258 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

HABITAT WORKS

September 2025

HABITAT WORKS

Report Title: 258 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Report to: Hinchliffe Architecture & Design Ltd
24 Carr View Road
Hepworth
Holmfirth
West Yorkshire
HD9 1HX

Version: *V1.0*

Issue Date: September 2025

Prepared by:

Alice Shaw BSc (Hons), BSc
Seasonal Ecologist Date: 24.09.2025

Reviewed and Approved by:

Joe Travis BSc (Hons), MSc, ACIEEM
Ecology Team Manager Date: 26.09.2025

Prepared by:
Habitat Works, Suite 12, Westleigh House, Denby Dale, Huddersfield HD8 8QJ

Version History	Author	Description	Date
V1.0	Joe Travis	Final Version for Issue	26.09.2025

Contents

Executive Summary

Habitat Works Limited (Habitat Works) was commissioned by Hinchliffe Architecture & Design Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the land at 258 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale, West Yorkshire, HD8 8SU (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 23662 09086), hereafter referred to as 'the Site' and as displayed in Figure 1.

The PEA was required to inform proposals for the construction of a new house in the garden of an existing property. These proposals are detailed within the Hincliffe Architecture and Design Ltd drawing '*Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Site Plan*' (DRG No. 279-24-PL02, October 2024).

Recommendations are made regarding impacts of the proposed development through habitat losses/potential gains on the Site post-development and the retention and protection of key ecological features. These include:

- Implementation of Best Practice Measures (BPM) for:
    - Common amphibians,
    - Badgers,
    - Hedgehogs;
- Consideration of enhancement opportunities for local species, including:
    - Installation of bat and bird boxes
    - Installation of bee bricks

1. Introduction

1.1 *Background*

1.1.1 Habitat Works Limited (Habitat Works) was commissioned by Hincliffe Architecture and Design Ltd to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the land at 258 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale, West Yorkshire, HD8 8SU (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 23662 09086), hereafter referred to as 'the Site' and as displayed in Figure 1.

1.1.2 The PEA was required to inform proposals for the construction of a new house in the garden of an existing property. These proposals are detailed within the Hincliffe Architecture and Design Ltd drawing '*Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Site Plan*' (DRG No. 279-24-PL02, October 2024).

1.1.3 This report details the findings of a PEA, including a data consultation and UK Habitat Classification survey undertaken in September 2025. Methodologies employed during the surveys are described along with the survey findings, evaluation, assessment and recommendations for any further survey work and/or mitigation/enhancement as required.

1.1.4 Recommendations are made regarding impacts of the proposed development through habitat losses/potential gains on the Site post-development including the retention and protection of key ecological features. The provision of species-specific enhancements are outlined where appropriate.

2. Methodology

2.1 *Data Consultation*

2.1.1 Data consultation was undertaken by Habitat Works with the local records centre; West Yorkshire Ecology Service (WYES) in September 2025 as part of the ecological appraisal process, to determine whether any ecological features of note had previously been recorded within 2 km of the Site. Data requested included:

- Records of protected species;
- Records of national or local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species;
- Details of any statutory sites of ecological interest e.g. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) etc.; and,
- Details of any non-statutory sites of ecological interest e.g. Local Wildlife Site (LWS).

2.1.2 The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website (http://www.magic.defra.gov.uk) was consulted in May 2025 for information on statutory and non-statutory designated sites of conservation interest, and for the presence of European Protected Species (EPS) mitigation licences for great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (GCN) and bats within 2 km of the Site. MAGIC was also used to search for information relating to GCN Class Survey Licence Returns and Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017- 2019 within 500 m of the Site.

2.1.3 Information returned from MAGIC and WYES with relevant assessments will be incorporated into the report as appropriate. All records will be reviewed, however particular interest will be placed on records within the past 10 years, with records prior to these considered historic.

2.2 *Ecological Walkover Survey*

2.2.1 An ecological walkover survey was undertaken on 12th September by Ecology Team Manager Joe Travis BSc (Hons) MSc ACIEEM and Seasonal Ecologist Alice Shaw BSc (Hons) following best practice guidelines (UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab) (UKHab Working Group (UKHCWG) 2018)). This survey method aims to define habitats and vegetation types present and provide an indication of their relative abundance. This survey method aims to characterise habitats and communities present and is not intended to provide a complete list of all species occurring across the Site.

2.2.2 The UKHab survey covered land within the Site (as illustrated by the red line site boundary in Figure 1).

2.2.3 Habitats and vegetation types present inside the Site were recorded onto a field map and notable, rare or scarce plant species, including other features of ecological interest, were highlighted using Target Notes (TN). The current management of habitats and associated features were noted and assigned UKHab secondary codes where relevant.

2.2.4 Evidence of protected species or species of nature conservation importance were recorded where present at the time of survey. Habitats or species present that are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 were also noted.

2.2.5 Survey findings are detailed in Section 3 and annotated on Figure 1, while site photographs are provided in Appendix 2.

2.2.6 Plant species recorded were classified according to the subjective method of DAFOR abundance ratings. The standardised terms are as follows:

- D Dominant

- A Abundant
- F Frequent
- O Occasional
- R Rare

2.3 *Protected and Key Species*

2.3.1 Any evidence of protected species or groups encountered during the survey was recorded. This included observations of field signs and an assessment of the suitability of the habitats present to support protected species. For full details of legislation relating to all habitats and species discussed within this report visit http://www.legislation.gov.uk.

Amphibians

2.3.2 The Site was assessed for its potential to support amphibians, including a detailed GCN assessment. A desk-based search for ponds within 500 m of the Site, which are not separated by a significant barrier to amphibian dispersal, was made using 1:10,000 OS mapping. Habitats within the Site were assessed for their suitability to support amphibians during their terrestrial and aquatic stages where applicable.

Badgers

2.3.3 Signs of badger *Meles meles* activity were sought within the Site and within 30m of the Site boundary, where possible.

2.3.4 The survey followed standard methodology detailed in '*Surveying Badgers*' (Harris *et al*., 1989) and the approach as described in '*The history, distribution, status and habitat requirements of the badger in Britain*' (JNCC, 1990).

2.3.5 The survey focused on areas with topography and/or vegetation typically utilised for sett building, in addition to key habitats typically favoured for foraging such as woodland, hedgerows, ditches and banks.

2.3.6 The survey involved identifying any badger field signs including setts, latrine/dung pits, foraging marks, feeding signs (e.g. snuffle holes), footprints, badger hairs and worn pathways, specifically along linear features and boundaries in the Site.

