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ECOLOGY

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

**LAND OFF PARK DRIVE, CHEADLE
STAFFORDSHIRE**

MARCH 2025

Commissioned By

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1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Eyebright Ecology Ltd. was commissioned by Claire Spooner & Tony Yardley to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Land Off Park Drive, Cheadle, Staffordshire, ST10 1JN (SK006437).

The surveys were required to inform a planning application for a new dwelling.

A site visit was undertaken on 9 December 2024 by an experienced ecologist who is a full member of Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

The site comprised a garden with grass which was partly mown, several trees, introduced shrubs, six small outbuildings (sheds and containers) and hardstanding with an area of patchy vegetation.

Table 1 below shows the findings and recommendations, with full specifications and details provided in the report.

Species / Habitat	Summary of Findings	Recommendations for Mitigation, Compensation & Enhancement
Bats	Building 1 - 6 were various small sheds and storage containers. No evidence of bats was found and the buildings were assessed to be of negligible potential for roosting bats.	No further bat survey is required of Buildings 1-6 where they require removal. To enhance the site for bats, an integrated bat box is proposed to be built into the west-facing gable of the new build.
Badger	No evidence of badger was found on or adjacent to the site.	No further survey or mitigation required.
Hedgehog	Hedgehog may be present in the locality and could forage or commute through gardens.	Ensure any excavations are covered at night or provide a mammal escape ramp. As an enhancement, install a hedgehog house (DIY or woodstone) in a corner of the garden or under a dense shrub.
Birds	No evidence of nesting birds was seen, but shrubs and trees may support common species of nesting birds between March to August inclusive.	Avoid vegetation removal in bird breeding season (March to August inclusive) or check for active nests immediately prior to works commencing in an area. To enhance site for house sparrows and swifts, 2 swift bricks are proposed to be built into the east or west gable of the garage and 2 cavity bird boxes (32mm hole) are proposed on mature trees.
Reptiles	Tussocky grassland in the garden potentially suitable for reptiles but no recent records of reptile populations within 2km. The garden will not be impacted by the	No further survey or mitigation required.

	proposals.	
Great crested newts	Grassland in the garden potentially suitable terrestrial habitat. 2 garden ponds in a nearby house assessed to be unlikely to support great crested newts. No other ponds within 250m.	No further survey or mitigation required.
Invertebrates	Site likely to support a limited, common range of invertebrates	To enhance the site for invertebrates, two solitary bee bricks are proposed to be built into the south wall of the garage.
Habitats and Biodiversity	Site comprises well-managed garden habitats.	The development is a self-build so is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain. To boost biodiversity, a native hedgerow could be planted along the eastern boundary, which should include at least five native species.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background & Objectives

Eyebright Ecology Ltd. was commissioned by Claire Spooner & Tony Yardley to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Land Off Park Drive, Cheadle, Staffordshire, ST10 1JN (SK006437).

The surveys were required to inform a planning application for a new dwelling.

A site visit was undertaken on 9 December 2024 by an experienced ecologist who is a full member of Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

The objective of this Preliminary Ecological Appraisal is to:

- Describe the existing ecological baseline as far as possible, and identify any further surveys that may be needed;
- Evaluate as far as possible, any potential impacts associated with the proposals;
- Provide details of any proposed mitigation, compensation or enhancement measures which can inform the project design.

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.

2.2 Site Character and Location

The site included a north-facing slope of grassland managed as a garden, an area of hardstanding to the north and several small sheds and storage buildings. There was a tarmac access track from Park Drive leading to the site from the north. A smaller part of the garden was mown short, with the rest of the area of grassland being unmown and left to grow tall for the last two years. The site was bordered by fences and a section of beech hedge and had a few trees and saplings located at the southern end of the site. There were areas of introduced shrubs such as laurel and rhododendron in the garden.

The site was on the northern edge of Cheadle, a town in the Staffordshire Moorlands. It was surrounded by other residential buildings and gardens on the north, east and west sides. The south of the site was bordering an area of woodland known as Cheadle Park. Beyond the residential areas was mixed farmland.

Figure 1 below shows a location map for the site.

Figure 1: Site Location Map (OS Licence AC0000826185)



3. RELEVANT LEGISLATION & PLANNING POLICY

The following descriptions provide a basic overview of relevant legislation and planning policy. Full details are available on the relevant government websites.

Protected Species and Habitats Legislation

3.1 Habitat Regulations

The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 make it an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb any wild animal listed in Schedule 2. It is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such an animal, even if the animal is not present at the time. In UK, European Protected Species that may be relevant to this site include:

- All species of bats
- Great crested newt

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) sites are also designated under the Habitats Directive, due to the presence of habitats and/or species which are important for conservation at a European level.

3.2 Wildlife & Countryside Act

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000 and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006, consolidates and amends existing national legislation to implement the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive), making it an offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or their eggs or nests (with certain exceptions) and disturb any bird species listed under Schedule 1 to the Act, or its dependent young while it is nesting;
- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed under Schedule 5 to the Act; intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection by any wild animal listed under Schedule 5 to the Act; intentionally or recklessly disturb certain Schedule 5 animal species while they occupy a place used for shelter or protection; bats and great crested newts are listed on Schedule 5.
- Pick or uproot any wild plant listed under Schedule 8 of the Act.
- Plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild any invasive plant listed under Schedule 9 of the Act.

