Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) Survey Report	
For:	Mr Richard Auty
Site:	Land to the rear of 49 Hopton Lane, Mirfield, WF14 8JN
Report Date:	9th December 2025
Report Reference:	SQ-3921

Surveying Ecologists:

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Client:	Mr Richard Auty
Site Name:	Land to the rear of 49 Hopton Lane, Mirfield, WF14 8JN
Grid Reference:	SE 19362 18814
Report:	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Date of Survey:	25th November 2025
Surveying Ecologists:	Aimee McManus BSc (Hons) Marie McAvan BSc (Hons) MSc

Issue:	Revision:	Stage:	Date:	Prepared by:	Approved by:
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1	V1	Final	9th December 2025	Aimee McManus BSc (Hons) – Estrada Ecology Ltd	Natasha Estrada MRes, MCIEEM- Estrada Ecology Ltd

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The contents of this report have been produced with consideration of the current best practice guidance, and in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) Code of Professional Conduct.

This report should not be submitted as part of a planning application without any accompanying species-specific reports, which may have been recommended herein.

Data within this report is valid for a maximum of eighteen months from the date of the survey. After this period, an updated site visit will be required to determine a new ecological baseline.

Site Summary

The site encompasses approximately 0.07 ha and comprises a vegetated garden currently associated with 49 Hopton Lane, Mirfield, which is proposed to form a separate new build plot. Scattered trees are present throughout the site, along with ornamental planting typical of private gardens. The surrounding landscape is semi-rural in character, comprising residential properties set within predominantly agricultural land.

Findings

The site was deemed to hold suitability for breeding birds, namely, within the trees present on the site. Recommendations are given in the conclusion of the report.

The trees also contain knotholes that may provide potential roosting features for bats; however, as they are being retained, no further survey or mitigation is required at this stage. Adjacent habitat also offers suitability for commuting and foraging bats. To avoid disturbance to these species, an appropriate lighting design is recommended.

The site habitats were deemed to hold negligible suitability for
No further survey effort is recommended.

Suitable commuting and foraging habitats for European hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus)* were recorded within the site. Precautionary methods regarding this species are recommended.

Terrestrial habitats with residual suitability for amphibians and reptiles were recorded both within and adjacent to the site, particularly within the log piles and the adjoining tree copse that connects to the site. As a result, precautionary working methods are recommended to avoid potential impacts on these species during the proposed works.

No suitable habitats for riparian mammals were recorded within the site. No further survey effort is recommended.

One species listed on Schedule 9 (II) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was recorded within the site. No species listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 were recorded within the site. Recommendations are given in the conclusion of the report.

The site was recorded to lack significant floral diversity and is unlikely to support important assemblages of invertebrates.

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1. **Introduction and Background to the Site**
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Appendices and References

Whilst every effort has been taken to ensure the accuracy of this report and its contents in view of potential ecological constraints to development or the likely presence or absence of species it must only be viewed as a snapshot in time and not be viewed as definitive. Due to external factors, such as seasonality, weather etc having the potential to affect survey results, no liability can be assumed for omissions or changes that may or may not occur after the date this report was produced.

1 Introduction and Background to the Site

1.1 Estrada Ecology Ltd was commissioned to conduct a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the Land to the rear of 49 Hopton Lane, Mirfield, WF14 8JN.

1.2 The site habitats consist of:

- Building
- Developed Land, Sealed Surface
- Vegetated garden
- Scattered trees

1.3 It is understood that the proposed works involve redeveloping the existing garden at 49 Hopton Lane to create a self-build residential plot.

1.4 Report Objectives:

- Present the findings of the ecological survey.
- Assess the potential of existing on-site habitats to support protected or notable species.
- Evaluate any likely ecological impacts on protected and notable species or habitats because of the proposed development.
- Provide recommendations for any further species-specific survey and mitigation measures that may be required; and
- Provide habitat enhancement recommendations in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).

1.5 Site Location and Wider Area

1.5.1 The site is located in Mirfield, West Yorkshire, with the property being surrounded by extensive farmland to the north. It lies approximately 6 miles west of Wakefield and 5 miles southeast of Huddersfield.

1.5.2 The survey site's central OS grid reference is SE 19362 18814.

1.5.3 The site lies within a predominantly rural landscape, with surrounding land use comprising scattered residential properties, farm buildings, and large areas of open agricultural land. Woodland blocks, hedgerows, and small watercourses are also present within the wider landscape.

Figure 1: The survey site within its wider setting.



(Google Earth, 2025)

2 Protected Species Legislation

2.1 Relevant legislation includes the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations which came into force on 31 December 2020.

2.2 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act came into force on 1 Oct 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England. The list has been drawn up in consultation with Natural England, as required by the Act. The S41 list is used to guide decision-makers such as public bodies, including local and regional authorities, in implementing their duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in England, when conducting their normal functions.

2.3 The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework was developed in response to the Convention on Biological Diversity's Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 - 2020. Its five strategic goals and twenty biodiversity targets supersede the UK Biodiversity Action Plan.

2.4 Environment and Biodiversity

2.4.1 Under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024), local planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance the natural environment when determining planning applications. Local planning authorities also have an obligation to seek opportunities to enhance the conservation status of Species and Principal Habitats.

2.4.2 Species and Habitats of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England (JNCC, 2009) are covered under section 41 of the Natural Environmental and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006). Species and habitats listed within Section 41 need to be taken into consideration by a public body when performing any of its functions, such as assessing planning applications.

2.4.3 Development proposals submitted after 12th of February 2024, with some exceptions, will be expected to achieve a minimum of 10% net gain in site biodiversity value under The Environment Act 2021 (Commencement No. 8 and Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2024.