2.3.7 In the event of identifying badger sett(s), these were examined with key details recorded, including the number of entrances and their status (e.g. active, partially used, and disused). Where present setts identified were categorised using nationally recognised sett classification (main sett, annexe sett, subsidiary sett, outlier sett) where possible (Harris *et al*., 1989).

Bats

2.3.8 Trees and structures within and immediately adjacent to the Site were subject to a ground-based assessment for their suitability to support roosting bats during the survey.

2.3.9 An individual structure may have several features of potential interest to roosting bats associated with it and it is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature by bats due to their transient nature. Consequently, it is customary when undertaking such surveys to assign each feature to a defined category of roosting potential as follows: negligible, low, moderate, high or confirmed (Collins, 2023).

2.3.10 Similar to structures, an individual tree may have several features of potential interest to roosting bats associated with it and it is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature by bats during a single daytime visit, given their highly transient natures. Consequently, it is customary when undertaking such surveys to

assign each feature to a defined category of None, Further Assessment Required (FAR), Potential Roosting Feature – Individual (PRF – I) and Potential Roosting Feature – Multiple (PRF – M) (Collins, 2023).

2.3.11 The Site was also assessed for its suitability for foraging and commuting bats in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2023).

Birds

2.3.12 In 2021, a re-assessment of Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) was published by Stanbury et al. (2021), which defined rare and threatened bird species on two lists (Red and Amber) describing the level of threat to each species of concern. "Red" is the highest conservation priority, with species needing urgent action through to "Green", indicating that the species are relatively unthreatened.

2.3.13 Data consultation data was filtered for WCA 1981 (as amended) Schedule 1 bird species and those species protected under Annex 1 of the EU Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, also known as the Birds Directive. Priority species (NERC Act 2006, LBAP) were likewise highlighted and the UK Red List for birds, also known as the BoCC as described above, was also referred to.

2.3.14 During the Site survey any species of birds encountered were recorded. Habitats were assessed for their potential value to nesting, wintering and foraging birds.

Invertebrates

2.3.15 The habitats present on the Site were assessed for their suitability to support invertebrates and incidental observations of invertebrates at and adjacent to the Site were noted.

Reptiles

2.3.16 The habitats present on Site were assessed for their suitability to support reptiles, particularly with reference to their connectivity with other areas of suitable habitat within the wider landscape.

Riparian Mammals and White-clawed Crayfish

2.3.17 A desk-based search for watercourses on or within 30 m of the Site, which are not separated by a significant barrier to dispersal, was undertaken using OS 1:10,000 mapping.

2.3.18 Where access was possible, watercourses were subsequently assessed for their suitability to support otter *Lutra lutra*, water vole *Arvicola amphibius* and white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*.

Other Key and Notable Species

2.3.19 Whilst on Site habitats were assessed for their potential to support any other nationally, locally scarce or notable species, with particular reference to LBAP species.

2.4 *Invasive Species*

2.4.1 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) and/or The Invasive Alien Species (Enforcement and Permitting) Order (2019) were recorded and mapped as seen during the survey.

2.5 *Assumptions and Limitations*

2.5.1 A UKHab survey is intended to provide a rapid assessment of habitats present within a site and is not intended to replace detailed vegetation or targeted protected species surveys, where deemed necessary.

3. Findings and Evaluation

3.1 *Site Description*

3.1.1 The Site is located on the northeastern extents of Denby Dale, West Yorkshire. The Site is currently a vegetated garden comprising a short-mown central lawn with dense introduced shrub boundaries.

3.1.2 Much of the land to the west of the Site is residential properties and gardens, whilst the much of the other land surrounding the Site comprises pastoral fields and mature hedgerows. To the south of the Site is the River Dearne corridor, which is bordered by deciduous woodland.

3.2 *Designated Sites*

3.2.1 No statutory designated sites were identified for locations within 2 km of the Site through a search of MAGIC.

3.2.2 WYES returned four non-statutory designated sites for locations within 2 km of the Site, all of which are Local Wildlife Sites (LWS).

3.2.3 Table 1 below details the designated sites within 2 km of the Site, with Figure 2 displaying their locations.

Table 1 - Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Designated Site	Description from Citation	Approx. Distance & Direction from Site
Non - Statutory		
Hob Royd Shrogg and Miry Greaves Shrogg (LWS)	Hob Royd Shrogg and Miry Greaves Shrogg are two areas of plantation woodland sloping down towards a stream, Thorpe Dyke.	600 m northeast
High Bridge Wood (LWS)	High Bridge Wood is an area of plantation woodland with improved grassland and arable to the northwest, Wakefield Road to the east, and plantation woodland Hob Royd Shrogg to the south west.	700 m northeast
Blacker Wood (LWS)	Blacker Wood is located to the northeast of Skelmanthorpe. There is a railway line to the south and a stream to the north, with improved grassland to the east and west and walls along most of the boundaries.	1.8 km north
Deffer Wood (LWS)	Deffer Wood is a large ancient woodland site, replanted with mixed conifers and broadleaved trees. Some small areas to the north have been recently felled and replanted.	1.8 km north

3.2.4 The Site lies within the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones for Dark Peak SSSI; Spring Meadows, Alderman's Head & Cow Croft Meadows SSSI; and Little Don Stream Section SSSI. The Impact Risk Zones for all the SSSI sites indicate that at the location selected, the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on any SSSI, and therefore, will not be mentioned further within this report.

3.2.5 The designated sites are considered to be of importance to nature conservation at between the local and county level.

3.2.6 Given that the proposals are confined to the Site, and that the closest designated Site is approximately 600 m from the Site, it is not considered that designated sites are a receptor to the proposals. As such, designated sites will not be mentioned further within this report.

3.3 *Habitats*

3.3.1 Priority habitats are not present within 30 m of the Site. The proposals are confined to the Site boundary, and as such, it is not considered that there will be any direct impact upon priority habitats.

3.3.2 Habitats recorded on the Site, their distribution and composition are discussed in order of dominance below. Habitat locations are annotated on Figure 1.

u1 Built up areas and gardens (Secondary Codes (SC): 828, 106)

3.3.3 Much of the Site comprises vegetated garden (SC: 828) in the form of a short-mown grass lawn (SC: 106), with ornamental boundaries including introduced trees, dense shrubs and ornamental flowers.

