

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

For site at Green Acres, Tower Hill, Stoke on Trent

Commissioned by: Total Design

Author: Ashley Butler MSc

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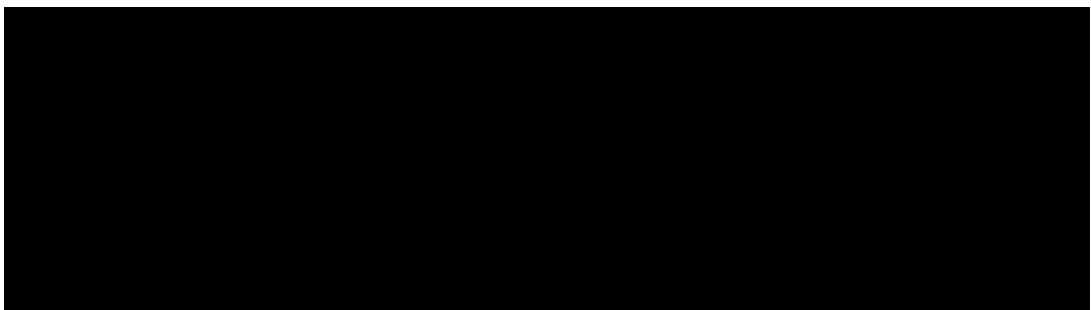
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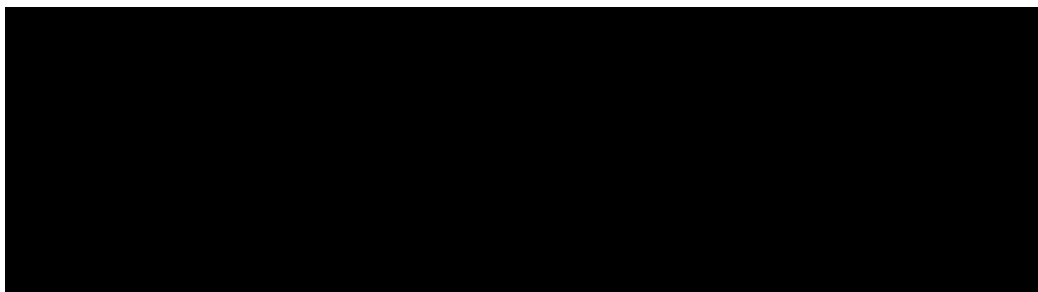
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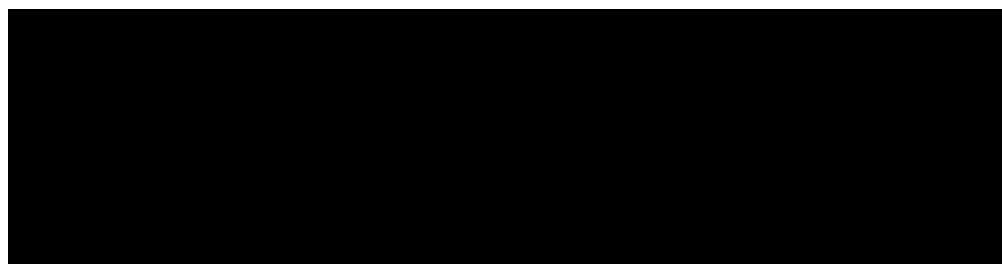
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Disclosure: The survey information and opinions which we have prepared and provided in this report is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's code of professional conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.



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Summary

Note: This is a brief summary of the findings. Please read the entire report for full details.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to identify any habitats or species which may be impacted by any proposed development of the site at Green Acres, Tower Hill. For the purposes of this report the land will be known as "the site".

The site has been identified for development via the conversion of a modern agricultural barn to a residential dwelling.

Methodology

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site and desk study (NBN and other online sources) was carried out.

A search of the local authority website was carried out for information on other developments in the immediate area which may result in a cumulative impact on habitats or species.

The surveys were carried out by Ashley Butler MSc of NewWays Ecology Ltd and followed guidelines from CIEEM and BS42020.

Key impacts and mitigation measures

From the preliminary survey the site is assessed as being of low ecological value.

In the absence of mitigation, the development may result in impacts on wildlife and habitats affecting the following protected species:

- Nesting Birds
- Amphibians

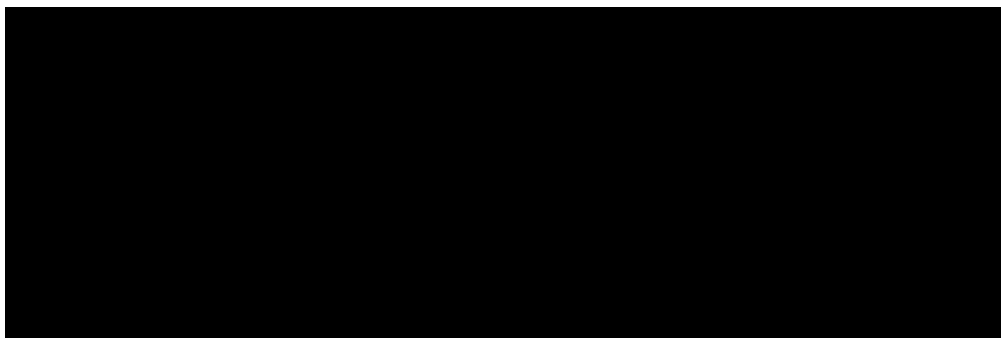
The following key mitigations are recommended: vegetation removal to be carried out between September and February -outside the bird breeding season, PWMS for reptiles and amphibians.

Conclusion

The site at Green Acres, Tower Hill is of low ecological value due to the site being predominantly developed land with modified grassland and a mixed native species hedgerow on the northern boundary. The hedgerow will be retained and enhancements to the site are proposed post development.

Therefore:

- Works must be carried out following the recommendations in this report
- If any vegetation is to be removed between March 1st to August 31st then a breeding bird survey must be carried out prior to the works.
- Precautionary Working Methods for reptiles and amphibians must be followed



1 Introduction

This survey and report was led by Ms. Ashley Butler MSc of NewWays Ecology Ltd. Ms. Butler is an experienced ecologist and specialises in Ancient Woodland flora, National Vegetation Classification, Phase 1 Habitat Surveys and commercial survey work in Wales and England.

