

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

**Bradstones Little Blakelow Farm,
Bottom Lane,
ST10 2LN**

February 2021

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Notice to readers

This report has been prepared by Absolute Ecology with all reasonable skill, care and diligence, within the terms of the contract with the client. The actions of the surveyor on site, and during the production of the report were undertaken in accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct for the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (www.cieem.org.uk).

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The results of the survey and assessment work undertaken by Absolute Ecology are representative at the time of surveying.

Every endeavour has been made to identify the presence of protected species on site, where this falls within the agreed scope of works.

The flora and fauna detailed within this report are those noted during the field survey and from anecdotal evidence. It should not be viewed as a complete list of flora and fauna species that may frequent or exist on site at other times of the year.

Up to date standard methodologies have been used, which are accepted by Natural England and other statutory conservation bodies. No responsibility will be accepted where these methodologies fail to identify all species on-site.

Absolute Ecology cannot take responsibility where Government, national bodies or industry subsequently modify standards.

Absolute Ecology cannot accept responsibility for data collected from third parties.

Reference to sections or particular paragraphs of this document taken out of context may lead to misrepresentation.

Non-technical summary

Absolute Ecology LLP was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of a site known as Bradstones, Little Blakelow Farm, Bottom Lane, ST10 2LN. Ordnance Survey grid ref: SK03335214.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken on 17th February 2021 by Helen Staton (Hons), ACIEEM, an experienced and licensed ecologist who is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (ACIEEM).

The site is the subject of a planning application for the construction of an agricultural building. The building, and access, will be constructed within the north eastern corner of a grassland field

The survey area is situated in a predominantly rural location immediately bounded by residential properties to the north, agricultural land to the east and south and a main road to the west (Bottom Lane). The site itself is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland, bounded by a fence and hedgerow.

There are two statutory sites (Swineholes Wood & Black Heath SSSI and Coombes Valley SSSI) and twenty-three non-statutory sites located within 2km of the application area.

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal confirmed the presence or potential presence of the following (see section 5 for further details):

- **Bats** – any additional site lighting should avoid light spill onto neighbouring bat foraging habitats (i.e. adjacent hedgerow).
- **Great crested newt** – four ponds are located within 250m of the application site. A Habitat Suitability Index assessment was conducted on the four ponds which assessed three to be of value for supporting great crested newts (P2-P4). To minimise impact of works on local amphibian populations, construction works should follow Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAM's)

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1.0 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Absolute Ecology LLP was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of a site known as Bradstones, Little Blakelow Farm, Bottom Lane, ST10 2LN. Ordnance Survey grid ref: SK03335214.
- 1.2 The Assessment was undertaken on the 17th February 2021 by Helen Staton (Hons) an experienced and licensed ecologist who is an Associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (ACIEEM).
- 1.3 The scope of this appraisal has been determined in line with the proportional approach to ecological survey, assessment and subsequent recommendations for avoidance and mitigation of impacts, which is encouraged in the emerging 'BS 42020: Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development'. This report has been prepared with due consideration for various best-practice guidance and methodologies including those of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM (2012))¹ and the emerging BS 42020.
- 1.4 The objective of this report is to provide the client with information on any known or potential protected or rare species that may be using the site, and to outline recommendations on how to proceed with the works in a legal and ecologically sensitive manner.
- 1.5 The site is the subject of a planning application for the construction of an agricultural building. The building, and access, will be constructed within the north eastern corner of a grassland field.
- 1.6 Unless the client indicates to the contrary, information on the species found to be present on the site will be passed to the county biological records centre to update records held for the area.

Site Description

- 1.7 The survey area is situated in a predominantly rural location immediately bounded by residential properties to the north, agricultural land to the east and south and a main road to the west (Bottom Lane). The site itself is dominated by poor semi-improved grassland, bounded by a fence and hedgerow.
- 1.8 Within the wider landscape are a number of ponds, water features, hedgerows, farmland, good semi-improved grassland and hay meadows.

Figure 1: Aerial view of the site with red line boundary indicating ecological survey area.



2.0 Methodology

Desk Study

- 2.1 In order to compile background information on the site and immediate surroundings Staffordshire Ecological Records (SER) were contacted.
- 2.2 Information requested was as follows:-
- Records of protected species within the 2 km of the site.
 - Records of rare or notable species within the 2 km of the site.
 - Non-statutory site designations on or within 2 km of the site.
- 2.3 Additionally, MAGIC (Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside, 2010) was used to establish whether any of the following were present:-
- Statutory site designations on or within 2 km of the site.
 - Statutory sites designated for bats within 2 km of the site.