3.3.4 Built-up areas and gardens is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor is it listed within the LBAP. The habitat is common within the wider local landscape, and as such is considered to be of no greater than site level importance to nature conservation.

u1b Developed land; sealed surface

3.3.5 The entrance of the Site comprises developed land; sealed surface. This area is constructed of tarmac and has no botanical value.

3.3.6 Developed land; sealed surface is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor is it listed within the LBAP. The habitat was considered to be of negligible botanical value, and will not be discussed further within this report.

3.4 *Species*

Amphibians

3.4.1 WYES returned a total of 18 records of amphibians, 10 of which are historic (outwith the last 10 years), for locations within 2 km of the Site. These records comprise nine records of great crested newts (GCN) *Triturus cristatus*, seven records of common frogs *Rana temporaria*, a single smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* and a single record of common toad *Bufo bufo*. The closest record pertains to a GCN located approximately 450 m southeast of the Site in 2000. The closest recent record pertains to a GCN located approximately 1.7 km northeast of the Site in 2017.

3.4.2 No EPS licences relating to GCN were identified using MAGIC within 2 km of the Site.

3.4.3 Eight present GCN Survey licences were identified using MAGIC and were located approximately 1.7 km northwest of the Site in 2017. No Great Crested Newt Pond Surveys 2017-2019 were undertaken within 2 km of the Site.

3.4.4 The Site location is not eligible in the Natural England GCN District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme.

3.4.5 Five waterbodies are present within 500 m of the Site from a search of OS Maps, of which, two are present within 250 m of the Site. The closest of these waterbodies to the Site is located approximately 90 m north of the Site (Figure 3, WB1), while the other waterbody within 250 m of the Site boundary is located approximately 140 m east of the Site (Figure 3, WB2). WB1 was not accessible on the day of the survey and could not be seen from the adjacent footpath due to dense hedgerow. Furthermore, WB2 was dry on the day of the survey.

3.4.6 Two ornamental pond features were identified at the southern end of the Site (Figure 1, TN1). These ponds were extremely small in scale, both approximately 5 m^2 in size and were dry on the day of the survey. In general, such water features are more likely to be used by common amphibians i.e. smooth newt, and/or

palmate newt and/or common frog (albeit GCN and common toad may use them in certain circumstances; for example if there is a larger waterbody close by that supports either of these species).

3.4.7 Overall, the terrestrial habitats on the Site are of limited suitability for GCN and common amphibians, with the habitats present on the Site limited in size and well pruned/maintained, resulting in these habitats offering extremely limited sheltering or foraging potential.

3.4.8 Of the two waterbodies within 250 m of the Site, WB2 is separated from the Site by Wakefield Road and the River Dearne, which both act as a barrier to dispersal for species onto the Site. WB1 is located to the north of the Site, and is surrounding by terrestrial habitats of significantly greater quality for GCN and other amphibians including tussocky grasslands, mature hedgerows and woodlands.

3.4.9 Given the lack of suitable habitats present on the Site, and the presence of habitats of significantly greater quality for GCN during their terrestrial phase surrounding WB1, it is not considered that GCN will be present on the Site, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

3.4.10 However, due to the presence of garden ponds on the Site, and potential further ponds in the adjacent gardens, the presence of common amphibians on the Site cannot be ruled out. However, given the limited opportunities for common amphibians provided by the aquatic and terrestrial habitats present on the Site, it is considered that the Site is of importance for common amphibians at no greater than the site level.

Badger

3.4.11 Due to the persecution of badgers *Meles meles*, WYES only provide records of badgers within 200 m of the Site boundary. WYES returned no records of badgers for locations within 200 m of the Site. The nearest sett record was recorded over 2 km from the Site, however due to the persecution of badgers, the precise location of this sett was not provided by WYES. WYES also considered the Site to lie outside areas of 'Increased probability of badger activity'.

3.4.12 No evidence of badger was recorded throughout the survey, and the Site offers limited sett building potential, such as denser areas of vegetation. The woods and pastoral land to the north of the Site provides greater quality sett building and foraging habitats.

3.4.13 The Site also lacks significant suitable foraging/commuting habitat comprising solely vegetated garden and hardstanding. Additionally, the garden is well-kept and located close to the existing houses, the disturbance that would be caused by the residential properties surrounding the Site, it is considered that any local badgers would not be reliant on the habitats on the Site. Although badgers are not considered to be reliant on the habitats present on the Site, there is potential for badgers to be present within the local area, and therefore the Site may form part of their wider territories.

3.4.14 Given the lack of field signs from walkover survey and the limited suitable habitats present on the Site, it is considered that the Site is of conservation value to badger at no greater than the site level.

Bats

3.4.15 WYES returned a total of 75 bat records, 54 of which are historic, for locations within 2 km of the Site, of these records, 17 pertain to roosts. Records include 11 common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* roosts and six unidentified bat species. The closest roost record pertains to a common pipistrelle located approximately 300 m northeast of the Site in 2001. The closest recent record pertains to a common pipistrelle roost located approximately 1.2 km northeast of the Site in 2015.

3.4.16 The remaining bat records from WYES pertain to foraging and other unspecified bat activities. Species

include common pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*, noctule t *Nyctalus noctula*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* and whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, in addition to further unidentified bat species. The closest record relates to noctule and common pipistrelle located approximately 400 m south of the Site in 2009. The closest recent record pertains to an unidentified pipistrelle located approximately 600 m west of the Site in 2017.

3.4.17 No EPS licences relating to bats were identified using MAGIC within 2 km of the Site.

Roosting Bats

3.4.18 There are no buildings on the Site that could support roosting bats. There are however a range of mature trees present on the southwest boundary of the Site that may support Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) for bats (Figure 1, TN2). Detailed assessment was not undertaken of these features as it is anticipated that the boundary trees will be retained as per the proposals, however the presence of rot holes and knotholes was noted that could support roosting bats, particularly in the white willow *Salix alba* trees.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

3.4.19 The Site offers limited potential for foraging and commuting bats, due to the limited scale of the habitats present on the Site. There is potential for the group of trees along the southwest of the Site to be used for foraging and commuting but the wider local landscape has habitats of superior quality for commuting and roosting bats, such as the River Dearne corridor and the adjacent woodlands to the south.

3.4.20 Overall, the Site is considered to be of negligible suitability for commuting and foraging bats (Collins, 2023), and the habitats on the Site are considered to be of no more than site level importance for foraging and commuting bats.