Species which are listed under Schedule 5 include common reptiles (adder, grass snake, slow worm and common lizard) which are partially protected against killing or injuring, and bats and great crested newts which have full protection.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are also designated under this Act.

3.3 Protection of Badgers Act

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 makes it illegal to kill, injure or take a badger or to intentionally or recklessly interfere with a badger sett. Sett interference includes disturbing badgers whilst they are occupying a sett or obstructing access to it.

3.4 Hedgerow Regulations

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 (as amended) makes it illegal to remove or destroy 'important' hedgerows without Local Planning Authority permission (either through planning or a Hedgerow Removal Notice). Hedgerows that are at least 20 metres long, more than 30 years old and contain certain botanical species need to be assessed for 'importance' using a number of criteria set out in the Regulations.

3.5 Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act

The NERC Act 2006 places a duty on authorities to have due regard for biodiversity and nature conservation during the course of their operations. This legislation includes a list of Species and Habitats of Principal Importance which must be considered as part of the planning process.

3.6 Environment Act 2021

Under the Environment Act 2021, all planning permissions granted in England (with a few exemptions) have to deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), implemented in law from April 2024. BNG will be measured using DEFRA's statutory biodiversity metric, and habitats will need to be secured for at least 30 years. The Act also sets out:

- a strengthened legal duty for public bodies to conserve and enhance biodiversity,
- new biodiversity reporting requirements for local authorities, and
- mandatory spatial strategies for nature: Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS).

3.7 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF 2012 replaced Planning Policy Statements (e.g. PPS9) and sets out current government policy on biodiversity and nature conservation. Planners are required to set criteria-based policies against which proposals for development which may affect legally protected species will be judged. The NPPF promotes sustainable development by ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity with emphasis on maintaining ecological networks at a landscape level.

3.8 Local Planning Policy

Staffordshire Moorland's core planning policies are set out in the Staffordshire Moorland Local Plan Adopted September 2020.

Policies relevant to ecology include:

- Policy NE1 – Biodiversity and Geological Resources
 - Ensure appropriate ecological assessments are undertaken
 - Protect designated sites from adverse effects of development
 - Developments achieve net gain of biodiversity
 - Ensure development promotes appropriate management, maintenance, enhancement and restoration of habitats and biodiversity in line with Biodiversity Action Plan targets
 - Protect and enhance habitats and species of Principal Importance
 - Ensure natural habitats used for sports and leisure are also managed to protect wildlife
- Policy NE2 – Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows
 - Woodland, healthy trees and hedgerows should be retained within developments wherever possible
 - Developments to plant new trees within the soft landscaping schemes including replacement trees where loss is unavoidable
 - Resist developments which directly or indirectly affect ancient woodlands, veteran trees or species-rich hedgerows.

Full wording of the policies and further details can be found here:

<https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/article/6213/The-Adopted-Local-Plan-2014---2033>

3.9 Staffordshire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

The Staffordshire Local BAP proposes a list of Ecosystem Action Plans which are linked to habitats and species which could occur there, many of which are of conservation concern.

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan for Staffordshire can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.sbap.org.uk/actionplan/index.php>

4. METHODS

4.1 Desk Study

Statutory international sites within 5km, and nationally and locally designated sites within 2km of the site were identified using Natural England's MAGIC website (<http://www.magic.gov.uk/>).

A request was made to Staffordshire Ecological Records (SER), for records of protected species and species of conservation, as well as any non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site.

The MAGIC (www.magic.gov.uk) website was used to search for any European Protected Species licences for bats and great crested newts within 2km of the site, great crested newt class licence returns and eDNA pond surveys 2017 - 2019 for the district licensing scheme.

Ordnance survey maps (1:25,000) and aerial images of the site (www.streetmap.co.uk and www.maps.google.co.uk) were examined online.

4.2 Field Survey - Habitats

A habitat survey was undertaken, following the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab). The habitat types within the site were identified and mapped according to the criteria set out in UKHab 2.0. Plants which were visible were identified and their abundance classified using the 'DAFOR' scheme, whereby; D = Dominant, A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare.

The UKHab survey was undertaken on 9 December 2024. The weather was dry, cold and clear.

4.3 Field Survey – Protected and Notable Species

During the walkover, the habitats were inspected for any field signs of protected species or species of conservation concern. In addition, the habitats on, and immediately adjacent to the site were assessed for their potential to support such species. Invasive fauna and flora species were also noted and mapped.

The following sections give more details for each species that potentially occurs on or adjacent to the site.

4.4 Bats

Preliminary Roost Assessment

A range of garden outbuildings (sheds and containers) were inspected inside and outside for any potential access points or roost sites, and any evidence of roosting bats including droppings, feeding remains, oil stains etc.

An assessment for potential suitability for roosting bats was made for the buildings, taking into account surrounding habitat and other factors such as artificial lighting, noise, disturbance etc.