Habitat Survey

- 2.4 The site was visited on the 17th February 2021 and was surveyed in accordance with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) Phase I Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC, 2007). This technique provides an inventory of the basic habitat types present and allows identification of areas of greater potential that might warrant further study.
- 2.5 Target notes (TN) were used to illustrate key features of interest (i.e. over mature trees / hedgerows) or to draw attention to areas considered too small to map or for the purpose of highlighting the location of an invasive plant species. Photographic plates have also been taken to help illustrate key site features.
- 2.6 The observable higher plant species in each habitat type within the site, and their abundance, were recorded using the DAFOR scale:

D	Dominant
A	Abundant
F	Frequent
O	Occasional
R	Rare

Fauna

- 2.7 Habitats present on the site were searched for obvious signs of faunal activity, e.g. presence of badger setts, mammal tracks or herpetofauna under refugia. Any buildings and mature trees on site were visually examined from the ground to identify features with the potential to support roosting bats.

Valuation of Ecological Features

- 2.8 The value of areas of habitat and plant communities has been measured against published criteria where available. Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) have been searched to identify whether action has been taken to protect all areas of a particular habitat and to identify current factors causing loss and decline of particular habitats. The presence of injurious and legally controlled weeds has also been taken into account.
- 2.9 When assigning a level of value to a species, its distribution and status (including a consideration of trends based on available historic records) has been taken into account. Other factors influencing the value of a species are: legal protection, rarity and Species Action Plans (SAPs). Guidance, where it is available, for the identification of populations of sufficient size for them to be considered of national or international importance has also been taken into account.

Survey Constraints

Data Search

- 2.10 Desk study data provides information on recorded species in the area and can be helpful for targeting survey. However, it is possible that protected species that have not been identified within the data search may occur on or adjacent to the site.

Field survey

- 2.11 Habitats within 50 m of the site boundary were inspected as far as access allowed. Ponds up to 500m from the site were viewed where there was public/land owner access.
- 2.12 The survey was undertaken during the winter months when not all botanical species are visible. However, given the sites dominant habitat type of species poor improved grassland, the species recorded at the time of the survey are considered representative of the habitat type present and it is considered unlikely that the time of year which the survey was conducted, would act as a constraint to the results.
- 2.13 Fauna species present may not always leave field signs and in addition, species may take up residence on site subsequent to the survey. If no development takes place within 12 months of this survey report, the findings should be reviewed and may need updating, and a full survey should be repeated within three years

Nomenclature

- 2.14 The English name only of flora and fauna species is given in the main text of this report; however, scientific names are used for invertebrates where no English name is available. Vascular plants and charophytes follow the nomenclature of The Botanical Society for the British Isles (BSBI) 2007 database (BSBI, 2011) with all other flora and fauna following the Nameserver facility of the National Biodiversity Network Species Dictionary (<http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nbn/>), which is managed by the Natural History Museum.

3.0 Legislation

- 3.1 The United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) 1994 sets out a strategy for implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity, which was signed by the United Kingdom at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992. The published report contains action plans for the United Kingdom's most threatened species and habitat plans for the most vulnerable areas.
- 3.2 The Local BAP sets out the county's part in the UK biodiversity planning process, in the form of local habitat and species action plans. Local BAPs are intended to focus resources, to conserve and enhance biodiversity, by taking account of national and local priorities.
- 3.3 Schedule 1 Part 1 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and amendments) – this lists birds protected by special penalties at all times. It prohibits intentional killing/injuring, taking, possessing, disturbing and selling (including parts and derivatives, eggs, nests, *etc.* as applicable) as well as damaging, destroying or disturbing nests in current use or dependent young, *etc.*
- 3.4 Schedule 5 of The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and amendments) – this prohibits deliberate killing, injuring, taking, possessing, disturbing and selling (including parts and derivatives) as well as damaging, destroying or obstructing any structure or place of refuge of listed fauna, such as Dormouse, Otter and bat species.
- 3.5 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, consolidate all the various amendments made to the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, in respect of England and Wales. It is illegal to kill, disturb, destroy eggs, breeding sites or resting places, to pick, collect, take cuttings, uproot or destroy in the wild as well as keep, transport, sell/exchange and offer for sale/exchange species listed.
- 3.6 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 – this increases protection given by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and amendments). The offence to intentionally damage any structure or place that a wild animal listed in Schedule 5 of the Act uses for shelter or protection or deliberately disturbing any such animal while in such a structure or place is extended so that the offence also covers reckless damage or disturbance. The CRoW Act also places a duty on Ministers and Government Departments to have regard for the purpose of conserving biological diversity in accordance with the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- 3.7 The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 - this Act makes it illegal to wilfully kill, injure or take any Badger, or attempt to do so and it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any part of a Badger sett.
- 3.8 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 - as well as creating Natural England, this act gives all public authorities the duty to have regard for conserving biodiversity within the commission of their duties. This includes a duty to restore and enhance as well as maintain biodiversity. The act also strengthens protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and makes authorities liable for allowing damage to such sites or their features.

4.0 Results

Desk Study – Map of sites and species shown within Appendix 1

Sites

Statutory Sites

4.1 There are two statutory sites located within 2 km of the application boundary:

- Swineholes Wood & Black Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Combes Valley SSSI

Swineholes Wood & Black Heath – 1.9km south east

4.2 The upland acidic dwarf shrub heath that formerly clothed much of the ridge has been largely converted to pasture. Swineholes Wood and Black Heath are the largest heathland remnants. They represent outlying examples of the submontane 'gritstone moors' of the Peak District.

