



Ecological Appraisal

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Land at Fengate Road

Pinchbeck

Lincolnshire

PE11 3PU

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October 2024

Site Details	Land at Fengate Road, Pinchbeck, Lincolnshire, PE11 3PU
Client	Houghton Produce Ltd
Date of Issue	03/10/2024
Report Reference	23219 – Ecological Appraisal

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Unless otherwise stated at Section 6, in relation to specific habitats and faunal species, the findings of the surveys and assessments detailed within this report should be considered as valid and able to be relied upon for a period of up to 18 months. Any alterations to the site boundary and / or proposals may invalidate the recommendations contained within this report.

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Executive Summary

Summary of Proposals	
It is understood that the proposals are for residential development, with associated landscaping and access infrastructure.	
Designations	
<p>No non-statutory designations are present within or adjacent to the site boundary, with all such designations being well separated from the site by existing development, access infrastructure, and open countryside. Given the small size of the site, and physical distance from all non-statutory designations, it is considered that these designations are unlikely to be affected by future works.</p> <p>The site falls within a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZs), albeit these confirm that residential development does not represent potential risk factor to the relevant designations and that the planning authority would not be required to consult with Natural England. No statutory designations are present within or adjacent to the site boundary, with all such designations being well separated from the site by existing development, access infrastructure, and open countryside. Given the nature and scale of the proposed development, and physical distance from all statutory designations, it is considered that these designations are highly unlikely to be affected.</p>	
Habitats	Habitats
Habitats within the site comprise modified grassland with an area of arable, as well as areas of ruderals, hardstanding and bare ground. The site is located with a rural setting with further arable land on its northern, western and southern aspects and is bound Fengate Road to the south and commercial buildings to the east.	New habitat creation proposed should comprise ecologically diverse and locally appropriate species, managed to benefit biodiversity.
Fauna	Fauna
Bats – Foraging / commuting opportunities are present in the form of a treeline.	Implement precautionary site clearance measures. Implementation of a sensitive lighting strategy for bats, and provision of new bat roosting opportunities.
Badger – No evidence of Badger setts or Badger foraging / commuting behaviour was recorded within / adjacent to the site. It is likely that Badger may occasionally pass through / make use of the site area.	Update survey prior to development works to re-confirm the presence / likely absence status of Badger.
Other mammals – Other mammal species likely to be present are widespread and not afforded specific legislative protection.	General construction safeguards.
Great Crested Newt – No suitable waterbodies are present at the site or within 250m of the site boundary, and no suitable habitats are present.	No further Phase 2 survey work required. General construction safeguards.
Reptiles – Negligible opportunities present within and adjacent to the site.	No further Phase 2 survey work / specific mitigation required. General construction safeguards.
Birds – Suitable nesting habitat in the form of a tree line and an individual tree.	Avoid vegetation clearance within the nesting bird season. Introduce new nesting habitats.
Invertebrates – Common and widespread species likely to be present.	No specific measures proposed.
Fauna	
Subject to implementation of the recommended mitigation and safeguarding measures, it is considered that no significant harm to any habitats or faunal species of interest will occur as a result of the proposals.	

1 Introduction

1.1. Background

1.1.1. Allied Ecology has been appointed to undertake an Ecological Appraisal in respect of Fengate Road, Pinchbeck (grid reference TF 23223 24692), as shown on Plan 23219-AE1.

1.1.1. The site is located in Pinchbeck, to the north of Spalding, and comprises modified grassland with an area of arable on its western aspect, as well as areas of ruderals, hardstanding and bare ground to the east. The site is located within a rural setting with further arable land on its northern, western and southern aspects and is bound Fengate Road to the south and commercial buildings to the east.

1.2. Summary of Proposals

1.2.1. It is understood that the proposals are for residential development, with associated landscaping and access infrastructure.

1.3. Basis of Reporting

1.3.1. This report documents the findings of the baseline ecological survey work and desktop study, carried out in order to establish the current ecological features of interest at the site. This report sets out the likely effects of the proposals in respect of the habitats and faunal features present and, where necessary, any requirements for further Phase 2 survey work, in line with relevant best practice guidance.

1.3.2. Where appropriate, proportionate recommendations for mitigation and / or compensation measures are also provided, in order to ensure that habitats and species of interest remain fully safeguarded under the proposals.

1.4. Surveyor and Author's Experience

1.4.1. The lead surveyor and author is Jonathan Byrd. Jonathan is a Chartered Ecologist (CEcol) and Full Member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM), with over 16 years of relevant experience within an ecological consultancy setting and is suitably authoritative to assess the potential effects of the proposals on the habitats and faunal species present.

1.4.2. In addition to being an experienced botanical and habitat surveyor, Jonathan holds Natural England protected species survey licences for UK bats (Class 2 - CL17/CL18), Barn Owl (CL29), Great Crested Newt (CL08), Dormouse (CL10a), and White-clawed Crayfish (CL11). Jonathan also holds Natural England Mitigation Class Licences for bats (BMCL - CL21) and Badger (CL35), and has held or been named on numerous standard Natural England mitigation licences for the above species. As such, the findings and assessments detailed within this report can be relied upon to inform the proposals.

2 Planning Policies

2.1. Local Planning Policy

- 2.1.1. Planning policies and considerations relevant to South Holland District Council are set out within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (adopted in March 2019), and the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan (adopted in October 2011). Policies and considerations of relevance to ecology and nature conservation within the above documents include the following:

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (March 2019)

Policy 3: Design of New Development

- 2.1.2. Under Policy 3, the Council states that development proposals will demonstrate how issues of relevance to the proposals will be secured:

‘...the incorporation of existing hedgerows and trees and the provision of appropriate new landscaping to enhance biodiversity, green infrastructure, flood risk mitigation and urban cooling...’

Policy 28: The Natural Environment

- 2.1.3. Under Policy 28, the Council aims to achieve a high quality, comprehensive ecological network of interconnected designated sites, sites of nature conservation importance and wildlife-friendly greenspace by protecting, enhancing and managing natural assets:

‘1. Internationally-designated sites, on land or at sea:

- a. development proposals that would cause harm to these assets will not be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances, where imperative reasons of overriding public interest exist, and the loss will be compensated by the creation of sites of equal or greater nature conservation value;*
- b. all major housing proposals within 10km of The Wash and the North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site, including the Sustainable Urban Extensions in Boston (site Sou006 & Wes002), Spalding (site Pin024/Pin045) and Holbeach West (site Hob048), will be the subject of a project-level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) to assess the impact of recreational pressure on The Wash and North Norfolk Coast European Marine Site. This should include:*

i. locally-specific information relating to access and site sensitivities;

Where the project-level HRA concludes that avoidance and/or mitigation measures are required, it is expected that:

ii. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGs) should be provided on site Sou006 and Wes002, site Pin024/Pin045 and site Hob048 as part of their package of mitigation measures; or

iii. all other major housing proposals should provide SANGs on-site and/or through a financial contribution to provide and/or enhance natural greenspace in the locality;

iv. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces should be designed in accordance with capacity and facility requirements in relation to the developments they mitigate for, best practice elsewhere and relevant evidence.

2. Nationally or locally-designated sites and protected or priority habitats and species:

a. development proposals that would directly or indirectly adversely affect these assets will not be permitted unless:

i. there are no alternative sites that would cause less or no harm; and

ii. the benefits of the development at the proposed site, clearly outweigh the adverse impacts on the features of the site and the wider network of natural habitats; and

iii. suitable prevention, mitigation and compensation measures are provided.

