commuting.

The application site has low potential to support foraging and commuting hedgehog.

3.4 Non-Native Invasive Species

There is a hedge of cherry laurel and rhododendron bordering the south of the application site where the proposed driveway will be constructed.



4 Impact Assessment

4.1 Evaluation of Ecological Features

The application site is not subject to any statutory nature conservation or notable habitat designations, although Priority Habitat deciduous woodland is present 30m south of the site. The habitats within the application site are of low value themselves as they are relatively managed habitats containing ornamental, native, and invasive non-native species. The habitats present provide some suitable habitat for and commuting bats, reptiles and hedgehog, and nesting birds. Invasive species cherry laurel and rhododendron are present on the site.

4.2 Discussion of Potential Ecological Impacts

4.2.1 Statutory Nature Conservation Sites

The application site is not subject to any Statutory Nature Conservations.

Moorgreen Meadows SSSI is 0.9km northeast of the site. The distance to this SSSI and the small-scale nature of the proposed works means impacts to the SSSI are highly unlikely.

4.2.1 NERC Act HPI / Local BAP Priority Habitats and Other Notable Designations

The Priority Habitat deciduous woodland to the south of the application site may be vulnerable to pollution or damage via dust, noise, surface water run-off and mechanical damage during the works phase.

4.2.2 Habitats

The development will result in the loss of garden habitats including lawn, ornamental plants, introduced hedgerows and a small number of native trees. These habitats are of relatively low value themselves and are common in the surrounding landscape.

4.2.3 Protected Species

Bats

As European protected species, bats are fully protected against the loss, damage or obstruction of roosts and the killing and injury of individual bats. The lack of roosting features on the application site means this is considered unlikely. Insensitive lighting can disrupt commuting routes and reduce foraging resources, which may impact upon the survival of the local population of bat species.

Nesting Birds

The removal of any trees, hedgerows or scrub could negatively impact any active bird nests present. Potential impacts include killing and injury of birds, as well as damage or destruction of nests and eggs. Such activities would be an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended.

Reptiles

Clearance of ground vegetation and open excavations and unsafe storage of materials, tools and chemicals could harm any individual hedgehog that may be utilising the site.

NERC Act SPI/Local BAP Species



Clearance of ground vegetation and open excavations and unsafe storage of materials, tools and chemicals could harm any individual hedgehog that may be utilising the site.

4.2.4 Non-Native Invasive Species

Rhododendron is listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which states it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause the species to grow in the wild. Construction activities will impact the hedgerows and therefore have high potential to spread this species further.

Although not listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, cherry laurel can spread quickly through a habitat to the detriment of native flora and are difficult to eradicate.

Construction activities will impact the hedgerows and therefore have high potential to spread this species further.



5 Recommendations

5.1 Overview

The assessment of the ecological constraints and subsequent recommendations are based on the current development proposals. If the development proposals change, this may alter the conclusions and advice in this report.

5.2 Ecological Impact Avoidance and Mitigation Measures

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines the mitigation hierarchy and promotes its use throughout the development planning process, in order to minimise harm to, and maximise benefits for, biodiversity. The NPPF highlights the primary objective for any proposed development should be avoiding adverse effects on biodiversity through good design. Any unavoidable adverse effects on biodiversity should be adequately mitigated to minimise any negative impacts. Compensation may be used after avoidance and mitigation measures have been fully considered, in order to address any residual impacts of the proposals.

5.2.1 Priority Habitats

Potential constraints relating to nearby Priority Habitat can be mitigated for through sensitive working practices during construction. Care should be taken when operating any plant or moving construction materials in proximity of the nearby deciduous woodland habitat to the south of the site. Standard pollution control measures should be followed when working on site, such as refuelling measures, spill response plans, dust suppression techniques and noise control measures.

5.2.2 Bats

Any external lighting used should be bat-friendly and not illuminate boundary vegetation, particularly the offsite woodland. Further details can be found in the Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and artificial lighting in the UK (Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals, 2023).

5.2.3 Nesting Birds

Removal of any vegetation should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (i.e., works should take place September through February) to avoid acting unlawfully. If this is not possible, then vegetation must only be removed following a nesting bird check carried out immediately prior to works (or within 24 hours) by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any active nests must remain 'in situ' with an appropriate vegetation buffer until young have fledged and the nest is no longer in use.