Combes Valley – 2km west

4.3 To the south-east of Leek the Combes Brook, a tributary of the River Churnet, has worn a steep valley through Upper Carboniferous strata. The valley is clothed with variably structured, ancient broadleaved woodland and both acidic and neutral grasslands. It supports outstanding assemblages of woodland breeding birds, beetles Coleoptera and moths and butterflies Lepidoptera.

Non-statutory Sites

4.4 There are twenty-three non-statutory sites located within 1km of the application boundary;

Table 1: Non-statutory sites within 2km of the application boundary

SiteID	Grid Ref.	Site Name	Status
05/40/75	SK047505	Swineholes Wood	SSSI, SWT Nature Reserve
05-10-68	SK016508	The Clough	Local Wildlife Site
05-12-35	SK013525	Padwick Wood	Local Wildlife Site
05-12-69	SK016529	Barnfield (field north of)	Local Wildlife Site
05-21-02	SK020512	Summerhill (south-west of)	Local Wildlife Site
05-21-18	SK021518	Sharpcliffe Edge	Retained BAS
05-21-77	SK027517	Bottomlane Farm (south-west of)	Local Wildlife Site
05-23-03	SK020533	Roughstone Hole	Local Wildlife Site
05-23-29	SK022539	Cook's Hollow	Retained BAS
05-23-37	SK023537	Cook's Hollow (south of)	Retained BAS
05-30-81	SK038501	Park Gate (south of)	Local Wildlife Site
05-31-01	SK030511	Sexton Farm (by)	Local Wildlife Site
05-31-16	SK031516	Knotbury (west of)	Retained BAS
05-31-83	SK038513	Greenhills	Local Wildlife Site
05-31-91	SK039511	Upper Greenhills Farm (west of)	Local Wildlife Site
05-32-53	SK035523	Blakelow (north of)	Local Wildlife Site
05-40-16	SK041506	Ipstone Edge Verges	Local Wildlife Site
05-40-27	SK042507	Cadlow (east of)	Local Wildlife Site
05-40-58	SK045508	Hallbarn	Local Wildlife Site
05-40-67	SK046507	Swineholes Wood (north-west of)	Local Wildlife Site
05-41-28	SK042518	Upper Greenhills Farm	Local Wildlife Site
05-41-77	SK047517	Pelham Farm	Local Wildlife Site
05-53-30	SK053530	Pethillshead Farm (east of)	Retained BAS

- 4.5 The closest of the non-statutory sites is 05-32-53 Blakelow (north of) a Local Wildlife Site (190m north east) comprising '*Verges comprising acid grassland on the southern side of the road. A pond is also located on this wide verge but has large amounts of the invasive species New Zealand pygmy weed*'

Species

- 4.6 SER provided the following records for protected and notable species within 2km of the site boundary (individual records discussed in detail within the Fauna section of the report):

- **Bats** – three confirmed species of bat recorded within the search area; common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), whiskered (*Myotis mystacinus*). All bat species are European and UK protected.
- **Amphibian** – One UKBAP species; common toad (*Bufo bufo*).
- **Birds** – five EU protected, ten UK protected and forty-one UKBAP species returned within the 2km search area.
- **Mammal** – one UK protected species of mammal returned; European badger (*Meles meles*), and two UKBAP species; European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and Brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*).
- **Reptiles** – one UK protected species of reptile returned; common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*).
- **Flowering plants** – one UK protected plant species, bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*).
- **Invertebrates** – thirty-two UKBAP species of invertebrate returned from within the search area.

Habitats

- 4.7 The following habitats or vegetation types were identified on or immediately offsite during the course of the habitat survey;
- B6 - Poor semi-improved grassland
 - J2.1 - Hedgerow
- 4.8 Supporting photographic plates are shown in Section 8.0.

B6 - Poor semi-improved grassland

- 4.1 The dominant habitat onsite is poor semi-improved grassland which at the time of the survey was at a short sward. Grass species noted include perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), cocks' foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Occasional herbaceous species noted include broad leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), and ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*).
- 4.2 The application area comprises the north eastern corner of a much larger field which will remain unaffected under the current proposals. Solar panels are located within the application area, which will be relocated to facilitate the construction of the agricultural building.

J2.1 – Hedgerow

- 4.3 Bounding the north eastern side of the site is a wooden fence beyond which is an overgrown hedgerow/treeline. Species recorded include hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hazel ((*Corylus avellana*) and oak (*Quercus* sp.).
- 4.4 The hedgerow is gappy in places and unmanaged although does offer suitable bird nesting/foraging opportunities.

Fauna

Bats

- 4.5 SER provided twenty-seven records of bats within the 2km search area. The records range in date from 1993 - 2015.

Buildings

- 4.6 There are no buildings present onsite.

Trees

- 4.7 There are no trees located onsite.