The assessment was based on the criteria in Table 2 below, which is taken from current Good Practice Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Table 2: Assessment of Roosting Potential

Potential Suitability for Roosting Bats	Roosting Habitat	Potential Flight Paths and Foraging Habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices / suitable shelter above or below ground).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by commuting or foraging bats at any time of year.
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats, but a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use 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 to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of year.	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats, e.g. gappy hedgerow, unvegetated stream, isolated habitat patches such as lone trees.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites which could be used by bats due to suitable characteristics, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (i.e. maternity or classic hibernation).	Continuous habitat connected to wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight paths, e.g. lines of trees, linked back gardens etc, or foraging e.g. trees, grassland, water etc.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites which is obviously suitable for larger numbers of bats on a regular basis due to suitable characteristics, and has potential to support high conservation status roosts, i.e. maternity or classic hibernation roosts.	Continuous, high quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape, likely to be used regularly by commuting and foraging bats e.g. river valleys, streams, lines of trees, hedgerows, woodland edge.

Ground Level Tree Assessment

During the walkover, trees on site were assessed from the ground using binoculars and a high powered torch where necessary, to search for Potential Roosting Features (PRF's). PRF's which may be used by roosting bats include cracks, splits, knot holes, hollow limbs, peeling bark, woodpecker holes and ivy. A Ridgid SeeSnake endoscope was available to inspect any features which could be safely accessed from the ground or a ladder.

Each tree was assessed for PRF's and categorised following the criteria in Table 3 below, which is taken from the current Good Practice Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Table 3: Assessment of Roosting Potential

Potential Suitability for Roosting Bats	Description
NONE	No PRF's in the tree or highly unlikely to be.
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRF's are present in the tree.
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present.

Where PRF's were present, they were categorised following the criteria in Table 4 below, which is also taken from current Good Practice Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Table 4: Assessment of PRF suitability

Potential Suitability for Roosting Bats	Description
PRF-I	PRF only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

4.5

Other Mammal Species of Conservation Concern

Field signs and/or incidental sightings of notable species, Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species and Species of Principal Importance (SPI) under the NERC Act (2006), such as

4.6

brown hare *Lepus europaeus*, polecat *Mustela putorius* and hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* were recorded. Habitats were also assessed for their potential to support such species.

4.7 Birds

During the walkover, any birds observed or heard on site were recorded. The habitats on site were assessed for nesting and foraging birds, in particular for species of conservation concern (e.g. Red List) or with additional protection whilst nesting (Schedule 1).

Any evidence of nesting birds on site was recorded, including alive or dead adult birds or chicks, feathers, droppings and pellets, nesting material, egg shells and nestling down.

4.8 Reptiles

During the walkover, any potential reptile habitat or features were recorded. These include tussocky, unimproved, marshy or rough grassland, south-facing slopes and hedgebanks, heathland and wetlands, open mosaic habitats, log and brash piles, rubble piles. Any sightings of reptiles or signs of reptiles such as sloughed skin, were recorded as target notes and mapped.

4.9 Amphibians

During the desk study, a search for waterbodies within 250 metres of the site was undertaken using Ordnance Survey and aerial maps.

Terrestrial habitats within the site, and between the site and any ponds were assessed for their suitability for foraging and sheltering amphibians. Amphibians require habitats such as grassland, scrub, woodland and hedgerows for dispersal, foraging, shelter and hibernation. Typical hibernation features are frost-free locations such as rotting logs or fallen trees, dry stone walls, paving slabs, rubble piles and mammal burrows.

4.10 Invasive Species

During the walkover, a search was made for any species listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, such as Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica* and Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*. Where present, the locations were mapped and photographed.

4.11 Personnel

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was undertaken by Eleanor Weir, an experienced ecologist who has worked as a professional ecological consultant for 23 years. Eleanor holds a current Natural England bat licence (Level 2: 2015-12689-CLS-CLS), great crested newt class licence (Level 1: 2020-44458-CLS-CLS), dormouse licence (2016-20824-CLS-CLS) and barn owl licence (CL29-00162) and is a full member of CIEEM.

4.12 Constraints

Desk study

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.

Great crested newts

A detailed search of OS, aerial and site maps was made to locate any obvious waterbodies within 250m of the site. However, small garden ponds, ephemeral pools or newly created ponds are often missing or obscured on maps, and it therefore cannot be guaranteed that all existing waterbodies within the search area have been located during the desk study and survey.

General

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 two years.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

There are no international statutory designated sites within 5km.

There are no national or local level designated sites within 2km.

There are two local statutory sites, both Local Nature Reserves (LNR). Hales Hall Pool LNR is located 1.2km east of the site and provides standing water with emergent vegetation species such as lesser reedmace *Typha angustifolia* and greater tussock sedge *Carex paniculata*.

Cecily Brook LNR is located approximately 1km east of the site with the reserve extending 1.25km south towards Millbrook Way. The brook is an important site for water voles *Arvicola amphibius*, and several ancient flower-rich meadows occur adjacent to the brook.

There is one non-statutory site within 2km of the site boundary, Cheadle Fish Ponds, a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) overlaps Hales Hall Pool LNR. The site is made up of two ponds, a larger pond used for fishing with emergent vegetation, and a smaller pond surrounded by trees.

There is an ancient semi-natural woodland, Monk's Wood, located approximately 1.9km south-east of the site.

Table 5 provides a summary of the designated sites.