Birds

3.4.21 WYES returned a total of 36 records comprising 31 bird species for locations within 2 km of the Site. Species returned include four Schedule 1 bird species, as listed within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981), 11 Red, 15 Amber and five Green listed BoCC species. Bird species recorded within 2 km of the Site are summarised in Appendix 3.

3.4.22 The Site offers some opportunities for nesting birds, however these are limited to small areas of introduced shrubs and trees on the Site. These are limited in size and scale in comparison to the common and widespread availability of nesting habitat in the wider local area, particularly in the woodlands to the north and south of the Site. Given the limited scale of suitable habitats present on the site, in conjunction with the presence of greater quality and size of suitable nesting habitats in the local area, it is consideredthat the Site is of importance to nesting birds at no greater than the site level.

Invertebrates

3.4.23 WYES returned 13 records comprising 12 invertebrate species including Aphodius merdarius *Esymus merdarius*, hairy wood ant *Formica lugubris*, Lebia chlorocephala *Lebia chlorocephala*, Lesser Silver Water Beetle *Hydrochara caraboides*, Longitarsus obliterates *Longitarsus obliterates*, Nicrophorus interruptus *Nicrophorus interruptus*, Poplar Borer *Saperda carcharias*, Pterostichus (Bothriopterus) quadrifoveolatus *Pterostichus quadrifoveolatus*, small heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*, Tanyptera nigricornis *Tanyptera nigricornis*, Timberman Beetle *Acanthocinus aedilis*, and Wall *Lasiommata megera*. The closest record pertains to a small heath located approximately 1.7 km north of the Site in 2015.

3.4.24 The habitats on the Site are unlikely to offer a range of opportunities for invertebrates, with the Site

comprising mostly of dense shrubs and short-mown grass lawn, therefore they are not considered to offer the variety in plant species, structural diversity and habitat interfaces that would be necessary to support diverse communities of terrestrial invertebrates. The variety of plant species and habitat structures present are of limited diversity and generally sub-optimal for invertebrates and considered unlikely to support notable species or large invertebrate populations but may contribute to foraging opportunities for common species.

3.4.25 Given the limited suitable habitat present on the Site, and the presence of more suitable habitat at a larger scale in the wider area, the Site is considered of importance to invertebrate species at no greater than the site level.

Reptiles

3.4.26 WYES returned a single, historic record of grass snake *Natrix Helvetica* for locations within 2 km of the Site. The closest record was located approximately 1.9 km northwest of the Site in 2014.

3.4.27 Overall habitats on the Site currently offer limited suitability for reptiles. The Site is a vegetated garden, and as with other surrounding residential areas, likely to be disturbed by the human activities associated with the Site and roads adjacent the Site. The Site is mown and undergoes further disturbance from the surrounding residential properties. Reptiles are generally timid, and prefer to avoid heavily trafficked locations, and as such the land use of the Site is likely to reduce the suitability of the Site for reptiles.

3.4.28 Given the lack of the records and the lack of suitable habitats, it is considered that reptiles are not a receptor to the proposals and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

Riparian Mammals and White-clawed Crayfish

3.4.29 WYES returned no records of European otter *Lutra lutra* for locations within 2 km of the Site.

3.4.30 WYES returned no records of European water vole *Arvicola amphibius* for locations within 2 km of the Site.

3.4.31 WYES returned a single, historic record of white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* for locations within 2 km of the Site. The record was located approximately 600 m northeast of the Site in 2003.

3.4.32 No evidence of these species was recorded during the walkover survey. No watercourses are located within 30 m of the Site and as such, it is not considered that riparian mammals or white-clawed crayfish are a receptor to the proposals, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

Other Notable and Key Species

Hedgehog

3.4.33 WYES returned no records of European hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* for locations within 2 km of the Site.

3.4.34 The Site has some suitability for hedgehog, with some foraging or commuting opportunities present throughout the denser areas of introduced shrubs that may be part of a wider foraging resource with habitats of greater size and quality present in the local area. Hedgehogs are highly mobile species it is possible that they could also occasionally commute across the Site to more suitable neighbouring habitats.

3.4.35 Based on the relatively limited value of habitats on the Site together with the availability of more suitable habitat associated in the wider area, habitats present on the Site are considered to be of no greater than site level importance to hedgehogs.

3.5 *Invasive Species*

3.5.1 WYES returned 30 records of invasive species. Invasive species include eastern grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*, Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, Japanese knotweed *Fallopia japonica*, Lamiastrum galeobdolon *Lamiastrum galeobdolon subsp. Argentatum*, and Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*. The closest record pertains to Himalayan balsam located approximately 150 m south of the Site in 2018.

3.5.2 Rhododendron was observed within the Site during the survey (TN3, Figure 1), which was present around the Site (See Appendix 1).

4. Impact Assessment, Mitigation and Enhancements

4.1 *Proposals*

4.1.1 Proposals for the Site comprise the loss of the habitats on the Site to allow the construction of a new house. These proposals are detailed within the Hinchliffe Architecture drawing *'Proposed Floor Plans, Elevations & Site Plan'* (DRG No. 279-24-PL02, October 2024).

4.2 *Habitats*

4.2.1 Given that the habitats present on the Site are common and widespread in the local landscape, it is anticipated that the loss of habitat at the Site is of importance to nature conservation at no greater than the site level.

4.2.2 The project is exempt from a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) as the development falls within the criteria for a self-build development.

4.2.3 To ensure that habitats are not lost as per the development, it is recommended that a range of native plant species are planted within the garden of the new property to offer a range of foraging opportunities for local wildlife. These should include a range of flowering and fruit producing species, that offer opportunities for local wildlife throughout the year.

4.3 *Protected Species*

Amphibians

4.3.1 GCN are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019, and are a European Protected Species ("EPS").

4.3.2 Common amphibians are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) against sale, barter or exchange of captive animals.

4.3.3 As the presence of common amphibians on the Site cannot be ruled out, it is recommended that Best Practice Measures (BPM) are implemented during the proposed development works. Any debris and rubble/brash piles and construction materials present (TN1,2&3) should be dismantled by hand or using hand tools to minimise the potential for harm to common amphibians should they be sheltering within such features. In the event that common amphibians i.e. smooth newt or palmate newt, common frog or common toad are encountered on Site during the works they should be allowed to move away of their own volition. If in immediate danger of injury, they should be carefully moved in gloved hands to an area of safe shelter away from the footprint of works.

