ECOLOGICAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

at

Longley Farm
Longley Lane
Huddersfield
West Yorkshire
HD9 2JD

Client:
J & E Dickinson

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JCA Limited
Arboricultural & Ecological Consultants

Quality Assurance

Version	**Desktop Survey Completed:**		**Site Surveyed:**		**Report Completed:**		**Checked:**	
	Date	Name	Date	Name	Date	Name	Date	Name
Planning	16/12/25	James Foster	02/12/25	James Foster	14/01/26	James Foster	15/01/26	Grace Bramley

This report has been prepared and provided in accordance with the *British Standard 42020: Biodiversity – Code of practice for planning and development 2018* and the *CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct.*

This Assessment is only valid for the named client and the project described. JCA Limited. accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purpose for which it was commissioned. If the scope of works or timing of the project are altered the advice given in this report may not be valid. Information and data provided within this report is considered accurate at the time of writing.

Provided no significant changes are made to the proposals or on the site (e.g. significant changes to management practices or habitats present) subsequent to the report's issue; this report can be considered valid for 18 months from the date of issue.

As part of membership to our professional body (CIEEM) and EPS licence reporting we are required to provide our biological results to applicable biological record centres. As such, it is our intention to supply biological data collected as part of this assessment, where recorded, to the relevant BRC. If the project is sensitive in nature, we may be able to delay submitting the records until the project enters the public domain, however, this must be discussed with JCA Limited and agreed in writing.

Summary

JCA Limited has been commissioned by **J & E Dickinson** to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) scoping of a site located at **Longley Farm, Longley Lane, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire**. The site is located at Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid Reference SE 14527 06157 with nearby postcode HD9 2JD.

A desktop study was undertaken in order to obtain any relevant ecological records that may be present within a 2km radius of the site, including protected and notable species records and nature conservation designations.

The site was surveyed on the 02/12/2025 by James Foster, Assistant Ecologist JCA Ltd. A thorough site assessment was undertaken following the guidelines set out in the UK Habitat Classification System (v2.01, 2023).

Recommended mitigation measures:

Invertebrates

The proposed works provide an opportunity to institute enhancement for biodiversity through native species planting and the addition of faunal boxes. A landscaping plan should be devised which incorporates, as far as practicable, native species with known benefits to wildlife common in the area.

During site clearance a watching brief will be maintained for the removal of any dead trees/dead wood. Should stag beetle larvae be found these will be re-buried in a safe shady place with some of the original rotting wood.

Amphibians

One eDna survey between mid-March and the end of June is required to determine presence/likely absence of great crested newts on site.

A precautionary approach should be adopted to include an **Ecological Clerk of Works** (**ECoW**) being present. Scrub and brash piles to be removed should be hand searched by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist prior to removal, to ensure no amphibians are currently resting in vegetation.

Badgers & Otter

Any excavations created during the development stage must be covered at night or appropriate escape routes implemented. Planks are to be placed at a 45-degree angle for badgers and otters to escape safely. Any open pipes must be capped.

Bats

As the site has been considered to have a low potential of supporting bat roosting sites, we recommend that one dusk emergence survey should be carried out to establish the absence/presence of roosting bats at Longley Farm, Longley Lane.

The production and implementation of a Construction Method Statement (CMS) will be put into place prior to the beginning of the construction phase.

All lighting installed as part of the development will be in line with Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at night.

Birds

Vegetation clearance should be conducted outside of the nesting bird season to avoid disturbing the birds (the nesting season is considered to run between 1st March and 31st August).

Where this is not possible a suitably qualified ecologist should check potential nesting habitat immediately prior to clearance. Where nesting birds are encountered works must be postponed until the nestlings have fledged.

Brown hare & Hedgehog

No clearance will be undertaken during the winter hibernation period and staged clearance would allow animals to move safely out of the works area.

Any excavations created during the development stage must be covered at night and appropriate escape routes implemented. Planks are to be placed at a 45-degree angle for brown hares or hedgehogs to escape safely. Any open pipes must be capped.