Licenses Held:

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) bat license (SO93356/1)

Natural England (NE) class 18 bat survey license (Number 2025-12723-CL18-BAT)

This report was commissioned by Total Design.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Assess the potential ecological impacts of any proposed development at the site.
- Identify if further information/surveys are required
- Identify any impacts upon designated sites
- Establish the need for, and extent of, any mitigation or compensation measures required as part of any proposed works

The site is located to the west of the village of Brown Lees with an access gate off Tower Hill Road linking Brown Lees to Mow Cop at grid reference SJ 87222 56599. The site is accessed via an existing access point (gate and splay) and track. The proposed site is a 0.15Ha plot. The site is predominately modified grassland and is dominated by a steel framed agricultural building with an area of unsealed surface. The boundaries are fenced on the south, east and west and mixed native species hedgerow to the north.

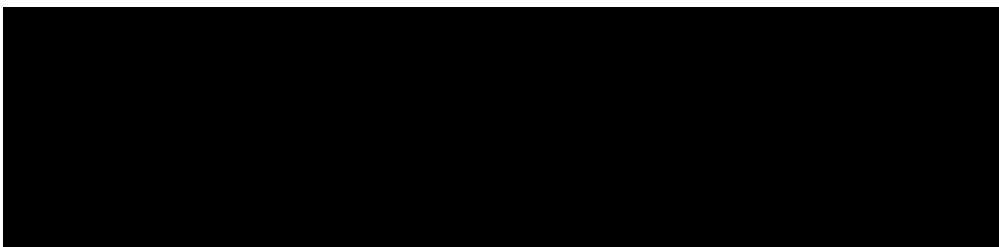
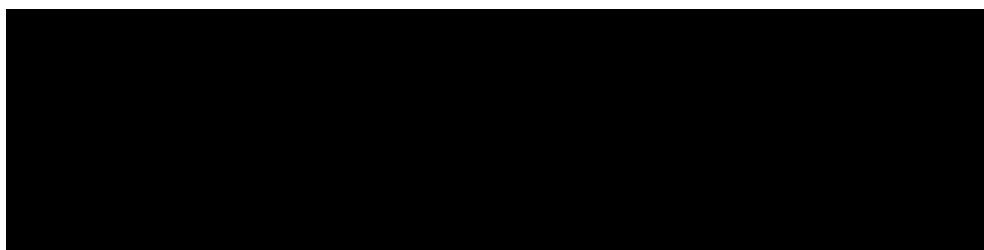
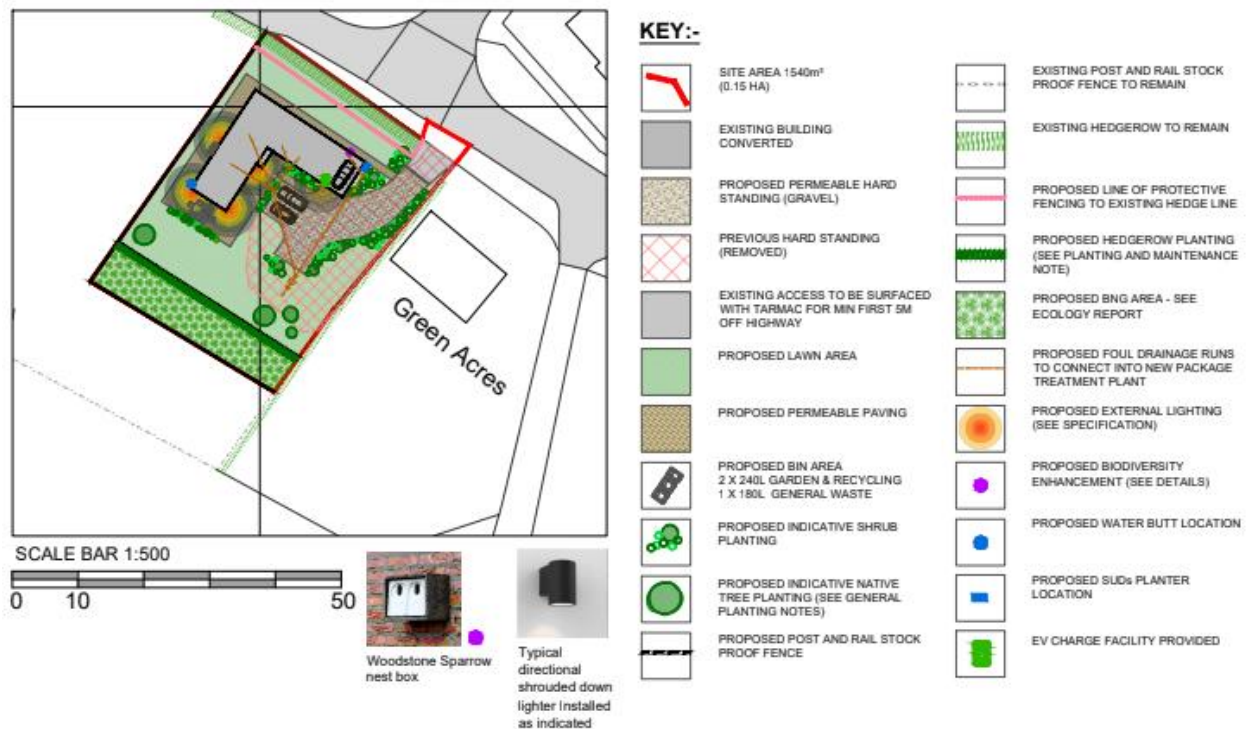




Figure 1: Site location. Contains © Crown Copyright and database right 2026. Ordnance Survey 100021874

The proposed development is for the conversion of the building into a residential dwelling.





2 Methodology

The methodology used for the PEA consisted of:

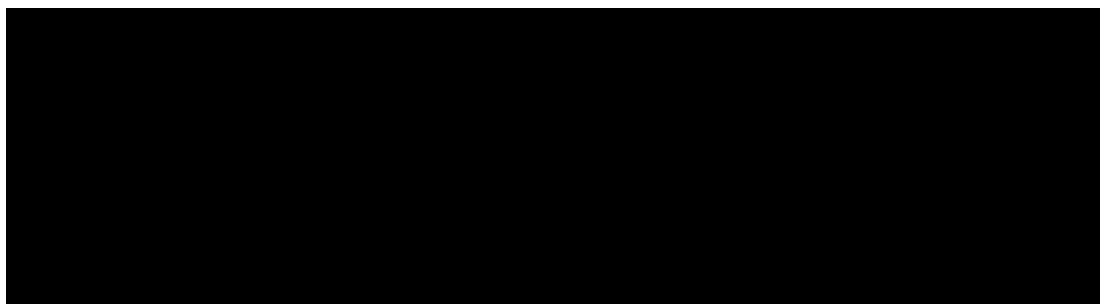
2.1 Desk Study

A desk study was undertaken to identify any records of flora or fauna species existing on-site or within a 2km radius and to identify European & UK designated sites (i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within a 2km radius. Data was obtained from the local biodiversity records centre and the online resource, Magic Map. The local authority planning portal was also researched for previous or ongoing development projects within the vicinity which may have a cumulative impact on species.