3. Addressing gaps in the ecological network:

a. by ensuring that all development proposals shall provide an overall net gain in biodiversity, by:

i. protecting the biodiversity value of land, buildings and trees (including veteran trees) minimising the fragmentation of habitats;

ii. maximising the opportunities for restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats and species of principal importance;

iii. incorporating beneficial biodiversity conservation features on buildings, where appropriate; and maximising opportunities to enhance green infrastructure and ecological corridors, including water space; and

iv. conserving or enhancing biodiversity or geodiversity conservation features that will provide new habitat and help wildlife to adapt to climate change, and if the development is within a Nature Improvement Area (NIA), contributing to the aims and objectives of the NIA.'

Policy 31: Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

2.1.4. Policy 31 relates to climate change, albeit the following measure is of relevance to ecology:

'...incorporating measures which promote and enhance green infrastructure and provide an overall net gain in biodiversity as required by Policy 28 to improve the resilience of ecosystems within and beyond the site.'

Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan (October 2011)

2.1.5. The Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan supports the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan, and aims to:

- *'Conserve and enhance Lincolnshire's biodiversity; recreating habitats on a landscape scale and developing networks of interlinked natural areas – a 'living landscape' of which wildlife is an integral part, not confined to specially protected sites.*

- *Ensure that biodiversity is recognised as an essential element of life in the historic county of Lincolnshire: including its contributions to health and wellbeing; the economy, recreation and tourism; and provision of ecosystem services (such as flood protection, retention of water resources, carbon storage and crop pollination).*
- *Ensure biodiversity conservation is sustainable; the benefits are felt by society, the economy and the environment.*
- *Provide and gather biodiversity information to monitor progress and enable individuals and organisations to make decisions based on sound evidence.'*

2.2. National Planning Policies and Position Summary

- 2.2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In particular, Chapter 15 details relevant policies to conserve and enhance the natural environment.
- 2.2.2. The British Standard for Biodiversity BS:42020 sets out a code of practice for biodiversity planning and development, and seeks to integrate biodiversity into all stages of the planning process. Embedding the principals of the 'mitigation hierarchy' into all stages of decision making seeks to avoid impacts then to mitigate unavoidable impacts, and, as a last resort, to compensate for unavoidable residual impacts that remain after avoidance and mitigation measures.

3 Desktop Study and Ecological Designations

3.1. Methodology

- 3.1.1. Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership was contacted in January 2024, to obtain information relating to non-statutory and statutory designations, and habitat and species records from within 2km of the site. In addition, and in order to obtain further background information and context regarding relevant nearby statutory designations and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZs), records provided on the online Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) database were searched up to 25km from the site boundary.
- 3.1.2. Information relating to Priority Habitats within or adjacent to the site, along with any published protected species licensing records, was also searched for. In addition, records of any ancient, veteran or notable trees located within or adjacent to the site were searched for using the Woodland Trust's online database.
- 3.1.3. Information obtained from the sources detailed above is shown on Plan 23219-AE1, where appropriate.

3.2. Priority Habitats and Species, Ancient Woodland, and Trees

- 3.2.1. No Priority Habitats are identified within or adjacent to the survey area. Furthermore, no records of any ancient, veteran or notable trees, or ancient woodland, were returned from within or adjacent to the site, and as such, it is unlikely that any such habitats will be affected by the proposals.

3.3. Non-Statutory Designations

- 3.3.1. Relevant non-statutory ecological designations, within a 1km radius, are identified within Table 3.1 below, and shown on Plan 23219-AE1.

Table 3.1. Summary of non-statutory designations within proximity to the site.

Designation	Distance (km)	Direction	Reason for Designation
Vernatt's Drain Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	0.89	S	This LWS is a large man-made watercourse. Although many parts of the drain banks are covered in coarse and weedy vegetation, there are stretches with a rich grassland flora. Plants typical of calcareous soils are present and wetland vegetation occurs on the rivers edge as well as species also suggesting a slightly saline element. The site supports a good range of fauna, including invertebrates and breeding bird populations. An otter spraint was also found.
River Glen Corridor LWS	1.1	N	This LWS is a botanically rich stretch of the River Glen. The site includes a channel and a strip of adjacent grassland within Willow Tree Fen nature reserve. A wide range of aquatic plants are present in the river. The

			site also comprises some woodland.
Vernatt's Nature Reserve LWS	1.67	SE	This LWS comprises mostly woodland with a pond and an area of grassland. Wetland vegetation occurs in and beside the pond. There is a range of faunal species including birds and invertebrates.
Land North of Spalding Station Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	1.73	SE	This LWS is a strip of former sidings and other largely unused Network Rail land in Spalding. The site supports a species-rich mixture of trees, scrub, grassland and bare ground. The site is suitable for a wide range of invertebrates and other fauna.
Spalding Cemetery LWS	1.77	SE	This LWS is a typical suburban cemetery, heavily managed as parkland with only the northern end currently active as a burial ground. A hedgerow with trees surrounds the site. The area is rich in birdlife. Parkland and woodland of any sort is a rarity in this part of Lincolnshire.

- 3.3.2. The non-statutory designations listed above are not located within or immediately adjacent to the site boundary, and are well separated from the site by open countryside and / or development, and access infrastructure. Given the nature and small-scale of the proposals, and physical distance from all non-statutory designations, it is considered that these designations are highly unlikely to be adversely affected.

3.4. Statutory Designations

- 3.4.1. Relevant statutory ecological designations are identified within Table 3.2 below, and shown on Plan 23219-AE1.

Table 3.2. Summary of statutory designations in proximity to the site and of relevance to the evaluation.

Designation	Distance (km)	Direction	Reason for Designation
Vernatts Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	1.67	SE	This LNR comprises a wildflower meadow which supports various invertebrate species. The site also contains wetland habitats including reedbeds, marsh and a large pond. This site also supports Water Vole and bird populations.

- 3.4.2. The site falls within a number of SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs), including the designation listed at Table 3.2. The IRZ details confirm that residential development does not represent potential risk factor to the relevant designations and that the planning authority would not be required to consult with Natural England.
- 3.4.3. The statutory designations listed above are not located within or adjacent to the site boundary, and are separated from the site by existing development, access infrastructure, and open countryside. Given the nature and scale of the proposed development, and

physical distance from all statutory designations, it is considered that these designations are highly unlikely to be affected.

4 Habitats

4.1. Third-party Records

- 4.1.1. The information obtained from Greater Lincolnshire Nature Partnership returned a number of notable plant species, the closest record being Nuttall's Waterweed *Elodea nuttallii* 260m to the south of the site.
- 4.1.2. The detailed survey work undertaken by Allied Ecology Ltd. did not identify the presence of the species identified above within the site (which supports no aquatic habitats), or any protected, rare or notable botanical species returned by the records centre.

4.2. Survey Methodology

- 4.2.1. An 'extended' habitat survey was carried out in January 2024, based on the UK Habitat ('UK Hab') Classification¹ methodology, whereby habitat types present were noted and mapped, together with an assessment of the general 'ecological value' and condition of each habitat. Based on the setting, character, botanical species diversity, and structure able to be distinguished during the survey, the Primary Habitat 'level' can be distinguished. Secondary codes / attribute descriptions are then used to provide further supplementary information to classify and characterise habitats present. Species identification utilises the current Botanical Society for the British Isles (BSBI) UK Vascular Plant List 'English Names' naming conventions.
- 4.2.2. This approach enables a detailed and informed appraisal of the habitat types present to be undertaken and can also identify where areas of potentially greater diversity / importance are present, that may require further detailed botanical assessments to fully characterise.
- 4.2.3. A further appraisal of any ecological features of interest, such as areas capable of supporting protected faunal species, was undertaken in line with CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal², whereby details regarding the presence or potential presence of any notable or protected species or habitats was noted (see Section 5).