2.5 Wildlife

2.5.1 European Protected Species, such as bats (all species) and great crested newt (Triturus cristatus), are afforded protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as well as under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000. It is an offence to:

- Deliberately or recklessly capture, injure, or kill any wild animal of a European protected species.
- Deliberately or recklessly disturb any such animal.
- Damage or destroy their breeding site or resting place.
- Keep, transport, or offer for sale / exchange any live or dead animal, or any part of, or anything from these species.

2.5.2 Disturbance of European Protected Species constitutes any activity which is likely to:

- To impair their ability to survive, to breed or reproduce, or to rear or nurture their young; or, in the case of animals of a hibernating or migratory species, to hibernate or migrate; and
- To significantly affect the local distribution or abundance of the species to which they belong.

2.6 UK Legislation

2.6.1 **Breeding birds** (all species) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird and to take, damage or destroy the nest (whilst being built or in use) or eggs. Schedule 1 species are afforded protection from disturbance at or near nest sites, including reckless disturbance under the Countryside Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000.

2.6.2 **Reptiles** (common species of adder (*Vipera berus*), grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*), common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*), and slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*)) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure and trade these animals.

2.6.3 **Amphibians** (smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), palmate newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*), common frog (*Rana temporaria*), and common toad (*Bufo bufo*) are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The sale, barter, exchange, transporting for sale and advertising to sell or to buy are an offence.

2.6.4 are protected by the and under the

. It is an offence: to wilfully, or attempt, to kill, capture, ill-treat or injure any ; to obstruct, destroy or damage a or to disturb a whilst within its ; to sell or offer for sale a live , or have possession or control of a live ; and marking a or attaching any ring, tag, or other marking device to

2.6.5 **Otters** (*Lutrinae*) are a European Protected Species (EPS) and are also fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It is against the law to capture, kill, disturb or injure otters (on purpose or by not taking enough care); damage or destroy a breeding or resting place (deliberately or by not taking enough care); obstruct access to their resting or sheltering places (deliberately or by not taking enough care); and possess, sell, control or transport live or dead otters, or parts of otters.

2.6.6 **Water voles** (*Arvicola*) are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and is a priority conservation species. It is against the law to:

- intentionally capture, kill, or injure water voles.
- damage, destroy or block access to their places of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care).
- disturb them in a place of shelter or protection (on purpose or by not taking enough care); and
- possess, sell, control or transport live or dead water voles or parts of them (not water voles bred in captivity).

3 Survey Methodology

3.1 Desktop Survey

3.1.1 A biological data records search was commissioned from West Yorkshire Ecology for a 2 km radius from the central grid reference and from West Yorkshire Bat Group for a 2 km radius.

3.1.2 Further inspection, using colour 1:25,000 OS base maps (www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk), MAGIC (www.magic.defra.gov.uk), aerial photographs from Google Earth (www.maps.google.co.uk), was also undertaken to provide additional context and identify any features of potential importance for nature conservation in the wider countryside.

3.1.3 Furthermore, consultation with MAGIC was undertaken to ascertain any European Protected Species Mitigation Licences granted within a 2 km radius from grid.

3.1.4 Natural England's Geoportal: England-wide data for great crested newts (GCN) was analysed for any records within a 1km radius from grid. The dataset contains eDNA pond surveys for district-level licensing (England). When available for the location, the Risk Zones for GCN are considered for the site.

3.2 Field Survey

3.2.1 The survey area was investigated on foot to ascertain habitats on site and the potential of those habitats to support ecological diversity. The vegetation types

present within the site were assessed by assistant ecologists, Aimee McManus BSc (Hons) and Marie McAvan BSc (Hons) MSc, using methodology based on that described in the UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 2.0 (2023) and CIEEM's Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment (2018).

3.2.2 Habitats and features with potential to support protected and/or conservation priority faunal species, together with any field signs of such species, were recorded on the field map using target notes. A search was undertaken for the following key habitats and field signs for protected or conservation priority species highlighted in Table 1.

Table 1: Key habitats and field signs of protected and priority species.

Taxon	Indicative Habitats	Field Signs
Bats	Roosts - Trees, buildings, bridges caves etc. Foraging areas - e.g., parkland, water bodies and streams, wetlands, woodland edge, hedgerow Commuting routes - linear features (e.g., hedgerows).	In or on potential roost sites: Droppings stuck to walls; urine spotting in roof spaces; oil from fur staining around roost entrances; feeding remains (e.g., moth wings).
Great Crested Newts	Ponds within 500m of suitable habitat within the site boundary. Suitable (terrestrial) habitat includes rough grassland, scrub and woodland, log and rubble piles and other debris, animal burrows.	Eggs, Individuals of all life stages. Egg rolled plants.
Reptiles	Rough grassland, log and rubble piles, compost heaps.	Sloughed skins; eggs, individuals.
Birds	Trees, scrub, hedgerow, field margins, grassland.	Nests; droppings below nest sites (especially in buildings of trees); tree holes.
	Found in most rural and many urban habitats.	
Otter	Water bodies / water courses.	Holt entrances; prints; latrine / spraint sites; anal jelly / smears.
Water Vole	Water bodies / water courses.	Burrow entrances; prints; latrine areas; faeces; feeding stations.
BAP invertebrates	Each butterfly species has its own habitat requirements determined by the food plant of the caterpillar, the nectar source for the adult and the conditions needed for the caterpillar to survive and then pupate successfully.	Eggs, larva, Pupa, adult butterfly. Habitat type and presence of food plants.