Foraging

- 4.8 Onsite poor semi-improved grassland offers low value foraging. The adjacent hedgerow is of higher value although will remain unaffected.

Badgers

- 4.9 SER provided seven records of badger within 1km of the site (locations confidential).
- 4.10 No badger setts or evidence was recorded during the time of the survey, and their current absence can be assumed.

Water Voles and Otters

- 4.11 SER did not return any records of otter (*Lutra lutra*) or water vole (*Arvicola terrestris*) within the search area.
- 4.12 There are no watercourses onsite or immediately adjacent. There is a small garden pond 5m to the north east of the application area which is considered unsuitable for water vole (due to its small size). Therefore, there are no anticipated contracts on riparian mammals as a result of the proposed development.

Other mammals

- 4.13 SER returned records of brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*) and hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*).
- 4.14 Thirty-eight records of brown hare were returned ranging in date from 1976-2004. Three records of hedgehogs were returned ranging in date from 1979-2006.
- 4.15 With regards for brown hare, the onsite grassland is considered suboptimal for this species, lacking in shelter and being of a grazed short sward, although given its rural locality may be used for foraging/commuting.
- 4.16 With regards for hedgehog, the grassland is considered sub optimal although the bounding hedgerow and adjacent garden offers potential for forging/shelter/hibernation. It is therefore possible that the application site may be used by this species for foraging/commuting.

Birds

- 4.17 SER returned five EU protected, ten UK protected and forty-one UKBAP species returned within the 2km search area.
- 4.18 The following bird species were either observed or heard on site during the survey including blackbird (*Turdus merula*), magpie (*Pica pica*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) and blue tit (*Cyanistes caeruleus*).
- 4.19 The grazed grassland does not offer any nesting bird potential. The adjacent hedgerow does offer nesting bird potential although will be retained. Therefore impacts are considered minimal.

Reptiles

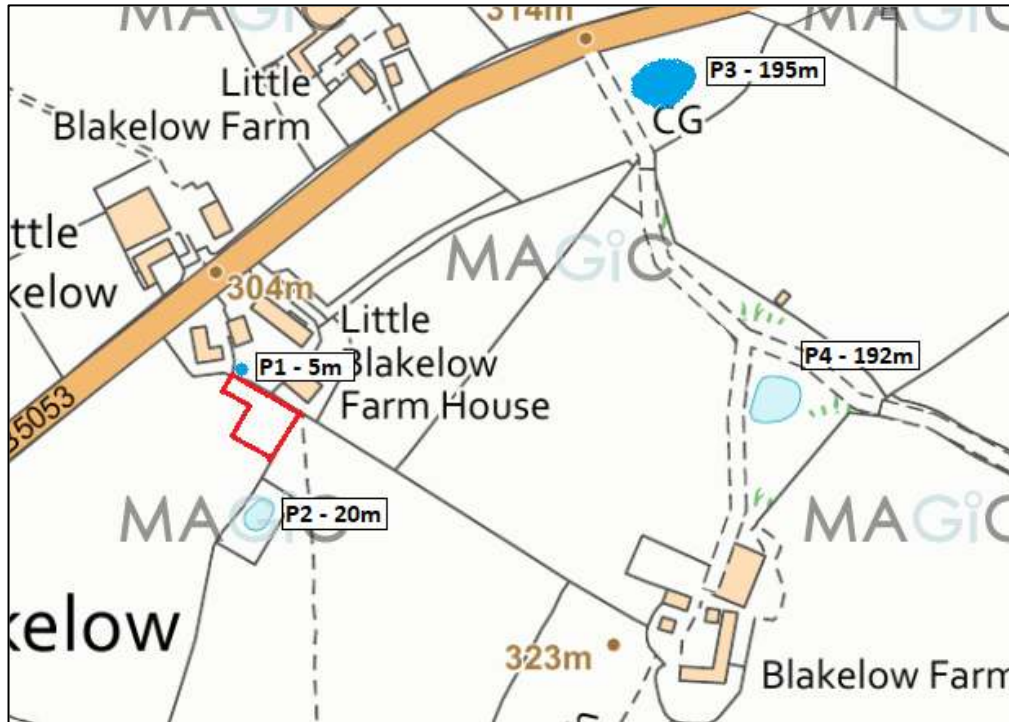
- 4.20 SER returned three historic records of common lizard (dating 1981-1998).
- 4.21 The onsite grassland is of sub optimal value for supporting reptiles offering little in the way of shelter/foraging. Therefore reptiles are anticipated to be absent from the site with no impacts envisaged.