4.3. Survey Constraints and Limitations

- 4.3.1. All of the species that occur in each habitat would not necessarily be detectable during survey work carried out at any given time of the year, since different species are apparent during different seasons. The habitat survey was undertaken outside the recognised optimal season, albeit given the nature of the habitats present, it is considered that a proportionate level of assessment was able to be undertaken and the findings can be relied upon to inform an appraisal of their importance and likely impact of the proposals.
- 4.3.2. The site was surveyed for the presence of invasive species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). However, given the varying detectability of such species depending upon a number of external factors (e.g. time of year, site management, etc.), the absence of such species should not be assumed even if none were recorded during the survey.

¹ UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.0* (at <https://www.ukhab.org>)

² Chartered Institute for Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (2013) 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal.'

- 4.3.3. No overriding constraints or limitations were encountered during the survey work undertaken, such that the subsequent assessments and safeguarding recommendations are considered to be robust and proportionate.

4.4. Evaluation Methodology

- 4.4.1. The evaluation of ecological features is largely based on professional judgement, whilst also being sure to reflect the latest available best practice guidance and literature. The approach taken in this report is based on that described by the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland' (2018)³. Once a particular ecological feature is established as likely to be 'important', based on the relevant criteria, the geographic level of that importance can then be ascertained.

4.5. Results and Evaluation

- 4.5.1. The habitats and features of interest identified within the site are described below and evaluated in terms of their status and level of ecological value, taking into consideration the local and national context, and the presence of any rare or notable plant species / communities. The likely effects on the habitats and features of interest as a result of the development proposals are also assessed. The potential for any of the habitats within or adjacent to the site to support faunal species is discussed in the relevant faunal section in Section 5.
- 4.5.2. The habitats and features of interest are shown on Plan 23219-AE2 and described in detail below, with a summary of their Habitat Classifications detailed at Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1. Habitat Classification Summary.

UK Habitat Classification	UK Habitat Classification Code	UK Habitat Secondary Code(s)	
Modified Grassland	g4	106	Mown
Other neutral grassland	g3c	81	Ruderl or ephemeral
Other non-cereal crops	c1d8	516	Active management
Developed land; sealed surface	u1b	804	Car park
Buildings	u1b5	833	Barn
Woodlands and Trees	w	33	Line of trees

Modified Grassland

- 4.5.3. The site is dominated by an area of modified grassland, as shown on Plan 23219-AE2. The grassland is heavily poached in places and managed by mowing with a sward height of 5-10cm.
- 4.5.4. Species dominating the sward include coarse grasses such as Perennial Rye-grass *Lolium perenne*, Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua*, and Cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata* with a number of herbs and ruderals also present, including Cow Parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Broad-leaved Dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*.

³ CIEEM (2018) 'Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine', ver. 1.1, Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester

Ruderals

- 4.5.5. An area of tall ruderals is present on the site, as shown on Plan 23219-AE2, comprising Bristly Oxtongue *Picris echinoides*, Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris*, Broad-leaved Dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, Cow Parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, Common Mallow *Malva sylvestris*, Cleavers *Galium aparine*, and Herb-Robert *Geranium robertianum*.

Other cereal crops

- 4.5.6. The site also contains a section of arable / cropland, as shown on Plan 23219-AE2, comprising a pumpkin patch with associated ruderal consistent with those of the wider site.
- 4.5.7. The cropland habitat within the site comprises botanical species which are common and widespread in the local and national context. As such, this habitat does not represent an important ecological feature, and its removal under the proposals is of negligible significance.

Hardstanding

- 4.5.8. An area of hardstanding associated with the entrance to the site and building B1 is present within the site, as shown on Plan 23219-AE2.
- 4.5.9. The hardstanding supports a limited range of common and widespread species. As such, the hardstanding does not represent an important ecological feature, and its removal under the proposals is of negligible significance.

Building

- 4.5.10. Building B1 is present to the east of the site, as shown on Plan 23219-AE2, and comprises a modern steel frame barn supporting a corrugated metal cladding roof cover with skylights present, providing light within the building.

Line of trees

- 4.5.11. There is a native tree line present on the northern, western, and southern boundary of the site which is 8-12m in height 2m in width and comprises Alder *Alnus glutinosa*. The tree line also has an associated off-site dry ditch.
- 4.5.12. It is understood that all trees are to be retained under the proposals and will be safeguarded during construction, as recommended in Section 6 below.

Individual tree

- 4.5.13. An individual Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* tree is present to the southeast of the site in association with the modified grassland.
- 4.5.14. It is understood that all trees are to be retained under the proposals and will be safeguarded during construction, as recommended in Section 6 below.

4.6. Additional Considerations

- 4.6.1. The potential for on-site habitats and immediately adjacent areas to support faunal species is detailed at Section 5 below.

5 Fauna

5.1. Bats

Relevant Legislation

- 5.1.1. All British bats receive protection under both European (Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended) and domestic (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended) legislation. The legislative protection refers to both bats and their roosts (i.e. sites used for resting and breeding). A number of bat species are also listed as Section 41 Priority Species, and are therefore afforded a greater level of consideration within development under the NERC Act 2006, representing a material consideration at planning.

Third-party Records

- 5.1.2. A number of records of bats from within 2km of the site were returned from the records centre, the closest record being a general bat species located 100m to the southwest of the site, recorded in 2013.
- 5.1.3. Other records of bats include but are not limited to Daubenton's Bat *Myotis daubentonii*, Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, Brown Long-eared Bat *Plecotus auratus*, Soprano Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, Western Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Nathusius's Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, Natterer's Bat *Myotis nattereri* and Noctule Bat *Nyctalus noctule*, dating between 1945 and 2022.

Survey Methodology

Preliminary Roost Assessment of Buildings and Trees

- 5.1.4. In accordance with best practice guidance^{4,5} and aided by the use of ladders, high-powered torches, and binoculars, all safely accessible external and internal areas of the building were subject to a detailed visual inspection survey in January 2024, in order to search for evidence of roosting bats. Evidence may include but not be limited to bats themselves (including deceased), droppings / excreta, feeding / prey remains, possible fur staining, and the sound of bats within a roost.
- 5.1.5. For buildings, a detailed visual inspection survey comprises searches of accessible external areas including to fascias / soffits, lead flashing, gaps around windows and doors, missing stonework and mortar, where present, to search for features capable of supporting roosting bats, or features capable of facilitating bat access to internal areas of the structure. Internally, all safely accessible areas are searched, including any enclosed roof voids or basements that may be present.
- 5.1.6. Trees within and immediately bounding the site were inspected for their potential to support roosting bats, by undertaking a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA), the presence of potential roost features such as holes, cracks, splits or lifted bark was searched for.
- 5.1.7. Where bat droppings (or possible bat droppings) are identified, a sample is collected and submitted to a third-party laboratory for multi-variant polymerase DNA analysis. This

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

⁵ Reason, P.F. and Wray, S (2023). *UK Bat Mitigation Guidelines: a guide to impact assessment, mitigation and compensation for development affecting bats*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Ampfield.

approach enables the precise species of bat(s), if present, to be identified and ensures that relevant safeguarding, mitigation, and compensations strategies can be effectively prepared.