2.2 Flora Survey

Field survey was carried out following standard Phase 1 Habitat Survey (P1HS) protocol (JNCC, 2016) and the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal guidelines (2018).

The site was surveyed in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Handbook for Phase 1 habitat (2016). All plants were identified using *The Wild Flower Key* (Rose, F. 2006), *Collins Complete Guide to Trees* (Johnson and More, 2006) and *Grasses, sedges, rushes and ferns* (Rose, 1989).



An assessment was made of all areas of vegetation within the site based on the standardised UK Habs Survey methodology. This involved a walkover survey to identify broad vegetation types, which were then classified against UK Habs habitat types where appropriate. A list of characteristic plant species was also compiled, and any invasive species encountered as an incidental result of the survey are noted.

2.3 Fauna Survey

2.3.1 Bats

Assessment of potential for roosting bats within the survey area was carried out in accordance with *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition)* (Collins, J. (ed.), 2023). An assessment was made of the suitability of buildings and trees on the site and around the site boundary to support roosting bats based on the presence of features such as loose or missing roof tiles or lifted lead flashing for buildings and holes, cracks, splits, loose bark and ivy cladding for trees. In addition an assessment was made of the suitability of the site and the surrounding habitat to support foraging and/or commuting bat species. A full bat survey was not carried out.

2.3.2 Birds

Assessment of potential for nesting birds within the survey area was carried out and included assessment of any buildings, hedgerows, scrub, ruderal plants and trees on site in accordance with *Breeding Bird Survey Instructions* (BTO/JNCC/RSPB). The survey also noted any old bird's nests or current nests present within the site boundary. A full bird survey was not carried out.

2.3.3 Dormouse

Assessment of potential for Dormouse within the survey area was carried out following recommendations within *A Practical Guide to Dormouse Conservation* (Bright and Morris, 1989). The assessment for the potential of the site to support dormouse was based on the presence of habitat features that may indicate that dormice are present on the study area. This includes the presence of food sources such as common hazel (*Corylus avellana*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*), and honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*). Additionally, the species requires a continuum of food supply so that habitat structure, diversity and connectivity to adjacent areas of woodland/scrub are important features for determining the potential presence of dormice. A full dormouse survey was not carried out

2.3.5 Reptiles

Assessment of potential for reptiles within the survey area was carried out following recommendations contained within *Surveying for Reptiles* (Frog life, 2015). The reptile survey was based on an assessment of the suitability of habitat present within the site to support a population of reptiles. Reptiles particularly favour scrub and grassland interfaces and the presence of these is a good indication that reptiles may be present on-site. In addition, reptiles may utilise features such as bare ground for basking, tussock grassland for shelter and compost heaps and rubble piles for breeding and/or hibernating. A full reptile survey was not carried out.

2.3.6 Amphibians

Assessment of potential for amphibians within the survey area was carried out following recommendations contained within *Surveying for amphibians* (Frog life, 2015). The assessment of the site to support great crested newts included establishing the presence of suitable aquatic habitats such as ponds within or adjacent to the site and the presence of suitable terrestrial habitat. Ponds that are densely shaded, highly eutrophic or that contain fish are likely to be less suitable for this species. In addition, online mapping resources at a minimum scale of 1: 25,000 were used to identify the presence of ponds or other water bodies within a 500 meter (m) radius of the site. The 500m is a standardised search radius to assist in the assessment of the potential of a site and its surrounding habitat to support this species, based on current Natural England guidance. A full Amphibian survey was not carried out.

2.3.7 Non-Native Invasive Species

Vigilance for non - native invasive species was maintained during the surveys.

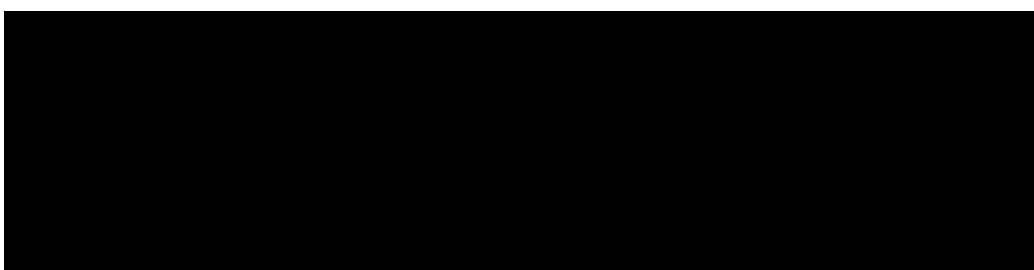
2.3.8 Zone of Influence

The zone of Influence is the area encompassing all predicted negative ecological effects from the proposed scheme and is informed by the habitats present within the site and the nature of the proposals. For the UK Habs survey the area within the site boundary was deemed appropriate.

3 Results

3.1 Survey Constraints

No constraints to access were noted. It is possible that some species may have been overlooked in the field or were not recorded because they were not evident at the time of surveys. No account can be



taken for the presence or absence of a species on any particular day. The survey provides a snapshot of the site and does not show seasonal differences. It is possible that certain flowering herbs and or ephemerals may have not been recorded during the spring survey and an extensive species list was not obtained but it is considered that the species characteristic to the habitats on site were recorded. Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect the presence of plants and animals such as activity levels at time of year, weather, migration patterns, and behaviour. The survey was undertaken in April and represents a valid sample of ecological evidence present on that date. This report is not designed, nor is it required to present a complete inventory of flora/fauna.

3.2 Data

There are no designated sites within 1km of the site. There are no sites designated for bat assemblages within 10km of the site.

3.3 Field Survey

Date	25/4/26	Notes
Weather	Bright and dry	
Cloud Cover	20%	
Temperature	16°C	
Wind Speed	0	
Name	Ashley Butler MSc	

3.4 Buildings

Within the site boundary there is a steel framed L shaped agricultural building open on the south and east facing sides.