Amphibians

4.22 SER returned no records of great crested newts and one 2015 record of common toad (*Bufo bufo*).

4.23 There are no ponds onsite and four ponds within 250m of the application boundary (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Pond locations and distance from site



4.24 All four ponds were subject to a Habitat Suitability Index assessment as shown within tTable 2.

Table 2: Habitat Suitability Index assessment

Date HSI assessment undertaken	17/02/21	17/02/21	17/02/21	17/02/21
Pond ref	P1	P2	P3	P4
SI1 - Location	1	1	1	1
SI2 - Pond area	0.05	0.2	0.6	0.3
SI3 - Pond drying	0.9	0.9	1	0.9
SI4 - Water quality	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67
SI4 - Shade	0.7	1	1	1
SI6 - Fowl	1	1	1	1
SI7 - Fish	1	0.67	1	0.67
SI8 - Ponds	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65
SI9 - Terr'l habitat	0.33	0.67	0.67	0.67
SI10 - Macrophytes	0.3	0.4	0.3	0.4
	0.52	0.65	0.74	0.68
HSI	Below average	Average	Good	Average

4.25 P1 (garden pond) was assessed to be of below average suitability for supporting great crested newts, P2-P4 were of average and good suitability.

- 4.26 The onsite terrestrial habitats (grazed poor semi-improved grassland) are of sub optimal value offering minimal shelter although may offer commuting habitat. Given the close proximity of P1 and P2 to the application area, site works should take place following Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAM's) to minimise any impact on local amphibian populations.

Invertebrates

- 4.27 SER returned thirty-two UKBAP species of invertebrate within the search area.
- 4.28 The habitats on site are generally common and do not provide much potential for rare invertebrate species although they are expected to support a number of more common species.

5.0 Development Constraints and Recommendations

Designated Sites

- 5.1 There are two statutory and twenty-three non-statutory sites located within 2km of the site boundary. The statutory sites are both well removed from the proposed working area therefore no impacts are envisaged.
- 5.2 The closest of the non-statutory sites is located 190m north. Due to the small size of the application site and minimal land intake, no impacts are envisaged.

Habitats

- 5.3 Botanically the site itself does not appear to have any rare species and is not particularly diverse.

Fauna Recommendations

Bats

Lighting

- 5.4 Particular consideration should be given to potential light spill that can affect the foraging and commuting strategy of many species and should be avoided onto the adjacent hedgerow and should not exceed 200 lumens (150 watts).
- 5.5 Where possible, any security lighting should be on a timer setting and faced down to prevent spillage onto nearby habitats. Height of any lighting columns around the development should not exceed eight meters to further reduce any ecological impact of light pollution. Low-pressure sodium lamps (SOX) fitted with hoods are recommended to direct light below the horizontal plane to minimize upward light spill.

Great Crested Newts

- 5.6 There are four ponds located within 250m of the application site, three of which offer average or good potential for supporting great crested newts. While the terrestrial habitats onsite are considered sub optimal for great crested newts (grazed poor semi-improved grassland offering minimal shelter), the proximity of the ponds to the working area increases the risk of impact, should great crested newts be present within the area.
- 5.7 This impact can be greatly reduced through the inclusion of Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAM's) into the working schedule, as detailed below;

Great Crested Newt RAM's

Site Induction

As part of the site induction process, all staff working on site will be made aware of the potential presence of GCN within the immediate landscape, and their status as a UK and European Protected Species. Great Crested Newts are protected in the UK under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and under Regulation 40 of the Habitats Regulations 2010. Legal legislation

and an illustration of this species will be displayed in the site office for immediate reference (see Appendix).

Great Crested Newts are protected in the UK under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and under Regulation 40 of the Habitats Regulations 2010. It is an offence to handle these animals without either a survey licence or a development licence obtained from Natural England.

Avoidance Measures: Protecting Amphibians

Timing and Duration

- The project is of short-term in nature, and the duration of groundworks will be kept as short as possible.
- External and ground works will be undertaken during daylight hours only as GCN are most active at night.

Construction Methods and Special Precautions

Pre construction

- Onsite habitat degradation - The vegetation/grassland within the development area should be maintained at a height of 10-15cm or below and kept short prior to and throughout the development period by strimming. This will discourage wildlife from entering this area of the site and to discourage amphibians taking refuge within the development site.

Hand search and destructive searches

The following methodology will be followed immediately prior to any groundworks/ excavations:

- All potential refuges shall be searched, and topsoil stripped within the development footprint during the active season for amphibians (mid-March - Mid October, weather dependant). The hand search will be carried out by the GCN-licenced ecologist and the topsoil strip by careful use of an excavator and will be undertaken under the supervision of a licenced ecologist.
- Only when the licensed ecologist is completely satisfied that there remains no risk to amphibians may plant/machine continue to excavate and level the chalet pad areas.
- No excavated topsoil in or adjacent to any potential GCN terrestrial habitat.
- The potential refuges will be dismantled and relocated away from the working area, but near the waterbodies, so that there are no loss of features.

During Construction

- Trenches and other excavations should be backfilled before nightfall. If this is not possible, ramps must be left to allow all wildlife to easily exit.