Assessment

- 5.1.8. Based on the findings of the visual inspection survey, the bat roosting potential category of a structure can be classified (see Table 5.1 below). In accordance with best practice guidance, further dusk emergence survey work may be required to determine the status of roosting bats, as detailed below.

Table 5.1. Summary of Bat Roosting Potential Categories and Further Survey Requirements.

Bat Roosting Potential Category	Structure: Typical Features / Evidence Present	Further Survey Requirements to give confidence that an Active Roost(s) is unlikely to be present
High	One or more potential bat roost locations present, which could support a high conservation status roost, with suitable foraging / commuting habitats nearby.	Three dusk emergence surveys.
Moderate	One or more potential bat roost locations present, albeit unlikely to support a high conservation status roost, with suitable foraging / commuting habitats nearby.	Two dusk emergence surveys.
Low	One or more potential bat roost locations present, capable of supporting individual bats, albeit unlikely to be in regular use. Unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool / stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats.	A single dusk emergence survey*.
Negligible	No obvious roosting features, albeit some uncertainty given that bats can make use of otherwise potentially unsuitable features.	No further survey work required.
None	A complete absence of crevices / suitable sheltering opportunities for bats.	No further survey work required.
<p>*Dusk emergence survey work is undertaken during suitable weather conditions / temperatures, between May – August / early September inclusive (for most bat roosting scenarios), with at least two surveys May – August (not into September).</p> <p>*Best practice survey guidance confirms that, if sufficient areas of a structure have been inspected and no evidence found, then further surveys may not be appropriate – further conditions apply.</p>		

- 5.1.9. Categorising the potential for trees to support an active bat roost(s) is carried out in a different way to a building / structure, with initial assessment criteria identified at Table 5.2 below.

Table 5.2. Summary of Initial Assessment Criteria for Trees.

Suitability	Description	Further Assessment Requirements
None	The tree does not support any potential roosting features, or is highly unlikely to.	No further survey work or assessment required.
FAR	Further Assessment Required, to establish whether any potential roosting features are present.	Further ground-level or 'close' inspection undertaken aerially / at height, to confirm the presence of absence of Potential Roost Feature(s).
PRF	A tree with at least one Potential Roost	Categorise the status / suitability

	Feature (PRF) present.	of the PRF(s).
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- 5.1.10. Based on this initial categorisation, trees identified to provide an identified Potential Roost Feature(s) (PRF) are further categorised in line with the guidance summarised at Table 5.3 below.

Table 5.3. Summary of Bat Roosting Potential Categories and Further Survey Requirements for Trees.

Bat Roosting Potential Category	Description	Further Assessment Requirements
PRF-I (individual)	The Potential Roost Feature(s) is / are only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats, due to its size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.	It may be necessary to undertake a single 'close' inspection aerially / at height#, in order to confirm the PRF-I status, albeit this will not always be necessary. Where PRF-I status is confirmed, no further survey work or assessment required*.
PRF-M (multiple)	The Potential Roost Feature(s) is / are potentially suitable to support multiple bats and could therefore be used by a maternity colony.	A minimum of three 'close' inspections undertaken aerially / at height#.
<p>*Precautionary methods of working should be implemented for any felling / pruning / management or maintenance works to the tree.</p> <p>#Survey work is undertaken between May – August / early September inclusive (for most bat roosting scenarios), with at least two surveys May – August (not into September).</p>		

- 5.1.11. Where safe access is not possible to carry out 'close' inspections undertaken aerially / at height either by ladder, climbing or MEWP, or Potential Roost Features are too extensive to inspect thoroughly, undertaking dusk emergence surveys remains an appropriate / accepted approach.

Survey Constraints and Limitations

- 5.1.12. All of the survey work detailed above was undertaken at a suitable time of year, under appropriate weather conditions, with access available to all relevant areas of the site. As such no overriding constraints to the assessment were encountered, and the findings of the survey work undertaken can be relied upon to inform the proposals.

Survey Results and Evaluation

Roosting - Trees

- 5.1.13. The trees present within the site are assessed as having no features capable of supporting roosting bats. As such, the roosting category for the on-site trees are 'none'. Under relevant best practice guidance, no further survey work or assessment is considered necessary to inform the planning application.

Roosting - Buildings

- 5.1.14. **Building B1** is a two-story modern steel frame barn supporting a corrugated metal cladding roof covering with skylights present. There are no obvious access points into the building for bats. As such, building B1 is assessed to provide negligible potential for roosting bats.

- 5.1.15. It is understood that the buildings are to be removed under the proposals. Under relevant best practice guidance, no further survey work or assessment is considered necessary to

inform the planning application.

- 5.1.16. Nonetheless, where proposed development is unlikely to result in an offence to European Protected Species, and where licensing is not required, reasonable precautionary measures should be implemented to minimise the risk to such species in the unlikely event they should be present during the course of development activities. Accordingly, and in line with the guidance set out by Natural England⁶, a number of highly precautionary mitigation measures to fully safeguard bats under the development are set out below in Section 6.

Foraging / Commuting

- 5.1.17. Habitats within the survey area which offer potential foraging and commuting habitat for bats include an Alder tree line. This habitat is understood to be retained under the proposals. As such, subject to the implementation of appropriate mitigation along with the proposed ecological enhancements, as outlined in Section 6 below, it is considered that bats will be fully safeguarded under the proposals.

5.2. Badger

Relevant Legislation

- 5.2.1. Badgers *Meles meles* receive protection under domestic legislation (Protection of Badgers Act 1992), which aims to protect this species from persecution.

Third-party Records

- 5.2.2. A relatively small number of records of Badger within 2km of the site were returned from the records centre, the closest of which was approximately 530m to the southwest of the site, dated in 2007.

Survey Methodology

- 5.2.3. A detailed Badger presence / absence survey was undertaken by Allied Ecology in January. The survey consisted of a search for the presence of any Badger setts within and adjacent to the site. For any setts identified, information on the number and location of sett entrances was noted and mapped, including an assessment of whether the entrances were active, inactive and disused (see Table 5.4 below).

Table 5.4. Descriptions of the status of Badger sett entrances.

Sett Entrance Status	Description / Features
Active	Active entrances are clear of any debris or vegetation, are obviously in regular use, and typically exhibit fresh spoil from recent excavation activity. Other evidence of activity associated with the sett entrance includes snagged Badger hair on surrounding vegetation, fresh Badger prints within/leading up to the entrance, and the presence of fresh bedding in proximity to the entrance.
Inactive	Inactive entrances are not in regular use and have debris such as leaves or twigs in the entrance, and vegetation growing in or around the entrance.
Disused	Disused entrances have not been in use for some time, are partially or completely blocked, and cannot be used without a considerable

⁶ Natural England (2013) 'European Protected Species: Mitigation Licensing - How to get a licence (WML-G12)'

	amount of clearance. If the hole has been disused for a considerable amount of time, all that may remain of the entrance is a depression in the ground and the remains of a spoil heap, which may have vegetated over.
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- 5.2.4. Based on the results of the Badger presence / absence survey, Badger setts can be classified based on the descriptions detailed in Table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5. Descriptions of Badger sett categories.