4.3.4 In the extremely unlikely event of discovering a GCN on the Site during works, works should cease immediately and an ecologist should be contacted for further advice.

Badger

4.3.5 Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is an offence under the act to kill, injure or take a badger. It is also an offence to destroy, damage or obstruct a currently active badger sett, or to disturb animals within the sett.

4.3.6 Badgers are not considered to be resident on the Site, however they are highly mobile species and have the potential to disperse on to areas of the Site and into working areas. As such it is recommended that, BPM be implemented throughout the works to protect badgers, should they subsequently pass through

these areas of the Site. The BPM should include:

- Any excavations deeper than 1 m required during the works should be covered overnight. Shallow excavations less than 1 m should have a roughened scaffold board or equivalent placed in them overnight to allow any animals which may become trapped to exit. Trenches will also be inspected each morning to ensure that no animals have become trapped overnight;
- Food/litter will not be left on Site;
- If in the unlikely event that badgers are encountered during works, then works will cease temporarily and the animal allowed to move away off its own volition. The ecologist will be contacted for advice; and,
- If badgers are suspected to be associated with the Site once works have commenced, including a suspected badger sett found on or within 30 m of the Site during the works by a contractor, works should cease and an appropriately experienced ecologist should be contacted for advice before continuing.

4.3.7 Additionally, any lighting implemented during the construction stage and upon completion of the development should be directed away from retained vegetated habitats, particularly off-site habitats to allow badgers to continue to use such habitats for foraging and commuting where present locally.

Bats

4.3.8 All species of bat occurring within the UK are included in Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Under regulation 41 bats are protected from deliberate capture, injury or killing, from deliberate disturbance and from deliberate damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place (roost).

4.3.9 All UK bats are also included on Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended). However, their protection is limited to certain offences. Under the 1981 Act (as amended) it is an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb bats while they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection, or to obstruct access to any such place.

4.3.10 Barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, Bechstein's *Myotis bechsteinii*, brown long-eared bat, greater horseshoe, lesser horseshoe, noctule and soprano pipistrelle bats are included as priority species under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006.

Roosting Bats

4.3.11 The mature trees on the boundary of the Site, particularly the white willow on the southern west boundary, have PRFs for bats such as knotholes, and as such, further survey would be required in the event the tree was to be impacted. It is not anticipated that any of these boundary trees will be impacted by the proposals, and as such, it is not considered that further surveys are required at this stage. If these proposals were to change and the tree is to be impacted, further survey should be undertaken comprising a Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA), as per good practice guidance (Collins, 2023).

4.3.12 As an enhancement for the Site, it is recommended that a minimum of a single integrated bat box should be incorporated into the new property as part of the development proposals. The model of boxes used should be suitable for crevice dwelling bat species, such as the Schwegler 1FR Bat Tube. The bat boxes should be placed at a minimum of 4 m above the ground on the houses, facing southern aspects to maximise chances of occupation.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

4.3.13 The habitats on the Site were considered negligible for foraging/commuting bats.

4.3.14 The connectivity of the Site to the wider area through vegetated habitat is not considered to be negatively impacted due to the limited scale of the proposals, in addition to the presence of higher quality foraging and commuting habitat in the wider landscape. As such, further survey in this instance is not necessary with respect to foraging and commuting bats.

4.3.15 Bat species in the UK are known to be impacted by artificial lighting. In order to avoid impacts associated with artificial light spill on bat flight-lines or foraging habitat, mitigation measures should be implemented whereby the lighting of the proposed development (as well as any temporary lighting to be used during the construction phase) should be designed to avoid light-spill onto suitable surrounding habitats to safeguard these as foraging and commuting resources.

Birds

4.3.16 All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected under the WCA 1981 (as amended) while a nest is in use or occupied. The nesting bird season is typically considered to fall between March and August (inclusive). Species listed under Schedule 1 of the Act receive additional protection against disturbance whilst occupying a nest site.

4.3.17 The habitats on Site were considered to be of no more than site level importance to local bird populations given the quality of habitat recorded on the Site and the extensive availability of similar to higher quality habitat for nesting birds in the wider area.

4.3.18 Nesting birds could be present at the Site due to the presence of introduced shrubs and trees. To minimise the risk of committing an offence in relation to nesting birds, clearance of these habitats (if required) should be programmed to be between September and February inclusive, i.e. to avoid the bird breeding season. If this is not possible, then a nesting bird check (to be undertaken by a suitably experienced ecologist) will be required within 48 hours of vegetation removal or building demolition. If an active nest is found during a nesting bird check, there will be a requirement to establish an exclusion zone around the nest (in consultation with the ecologist) which should be maintained until it has been demonstrated that all fledglings have left the nest and the nest is no longer active. This may require monitoring for periods of at least up to a month dependent on nesting stage. Repeat visits will be required if vegetation removal is not completed within the 48-hour timeframe after the initial nesting bird check.

4.3.19 It is recommended that a minimum of a single integrated bird nest box should be incorporated into the proposed house as a positive enhancement for nature conservation. Schwegler Brick Box Type 25 boxes are recommended as they have been shown to achieve good uptake by a range of species and not just swifts. The bird boxes should be placed at a minimum height of 3 m (near eaves level when placed on buildings) facing different aspects to maximise chances of occupation. Full south aspects present a risk of overheating and should therefore be avoided.

4.3.20 It is recommended that native fruit bearing tree species and/or shrubs are planted in the newly created gardens. This will offer local bird species both foraging and sheltering opportunities in the post-development landscape.

Invertebrates

4.3.21 Many invertebrate species are listed under Section 41 of NERC act (2006) designating them as Species of Principal Importance in England.

4.3.22 Several species of invertebrate and their habitat are afforded full protection under Schedule 5 (Section 9) of the WCA 1981 (as amended). Several species are also EPS. These are afforded strict protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) 2019 under Schedule 2.

4.3.23 The loss of the vegetated habitats on the Site is not considered likely to impact any notable populations of invertebrates. Habitats on Site are considered of no more than site level importance for invertebrates and impacts from proposals are therefore likely to be insignificant to invertebrates resident in the local area. Common invertebrate species that may be resident in the wider area would benefit through the provision of seasonal nectar resources and consideration should be given to inclusion of native woody and flowering species in and planting schemes.

4.3.24 Further enhancements for the Site with regards to invertebrates would be to incorporate bee bricks into the new house. Bee bricks provide sheltering opportunities for solitary bees, which are pollinator species and are vital to local ecosystems. Solitary bees do not have queens or honey to protect, meaning they are non-aggressive and extremely unlikely sting.