3.5 Habitat

The site is predominately modified grassland and developed land. The access is via an existing gate and splay off Tower Hill Rd. The boundaries of the site are mixed native hedgerow on the northern side and fenced on the remaining sides. The site is situated to the west of the village of Brown Lees. The site is rural and surrounded by arable and pastoral land with urban development to the northeast. The site has good connectivity to the surrounding landscape due to the hedge lined boundaries.

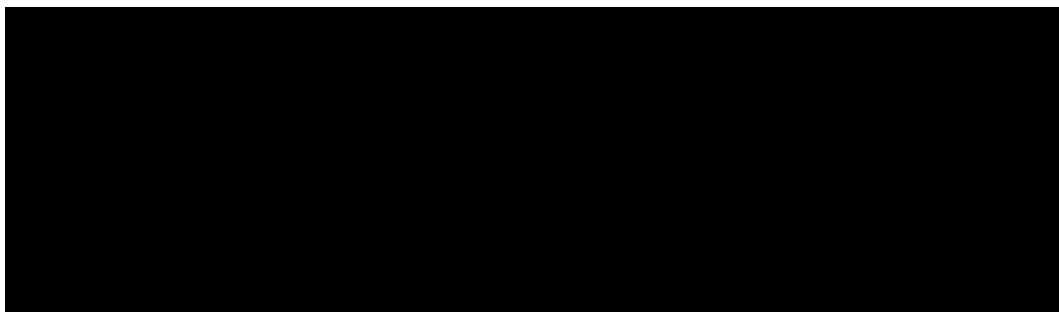




Figure 2: Habitat surrounding site. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right

Due to the scale of the development and distance to any nationally designated site it is anticipated any impacts are likely to have a negligible impact on designated sites. A review of aerial photographs and OS and Magic Map data provide contextual information on the site and its surrounds.

3.6 Trees

Within the site boundary there are no trees.

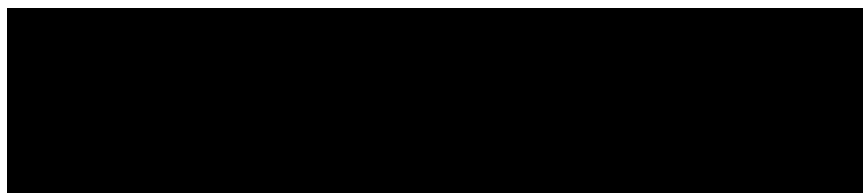
The nearest area of ancient woodland is 1.8km southeast of the site – Greenway Woods which extends to 8.3Ha.

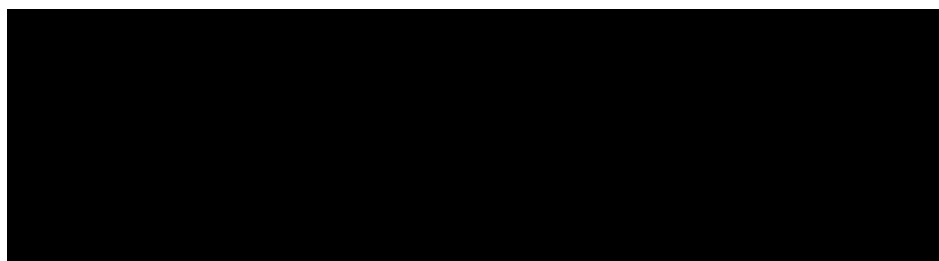
3.7 Boundaries

North Boundary: 28m mixed native species hedgerow with dominant holly, abundant hawthorn and occasional black alder, rowan and hazel. BAP priority habitat.

East Boundary: 32m post and wire stock fence

South Boundary: 28m post and wire stock fence





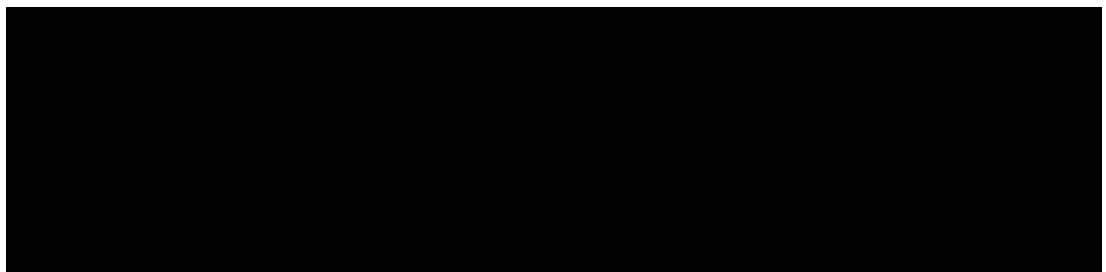
4 Evaluation

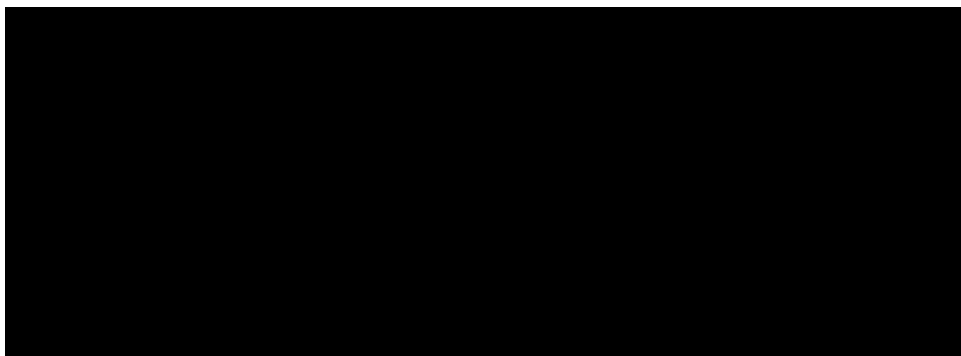
4.1 Habitats

All habitats identified on site and within the boundaries are described in Table 1 below, together with a preliminary assessment of their potential to support notable species, protected species, and BAP Priority Habitats and Species. The table also evaluates potential impacts relative to the proposed development. The locations and extent of habitats are shown within Appendix I: UK Habs Survey Map.