Sett Category	Description / Features
Main Sett	Main setts usually have a large number of entrances with conspicuous spoil heaps, and the sett generally appears to be active. Main setts are usually in continuous use and used for breeding, and as such, well-worn pathways to and from the sett and between entrances will be present. Bedding is frequently dispelled from the site, and will be located in close proximity.
Annexe Sett	Annexe setts are typically located in close proximity to the main sett (<150m away) and are usually connected to the main sett by one or more obvious well-worn paths. The Annexe sett will typically have several entrances, albeit not all will be in use at one time.
Subsidiary Sett	Subsidiary setts typically comprise 3 – 5 entrances, and will be located at least 50m from the main sett. A subsidiary sett will not exhibit obvious pathways connecting with another sett, and are not continuously active.
Outlier Sett	Outlier setts typically comprise one or two entrances, and will have little spoil associated with the entrances. Outlier setts are only used sporadically and will have no obvious pathways connecting with another sett.

- 5.2.5. In addition, evidence of any general Badger activity was searched for during the survey, so as to assess the use of the site by Badger for foraging and / or commuting. Evidence in the form of field signs, such as commuting pathways, hair, footprints, latrines / dung pits and general foraging signs, was noted and mapped where present.

Survey Constraints and Limitations

- 5.2.6. No constraints or limitations to the survey or assessed were encountered. It is considered that the level of survey work carried out provides an accurate baseline to assess the potential for impacts on Badger under the proposals, including the requirement for further survey work.

Survey Results and Evaluation

- 5.2.7. No evidence of Badger setts or Badger foraging / commuting behaviour was recorded within the site during the survey work undertaken. As such, it is unlikely that Badger rely on the site, and overall the site is considered to be of negligible importance to Badger at the local level. Nonetheless, Badger is known to be present within the local area, and it is possible that Badger may occasionally make use of or pass through the site. As such, a number of mitigation measures have been recommended in Section 6 to ensure that Badgers are fully safeguarded during the proposed works.

5.3. Other Mammals

Relevant Legislation

- 5.3.1. Water Vole *Arvicola amphibius* receives protection under domestic legislation (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended). The legislative protection refers to both individual Water Voles and their breeding sites and sheltering places. Water Vole is also listed as a Section 41 Priority Species.
- 5.3.2. Otter *Lutra lutra* receives protection under both European (Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended) and domestic (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended) legislation. The legislative protection refers to both individual Otters and their breeding sites and resting places. Otter is also listed as a Section 41 Priority Species.
- 5.3.3. Other UK mammals do not represent protected species and as such, are not afforded direct legislative protection. A number of other mammal species are listed as Section 41 Priority Species, and are therefore afforded a greater level of consideration within development under the NERC Act 2006, representing a material consideration at planning.

Third-party Records

- 5.3.4. A relatively small number of records of Water Vole were returned from within 2km of the site from the records centre, being located 370m to the north of the site, dated in 2011.
- 5.3.5. A relatively small number of records of Otter were returned from within 2km of the site from the records centre, the closest of which was recorded 1.27km to the north of the site, dated in 2014.
- 5.3.6. A relatively small number of records of West European Hedgehog were returned from within 2km of the site from the records centre, being located 560m to the northwest of the site and dated in 2003.

Survey Methodology

- 5.3.7. A general assessment of the habitats within the site was undertaken in January 2024, in respect of their suitability to support other mammals. Any field signs suggesting the presence of other mammal species was observed, including evidence of sheltering, foraging and commuting activity. Information on the presence or potential presence of other mammals was noted and mapped.

Survey Constraints and Limitations

- 5.3.8. No constraints or limitations to the survey or assessed were encountered. It is considered that the level of survey work carried out provides an accurate baseline to assess the potential for impacts on other mammals under the proposals, including the requirement for further survey work.

Survey Results and Evaluation

- 5.3.9. The site itself comprises habitats which are unsuitable to support Water Vole and Otter, and no evidence to suggest Water Vole or Otter may be present was encountered during the survey work. As such, it is highly unlikely that these species are present within or adjacent to the site.

- 5.3.10. Other common species in both a local and national context, such as Fox *Vulpes vulpes* and Hedgehog are likely to utilise the site. Fox and Hedgehog are not afforded specific legislative protection, albeit Hedgehog constitutes a Priority Species and as such, represents a material planning consideration. Mitigation measures are proposed at Section 6 to safeguard Hedgehog and other mammals, should they enter the site during the proposed works.

5.4. Great Crested Newt

Relevant Legislation

- 5.4.1. Great Crested Newts receive protection under both European (Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended) and domestic (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended) legislation. The legislative protection refers to both Great Crested Newts and habitats utilised by this species for foraging, resting and breeding. All other British amphibian species receive limited protection under Section 9 (5) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*, Common Toad *Bufo bufo*, Natterjack Toad *Epidalea calamita*, and Pool Frog *Pelophylax lessonae* are also listed as listed as Section 41 Priority Species, and are therefore afforded a greater level of consideration within development under the NERC Act 2006, representing a material consideration at planning.

Third-party Records

- 5.4.2. No records of Great Crested Newt within 2km of the site were returned from the records centre.

Survey Methodology

- 5.4.3. A general assessment of the terrestrial habitats within the site was undertaken in January 2024, in respect of their suitability to support Great Crested Newt and other amphibians. In addition, any aquatic habitats (waterbodies) at the site and within 250m⁷ of the site boundary (identified using Ordnance Survey and satellite imagery) were assessed for their suitability to support Great Crested Newt using the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI)^{8, 9}. Guidance set out by Natural England states that a HSI assessment incorporating an extended search area of 500m of the site boundary is required where the following factors are identified:

- Data indicates that the pond(s) has the potential to support a large Great Crested Newt population (informed by the results of the desktop study);
- The site footprint contains particularly favourable habitat;
- The development would have a substantial negative effect on that habitat; and
- There is an absence of dispersal barriers.

- 5.4.4. Habitats within the site are considered not to be particularly favourable and barriers to Great Crested Newt dispersal are present, such that an assessment of ponds within 250m of the site remains proportionate.

⁷ 250m is the typical maximum migratory range of this species, see English Nature (2004) 'An assessment of the efficiency of capture techniques and the value of different habitats for the great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*'. English Nature Research Report 576

⁸ Oldham RS, Keeble J, Swan MJS & Jeffcote M (2000) 'Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*)'. Herpetological Journal 10 (4), 143-155

⁹ Amphibian & Reptile Groups of the UK (2010) 'ARG UK Advice Note 5: Great Crested Newt Habitat Suitability Index'

Survey Constraints and Limitations

- 5.4.5. It is considered that the level of survey work carried out provides an accurate baseline to assess the potential for impacts on Great Crested Newt under the proposals, including the requirement for further survey work.

Survey Results and Evaluation

- 5.4.6. The site is considered to provide limited, sub-optimal, terrestrial foraging and sheltering opportunities for Great Crested Newt and other amphibians, being largely comprised of modified grassland, arable and hardstanding with no waterbodies present. No aquatic opportunities are present within the site, with no waterbodies present within 250m of the site boundary (typical commuting distance for Great Crested Newts). Furthermore, no records of Great Crested Newt were returned from the local records centre. As such, Great Crested Newts are highly likely to be absent from the site and therefore this species does not represent a constraint to the development.