3.3 Timing and Weather Conditions

3.3.1 The survey was conducted on the morning of the 25th of November 2025.

3.3.2 Weather conditions at the time of the site visit were clear with a breeze and temperatures of 6°C.

3.4 Personnel

3.4.1 The survey was undertaken by assistant ecologists, Aimee McManus BSc (Hons) and Marie McAvan BSc (Hons) MSc.

3.4.2 All surveying ecologists worked under the supervision and guidance of experienced ecologist Natasha Estrada BSc (Hons), MRes, MCIEEM, who is a licensed bat ecologist (2025-85541-CL18-BAT) and the named ecologist on several Natural England European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses.

3.5 Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.5.1 Where present and access could be gained, trees and buildings were subject to an external inspection to determine their suitability to support roosting bats. The external inspections were conducted in accordance with the current best practice guidance (Collins, 2023).

3.5.2 Potential bat roost features and field sign evidence of the use of the site by bats include the presence of droppings, stains, or grease marks, feeding remains, or the observations of the bats themselves.

3.5.3 Where present, trees, buildings and the quality of on-site habitats were then categorised based on the classification criteria in 'Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists' (Collins, 2023). Classification criteria are presented below:

- **Negligible:** No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
- **Low:** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used regularly or by larger numbers of bats.
- **Moderate:** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat, but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
- **High:** A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts (e.g., maternity, or classic cool/stable hibernation site).

4 Ecological Constraints

4.1 It should be noted that this ecological appraisal provides baseline ecological data at the time of survey only and does not include flora or fauna which may be present at different times of the year.

4.2 An absence of species records from within a search radius does not confirm that a species is absent from within the search area.

5 Survey Results

5.1 Field Survey Results

5.1.1 **Habitat Overview**

5.1.1.1 A summary of the habitats recorded (Appendix One) during the site inspection is listed as follows:

Table 2: Recorded Habitats within the Site Boundaries.

Habitat	UK HABS Codes	
	Primary	*Secondary*
Building	**u1b5**	-
Developed Land, Sealed Surface	**u1b**	-
Vegetated Garden	u	**828**
Scattered Trees	u	**32**

5.1.1.2 A list of all species recorded on the site during the survey can be found in Appendix Two.

5.1.2 **Building**

5.1.2.1 One building is present within the site boundary, which is proposed for demolition under the current planning proposals.

5.1.2.2 The building comprises a single-storey detached wooden shed with a felt-lined roof. Although the structure is weathered and shows minor deterioration, no gaps, crevices or internal voids suitable for roosting bats were identified. The shed is therefore assessed as having negligible bat roost suitability, and no further bat-related recommendations are required for this structure. The shed also provides no suitable features for breeding birds, including species such as swift (*Apus apus*) and swallow (*Hirundo rustica*).

Figure 2: Building



5.1.3 **Developed Land: Sealed Surface**

5.1.3.1 A tarmac surface is present at the site entrance in the form of a driveway. No species were noted within this area. This habitat is assessed as having negligible intrinsic ecological value, and no ecological recommendations are required in relation to this habitat.

5.1.4 **Vegetated Garden and Scattered Trees**

5.1.4.1 A large, vegetated garden comprises the majority of the site, forming the existing garden associated with the adjacent property. The garden supports short-sward grassland with a range of introduced ornamental species. Species recorded include common garden plants such as fuchsia (*Fuchsia* spp.), geranium (*Geranium* spp.), azalea (*Rhododendron* spp.), Japanese pieris (*Pieris japonica*), periwinkle (*Vinca* spp.), and willow-leaved cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster salicifolius*). Other species recorded include common ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), thistle (*Cirsium* spp.), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), and common dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*). One non-native invasive species, rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*), listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), was recorded within the garden as an ornamental planting. Relevant recommendations are provided within this report.

5.1.4.2 To the east of the site, an area of permeable paving surface is present, likely associated with a future driveway. The garden is largely enclosed by wooden and brick boundary fencing. A log pile is present to the south, offering potential refugia suitable for common amphibians and reptiles.