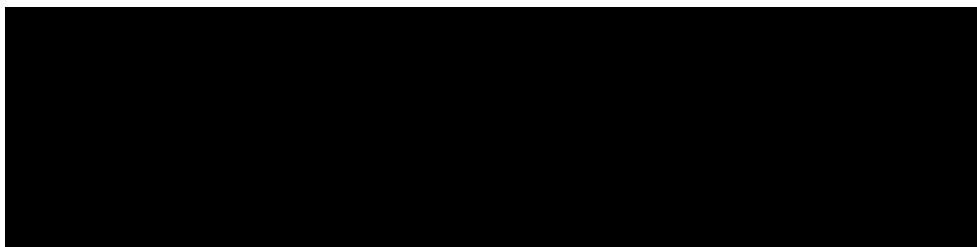
Table 1

UK Habs Habitats	
Developed land	
Description: The site is dominated by the steel framed agricultural building and access. The building is L-shaped and open on the southern and eastern sides with a pitched corrugated composite material roof and timber and sheet metal cladding. Due to the structure of the building it has negligible potential to support roosting bats.	
Potential Constraints: The building and areas of hard standing are of low ecological value with limited potential to nesting birds.	

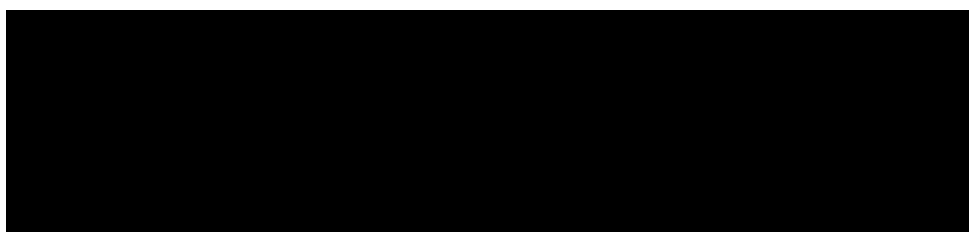




	
Modified grassland	
Description: The site is a long term pasture lay dominated by perennial ryegrass. Species include: perennial ryegrass, red fescue, creeping buttercup, broad-leaf dock white clover daisy, creeping thistle, dandelion,	
Potential constraints: The areas of grassland are of low to moderate ecological value with potential to support invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals.	



	
Hedgerows	
Description: The northern boundary of the site is mixed native hedgerows-predominately holly. BAP priority habitats.	
Potential Constraints: The hedgerows are of moderate ecological value due to the mix of species, and density and potentially provide an important resource for invertebrates, foraging and traversing bats, small mammals including hedgehogs, reptiles, amphibians, nesting birds, and foraging birds. If hedgerow works are required to facilitate the development, then an adverse effect is anticipated on this habitat if not appropriately mitigated for.	



Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty on the Secretary of State to publish, review and revise lists of living organisms and types of habitats in England that are of principal importance for the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Act also requires the Secretary of State to take, and promote the taking of, steps to further the conservation of the listed organisms and habitats. This is important in the context of planning decisions as the National Planning Policy Framework and affords planning policy protection to the habitats of species listed as Section 41. The following Section 41 habitats are found on the site:

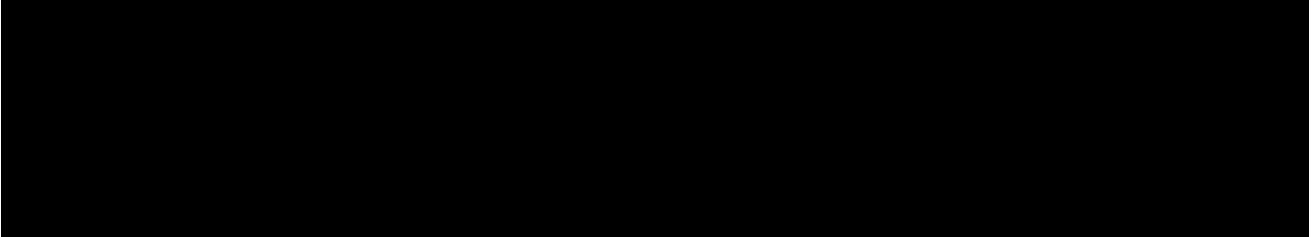
- Hedgerows

The following additional s41 priority habitats are found within 2km of the site:

- Deciduous woodland

4.2 Bats

There is negligible potential for bats roosting on site, the building on site has negligible roosting potential. Due to the surrounding pastoral and arable habitat and hedgerow boundaries the site provides potential for foraging and commuting bats. Within 1km there are records for common pipistrelles. There is one protected species licenses for bats within 2km of the site- 1.5km northeast of the site for the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelles. The proposed development is anticipated to have negligible impact on bats.



4.4 Dormice

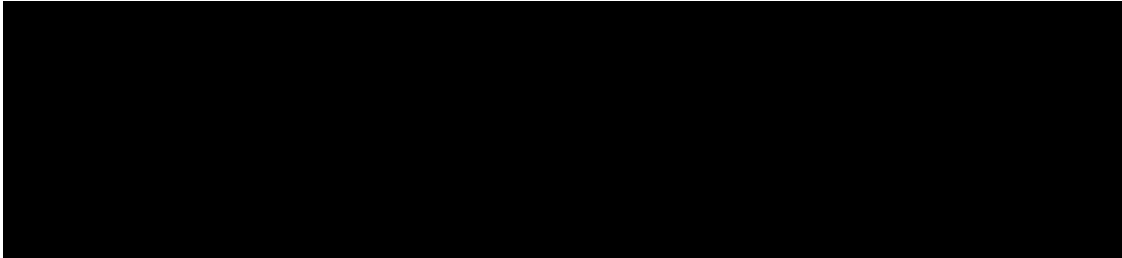
The site has negligible potential for dormice due to the lack of food source species present within the hedgerow onsite. The site has low connectivity to areas of additional suitable habitat and there are no records for dormice within 1km of the site. The proposed development is anticipated to have negligible impact on dormice.

4.5 Reptiles

The site has negligible potential for reptiles due to the presence homogeneous sort mown grassland. There are no records for reptiles within 1km of the site. The proposed development is anticipated to have negligible impact on reptiles.

4.6 Amphibians

The site has negligible potential for amphibians due to the lack of suitable habitat. There are no water bodies on site but there is one pond within 500m of the site. There are is one record for GCN within



1km of the site – 520m southwest of the site. The proposed development is anticipated to have negligible impact on reptiles.