5.2.4 Reptiles and NERC Act SPI/Local BAP Species

To avoid potential harm to reptiles or hedgehog that may be in the local area at the time of works, the following simple measures should be followed:

- The work site should be kept tidy at the end of each shift, with chemical and equipment stored securely. Excavations should be backfilled or covered to prevent reptiles or hedgehog from falling in. If this is not possible then a plank should be left in the excavation at an angle no greater than 45 degrees to provide a means of escape.
- Removal of storage materials, debris piles, leaf litter and any ground vegetation within the boundary vegetation habitats should be undertaken carefully and with consideration to the potential presence of reptiles and hedgehog. Any individuals encountered should be allowed to move away safely or be moved to an area of similar habitat away from the works.



5.2.5 Non-Native Invasive Species

Rhododendron and cherry laurel reproduce through seeds which can be easily transported by vehicles and in contaminated soil. Seeds remain dormant in the soil for several years and will germinate when conditions are favourable. Care should be taken to avoid the spread of the plant from the works site during construction. Any plant material or soil removed from the site should be disposed of appropriately.

5.3 Ecological Enhancement

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local policy encourages developers to incorporate ecological enhancements into projects to achieve positive outcomes for biodiversity. Generally, enhancements act to improve the quality of the habitat for the flora and fauna on and within the vicinity of the site. These enhancements can also provide aesthetic appeal, thus adding to the value of the project. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides guidance to planning authorities on how development proposals may provide enhancements to biodiversity and contribute to wildlife and habitat connectivity in the wider area.

Possible opportunities to enhance the wildlife potential, appropriate to this site, are provided below. It is important that any measures adopted be clearly demonstrated to the Planning Authority through inclusion in design plans and accompanying documentation.

- A range of boxes are available that provide a self-contained space for roosting bats. Some which can actually be incorporated into the walls of new builds, others may be attached to trees or the building exterior. These bat boxes can provide new roosting space to encourage a wide range of bat species to utilise the surrounding area.
- The installation of bird boxes can provide additional nesting space for birds, secure from predatory animals such as foxes (*Vulpes vulpes*). Many small bird species, such as blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*) and great tit (*Parus major*) will preferentially nest in nest boxes, where available, and boxes to suit different species should be offered. As a building development, there is an opportunity to provide nest boxes built into walls specifically for house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and swift (*Apus apus*). These are both on the red list of Birds of Conservation Concern.
- Installation of bee bricks would benefit invertebrates, integrated into buildings in a south-facing wall at a minimum height of 1m, with no vegetation obstructing the holes. Planting bee-friendly plants nearby would provide the bees using the bricks with a good quality foraging resource.



6 Conclusion

The application site is not subject to any statutory nature conservation or notable habitat designations, although Priority Habitat deciduous woodland is present 30m south of the site. The habitats surrounding the buildings within the application site are of low value, being managed and including non-native invasive species in a garden setting. The application site may be used by commuting and foraging bats, reptiles and hedgehogs, and nesting birds.

Some standard pollution methods should be adhered to when construction activities are taking place to avoid impacts on the nearby Priority Habitat deciduous woodland. Removal of storage materials, trees and shrubs should be undertaken outside of the main bird nesting season or preceded by a check by an ecologist, and consideration should be given to the potential presence of reptiles and hedgehog during site clearance and construction activities. Any lighting installed for the works or development should be bat sensitive. Clearance of non-native invasive plant species should be done in accordance with best-practice guidelines, with appropriate care taken to avoid spread of the plants.

The proposed works to the building provides the opportunity to enhance the application site by incorporating additional bat roosting spaces, nesting spaces for specialist bird species and nesting spaces for solitary bee species.



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Appendix A: Application Site



Figure 1. Location of application site (red line) and surrounding landscape



Figure 2. Application site boundary (red line) and location of B1 (yellow line) and B2 (orange line)

Appendix B: Legislation Information

Statutory Designated Sites

Particular national and international legislative instruments enable the designation of sites of conservation interest. These 'statutory designated sites' are then afforded varying degrees of protection under environmental legislation and government policy. The land designations considered by this study are set out below, with details of their associated legislation.