5.5. Reptiles

Relevant Legislation

- 5.5.1. All British reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which protects all six species from intentional killing or injury, albeit the legislation does not extend to protection of habitats utilised by reptiles. All British reptiles are also listed as Section 41 Priority Species, and are therefore afforded a greater level of consideration within development under the NERC Act 2006, representing a material consideration at planning. Sand Lizard *Lacerta agilis* and Smooth Snake *Coronella austriaca* also receive European protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Third-party Records

- 5.5.2. A single record of reptile species within 2km of the site was returned from the records centre, being a Grass snake located 480m to the northwest of the site, dated in 2011.

Survey Methodology

- 5.5.3. A general assessment of the habitats within the site was undertaken in January 2024, in respect of their suitability to support reptiles. Any evidence suggesting the presence or potential presence of reptile species at the site was noted and mapped.

Survey Constraints and Limitations

- 5.5.4. No constraints or limitations to the survey or assessed were encountered. It is considered that the level of survey work carried out provides an accurate baseline to assess the potential for impacts on reptiles under the proposals, including the requirement for further survey work.

Survey Results and Evaluation

- 5.5.5. The site is dominated by modified grassland which is considered to be unsuitable for reptiles. As such, if reptiles are present within the wider immediate landscape, only very limited potentially suitable habitats are present which would not be able to sustain location populations in isolation. On a highly precautionary basis, measures are proposed at Section 6 in order to ensure reptiles remain fully safeguarded under the proposals.

5.6. Birds

Relevant Legislation

- 5.6.1. All British birds and their nests are protected under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislative protection refers to killing or injury of individuals, and their nests, while being created or in use, cannot be taken, damaged or destroyed. A number of species are also listed on Schedule 1 of the Act and therefore receive a greater level of protection and are subject to special penalties.

Third-party Records

- 5.6.2. A large number of records of birds within 2km of the site were returned from the records centre. Records of species include, but are not limited to, Black Redstart *Phoenicurus ochruros*, Brambling *Fringilla montifringilla*, Cetti's Warbler *Cettia cetti*, Common Crossbill *Loxia curvirostra*, Common Scoter *Melanitta nigra*, Corn Bunting *Emberiza calandra*, Crane *Gruidae*, Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*, Curlew *Numenius arquata*, Dark-Bellied Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*, Fieldfare *Turdus pilaris*, Garganey *Spatula querquedula*, Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula*, Grasshopper Warbler *Locustella naevia*, Green Sandpiper *Tringa ochropus*, Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Grey Partridge *Perdix perdix*, Hen Harrier *Circus cyaneus*, Hobby *Falco subbuteo*, Kingfisher *Alcedo Atthis*, Lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret*, Linnet *Linaria cannabina*, Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*, Little tern *Sternula albifrons*, Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus*, Osprey *Pandion haliaetus*, Peregrine *Falco peregrinus*, Red Kite *Milvus milvus*, Red-crested Pochard *Netta rufina*, Redshank *Tringa totanus*, Red-throated Diver *Gavia stellata*, Redwing *Turdus iliacus*, Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, Skylark *Alauda arvensis*, Slavonian Grebe *Podiceps auritus*, Snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, Song Thrush *Turdus philomelos*, Spotted Flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*, Swift *Apodidae*, Tundra Swan *Cygnus columbianus*, Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*, Whimbrel *Numenius phaeopus*, Whooper Swan *Cygnus cygnus*, Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola*, Yellow Wagtail *Motacilla flava*, and Yellowhammer *Emberiza citrinella* dating between 1991 and 2022.
- 5.6.3. A small number of records of Barn Owl *Tyto alba* were also returned from within 2km of the site, dating between 1998 and 2021, albeit given the low resolution of the records, it is not possible to determine their precise location in relation to the site.

Survey Methodology

- 5.6.4. A general assessment of the habitats within the site was undertaken in January 2024, in respect of their suitability to support birds. Any birds which were observed utilising the site were identified using sight or sound, which was noted and mapped where appropriate during the survey work. Other field signs, including any evidence of nesting or foraging by birds, was also noted.

Survey Constraints and Limitations

- 5.6.5. No constraints or limitations to the survey or assessed were encountered. It is considered that the level of survey work carried out provides a proportionate baseline to assess the potential for impacts on birds under the proposals, including the requirement for further survey work.

Survey Results and Evaluation

- 5.6.6. During the survey work undertaken, a tree line and an individual tree were recorded which are assessed as able to provide nesting opportunities to birds.
- 5.6.7. It is understood that potential nesting habitat associated with the treeline and individual tree, would be retained under the proposals. Should minor clearances / management ultimately be required, this could potentially affect any nesting birds which may be present at the time of works and as such, safeguarding measures in respect of nesting birds are set out in Section 6 below. The proposals include the creation of new nesting habitat, as detailed in Section 6 below, which will ensure that long-term nesting opportunities will continue to be provided at the site.

5.7. Invertebrates

Relevant Legislation

- 5.7.1. A number of invertebrates are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Large Blue Butterfly *Maculinea arion*, Fisher's Estuarine Moth *Gortyna borelii lunata* and Lesser Whirlpool Ram's-horn Snail *Anisus vorticulus* also receive European protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). A number of invertebrates are also listed S41 Priority Species, and are therefore afforded a greater level of consideration within development under the NERC Act 2006, representing a material consideration at planning.

Third-party Records

- 5.7.2. A number of records of invertebrates were returned from within 2km of the site, including but not limited to Cinnabar *Tyria jacobaeae*, Buff Ermine *Spilarctia luteum*, Dark Spinach *Pelurga comitata*, Dark-barred Twin-spot Carpet *Xanthorhoe ferrugata*, Dot Moth *Melanchra persicariae*, Large Copper *Lycaena dispar*, Shaded Broad-bar *Scotopteryx chenopodiata*, Small Heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*, Wall *Lasiommata megera*, dating between 1970 and 2017, albeit given the low resolution of the records, it is not possible to determine their precise location in relation to the site.

Survey Methodology

- 5.7.3. A general assessment of the habitats within the site was undertaken in January 2024, in respect of their suitability to support invertebrates. Any invertebrate species were identified, where possible, and noted during the survey work.

Survey Constraints and Limitations

- 5.7.4. No constraints or limitations to the survey or assessed were encountered. It is considered that the level of survey work carried out provides an accurate baseline to assess the potential for impacts on invertebrates under the proposals, including the requirement for further survey work.

Survey Results and Evaluation

- 5.7.5. The survey work did not record the presence of any protected, rare or notable species within the site. The site is dominated by modified grassland and arable which is likely to only support a limited diversity of widespread invertebrate species. As such, given the habitats present on-site and the absence of any sites specifically designated for invertebrate interest

within the surrounding area, it is unlikely that the site supports an important invertebrate assemblage. As such, it is considered that the proposed development is unlikely to significantly affect local invertebrate populations.

6 Recommended Mitigation and Safeguarding Measures

- 6.1 Based on the results of the survey work undertaken at the site, it is recommended that the following measures are implemented. In accordance with best practice guidance (BS 42020:2013), detailed mitigation strategies / method statements can be secured through appropriate planning conditions.

Protection of Retained Trees

- 6.2 Retained trees should be protected during all stages of the development in accordance with standard arboriculturalist best practice guidance (BS 5837:2012), or as recommended by a suitably qualified arboriculturalist. This will involve the installation of protective fencing, or similar methods, to fully safeguard the root protection areas of the retained trees.

Bats – Update Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of Buildings and Trees.