Hedgehog

4.3.25 Hedgehog are included as a species of principal importance under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. Whilst not afforded a high level of protection, hedgehogs have experienced significant declines in the UK population. Taking a best practice approach, avoiding harm to hedgehogs should be taken into consideration during works.

4.3.26 The proposals on the Site is not considered to significantly impact upon hedgehog of more than site level importance.

4.3.27 Hedgehogs are a highly mobile species and have the potential to disperse on to the Site from suitable habitats. BPM should be followed:

- Maintaining vigilance for hedgehogs at all times during the works;
- Allow any hedgehogs to move away from the Site of their own volition. Should a hedgehog be in immediate danger, they should be picked up by gloved hand and placed in an area of suitable shelter and safety away from the proposed works;
- If any excavations are to be left uncovered overnight, a suitable escape ramp (e.g. a long scaffolding board) should be placed within the excavation to allow a hedgehog to escape in the event an individual should fall in;
- If hedgehog is encountered between November and March or juveniles are encountered the ecologist should be contact for advice immediately as these are periods when individuals are at most risk to disturbance; and,
- Safeguards outlined for amphibians, reptiles and badgers will further help to safeguard small mammals, including hedgehogs in the event that they are present during Site clearance works.

4.4 *Invasive Species*

4.4.1 Rhododendron was identified at the Site and is included within Part II of Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

4.4.2 Retaining invasive plant species that are already within the Site does not in itself constitute an offence, however it is recommended that any retained invasive species be controlled to avoid the natural spread within the Site and to off-site habitats. Where removal is required or spreading may occur to facilitate the site investigation or remediation works, a precautionary approach following a method statement should be taken when clearing these shrub species during works.

4.4.3 It is also recommended that care is taken to avoid the spread of Rhododendron across the Site and off-Site. Where removal is required to facilitate the works, any plant material should be disposed of in accordance with guidance published by Natural England, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and the Environment Agency (2022).

5. References

BRIG (2011). UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Habitat Descriptions. Available: http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/PDF/UKBAP_PriorityHabitatDesc-Rev2011.pdf

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

Cresswell, P, Harris, S & Jefferies, DJ (1990) *'The history, distribution, status and habitat requirements of the badger in Britain.* Nature Conservancy Council.

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

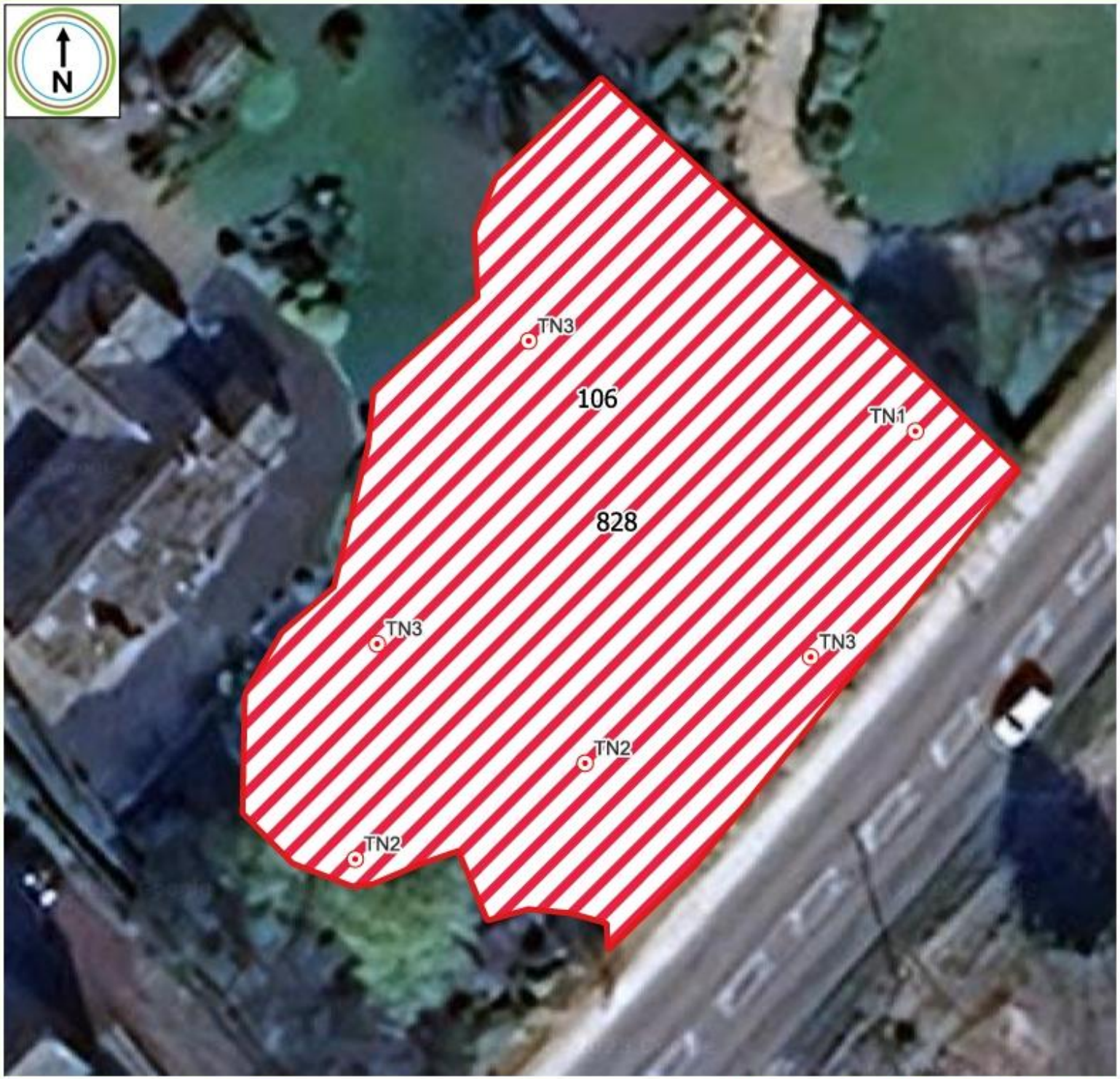
Harris, S., Cresswell, P. and Jefferies, D. (1989) '*Surveying Badgers*'. Mammal Society (Occasional Publication No 9).