- All debris, rubble etc. collected during site clearance should be placed directly into skips or removed from the site immediately to avoid it becoming used as refugia by amphibians.
- All new construction materials should be stored on pallets or in bags to prevent them becoming used by terrestrial newts, amphibians. Keep the site tidy.
- Impact of vehicles/machinery on the ground must be minimised by undertaking work from hardstanding or agreed areas only.
- Site Vigilance and Sympathetic Working - Site staff must be made aware that if great crested newts are found onsite there is a correct procedure in place to follow, and failure to halt works may result in committing an offence under the Habitats Regulations 2010.
- If a newt is found: If it is suspected that a Great Crested Newt has been found, work must be suspended and the advice of a suitably licensed GCN ecologist sought. Natural England will be consulted for advice.
- At no point should any worker handle a Great Crested Newt or suspected Great Crested Newt. Unlicensed handling is illegal and untrained handling may cause the newt unnecessary stress and injury.
- If, using a supplied hand out at the end of this document, the site operatives can CONFIDENTLY (100% certainty) identify that the newt found is NOT a Great Crested Newt, the newt can be carefully moved out of the area of works and placed in nearby habitat similar to that in which it was found. A newt found on land should not be placed into a pond or other water body.
- If amphibians (other than GCN) are found - If any amphibians (other than Great Crested Newt) are found within the working area they should be removed to an area outside of the working zone, preferably in dense vegetation, a rubble pile, or under lying wood (taking care not to squash them).
- Amphibians should be picked up by placing the fingers under the body and lifting, not by grasping any part of them. They can be held still by placing a thumb gently on top of them, if necessary.
- Handling should be kept to a minimum and latex gloves should be avoided. Vinyl, Nitrile and other non-latex gloves are ok and should be used where possible.
- If the amphibians found are hibernating then they should be collected up and placed in a covered box or bucket while a suitable shelter / hibernaculum is prepared for them under the advice of an ecologist.

6.0 References

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- Anon (1995) *The UK Biodiversity Action Plan*. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.
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- Rose, F. (1991). *The Wild Flower Key*. Frederick Warne, London.

Websites used:

Protected Sites: www.magic.gov.uk

Protected Species: <http://data.nbn.org.uk/>

Rotherham Biodiversity Action Plan:
http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/1009/wildlife/946/biodiversity_action_plan/1

UKBAP: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155>

www.rspb.org.uk

www.streetmap.co.uk

www.maps.google.co.uk

www.bing.com/maps

Web addresses for access to full UK legislation and policy text:

Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994:
http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1994/uksi_19942716_en_1

Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2007:
http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2007/uksi_20071843_en_1

Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) (Amendment) Regulations 2009:
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2009/6/pdfs/uksi_20090006_en.pdf

Habitats Directive:
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>

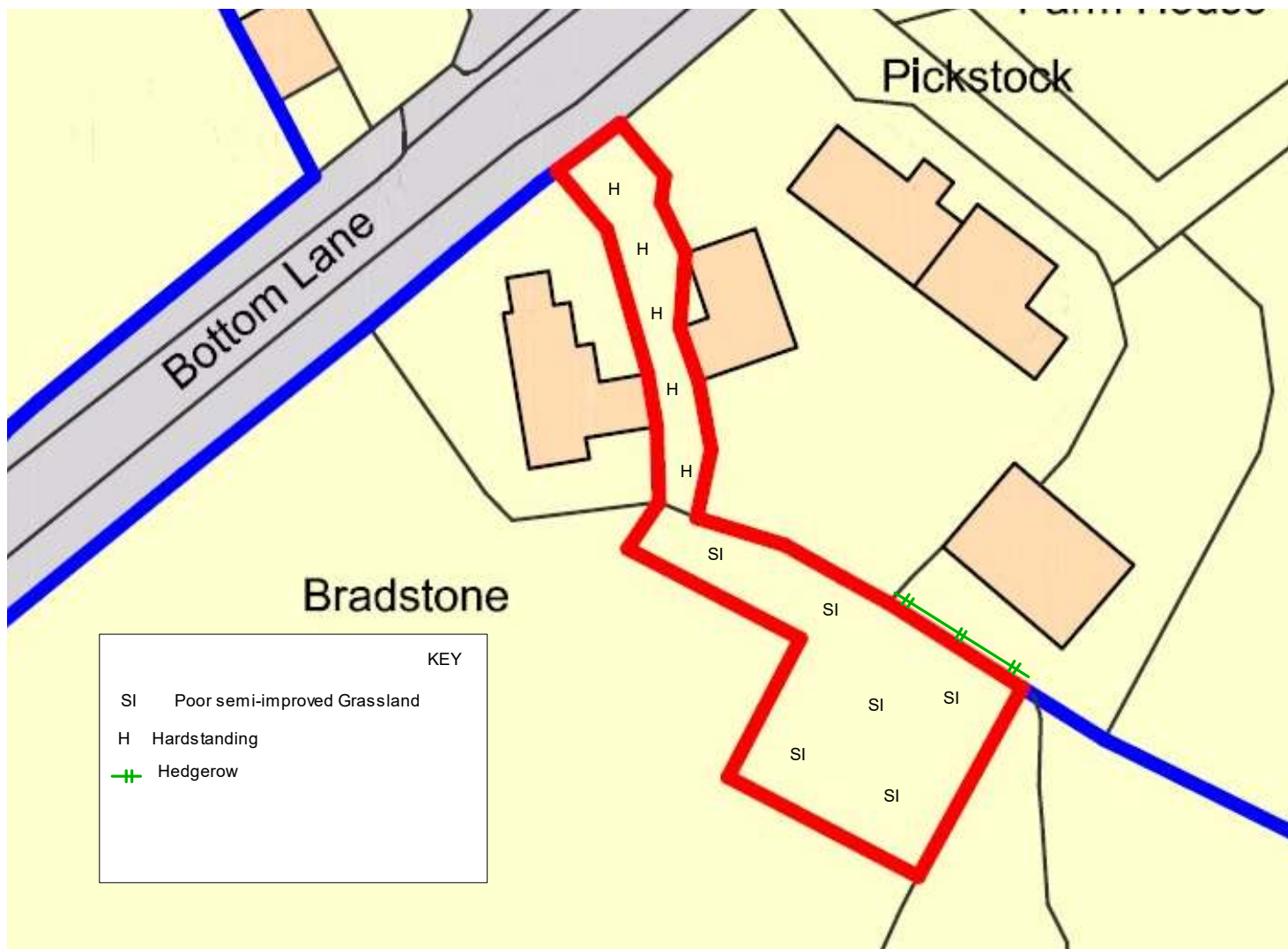
Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>