4.7 Breeding Birds

There is high potential for birds to use the hedgerow on site for nesting and foraging. The site has negligible potential for ground nesting birds. During the survey, birds were noted within the hedgerows, but no nests were recorded. Without the instigation of reasonable avoidance measures the proposed development is likely to have an impact on nesting birds if vegetation removal is required.

The following bird species were observed on or over the site:

Goldfinch, jackdaw

4.8 Invertebrates

The site has low potential for invertebrates due to the habitat features on site and the diversity of the species found within the sward. Within 1km the presence of several protected invertebrates are recorded.

4.9 Other Flora

All plant species recorded on the site are common and widespread and it is considered the site has low potential for rare or scarce flora. There are numerous records for protected flora within 1km of the site. None of these species were recorded during the survey however the survey was carried out at a sub-optimal time for detailed vegetation survey and it is likely not all forb species were accounted for. At the time of the survey no listed invasive species under the WCA 1981 (as amended) were recorded on the site and within the boundary habitats.

4.10 Other species

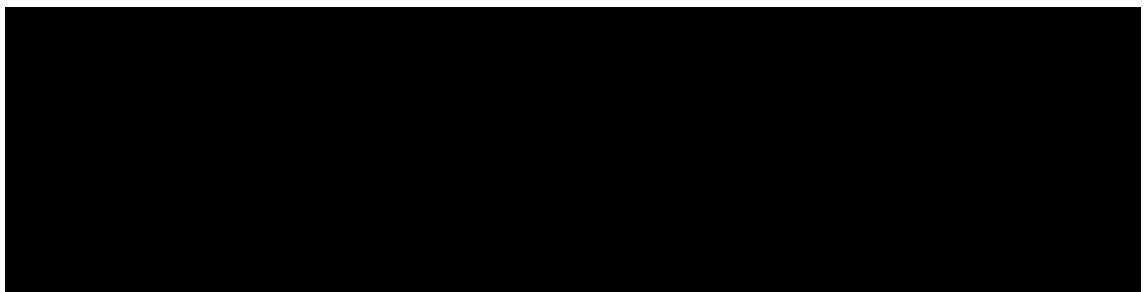
Due to the habitats present there is potential for other protected species to use the site.

The site may support other small mammals such as hedgehogs which may utilise the hedgerows for foraging and commuting. There are records for hedgehogs within 1km of the site.

5 Recommendations

Avoidance Measures and Mitigation

- The ecologist will be on call for the duration of the work and will be informed in any European protected species is found
- If any trenches are left exposed over night during the works, there must be a means of escape for animals. This will comprise of a shallow sloped board (of at least 30cm width) set at an angle of no more than 30°.



5.1 Habitats

From the preliminary survey the site is of low biodiversity value due the areas of developed land and homogeneous grassland. The mixed species hedgerows provides good habitat for breeding and foraging birds, small mammals, and invertebrates.

The proposed plans require the loss of areas of developed land, and modified grassland. The hedgerow will be retained.

5.2 Bats

The site has negligible potential for roosting bats due to the lack of potential bat roost features. The site may be utilized by commuting and foraging bats and there are a number of small roosts close to the site therefore:

- The potential impacts of lighting during and post-development on bats must be considered. The lighting of all areas of the site during and post-development must be designed to avoid any impacts on bats that are potentially commuting across the site. Retained hedgerows must remain dark spaces.

5.4 Dormice

The site has negligible potential for dormice due to the lack of food source species within the boundaries therefore no further survey for dormice is required. However, if dormice are identified using the site during any further surveys for other species then mitigation for dormice will be considered.

5.5 Reptiles and amphibians

The site has negligible potential for reptiles and amphibians due to the lack of water sources within the boundaries and homogeneous grassland. However, due to GCN's recorded 550m from the site the following RAMs must be followed:

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

- All clearance works (i.e. clearance of log piles, debris, rough grass etc.) and topsoil stripping within the footprints of the works will be undertaken when common reptiles are likely to be fully active i.e. during the April to September.
- Clearance of tall vegetation will be undertaken using a strimmer or brush cutter with all cuttings raked and removed the same day. Cutting will only be undertaken in a phased way which may either include:
 - Cutting vegetation to a height of no less than 30mm, clearing no more than one third of the site in any one day or;

- Cutting vegetation over three consecutive days to a height of no less than 150mm at the first cut, 75mm at the second cut and 30mm at the third cut;
- Following removal of tall vegetation, using the methods outlined above, remaining vegetation will be maintained at a height of 30mm through regular mowing or strimming to discourage common reptiles and amphibians from returning.
- Ground clearance of any remaining low vegetation (if required) and any ground works will only be undertaken following the works outlined above.

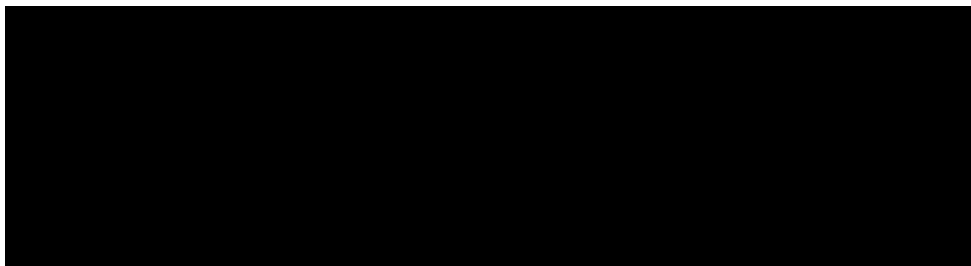
Additional Precautionary Working Methods

- Works will be restricted to the designated development area and the impact of works on adjacent habitats avoided by the clear demarcation of the works area.
- All proposed work must strictly be in accordance with all relevant Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPG) published by the Environment Agency
- Access will be via the existing access point only.
- Trenches and other excavations should be backfilled or effectively covered before nightfall. If this is not possible, ramps set at an angle no steeper than 30° must be left to allow all wildlife to easily exit. Any such trenches shall be carefully checked for the presence of wild animals before works re-commence.
- Burning or machine removal of any potential hibernacula (wood piles, debris etc.) shall not take place without a thorough advance hand search for amphibians, reptiles and hedgehogs.
- All building materials arriving on site, or debris, rubble etc. collected during site clearance shall be stored above ground on pallets, in bags or similar or will be placed directly into skips or removed from the site immediately to avoid it becoming used as refugia by amphibians and reptiles.
- Mounds of soil will be compacted around the base to avoid creating refuges which newts could occupy and / or stored off the ground on pallets, in bags, or similar.
- Any work that will result in temporary habitat disruption and reinstatement, such as laying services needs ecological supervision and the ecologist shall be contacted in advance to arrange suitable timing and methods.