Table 5: Summary of designated sites

Site Name	Designation	Distance / Direction from Site	Description
International Statutory Sites			
None within 5km	N/A	N/A	N/A
National Statutory Sites			
None within 2km	N/A	N/A	N/A
Local statutory and Non-Statutory Sites			
Hales Hall Pool	LNR	1.2km E	Standing water with nationally important vegetation species such as lesser reedmace.
Cecily Brook	LNR	1km E	A brook surrounded by ancient flower rich meadows. Known habitat of water voles.
Cheadle Fish Ponds	LWS	1.2km E	Two ponds, one large used for fishing, and a separate smaller pond surrounded by trees.
Monk's Wood	N/A	1.9km SE	Ancient and semi natural woodland

5.2 Habitats

Site overview

The site comprised an area of grassland managed as a garden and included garden shrubs and several established trees. The north of the site was hardstanding with several sheds and storage containers.

Figure 2 (Appendix 1) shows a map of the habitats. Appendix 2 shows photographs of the habitats. The codes below refer to the Primary and Secondary habitat classifications in UKHab Version 2.0.

Vegetated Garden (u1 828)

The majority of the site was an area of grassland which has been long managed as a garden, with frequent mowing of the whole area until around two years ago. The west side was still being mowed at the time of survey, with the sward height around 5cm. The east side had been unmown for a longer period and the grasses were tall and rank.

The grassland included abundant rough meadow-grass *Poa trivialis* and common bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, frequent red fescue *Festuca rubra*, occasional crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and rarely occurring cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*. There were a range of forbs within the sward, including frequent common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, occasional dandelion *Taraxacum officinale*, cat's-ear *Hypochaeris radicata*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, self-heal *Prunella vulgaris*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, dove's-foot crane's-bill *Geranium molle*, bush vetch *Vicia sepium* and common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*. The sward included abundant mosses. Species diversity was around 6-8 species /m² but is likely to increase in summer.

The garden included occasional ornamental shrubs including rhododendron, cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*, magnolia and Leyland cypress *Cupressus x Leylandii*.

There was a garden hedge comprising beech *Fagus sylvatica* cut to 1m tall, forming part of the west boundary of the garden. The east boundary was marked by a fence.

Individual tree (u1 200)

There were several semi-mature and mature trees present at the south end of the garden including silver birch *Betula pendula*, horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*, oak *Quercus robur* and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*.

Building (u1b5)

There were a number of garden outbuildings within the site boundary.

Building 1 was a metal container used for storage, well-sealed.

Building 2 was a wooden shed with a pitched roof lined with bitumen and unlined wooden walls.

Building 3 was a small wooden shed with a corrugated metal roof.

Building 4 was a small wooden shed/ workshop. It had unlined wooden walls and a pitched corrugated roof lined with bitumen.

Building 5 was a small wooden shed with a single pitched plywood roof lined with bitumen, and unlined wooden walls.

Building 6 was a wooden shed with unlined wooden walls and a plastic sheet roof.

Sealed surface (u1b)

There was an unvegetated sealed tarmac road leading into the property from Park Drive to the north of the site, and an area of hardstanding used for parking.

Sparsely vegetated urban land (u1f)

A small area of hardstanding had around 40 – 50% patchy vegetation growing in cracks and crevices – this was a mixture of grasses and herbs including common bent, rough meadow-grass, dandelion, ribwort plantain, broadleaved willowherb *Epilobium montanum*, yarrow and self-heal.

5.3 Protected and Notable Species

The following descriptions include desk study data, as well as an assessment of potential or evidence of protected species on site.

Bats

Staffordshire Ecological Record (SER) returned 93 records of bats within 2km of the site. Species included common pipistrelle *Pipistellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, brown long-eared *Plecotus auritus*, Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*, whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, and noctule *Nyctalus noctula*.

The nearest record was located 114m away and was for a roost for a common pipistrelle, dated 1999. The next nearest recorded roost was located 587m south-east of the site, for common pipistrelle dated 2014. There was a roost located 619m east of the site for a pipistrelle species, dated 1990. There was a roost recorded 1km south-east of site for pipistrelle species, with a total count of 37 individuals indicating a maternity roost but dating to 1991. There was a more recent record of a maternity roost of 60 pipistrelles at a site 1.5km away from 2006.

The MAGIC website showed no sites within 2km that have been granted a mitigation licence for the damage or destruction of roosts relating to bat species.

Preliminary roost assessment

The site had 6 small outbuildings which were inspected and assessed for suitability for roosting bats. All the buildings were found to have negligible potential for roosting bats; Table 6 provides more details.

Table 6: Building assessment for roosting bats

Building Number	Description / Photo	Potential Roost Features (PRFs) / Access Points	Evidence found / Assessment of Potential
B1	Building 1 was a metal container used for storage. The container was kept locked and was well-sealed with no potential access points. Inside there were no crevices or features likely to be suitable for roosting bats. 	No access points or PRFs	No evidence of bats found. Due to lack of evidence and limited roosting opportunities, B1 was assessed to have no potential for roosting bats.
B2	Building 2 was a small single-storey wooden shed, with a pitched roof which comprised corrugated bitumen sheets, lined with plywood inside which was damp inside. There were plastic panels in the roof to let light in. The walls were unlined wood with plastic windows. The shed was previously used as a workshop. 	No access points or PRFs noted	No evidence of bats found. Due to lack of evidence and limited roosting opportunities, B2 was assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats.
B3	Building 3 was a small wooden shed with a corrugated metal roof. The roof and walls were unlined.	No access points or PRFs noted	No evidence of bats found. Due to lack of evidence and limited

Building Number	Description / Photo	Potential Roost Features (PRFs) / Access Points	Evidence found / Assessment of Potential
			roosting opportunities, B3 was assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats.
B4	Building 4 was a small wooden shed previously used as a workshop. It had a pitched corrugated bitumen roof lined with plywood, unlined wood walls and windows. 	No access points or PRFs noted	No evidence of bats found. Due to lack of evidence and limited roosting opportunities, B4 was assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats.
B5	Building 5 was a very small wooden shed with a single pitch roof of corrugated bitumen lined with plywood and unlined walls. It had a small window on one side. 	No access points or PRFs noted	No evidence of bats found. Due to lack of evidence and limited roosting opportunities, B5 was assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats.