Designation	Protection
National Parks	National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949.
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; local planning policy.
Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; local planning policy.
National Nature Reserves (NNRs)	National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949; Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; local planning policy.
Ramsar sites	Ramsar Convention; Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; Countryside and Rights of Way act 2000.
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	EU Habitats Directive; Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
Special Protection Areas (SPAs)	EU Birds Directive; Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981; Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.



Non-Statutory Designated Sites

Non-statutory designated sites, such as County Wildlife Sites (CWS), Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) are local sites designated by Local Planning Authorities that are considered to be of significant nature conservation value. They often have an important role in the wider landscape by connecting statutory designated sites and can support European protected species and species listed under the Habitats Directive.

Ancient Woodland is a non-statutory designation, which is generally applied to woodlands known to predate 1600. Before this time woodland was rarely artificially planted, hence these woodlands are likely to be naturally established. Subtypes include Ancient Semi Natural Woodlands and Ancient Replanted Woodlands. Although tree cover in the latter has predominately been replaced, original features such as characteristic wildlife are retained. Ancient woodlands are protected under national planning policy. Current planning policy guidance requires that developments must not result in the loss or deterioration of Ancient Woodlands, which are a valuable biodiversity resource.

European Protected Species (EPS)

European protected species are protected in the UK by Regulation 40 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), with EPS listed under Schedule 2. This is the national implementation of the European Union's 'Habitats Directive' (Council Directive 92/43/EEC (a) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Flora and Fauna). Protection is also afforded to any EPS under Section 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), owing to their inclusion in Schedule 5.

These legislative instruments make it unlawful to intentionally, deliberately or recklessly capture, kill, injure or disturb in a place of shelter, any EPS. The damage or destruction of a breeding or resting place, whether intentional or reckless, also constitutes an offence.

The following are examples of EPS which are native to and residing in the United Kingdom:

- Sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*)
- Smooth snake (*Cornella austriaca*)
- Great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*)
- Dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*)
- Otters (*Lutra lutra*)
- Bats (all native species)

'Widespread' Species

Widespread Reptiles

Through inclusion in Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, it is an offence under Section 9 to intentionally kill, injure or sell, offer for sale, possess or transport for the purpose of sale, any living or dead widespread species of UK reptile, or any product derived from one.

In addition, all native reptiles are adopted as Species of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Water Voles

The water vole *Arvicola amphibius* is fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Protection is afforded against killing and injury of water voles, as well as the damage, destruction or obstruction of burrows, or disturbance of burrows while in use.



Nesting Birds

Under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is an offence to kill, injure or take any wild bird; take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built; take or destroy the egg of any wild bird.

There are 49 bird species listed as Species of Principal Importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. These species are therefore material planning considerations.

Schedule 1 Listed Birds

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 there are special penalties for offences regarding birds listed in this Schedule. Additionally, it is an offence to disturb Schedule 1 listed bird or dependent young at nest.

Badgers

Badgers are protected by the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under this legislation, badgers and their setts are protected against all deliberate damage, destruction and disturbance. Badgers are widespread and abundant; their legal protection is primarily aimed at preventing blood sports, however there are still implications for developers.

NERC Act Habitats and Species

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1st October 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act required the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when carrying out their normal functions.

There are 56 Habitats of Principle Importance (HPI) included on the S41 list. These are all the habitats in England that were identified as requiring action in the former UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). These areas include terrestrial habitats such as upland hay meadows to lowland mixed deciduous woodland. Additionally, 943 Species of Principle Importance (SPI) were included in the S41 list. The species found in England were identified as requiring action under the former UK BAP, which has since been replaced by the Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. The priority species and habitats designed under S41 of the NERC Act will be considered as part of the constraints and opportunities assessment, thus identifying if these habitats will be impacted and also where opportunities are present to enhance the area for local priority species.

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

All mammals receive some protection under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996, which makes it an offence to intentionally cause unnecessary suffering of any wild mammal. The Wild Mammals Act may apply during site clearance works, particularly where burrowing animals such as foxes and rabbits are present as they could be crushed or asphyxiated in their burrows by heavy machinery.