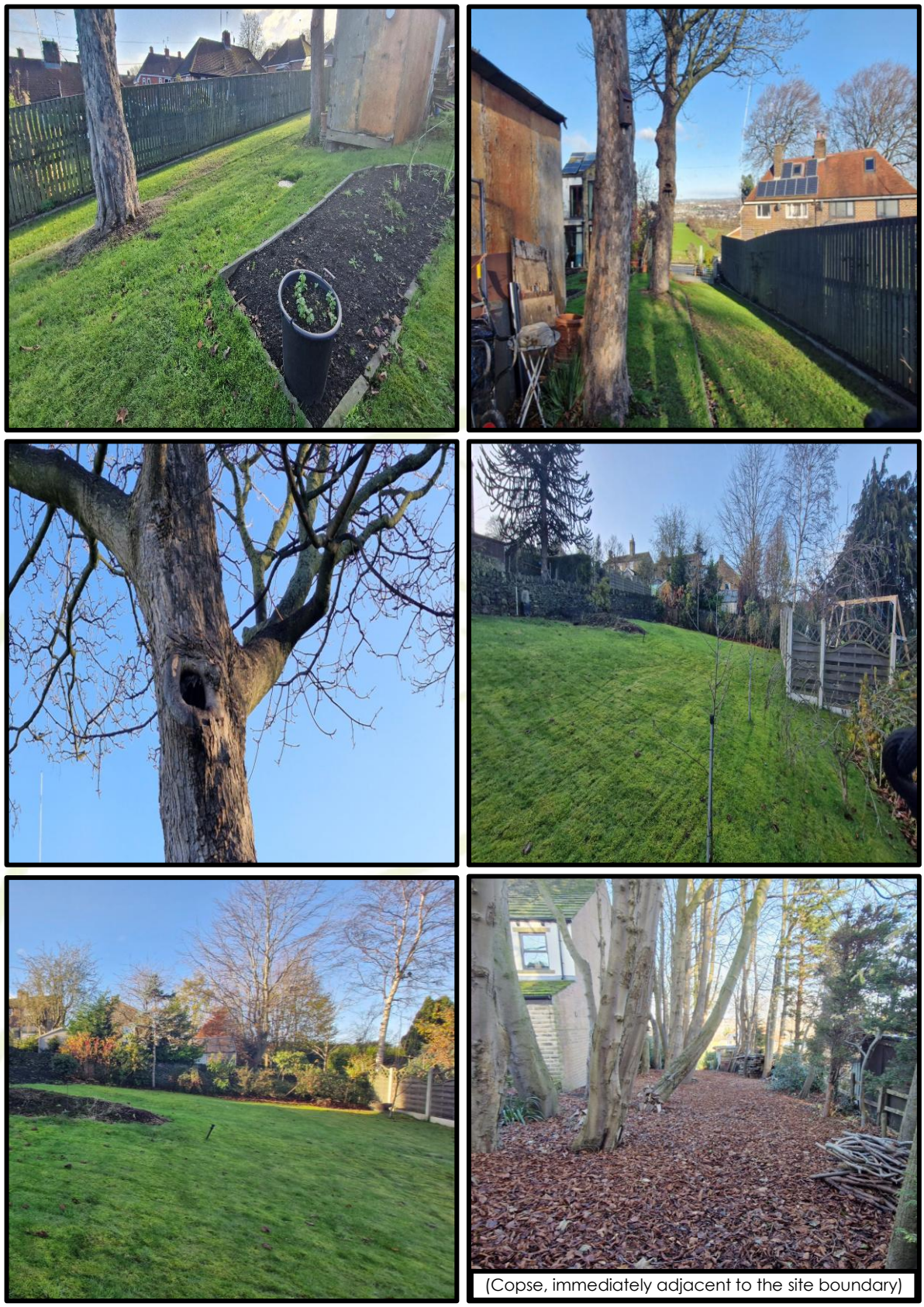
5.1.4.3 Scattered trees are present on site, including three mature sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*). According to the Kirklees Council TPO mapping, these trees fall within a designated Tree Preservation Order (TPO) Area. All trees are understood to be retained. These mature trees contain ecological features such as occasional knotholes that offer low bat roost suitability for species. As the trees are to be retained, no further recommendations are required.

5.1.4.4 The trees also provide suitability for breeding birds, and relevant recommendations are included within the report. Additional small trees were noted, including a blue spruce (*Picea pungens*) and several young saplings. These were considered to offer negligible suitability for nesting birds.

5.1.4.5 Immediately south of the site boundary is a small copse forming part of the wider TPO strip. Although outside the development footprint, it remains within the same landownership and is directly connected to the garden, providing an important ecological link to the surrounding landscape. The copse contains brash piles, log piles and other ground cover that offer suitable refugia and commuting routes for protected species, including foraging and commuting bats, reptiles, amphibians and hedgehog.

5.1.4.6 Due to the direct connectivity between the site and the adjacent copse, there remains a residual risk that species such as reptiles, amphibians and hedgehog may occasionally commute onto the site. The likelihood of using the site itself is considered negligible, although the copse may provide residual commuting habitat. Relevant recommendations are provided within this report.

Figure 3: Vegetated Garden and Scattered Trees



(Copse, immediately adjacent to the site boundary)

5.2 Desktop Survey Results

5.2.1 A total of 748 records were returned from West Yorkshire Ecology Service for a 2 km radius from the central grid reference, and 37 records from West Yorkshire Bat Group for a 2 km radius. The list of protected and notable species data records is available upon request. In summary, the following records were returned:

Table 3: Records found within the search radius.

Species	Records	Notes
Bats	158	Four records for unidentified *Myotis* species, dated in 2010-2017. Five records for Natterer's bat (*Myotis nattereri*) dated 2014–2017. Six records for lesser noctule / Leisler's bat (*Nyctalus leisleri*) dated 1993–2020. Thirty records for noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*) dated 2010–2024. Nine records for brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*) dated 2005-2019. Four records for soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) dated in 2013. Sixteen records for unspecified pipistrelle species (*Pipistrellus sp.*) dated 1993–2016. Sixty-two records for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) dated between 2001 and 2024. Twelve records for unspecified *Vespertilionidae* dated 1993–2019. One record for Daubenton's bat (*Myotis daubentonii*) dated in 2021. One record for whiskered/Brandt's bat (*Myotis mystacinus/brandtii*) dated in 2017. One record for long-eared bat species (*Plecotus* sp.), dated in 2014. Six records for lesser noctule (*Nyctalus leisleri*), dated between 1995 and 2017. One record for unidentified bat (*Chiroptera*), dated in 2021.
	~	Any records pertaining to have been omitted from this report due to the sensitivity of the data. Full consideration has been given to any information returned.
Hedgehog	5	Five records returned for hedgehogs dated 2017-2020.
Otter	0	No records returned for otter.
Water vole	0	No records returned for water vole.
Reptiles	0	No records returned for reptiles.
Amphibians	555	Twenty-two records for common frog dated 2008-2017. Thirty-three records for common toad dated 2001-2017. Three-hundred and seventeen records for great crested newt dated 2002-2017. One-hundred and eight three records for smooth newt dated 2002-2020.

5.2.2 Consultation with MAGIC returned five European Protected Species Mitigation Licenses within a 2 km radius from grid.