Natural England (2010) '*List of habitats and species of principal importance in England under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006'*.

Stanbury A, Eaton M, Aebischer N, Balmer D, Brown A, Douse, A, Lindley, P, McCulloch N, Noble D and Win I (2015) '*The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Island and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain'*. British Birds 114: 723-747.

UK Habitat Classification Working Group (2020). UK Habitat Classification – Habitat Definitions V1.1 at https://ecountability.co.uk/ukhabworkinggroup-ukhab

Figure 1. UK Habitat Classification Map



Legend

Site Boundary

Baseline Areas

u1 Vegetated garden

Target Notes

Secondary Codes

106 - Mown
828 - Vegetated garden

0 5 10 15 20 m

HABITAT WORKS

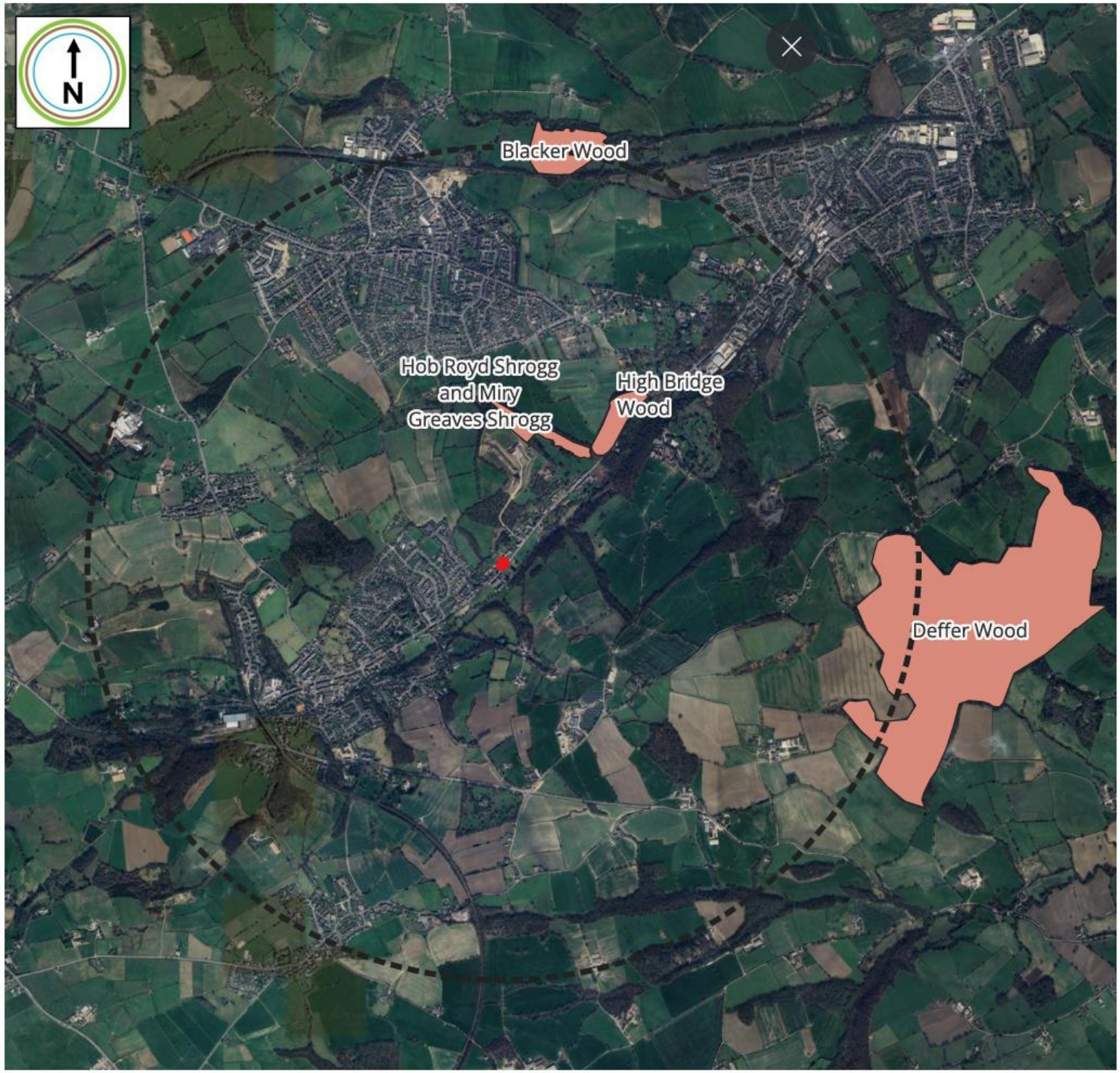
Hinchliffe Architecture and Design

258 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale

Figure 1
UKHabs Habitat Map

Basemap: Copyright Google 2025 | September 2025 | Scale - 1: 500 @ A4 | Drawing Reference: 250922/F1/AS

Figure 2. Designated Sites Map



Legend

- Site Boundary
- 2 km buffer

Designated Sites

- Local Wildife Site (LWS)