- 6.3 Should a considerable amount of time elapse (>2 years) between the survey work detailed in this report and the proposed works commencing, it is recommended that a further visual inspection survey of the on-site building and trees be undertaken prior to commencement. Such survey work would aim to establish the current status of bats at the site, and to identify any change in the potential for the trees to support roosting bats.

Bats – Sensitive Lighting

- 6.4 In order to avoid unnecessary light-spill onto retained boundary habitats, it is recommended that an ecologically sensitive lighting scheme be implemented. This would intend to keep any new lighting provision to a minimum, and avoid vegetated habitats where practicable. Particular consideration should be given to avoiding upward light trespass, skyglow, and unnecessary lighting.

General Faunal Safeguards

- 6.5 In order to fully safeguard faunal species during the consented works the following measures are recommended:
- Construction workers will maintain a watching brief for faunal species within the site, during any clearance works;
 - Any trenches or excavations left overnight will include a feature(s) for faunal species to escape. Such feature could include a plank of wood or gently graded edge; and
 - Any temporarily exposed drains or pipes will be capped off or suitably blocked if left overnight, to avoid occupation by faunal species.

Hedgehog – Site Permeability

- 6.6 In order to maintain permeability through the site for Hedgehogs, it is recommended 13cm x 13cm cut-outs are included at the base of any proposed boundary features. This would aim to ensure that Hedgehogs can forage within and commute through the site.

Amphibians and Reptiles – Habitat Manipulation Exercise

- 6.7 Habitats within the site provide limited terrestrial opportunities for amphibians and reptiles. As identified above, the lack of wider habitat connectivity and suitable aquatic opportunities

for Great Crested Newts indicates that it remains unlikely that reptiles or Great Crested Newts would be impacted by the proposals. However, as a precautionary measure to safeguard amphibians and reptiles, and to avoid an offence under the relevant legislation being unintentionally committed, it is recommended that a destructive search (under Ecological Clerk of Works Supervision) of any debris piles and suitable vegetated features is undertaken prior to / during their removal. Vegetated habitats would be reduced in height as part of a 'two-stage' clearance process, which would see suitable vegetation managed to a height of ~15cm before being hand-searched. Any reptiles or amphibians encountered would be captured and moved out of harm's way, to a retained and unaffected suitable area, before any remaining clearance activities are carried out.

- 6.8 In the highly unlikely event that Great Crested Newt is identified during the habitat manipulation exercise, all site works would cease and consideration given to obtaining a Natural England mitigation licence, or registering the site with the Natural England District Level Licence for Great Crested Newts, prior to recommencement. The Local Planning Authority would be provided with an immediate update, and confirmation of further actions / licensing undertaken.

Nesting Birds – General Safeguards

- 6.9 Habitats capable of supporting nesting birds should not be subject to clearance and / or management works during the recognised nesting bird season (March – August inclusive). Where this is not practicable, any habitats capable of supporting nesting birds should only be subject to works following a Nesting Bird Survey. This would aim to establish whether any active bird nests are present, and instate an appropriate buffer to the proposed works. Such a buffer should remain in place until the chicks have fledged and the nest becomes inactive. Such surveys must be carried out within three days of vegetation works commencing.

7 Recommended Ecological Enhancements

- 7.1 Based on the results of the survey work undertaken at the site, it is recommended that the following measures are implemented. It is considered that subject to the implementation of such enhancement measures, the delivery of biodiversity net gains at the site can be achieved under the proposals. In accordance with best practice guidance (BS 42020:2013), detailed ecological enhancements and management / monitoring plans can be secured through appropriate planning condition wording.

New Native Planting

- 7.2 To maximise the deliverable net gains at the site, where practicable it is recommended that new tree and shrub planting within the site comprise native species of relevance within the local context. Species identified as being of particular benefit to wildlife include a range of early and late flowering / fruiting species such as Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, Silver Birch *Betula pendula*, Aspen *Populus tremula*, Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, Oak *Quercus* sp., Wild Cherry *Prunus avium*, Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, Rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, Hazel *Corylus avellana* and Wayfaring-tree *Viburnum lantana*, to ensure that foraging opportunities are available for local faunal populations throughout the year.
- 7.3 Any non-native species included within the proposals should include varieties listed on the RHS' 'Plants for Pollinators' database, which are of elevated value for nectar-consuming invertebrate species, such as bees, moths and butterflies.

Faunal Enhancements

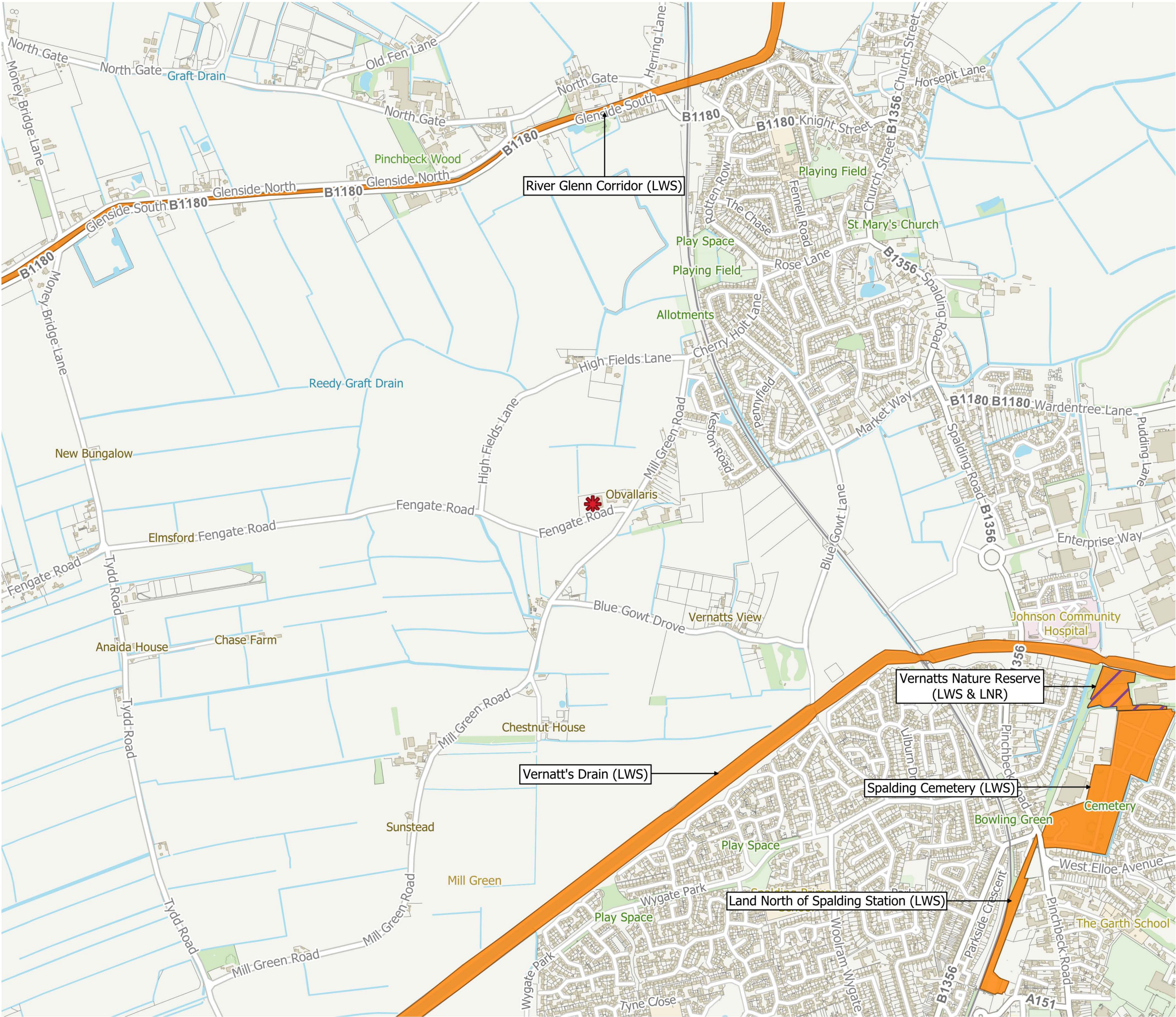
- 7.4 **Bat Boxes** – It is recommended that new bat roosting opportunities be incorporated within the proposals. The detail of such measures, including location and number of features can be secured via a suitably worded planning condition. However, it is recommended that two new artificial bat roosts be incorporated within the development proposals. These features are recommended to be integrated to the fabric of the buildings, comprising Integrated Eco Bat Box, Crevice features / Ibstock bat brick (or similar).
- 7.5 **Bird Boxes** – It is recommended that new bird nesting opportunities be incorporated within the development proposals. The detail of such measures, including location and number of features can be secured via a suitably worded planning condition. However, it is recommended that two new artificial bird nest boxes be incorporated within the development proposals. It is recommended that, where practicable, new bird boxes be sited on retained trees within the site boundary.
- 7.6 **Hedgehog Dome** – It is recommended that a new sheltering opportunity for hedgehogs be incorporated within the development proposals. It is proposed that a single hedgehog dome be integrated within sheltered areas of the landscaping proposals, contiguous to off-site connecting habitats where practicable.