Building Number	Description / Photo	Potential Roost Features (PRFs) / Access Points	Evidence found / Assessment of Potential
B6	Building 6 was a log store with a plastic roof and wooden walls with gaps for air flow. 	No access points or PRFs noted	No evidence of bats found. Due to lack of evidence and limited roosting opportunities, B6 was assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats.

Ground level tree assessment

All trees on site were inspected for potential roosting features, but none of the trees were found to have any features suitable for use by roosting bats.

Other mammal species of conservation concern

SER returned 24 records of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* within 2km of the site, which were a mixture of live sightings and dead RTC. None related to the site or surrounds but the records show populations occur around the town. There were also 2 records of brown hare *Lepus europaeus*, within 2km of the site.

No evidence of priority mammals such as hedgehog or brown hare were seen on site. The site provides typical habitat for foraging and breeding hedgehog but is less likely to support brown hare on a regular basis.

Birds

SER returned 167 records of birds within 2km of the site, including lesser redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*, common redpoll *Acanthis flammea*, sparrowhawk *Accipiter nisus*, swift *Apus apus*, greenfinch *Chloris chloris*, black-headed gull *Chroicocephalus ridibundus*, house martin *Delichon urbicum*, kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, linnet *Linaria cannabina*, house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, willow warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus*, dunnoek *Prunella modularis*, starling *Sturnus vulgaris*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, redwing *Turdus iliacus*, song thrush *Turdus philomelos*, fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*, mistlethrush *Turdus viscivorus*, and tawny owl *Strix aluco*.

The majority of records were located along Cecily Brook to the east and south of the site boundary, and all records were dated between 1997 and 2023. There were no records relating to the site or surrounds.

The site provides small amounts of habitat for common species of nesting birds, such as trees and shrubs.

Reptiles

SER returned 2 historical records of grass snake *Natrix helvetica* recorded within 2km of the site. The records were dated between 1924 and 1987.

The grassland in the garden, although on a north-facing slope, did have some potential to support reptiles where it was unmown; however, the lack of any records within the last 37 years within 2km suggests there are no regularly occurring populations in the area.

Amphibians

SER held one record of great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* within 2km; this was 1.86km away and dated to 2002. There was also a record of common toad *Bufo bufo*, 1.7km away dating to 2009.

MAGIC showed no great crested newt licence returns within 2km of the site boundary.

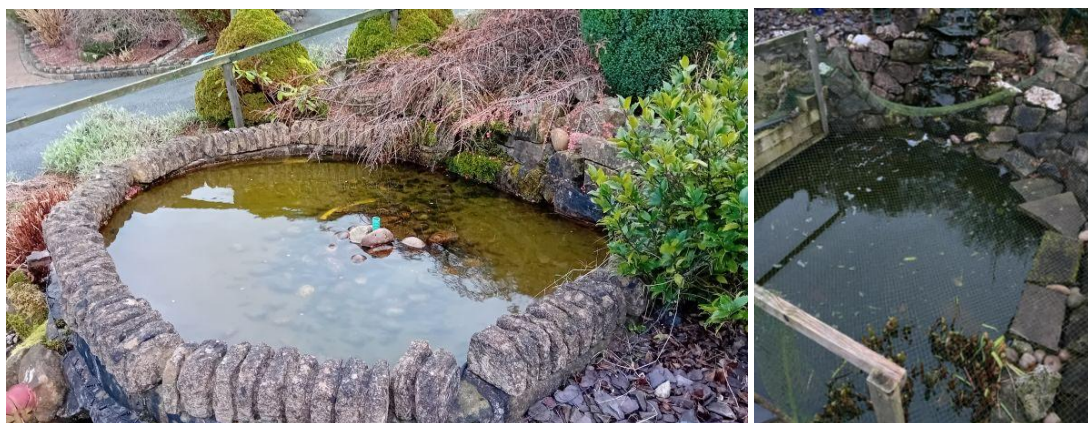
There were 2 ponds within 250m of the site; these were two very small ornamental garden ponds in the nearby garden of the house.

Pond 1 was a small concrete ornamental pond in the front garden of a neighbouring house, around 30m away from the site – the pond was tiny and could be fully inspected; there was no vegetation or any other signs of life in the pond.

Pond 2 was a small ornamental fishpond in a nearby property's back garden, around 40m away from the site, and it was heavily stocked with goldfish.

It is unlikely that either pond would support great crested newts. The lack of suitable ponds within 250m indicates there is a negligible risk of great crested newts occurring on site.