Table 4: European Protected Species Licenses within the search radius

License	Year	Species	Distance from Site	Reason
2016-27006-EPS-MIT	2016	Common pipistrelle	923 m NE	Damage to a resting place, destruction of a resting place
2016-25281-EPS-MIT	2016-2021	Common pipistrelle	1233 m NE	Destruction of a resting place
2015-15246-EPS-MIT	2015-2025	Common pipistrelle, Natterer's bat	1772 m E	Damaging a breeding site, destruction of a resting place
EPSM2012-4870	2013	Common pipistrelle	1998 m SW	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2010-1909	2012-2017	Great crested newt	1720 m SW	Affecting a breeding site, destruction of a breeding site, destruction of a resting place

5.2.3 No records for great crested newt presence were recorded within a 1km radius from grid via consultation with Natural England's eDNA pond surveys for District Level Licensing (England). The site is recorded as falling within an n/a zone for great crested newts.

5.2.3.1 **Designated Sites**

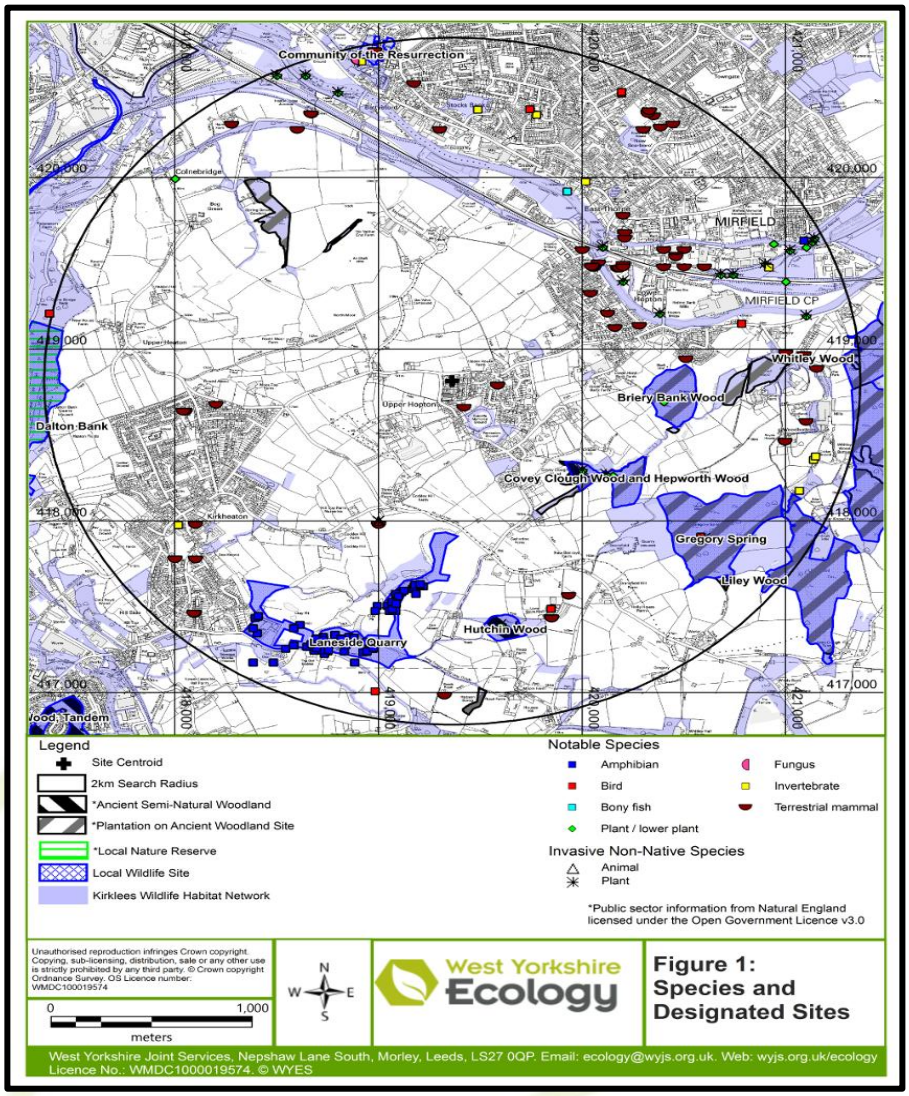
5.2.3.2 Consultation with MAGIC map returned one Statutory Designated Site within the 2 km search radius from grid: Dalton Bank (Local Nature Reserve), located approximately 1906 metres west.

5.2.3.3 Consultation with West Yorkshire Ecology Service returned nine Non-Statutory Designated Sites within the 2 km search radius from grid.

Table 5: Non-Statutory Designated Sites within the Search Radius

Site Name	Designation	Distance from Site
Briery Bank Wood	Local Wildlife Site	1004 m E
Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield	Local Wildlife Site	1940 m N
Covey Clough Wood and Hepworth Wood	Local Wildlife Site	757 m SE
Dalton Bank	Local Wildlife Site	1906 m W
Gregory Spring	Local Wildlife Site	1242 m SE
Hutchin Wood	Local Wildlife Site	1411 m S
Laneside Quarry	Local Wildlife Site	916 m S
Liley Wood	Local Wildlife Site	1900 m SE
Whitley Wood	Local Wildlife Site	1476 m E

Figure 4: Non-Statutory Sites within the Search Radius



(West Yorkshire Ecology, 2025)