If reptiles or amphibians are discovered during the works, then work must cease immediately, and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist or Natural England.

5.7 Breeding Birds

The site has moderate potential for breeding birds. All planned vegetation removal must be carried out outside the bird breeding season (Sep-Feb inclusive) or be preceded by a nesting bird survey carried out by an experienced ecologist following current guidelines for breeding bird surveys to confirm nesting birds are absent from the site.



5.8 Other species

Vigilance for other species will be maintained during the further surveys. Any evidence of other species using the site will be noted and mitigated for.

5.9 Biodiversity Net Gain and Site Enhancements

It is anticipated an area of developed land, and grassland will be lost during development with all the hedgerows being retained. BNG assessment may be required on site dependent on plans.

To ensure a net benefit for biodiversity the following enhancements will be instated post development:

- To plant hedgerows as boundaries instead of fences. This will reduce the overall mass of vegetation lost during development.
- It is encouraged that any new hedgerows incorporate native species i.e. hazel, holly, field maple, dogwood, guelder rose, hawthorn etc.
- Native species of high value to pollinators and wildlife should be used for landscaping purposes, for example wildflower turf or seeding with flowering lawn mix (Emorsgate EL1 flowering lawn mixture 3 is a good option which responds well to regular short mowing), fruit trees, and honeysuckle in line with the Pollinator Action Plan.
- Bird nesting boxes and bat boxes should be included in the construction of the new building. Integrated boxes such as the Schwegler 2FR integrated bat tube and Schwegler brick nest boxes types 25A or 26.

6 Legislation and Policy Guidance

6.1 Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

(1) A person who—

(A) Deliberately captures, injures or kills any wild animal of a European protected species,

(b) Deliberately disturbs wild animals of any such species,

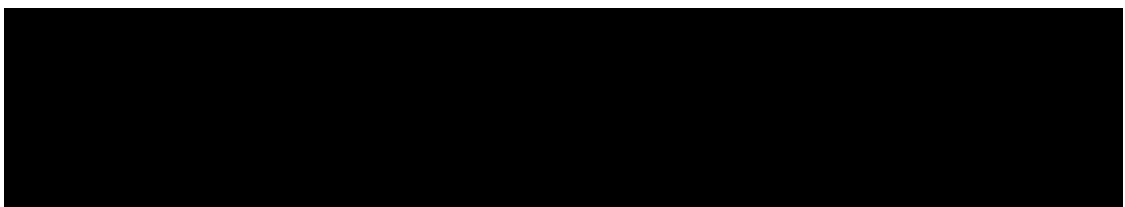
(c) Deliberately takes or destroys the eggs of such an animal, or

(d) Damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place of such an animal,

is guilty of an offence.

6.2 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 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) in Great Britain (NB Council Directive 79/409/EEC has now been replaced by Directive 2009/147/EC of



the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds (codified version)).

6.3 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000

The Act places a duty on Government Departments to have regard for the conservation of biodiversity and maintain lists of species and habitats for which conservation steps should be taken or promoted, in accordance with the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Schedule 9 of the Act amends SSSI provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 including provisions to change SSSIs and providing increased powers for their protection and management. The provisions extend powers for entering into management agreements; place a duty on public bodies to further the conservation and enhancement of SSSIs; increases penalties on conviction where the provisions are breached; and introduce a new offence whereby third parties can be convicted for damaging SSSIs. To ensure compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998, appeal processes are introduced with regards to the notification, management and protection of SSSIs.

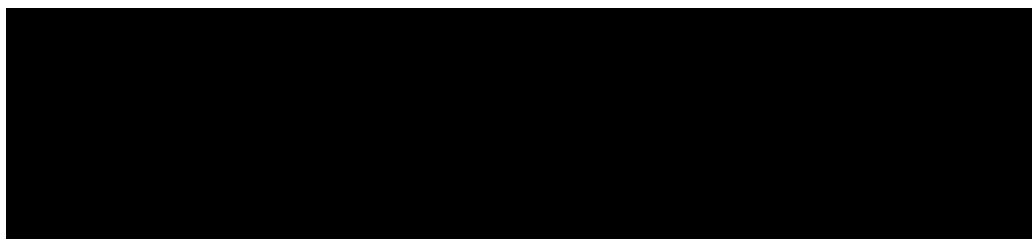
Schedule 12 of the Act amends the species provisions of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, strengthening the legal protection for threatened species. The provisions make certain offences 'arrestable', create a new offence of reckless disturbance, confer greater powers to police and wildlife inspectors for entering premises and obtaining wildlife tissue samples for DNA analysis, and enable heavier penalties on conviction of wildlife offences.

6.4 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) includes objectives to conserve, and, where practicable, enhance:

- The quality and range of wildlife habitats and ecosystems;
- The overall populations and natural ranges of native species;
- Internationally important and threatened species, habitats and ecosystems;
- Species, habitats and natural and managed ecosystems characteristic of local areas
- Biodiversity of natural and semi-natural habitats where this has been diminished over recent decades.

6.5 Protected Species

The presence of a species protected under European or UK legislation is a material consideration when a local planning authority is considering a development proposal which, if carried out, would be likely to result in disturbance or harm to the species or its habitat. Local planning authorities should advise



anyone submitting a planning application that they must conform with any statutory species protection provisions affecting the site concerned and should consult Natural Resources Wales before granting permission. An ecological survey to confirm whether a protected species is present and an assessment of the likely impact of the development on a protected species may be required in order to inform the planning decision.

Developments are always subject to the legislation covering European protected species regardless of whether they are within a designated site. New developments for which development works would contravene the protection afforded to European protected species require derogations from the provisions of the Habitats Directive.

Derogations may only be authorised if;

- 1) There is no satisfactory alternative.
- 2) The development will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in its natural range.
- 3) The development works to be authorised must be for the purposes of preserving 'public health or safety, or for other imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment.

Derogations are granted by a license issued by the Natural England. Local planning authorities are under a duty to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive in exercising their functions. To avoid developments with planning permission subsequently not being granted derogations in relation to European protected species, planning authorities should take the above three requirements for derogation into account when considering development proposals where a European protected species is present.