Plate 1: Pond 1 (left) and Pond 2 (right)



Invertebrates

SER returned 150 records of invertebrates within 2km of the site, including a range of butterflies, bees, wasps and bees. Insect species included alder leaf beetle *Agelastica alni*, small heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*, dingy skipper *Erynnis tages*, wall *Lasiommata megera*, common darter *Sympetrum striolatum*, red banded sand wasp *Ammophila sabulosa*, gwynne's mining bee *Andrena bicolor*, ashy mining bee *Andrena cineraria*, Clarke's mining bee *Andrena clarkella*, dusky thorn *Ennomos fuscantaria*, sandpit blood bee *Sphecodes pellucidus*, and brindled ochre *Dasypolia temple*.

The site is unlikely to provide habitat for any rare or significant assemblages of invertebrates as the habitats are common and well managed.

Plants

SER returned 38 records of significant plant species within 2km of the site. Species included bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, cornflower *Centaurea cyanus*, common eyebright *Euphrasia nemorosa*, galingale *Cyperus longus*, tall hawkweed *Hieracium acuminatum*, dark-leaved hawkweed *Hieracium diaphanum*, shrubby cinquefoil *Potentilla fruitcosa*, and wild pansy *Viola tricolor*.

No significant or protected plants were recorded on site.

Invasive species

SER returned no records of invasive species within 2km of the site.

Other than rhododendron which was in a managed garden habitat, no invasive species were recorded on site.

6. IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary of Findings, Potential Impacts and Recommendations

An assessment of potential impacts are shown in Table 7. In addition, recommendations for mitigation, compensation and biodiversity enhancement are detailed. Section 7 (References and Resources) provides example wildlife habitat suppliers and websites providing more details on information and Figure 3 shows a proposed layout of biodiversity enhancements.

Table 7: Summary of Findings, Potential Impacts and Recommendations

Species / Habitat	Summary of Findings	Potential Impacts of Proposed Works	Recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement
Designated Sites	There were no international or national statutory designated sites within the search area. Hales Hall Pool LNR and Cecily Brook LNR are both over 1km away. Cheadle Fish Ponds LWS was 1.2km away.	Unlikely to be any impacts on designated sites due to distance and proposal only being a single dwelling.	No mitigation required.
Bats	Building 1 – 6 were a variety of small garden sheds and containers used as workshops and storage. No evidence of roosting bats was found. Due to lack of suitable features for access or roosting, the buildings were	Unlikely to be any impacts on roosting bats during removal of the buildings.	No mitigation required. An integrated bat box is proposed in the new dwelling as an enhancement for the site. These are self-contained boxes in the external wall which require no cleaning or maintenance. The bat box will be built into a south or west facing gable

Species / Habitat	Summary of Findings	Potential Impacts of Proposed Works	Recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement
	assessed to be of 'negligible' potential to support a bat roost.		at the time of construction and would be a Vivara Pro Build In box, Habibat, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or a similar integrated bat box. Ideally the box will be close to the top of the gable and should not be sited directly above windows. (see Section 7 for bat box links)
Badgers	No evidence of badger was found on site, and it is unlikely that badgers would create a sett on site in future.	No impacts on badgers.	No further survey or mitigation required.
Hedgehog	The site may support occasional hedgehogs foraging through.	Potential for mammals such as hedgehog to get trapped in excavations if left open at night.	During construction, any excavations must be covered at night or have mammal escape ramps included. As an enhancement, install a hedgehog house in a corner of the garden or under a dense shrub. This can be cheaply built using bricks and paving slabs, or by purchasing a commercially available woodstone hedgehog house. (see Section 7 for hedgehog info) (N.B. avoid use of igloo-style wicker hedgehog houses which can be dangerous for hedgehogs)
Birds	The hedgerows, shrubs and trees may be used by nesting birds during the breeding season. Some removal of rhododendron / laurel will be required as it is in the construction area.	Vegetation removal could damage or destroy nests if undertaken between March and August inclusive. Long-term loss of nesting sites.	Avoid removing vegetation between March to August inclusive. If work cannot avoid the main nesting period of March to August, check for active nests prior to work commencing. Any areas with active nests will need to be avoided until fledglings have left the nest. To enhance the site for nesting birds, two integrated swift bricks will be installed on the west (or east) facing gable

Species / Habitat	Summary of Findings	Potential Impacts of Proposed Works	Recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement
			of the garage, at least 1m apart from each other. Swift bricks are also readily used by house sparrows and other cavity nesting species. In addition, 2 tree bird boxes will be installed on mature trees in the garden. These will be 32mm hole woodstone boxes such as Vivara Pro Seville. (see Section 7 for bird box links)
Reptiles	Grassland on site has potential to support reptiles where unmown. Lack of records in 2km within last 37 years suggests there are few populations in the locality.	The proposed works will not affect the grassland in the garden.	No further survey or mitigation required.
Great crested newts	No ponds within 250m. Site has low value terrestrial habitat.	No likely impacts on great crested newts.	No mitigation required.
Invertebrates	Site likely to support a common assemblage of invertebrates.	No significant impacts on invertebrates expected.	As an enhancement, two solitary bee bricks are proposed in the south-facing wall of the garage. These bricks replace a normal brick so are permanent features. These will be sited to receive sun for most of the day, and around 1 – 1.5m high. To encourage uptake, plant nectar producing flowers in pots or borders nearby. (see Section 7 for bee brick links)
Habitats and Biodiversity	The habitats on site were mainly vegetated garden, with sealed surface and a small area of sparsely vegetated urban land. As the application is classed as 'self-build', it is exempt from	The construction area will not impact the main garden – it will remove a small area of non-native shrubs and sparsely vegetated land / hardstanding.	The construction of the new house is 'self-build' and is therefore exempt from a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment. Hedges are encouraged to be planted rather than (or as

Species / Habitat	Summary of Findings	Potential Impacts of Proposed Works	Recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement
	Biodiversity Net Gain.		well as) using fences, as hedges provide habitat for many species and are an easy way to boost biodiversity, especially if a native hedge is planted. Native hedges should include a mixture of at least five native hedgerow species, for example: hawthorn, hazel, dog rose, elder, holly, dogwood, field maple, oak and guelder rose. Consideration may be given for planting a native hedge along the existing fenceline of the eastern boundary of the garden.

7. REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Collins, J. (ed) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines* (4th edn). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

Institute of Environmental Assessment (1995). *Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment*, E & F Spon, London.

Reason, P.F. and Wray, S. (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for developments affecting bats*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

Stace, Clive (2019). *New Flora of the British Isles (Fourth Edition)*. C & M Floristics, Suffolk.

Stanbury, A., Eaton, M., Aebischer, N., Balmer, D., Brown, A., Douse, A., Lindley, P., McCulloch, N., Noble, D., and Win I. (2021). *The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain*. *British Birds* 114: 723-747

Example Suppliers / Instructions

Bats

Habibat Integrated Bat Box: <https://www.habibat.co.uk/bat-boxes>

Ibstock Integrated Bat Box: <https://www.nhbs.com/ibstock-enclosed-bat-box-c>

Vivara Pro Build-in Bat Box: <https://www.nhbs.com/build-in-woodstone-bat-box-uk-brick-size>

Birds

Swift bricks <https://www.actionforswifts.com/>

https://www.swift-conservation.org/swift_bricks.htm

Vivara Pro Seville woodstone 32mm cavity bird box:

<https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-seville-32mm-woodstone-nest-box>

Hedgehogs

Woodstone hedgehog house:

<https://www.wildcare.co.uk/woodstone-hedgehog-house-10506.html>

DIY hedgehog house:

<https://wildlifegadgetman.com/project/make-hedgehog-home-bricks/>

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/helping-nature/what-you-can-do/activities/build-a-hedgehog-house>