5.3 Priority Habitats and Priority Species

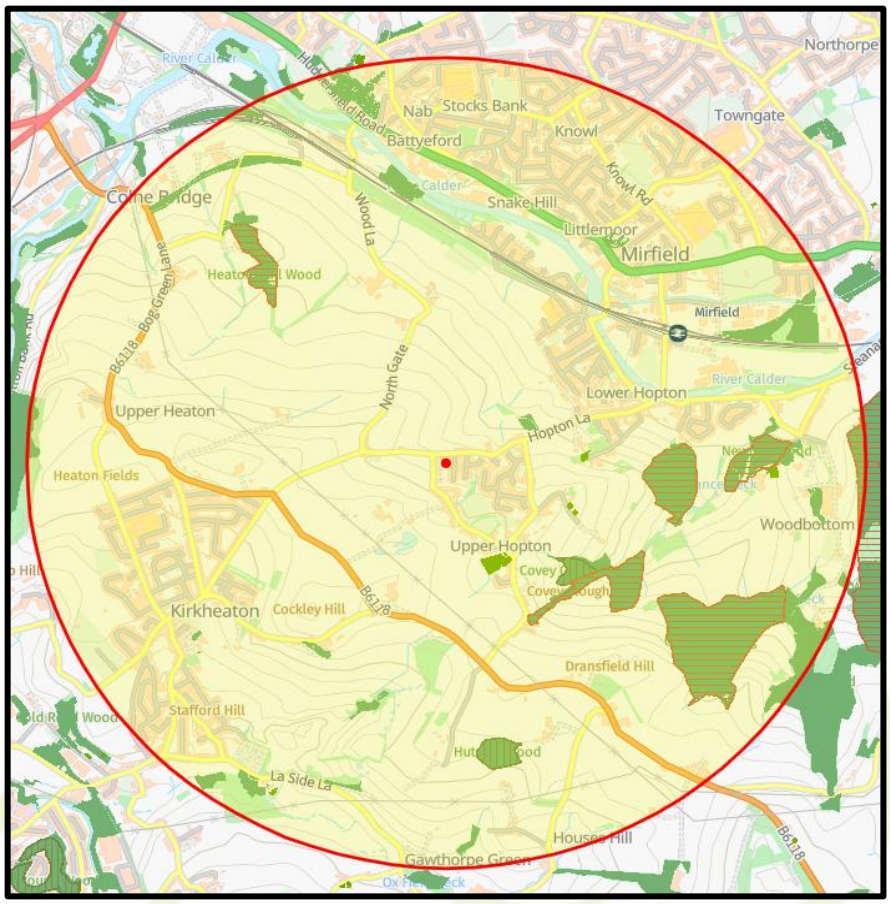
5.3.1.1 No priority habitats were recorded within the redline site boundary.

5.3.1.2 Three priority habitats were recorded outside the redline site boundary but within the search radius as displayed in table 6 below.

Table 6: Priority Habitats outside the Site Boundary but within the Search Radius

Habitat Type	Habitat Description
Deciduous Woodland	Multiple parcels are present within the search radius, the closest being 431 metres northeast.
Ancient woodland	Multiple parcels present, the closest being 763 metres southeast.
Traditional orchard	A couple of parcels present, the closest being 525 metres south.

Figure 5: Priority Habitats within the Search Radius



(MAGIC, 2025)

5.3.1.3 No protected species listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded within the application boundary.

5.3.1.4 One non-native invasive species listed on Schedule 9 (II) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was recorded within the application boundary, rhododendron. Further recommendations have been provided within the report.

5.4 Protected Species

5.4.1 Breeding Birds

5.4.1.1 No presence of breeding birds was recorded at the time of survey. No field sign evidence suggesting the use of the site by nesting birds was recorded at the time of survey.

5.4.1.2 The trees on site were assessed as offering suitability for use by nesting birds, particularly the mature trees within the site. Habitats immediately outside the site, including the adjacent copse and surrounding off-site trees, also provide suitable breeding bird habitat.

5.4.1.3 It is understood that all trees are to be retained, but there remains potential for breeding birds to be affected if any works or habitat management occur during the nesting season. Further recommendations have been made within this report.

5.4.2 **Bats**

5.4.2.1 The small shed on site was assessed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats. No further recommendations are required in relation to this structure.

5.4.2.2 The three mature trees within the site contain potential roost features in the form of knotholes, and the adjacent copse provides a suitable linear corridor for foraging and commuting bats. As all trees are proposed for retention, no specific mitigation is required for these features. However, any lighting associated with the development must be designed to avoid light spill onto the copse and other boundary habitats that could be used by bats. Further lighting recommendations are provided in this report.

5.4.3

5.4.3.1 No presence of was recorded within the site.

5.4.3.2 The site is considered to have negligible suitability for . While the wider landscape may provide appropriate foraging and commuting opportunities, the likelihood of utilising the site itself is negligible.

5.4.3.3 No impacts towards are anticipated. No further survey effort is proposed for this species.

5.4.4 **European Hedgehog**

5.4.4.1 No presence of hedgehog was recorded within the site. No field-sign evidence suggesting the use of the site by hedgehog was recorded at the time of the survey.

5.4.4.2 The site is considered to offer a residual level of suitability for use by hedgehogs, given the habitats present on the site. The broader landscape, including the adjacent copse, provides good suitability for hedgehogs, and it cannot be ruled out that hedgehogs will not commute across the site.

5.4.4.3 Any residual impacts towards hedgehogs are considered able to be mitigated with the implementation of precautionary methods during the development of the site. No further survey effort is proposed for this species.

5.4.5 **Riparian/Aquatic Mammals**

5.4.5.1 No field sign evidence for aquatic mammals was recorded within the site.

5.4.5.2 No aquatic habitat deemed suitable for usage by aquatic mammals was recorded within the curtilage of the site or in the immediate environment.

5.4.5.3 No terrestrial habitat deemed suitable for usage by aquatic mammals was recorded within the curtilage of the site or in the immediate environment.