Protection of Badgers Act 1992:
http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts1992/ukpga_19920051_en_1

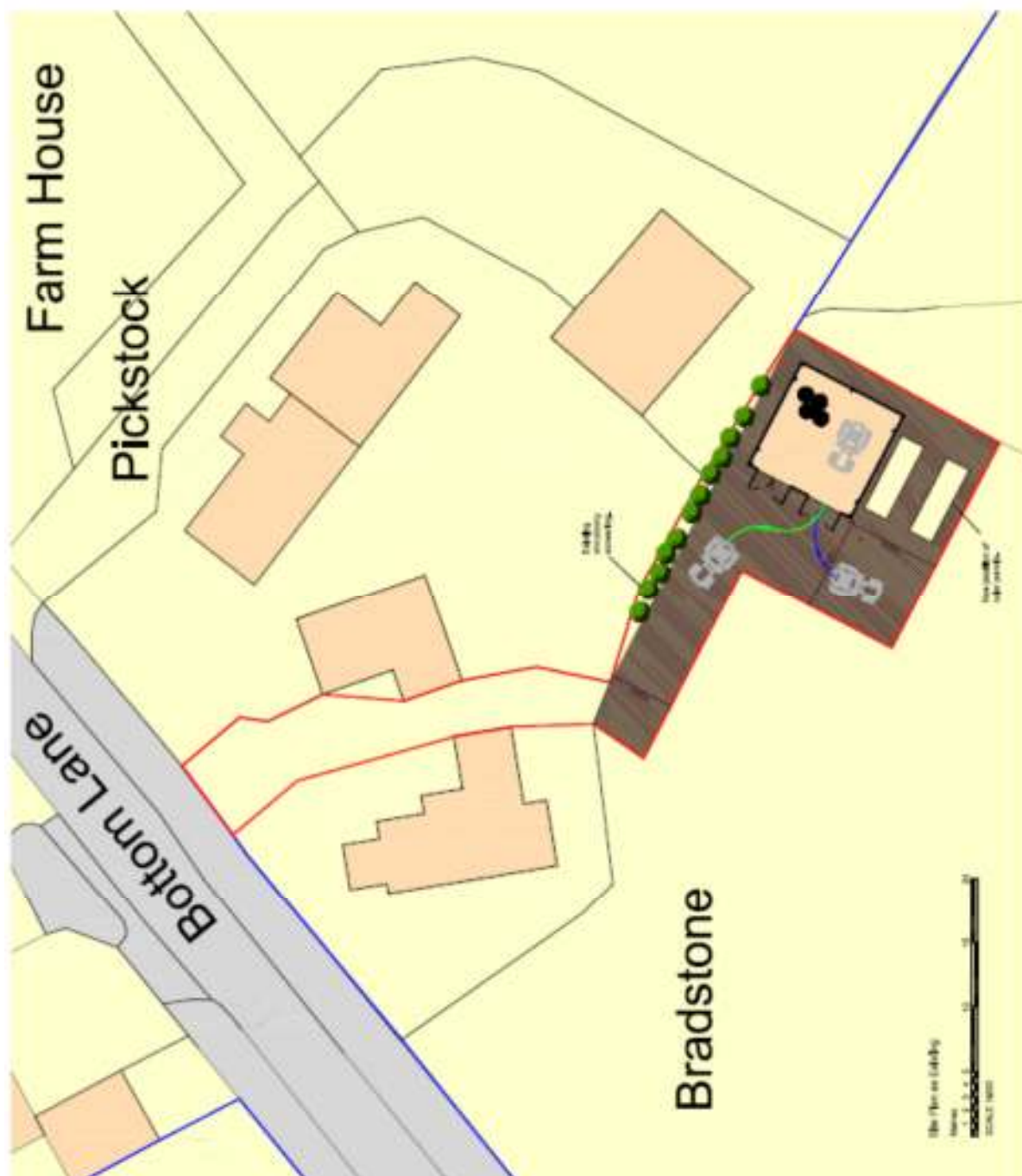
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

National Planning Policy Framework 2012:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>

Phase I Habitat Survey Map



Proposed site plan



7.0 Photographic Plates

Plate 1: View of the application site looking north, showing the poor semi improved grassland field and adjacent hedgerow.