Bees

<https://www.nhbs.com/solitary-bee-bricks>

APPENDIX 1 - FIGURES

Figure 2 – Baseline Habitats

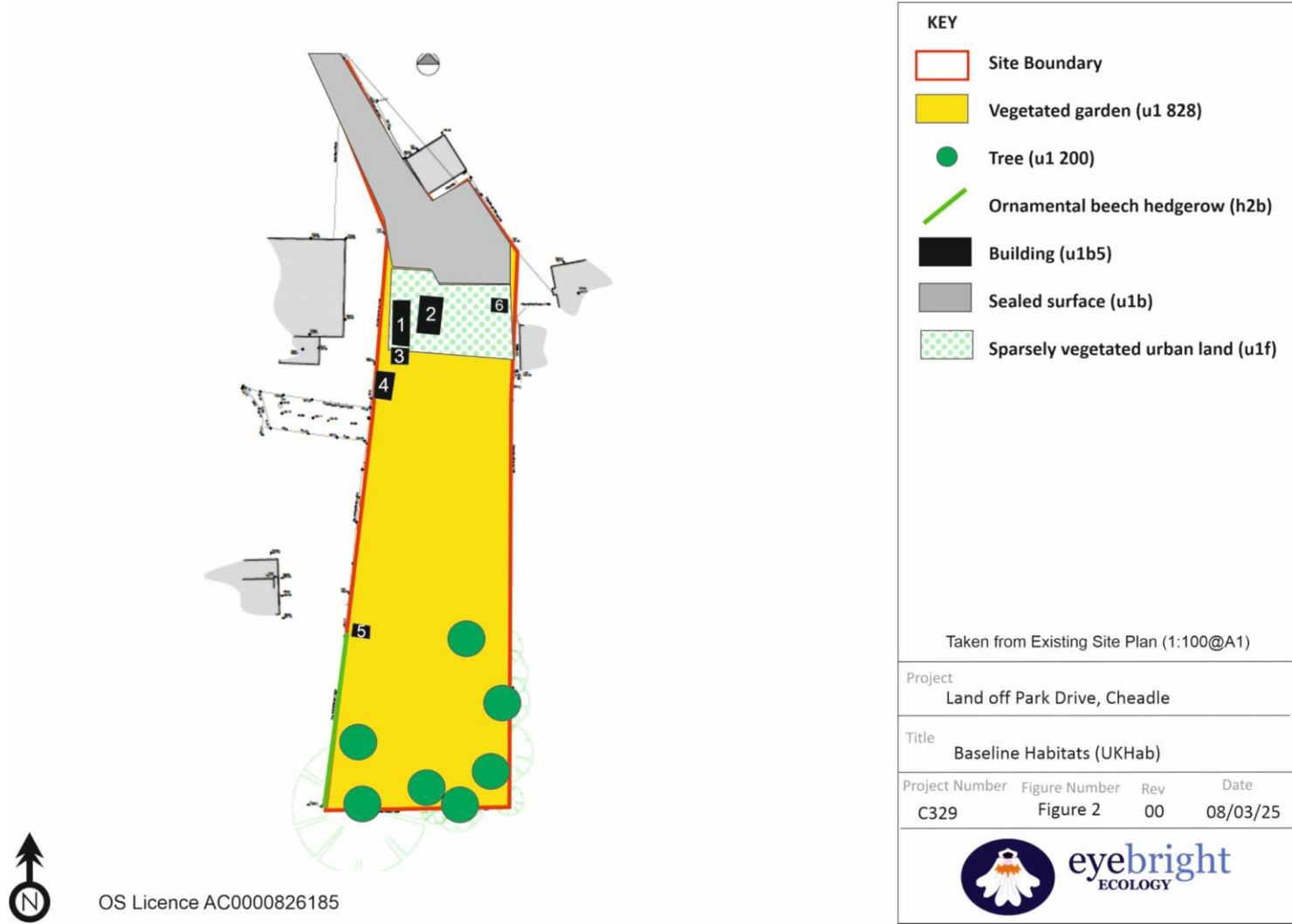
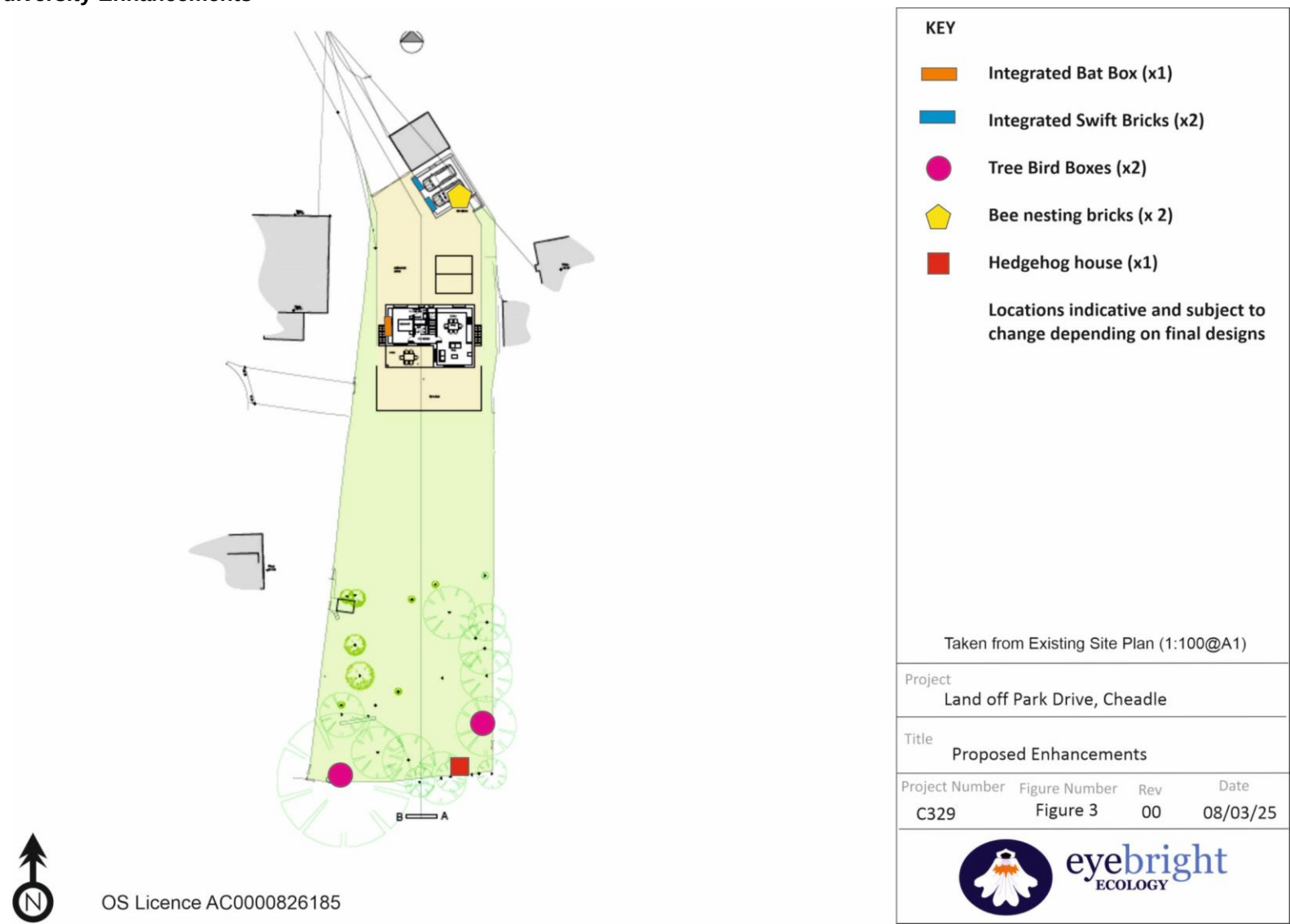


Figure 3 – Biodiversity Enhancements



APPENDIX 2: Photographs

Additional plates further showing habitats within the site.

Plate 2: View south along garden showing mown lawn and unmanaged lawn, introduced shrubs and scattered trees



Plate 3: View across rank grassland



Plate 4: Area of sealed surface north of site where proposed dwelling will be built



Plate 5: Looking over the proposed area of construction



Plate 6: View north showing sloping garden



Plate 7: Area of sparsely vegetated sealed surface and Building 2



Plate 8: Existing tarmac driveway