5.4.5.4 No impacts towards otters or water voles are anticipated, and no further survey effort for these species is required at this stage.

5.4.6 **Amphibians and Reptiles**

5.4.6.1 The site is considered to offer residual suitability for common amphibians. No evidence of great crested newts was recorded during the survey. The site is recorded as falling within an n/a zone for great crested newts.

5.4.6.2 Terrestrial habitat suitable for amphibians and reptiles is restricted to a small, isolated feature of a log pile to the south of the site. No aquatic habitats suitable for breeding amphibians were identified on site or within close proximity. The adjacent copse could offer some suitable terrestrial habitat for herptiles.

5.4.6.3 While the likelihood of amphibian and reptile presence is considered residual, precautionary working methods are advised. These measures are considered sufficient to mitigate any residual risk and are outlined in the conclusion of this report.

5.4.7 **Other species**

5.4.7.1 The site does not support suitable habitat for any other protected or significant fauna, such as barn owl (*Tyto alba*), dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*), brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*), or white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*). No impacts towards these species are anticipated.

6 Conclusions

6.1 Designated Sites

6.1.1.1 One Statutory Designated Sites were recorded within the 2 km search radius, Dalton Bank (Local Nature Reserve), located approximately 1906 metres west.

6.1.1.2 Nine Non-Statutory Designated Sites were recorded within the 2 km search radius, with the closest, Covey Clough Wood and Hepworth Wood, 757 metres southeast.

6.1.1.3 The site is not recorded as being within any notable designated sites or impact zones.

6.1.1.4 Both Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites are considered unlikely to be impacted by the proposed works due to their distance from the development site. No recommendations have been made.

6.2 Habitats and Vegetation

6.2.1.1 No priority habitats were recorded within the red line boundary.

6.2.1.2 Three priority habitats were identified within a 2 km search radius, with the closest being deciduous woodland located approximately 431 metres from the site. Given the distance and the fact that all proposed works are confined within the site boundary, potential impacts on these woodlands and other Priority Habitats are considered negligible.

6.2.1.3 No trees which are on the Ancient Tree Inventory were recorded on site.

6.2.1.4 A Tree Preservation Area is located adjacent to the site boundary, and three

mature trees within the site are also subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs). All protected trees are understood to be retained. Recommendations for their protection during construction have been provided within this report.

6.2.1.5 No protected or notable flora listed on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) was recorded during the survey.

6.2.1.6 One non-native invasive species, rhododendron (listed under Schedule 9 (II) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended), was recorded within the garden where it is currently maintained as ornamental planting. Further recommendations for invasive species management are provided within the conclusion of this report.

6.3 Recommendations for Further Surveys / Mitigation

6.3.1 **Breeding Birds**

6.3.1.1 No active or historic evidence of breeding birds was located on site. Trees are present within the immediate vicinity of the site, which is a suitable habitat for breeding birds. It is understood at this juncture that all trees are to be retained within the site vicinity, and any trees located on the site.

6.3.1.2 Due to the possibility of birds nesting in and immediately adjacent to the site, it is recommended that any clearance of vegetation be conducted outside of the breeding bird season (April to September inclusive). If clearance of vegetation outside the breeding bird season is not feasible, a pre-work check by a suitably qualified ecologist is recommended. Any nests identified within the site vicinity should have a 5 m buffer installed around the nest, which will remain until an ecologist confirms the birds have abandoned the nest or the chicks have all fledged.

6.3.2 **Bats**

6.3.2.1 No bats or signs of bat activity were recorded during the survey. The shed on site was assessed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats. The three mature sycamores on site contain potential roost features (PRFs) in the form of knotholes; however, these trees are understood to be retained, and therefore no specific recommendations are required in relation to this habitat.

6.3.2.2 The surrounding habitats provide suitable commuting and foraging opportunities for bats. It is recommended that works are undertaken during daylight hours where possible. If night-time working is unavoidable, a bat-sensitive lighting strategy will be required to minimise disturbance to local bat populations. Post-development lighting should be motion-activated, of low intensity, and carefully designed to avoid light-spill onto the adjacent copse/woodland and other boundary vegetation.

6.3.3 **Precautionary Works**

6.3.3.1 Habitats on site, including shrub vegetation, log piles and brash piles adjacent to the site boundary, provide opportunities for foraging and commuting hedgehogs and retain residual potential for common amphibians and reptiles. Consequently, precautionary working methods should be implemented as part of the scheme to ensure these species are not adversely affected by the proposed

works.

6.3.3.2 These measures will include a pre-work check by a suitably qualified ecologist. Any open holes or trenches are to be covered over when not in use. A designated person is to check any open holes, trenches or any piles of equipment each morning for small animals that may have become trapped or are using equipment as refuges overnight. A simple measure, such as a plank of wood placed into holes and trenches, can allow small animals to escape.

6.3.3.3 If a common amphibian, reptile or hedgehog is located on site, the animal can be gently removed with gloved hands and transported to the copse of trees south of the site, out of harm's way. If a great crested newt or bird nest is located on site, all works must cease, and an ecologist must be consulted immediately.

6.3.3.4 Mature trees on site subject to Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) should be afforded appropriate protection during the proposed works. Suitable buffers must be established around each tree to ensure that no excavation, ground disturbance or storage of materials occurs within the respective Root Protection Areas (RPAs). This will prevent unnecessary impacts to tree health and maintain compliance with best practice guidance.

6.3.4 **Schedule 9 (II) Invasive Species**

6.3.4.1 Rhododendron was recorded within the site boundary. This species, specifically *Rhododendron ponticum*, is listed under Schedule 9, Part II of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as an invasive non-native species.