Plate 2: Pond 1 assessed to be of 'below average' suitability for supporting great crested newts



Plate 3: Pond 2 assessed to be of 'average' value for supporting great crested newts



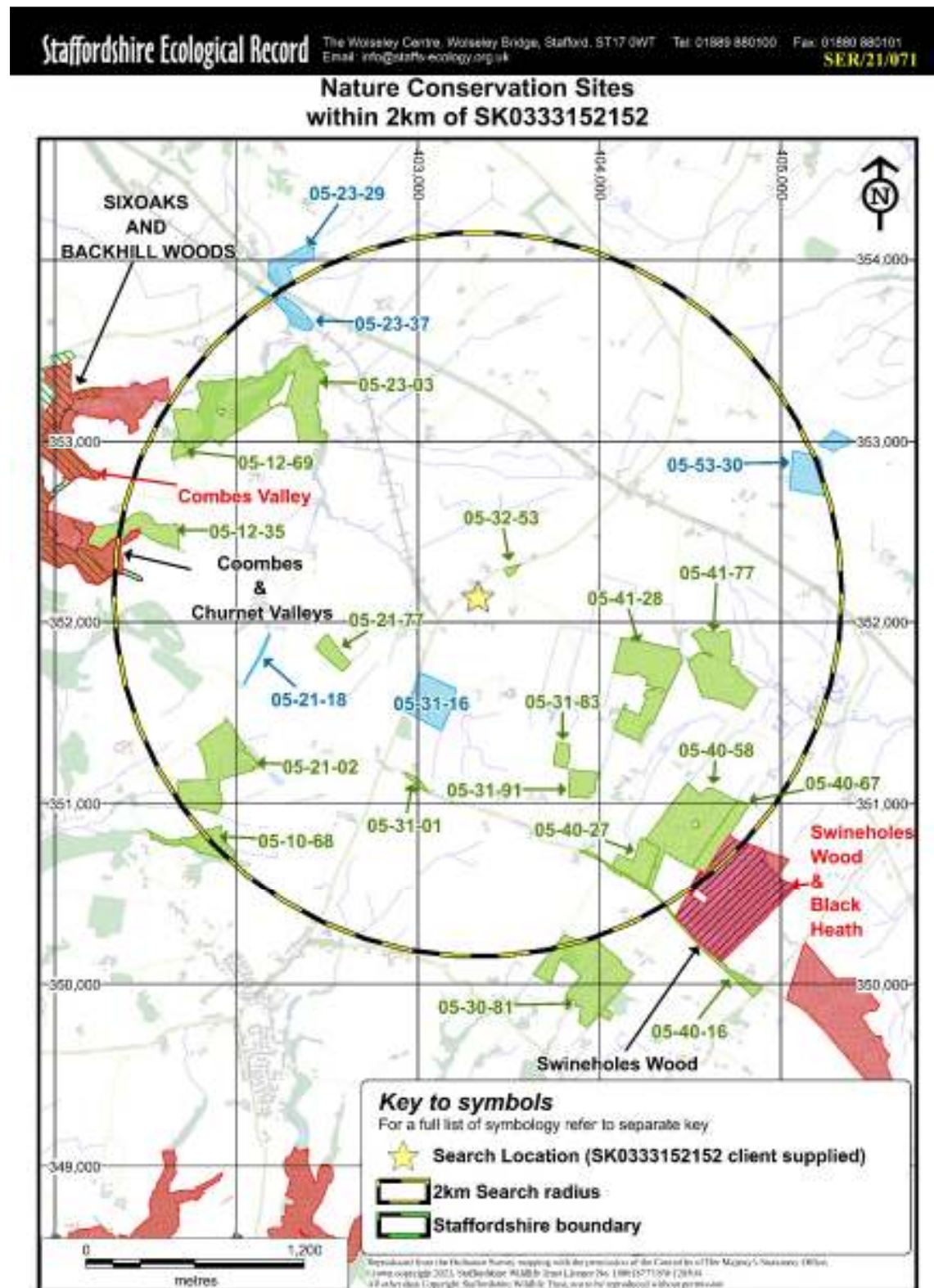
Plate 4: Pond 3 assessed to be of 'good' potential for supporting great crested newts



Plate 5: Pond 4 assessed to be of 'average' potential for supporting great crested newts



Appendix 1: Desk Study



Protected Species within 2km of SK0333152152

Note: Gadgor records are excluded, and only 100m precision sightings are plotted