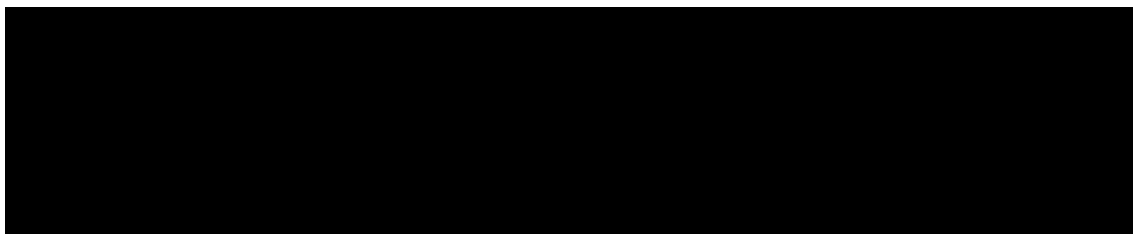
6.6 Nesting Birds

Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), it is an offence in the UK to:

- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is being built or in use.
- Kill, injure or take any wild bird.
- Take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird

To avoid committing an offence, no works should be carried out on a structure/feature that is being used by nesting birds. Nesting is deemed to be over when the young have fully fledged.

6.7 Policy NE1 – Nature Conservation and Development



Development proposals that would have a significant adverse effect on a locally designated site of biodiversity and / or geological importance, or a site that satisfies the relevant designation criteria, or on the continued viability of priority habitats and species, as identified in the UK or Local

Biodiversity Action Plans or Section 42 list of species and habitats of importance for conservation will only be permitted where:

- a) The need for the development clearly outweighs the nature conservation or geological importance of the site; and
- b) It can be demonstrated that the development cannot reasonably be located elsewhere.

Where development is permitted, it will be expected that any unavoidable harm is minimised by effective avoidance measures and mitigation. Where this is not feasible appropriate provision for compensatory habitats and features of equal or greater quality and quantity must be provided.

Where nature conservation interests are likely to be disturbed or harmed by development proposals, applications must be accompanied by an ecological survey and assessment of the likely impact of the proposal on the species /habitats, and, where necessary, shall make appropriate provision for their safeguarding.

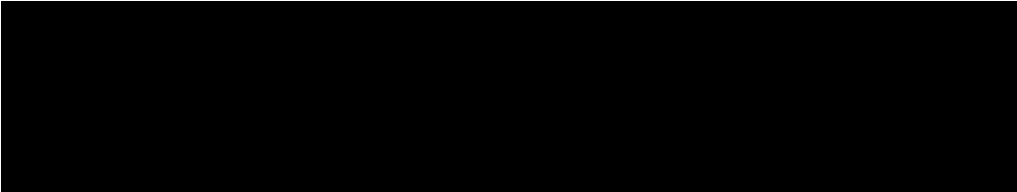
Development proposals shall accord with nature conservation interests and will be expected to:

- i) Retain, and where appropriate enhance, existing semi-natural habitats, linear habitat features, other features of nature conservation interest and geological features and safeguard them during construction work;
- ii) Incorporate appropriate native vegetation in any landscaping or planting scheme, except where special requirements in terms of purpose or location may dictate otherwise;
- iii) Ensure the protection and enhancement of wildlife and landscape resources by appropriate building design, site layouts, landscaping techniques and choice of plant species;
- iv) Where appropriate, make provision for on-going maintenance of retained or created nature conservation interests.

National and Local Planning Policy

6.8 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

(NPPF- Dec 2024) sets out the obligations of Planning Authorities to aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity, by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils, recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services and minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible. The existing supplementary guidance in Government Circular ODPM 06/2005 on Biodiversity and Geological Conservation remains valid. The requirement for public authorities to address biodiversity issues is also included within the Natural



Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, which states that ‘every public authority...must, in exercising its functions have regard...to the purpose of conserving biodiversity’.

7 Conclusion

The site at Green Acres, Tower Hill is of low ecological value due to the site being predominantly developed land with modified grassland and a mixed native species hedgerow on the northern boundary. The hedgerow will be retained and enhancements to the site are proposed post development.

Therefore:

- Works must be carried out following the recommendations in this report
- If any vegetation is to be removed between March 1st to August 31st then a breeding bird survey must be carried out prior to the works.
- Precautionary Working Methods for reptiles and amphibians must be followed

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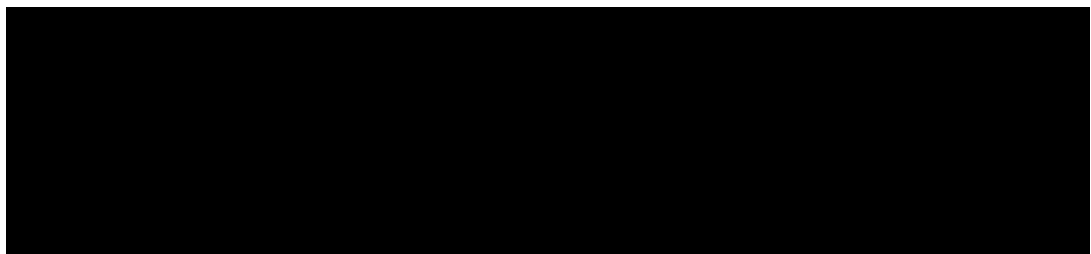
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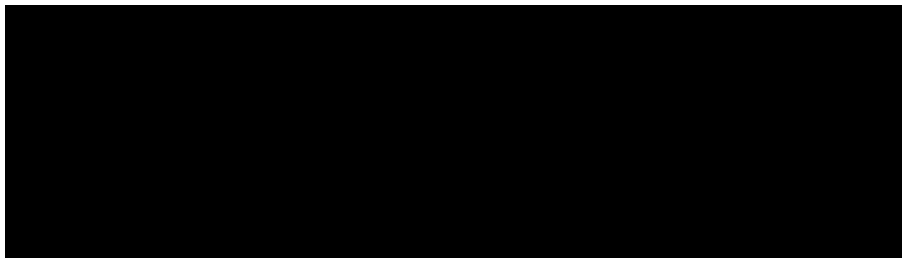
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9 Appendix I: Supporting Documents

UK Habs Habitat map

Barn at Green Acres - Baseline Habitats



Figure 4: Habitat map