6.3.4.2 The presence of this species will require appropriate consideration during any site redevelopment. If the rhododendron is to be removed, this should be undertaken under controlled conditions and disposed of in accordance with current legislation and best-practice guidance, particularly regarding soil movement and vegetation clearance. Although retention as ornamental planting is possible, this species is generally unfavourable alongside native vegetation because of its ability to suppress native flora.

6.3.4.3 While it is not an offence to have these species present on land, under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (Duty of Care) Regulations, the landowner has a responsibility to ensure these species do not spread beyond their current extent.

6.3.4.4 Further information on best practice for the management and control of invasive species can be found in the Environment Agency Regulatory Position Statement 178 (2023), which outlines acceptable approaches for soil and plant waste disposal where invasive species are present.

7 Biodiversity Enhancement

7.1 In line with the National planning Policy Framework (2024), the application should demonstrate biodiversity enhancements. Upon finalisation of plans, calculations can be compiled.

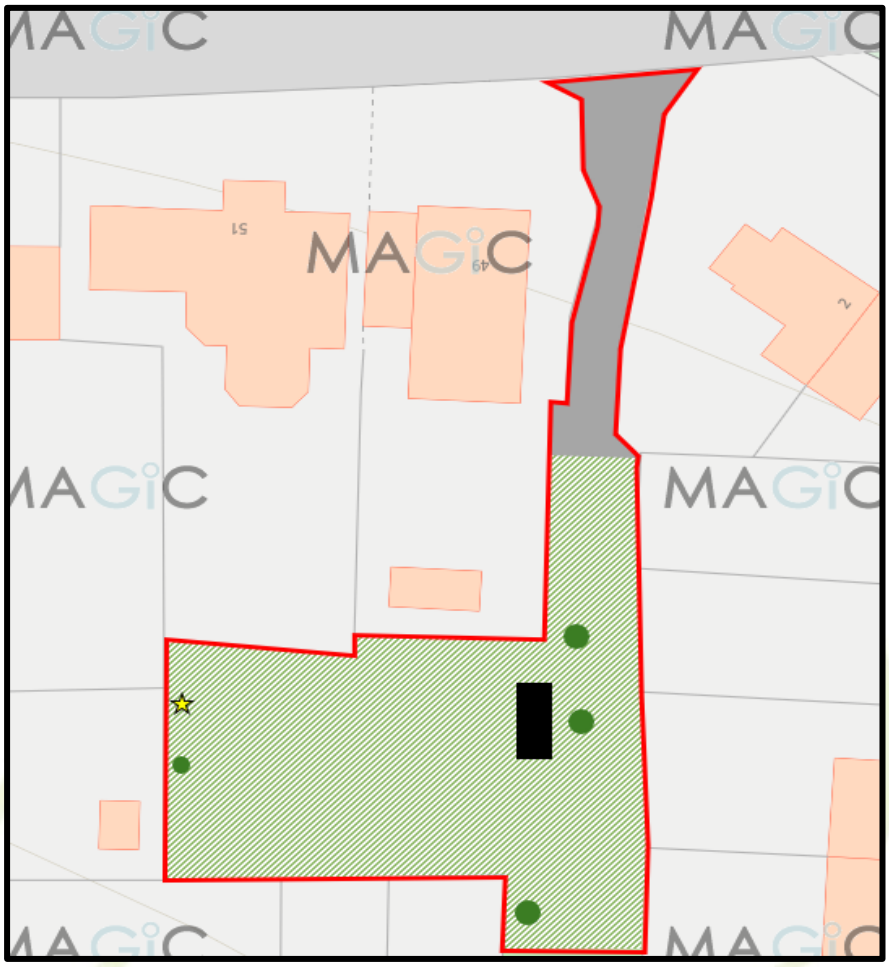
7.2 Due to the size of the site and location, applicable specific habitat enhancements could include:

- Bat and bird boxes integrated into the scheme design to enhance roosting provision over the wider site.
- A planting scheme should be implemented within the scheme to create a greenspace within the site. Plantings should comprise native species of high biodiversity value.
- Boundary features should be kept open and allow passage for small mammals such as hedgehogs.

7.3 In line with national policy, developments submitted for planning after the 12th of February 2024, with some exceptions, are expected to achieve a 10% net gain minimum increase in site biodiversity value from the existing baseline assessment.

7.4 It has been advised that the development proposals fall under the exemption of Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements as Self-Build and Custom applications. Consequently, no post-development BNG calculations have been produced at this stage.

Appendix One : UK Habitats Classification Map



UK Habitats Classification Habitat Map Key	
	Site Boundary
	Developed Land; Sealed Surface
	Building
	Vegetated Garden
	Scattered trees
	Target Note – Schedule 9 (II) Invasive plant species – *Rhododendron ponticum*

Appendix Two: Species list (on site)

Vernacular	Taxon
Flora	
Azalea	*Rhododendron spp.*
Blue spruce	*Picea pungens*
Common dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale*
Common ragwort	*Jacobaea vulgaris*
Crab apple	*Malus sylvestris*
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
Dogrose spp	*Rosa spp.*
Dogwood spp.	*Cornus spp.*
Foxglove spp.	*Digitalis spp.*
Fushcia	*Fuchsia spp.*
Geranium spp.	*Geranium spp.*
Japanese periwinkle	*Vinca minor*
Perennial ryegrass	*Lolium perenne*
Rhododendron*	*Rhododendron ponticum*
Sycamore	*Acer pseudoplatanus*
Thistle spp.	*Cirsium spp.*
Wiliams rhododendron	*Rhododendron williamsianum*
Willow-leaved cotoneaster	*Cotoneaster salicifolius*

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