0 250 500 750 1,000 m

HABITAT WORKS

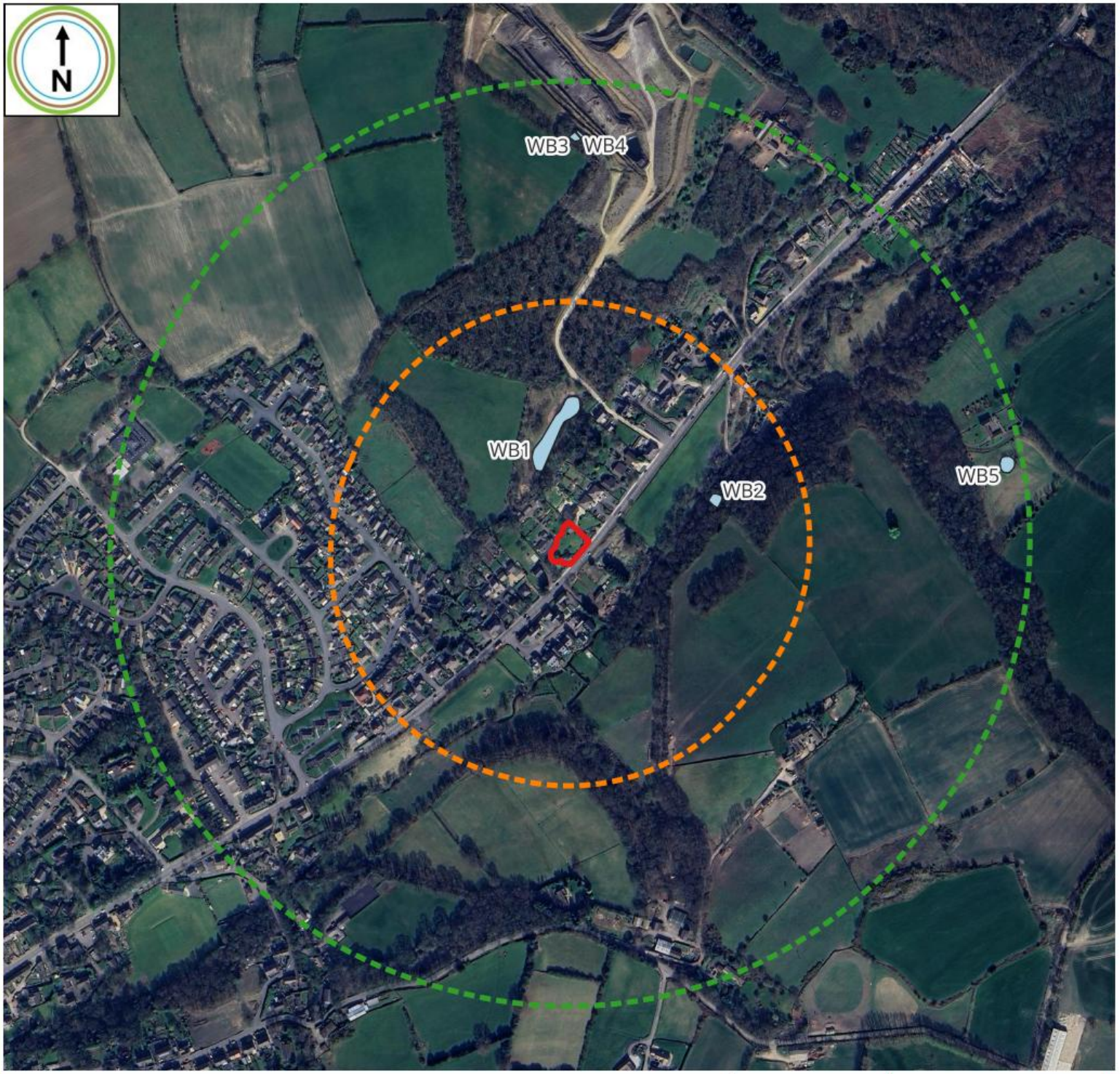
Hinchliffe Architecture and Design

258 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale

Figure 2
Designated sites within 2 km of the Site

Basemap: Copyright Google 2025 | September 2025 | Scale - 1: 45000 @ A4 | Drawing Reference: 250922/F2/AS

Figure 3. Waterbodies within 500 m of the Site



Legend

- Site Boundary
- 250 m Buffer
- 500 m Buffer
- Waterbodies

0 100 200 300 400 m

HABITAT WORKS

Hinchliffe Architecture and Design

258 Wakefield Road, Denby Dale

Figure 3
Waterbodies within 500 m of the Site

Appendix 1. Target Notes

TN1 – Ornamental garden ponds

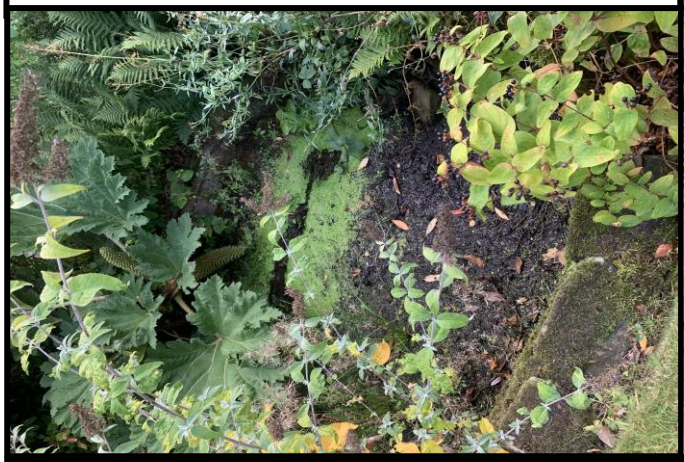
TN2 – Trees with Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) for bats

TN3 – Rhododendron

Appendix 2. Site Photographs

Photograph 1. Northwest of the Site

Photograph 2. Centre of the Site



Photograph 3. First dry pond on Site (TN1)

Photograph 4. Second dry pond on Site (TN1)

Photograph 5. White willow with knothole (TN2)

Photograph 6. Silver birch with knothole (TN2)

Photograph 7. Dense scrub from the south of Site

Photograph 8. Rhododendron scrub (TN3)

Photograph 9. Northeast of the Site

Photograph 10. Southeast of the Site

Appendix 3. Bird Species Records Summary

Common Name	Scientific Name	BoCC Status
Fieldfare	*Turdus pilaris*	Schedule 1, Red
Redwing	*Turdus iliacus*	Schedule 1, Amber
Barn Owl	*Tyto alba*	Schedule 1, Green
Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*	Schedule 1, Green
Greenfinch	*Chloris chloris*	Red
House Sparrow	*Passer domesticus*	Red
Mistle Thrush	*Turdus viscivorus*	Red
Spotted Flycatcher	*Muscicapa striata*	Red
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*	Red
Swift	*Apus apus*	Red
Tree Pipit	*Anthus trivialis*	Red
Willow Tit	*Poecile montanus*	Red
Wood Warbler	*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*	Red
Yellowhammer	*Emberiza citrinella*	Red
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*	Amber
Dipper	*Cinclus cinclus*	Amber
Dunnock	*Prunella modularis*	Amber
Grey Wagtail	*Motacilla cinerea*	Amber
Kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus*	Amber
Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*	Amber
Redstart	*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*	Amber
Rook	*Corvus frugilegus*	Amber
Song Thrush	*Turdus philomelos*	Amber
Sparrowhawk	*Accipiter nisus*	Amber
Tawny Owl	*Strix aluco*	Amber
Willow Warbler	*Phylloscopus trochilus*	Amber
Wood Pigeon	*Columba palumbus*	Amber
Wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes*	Amber
Brambling	*Fringilla montifringilla*	Green
Collared Dove	*Streptopelia decaocto*	Green
Goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis*	Green