Appendix C: Survey Results

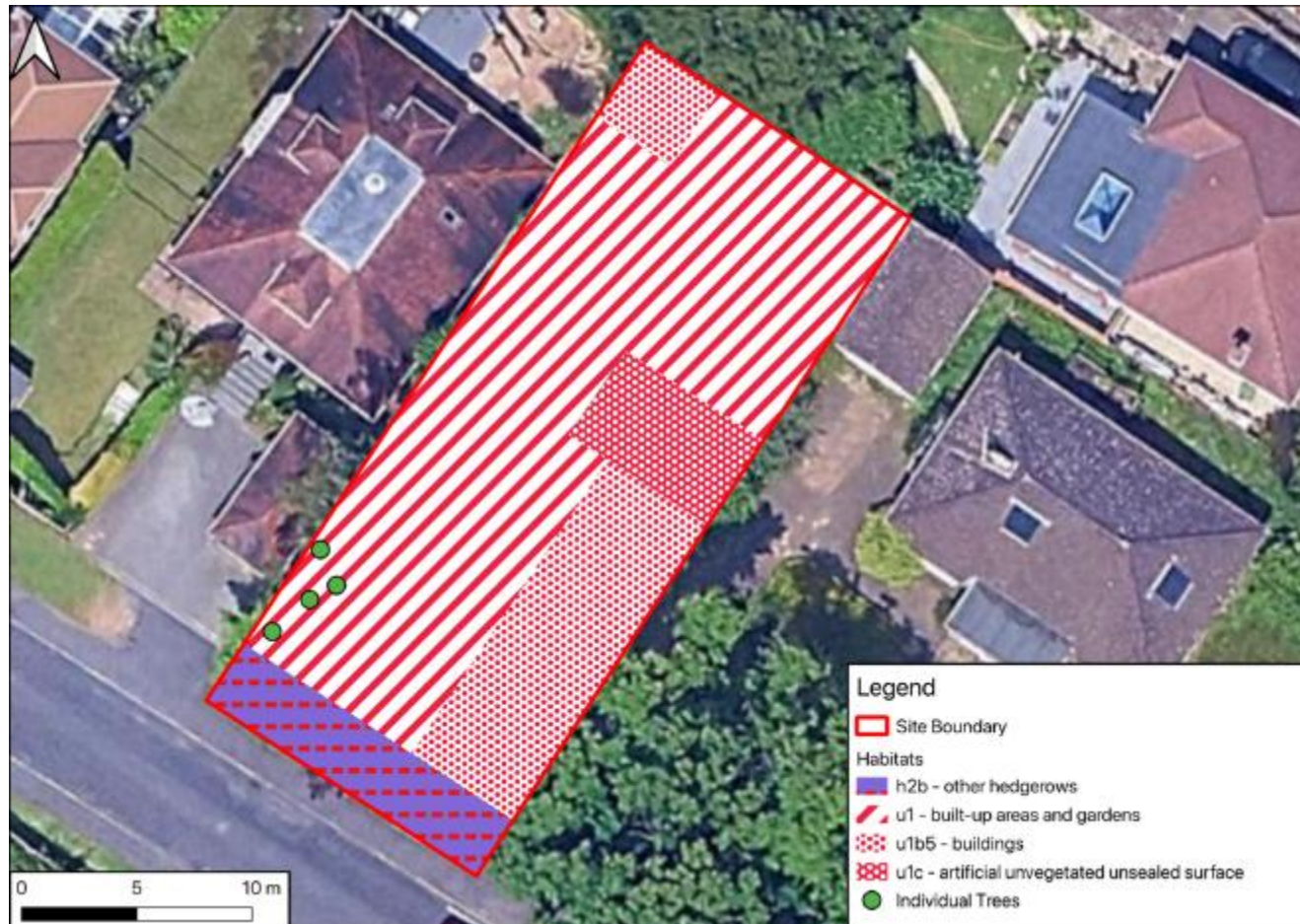


Figure 3. Habitat map of 2 Western Road. QGIS 2025.



Photograph 1.
North end of application site and B2.



Photograph 2.
B2.



Photograph 3.
South end of application site and B1.



Photograph 4.
B1.



Photograph 5.
South end of application site and B1.



Photograph 6.
Cherry laurel and rhododendron bordering south of application site