8 Conclusions

- 8.1 Allied Ecology has undertaken an Ecological Appraisal in respect of the proposed development at Fengate Road, Pinchbeck. This report sets out the results of the baseline ecological survey work and desktop study, carried out in order to establish the likely effects of the proposals in respect of the features of interest identified and, where necessary, any requirements for further Phase 2 survey work, in line with relevant best practice guidance.
- 8.2 Information returned from the desktop study confirms that no statutory designations are present within or immediately adjacent to the site, with all designations sufficiently separated from the site such that no adverse impacts are predicted.
- 8.3 To summarise, subject to the recommended mitigation and safeguarding measures, it is considered that no significant harm to any habitats or faunal species of interest will occur as a result of the proposed development. On the contrary, there are a number of opportunities to improve the site for biodiversity, through implementation of the recommended enhancement measures.

Plan 23219-AE1

Site Location and Ecological Designations



Key:

Site Location

Statutory Designations

Local Nature Reserve (LNR)

Non-statutory Designations

Local Wildlife site (LWS)

Fengate Road, Pinchbeck, PE11 3PU

Site Location and Ecological Designations

23219-AE1

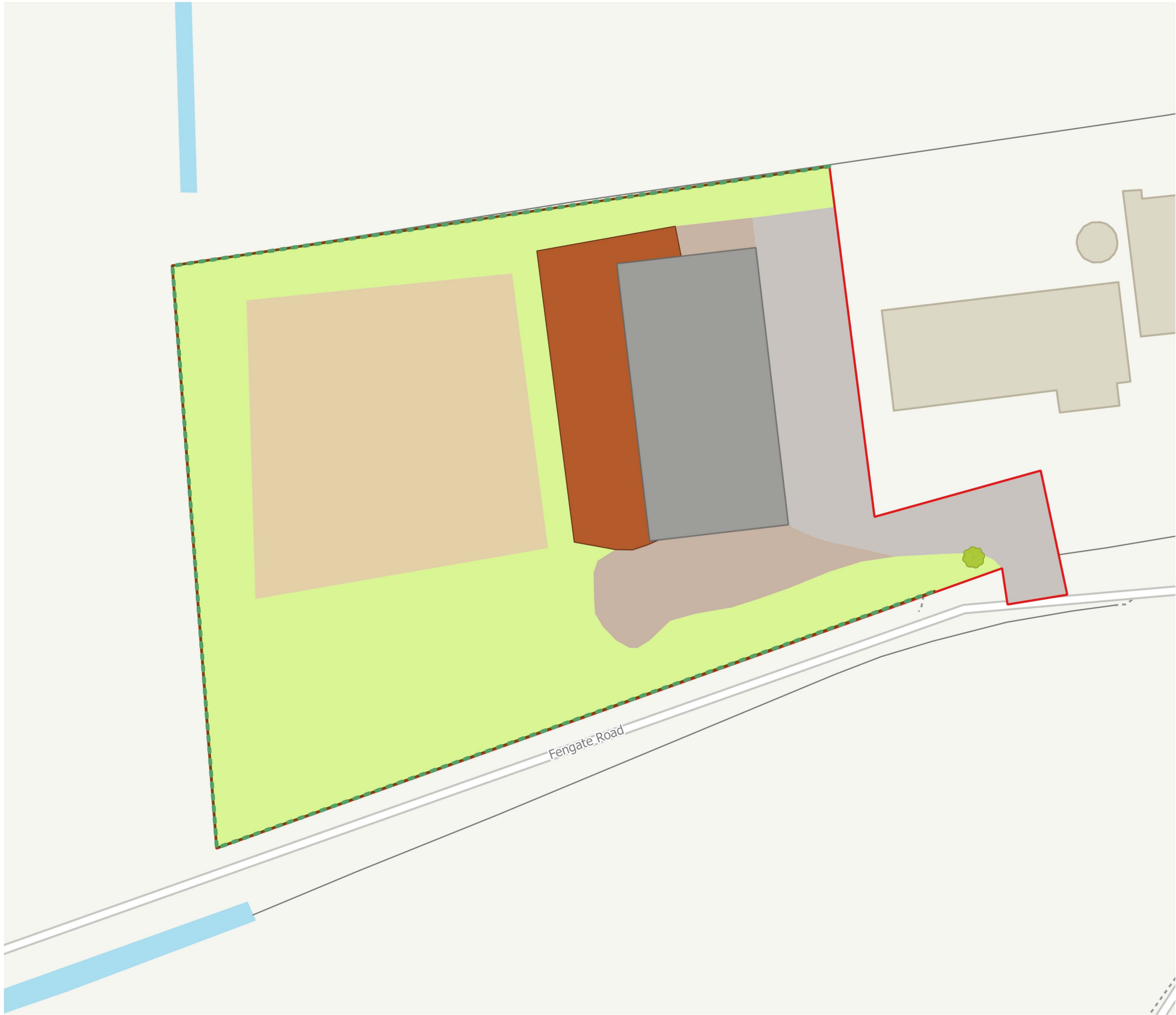
October 2024

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Plan 23219-AE2

Habitats and Features of Interest



Key:

- Site Boundary
- Tree
- Tree line
- Building
- Hardstanding
- Ruderal
- Bare ground
- Arable
- Modified Grassland



Fengate Road, Pinchbeck, PE11 3PU

Habitats and Features of Interest

23219-AE2

October 2024



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Appendix 23219-AE1

Photographs



Photo 1. Building B1, with regularly used / access hardstanding



Photo 2. Southern and western boundary, with hardstanding and modified grassland to the rear



Photo 3. Northern site boundary and patch of ruderals



Photo 4. Pumpkin patch / cropland



Photo 5. Uniformly short-sward / species-poor modified grassland



Photo 6. Building B1 internal



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