Schedule 9 plants

Control of the pontic rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* on site should be dealt with prior to or during the construction process. The plants should be completely removed as part of the re-development to prevent their further spread throughout the site and into surrounding areas. Details of the measures required to control invasive plant species on site should be detailed in a separate report prior to commencing works on site.

Survey Results:

Amphibians

An Amphibian Survey & Report was conducted by JCA Ltd. in June 2025 (Ref: 22888b/GB). A HSI survey and eDNA survey was conducted on the pond on site. The HSI result found the pond to have a HSI score of 0.63 (average). The eDNA result was negative for Great crested newts.

Bats

A Bat Emergence Survey Report was conducted by JCA Ltd. in July 2025 (Ref: 22888b/RPS). Dusk emergence surveys were undertaken on 10/07/2025 to identify any bat use of the building. The surveys found no emergence activity from the surveyed building, and moderate levels of commuting and forging activity around the site.

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 In November 2025 JCA Limited was instructed by **J & E Dickinson** to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) scoping of a site located at **Longley Farm, Longley Lane, Huddersfield**, hereafter referred to as 'the site'. The purpose of the survey is to establish a baseline of ecological information and assess whether the proposed works, hereafter referred to as 'the scheme', have the potential to adversely affect any protected or notable habitats or species.

1.2 Site Description

1.2.1 The site is situated to approximately 2km south of Holmfirth, at grid reference: SE 14527 06157.

1.2.2 The site currently consists of other neutral grassland, modified grassland, rhododendron scrub, aquatic marginal vegetation, ruderal vegetation, introduced shrub, developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface, buildings, sparsely vegetated urban land, pond and a non-native and ornamental hedgerow.

1.2.3 The site is located in a rural area and is bordered on all sides by agricultural pastureland with the River Ribble, which is located approximately 500m to the east.

1.2.4 The development proposed on this site is the extension of the existing cottage cheese unit, extension of the existing track and new areas of hardstanding.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 This report summarises the relevant policy and legislation framework, baseline ecology within the zone of interest, assesses any potential impacts and proposes impact avoidance and mitigation measures, as well as assessing any residual effects.

1.5 Scope of the Report

1.5.1 The purpose of the Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) is to identify habitats currently present within and around the site in order to obtain baseline ecological information for the site. The EcIA also assessed the potential of the site to support species which receive legal protection (at a UK Level) and species that are otherwise notable including Species of Principal Importance and Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC).

1.5.2 The EcIA comprises two main elements a) a desktop review of the ecology and policy context and b) a field survey of the proposed development site, and where possible, other areas to be affected.

1.6 Relevant Planning Policy and Legislation

1.6.1 As well as considering relevant nature conservation legislation, the mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures recommended within this report seek to address national and local planning policy requirements and support national and local biodiversity objectives under the Dorset Biodiversity Strategy, as required by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

1.6.2 The legislation, planning policy and guidance referred to in this report is set out in **Appendix 4**. In summary, due regard has been paid to the following:

- The Environment Act 2021;
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended);
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended);
- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000;
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992;
- Hedgerow Regulations 1997;
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996;
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023);
- The Kirklees Local Plan Strategy and Policies (adopted 2019)

1.7 Previous Studies & Further Survey

1.7.1 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal with Preliminary Roost Assessment was conducted by ecus Ltd. in November 2024 (Ref: 24178). The results and recommendations from the survey are summarised below.

1.7.2 Results

- Amphibians: The pond on site was judged to have a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) Score for Great crested newts of 0.33 (poor). An additional pond was identified within 250m of the site, however HSI calculations could not take place due to access limitations. The terrestrial habitats on site were found to offer relatively limited suitability for foraging and sheltering/hibernating

Great crested newt, with additional terrestrial habitat further afield. However, it was judged that the habitat connectivity of the site to habitats further afield contains barriers to dispersal, such as the B6106 and arable fields. It was considered that the site is of importance to great crested newts (should they be present) at the site level only. It was also judged that it is unlikely for the site to support large populations of common amphibian.

- Badgers: the site was judged to have some potential for sett creation and, forging and commuting badgers. However, no direct evidence of badger was recorded on site. It was considered unlikely that badgers regularly utilise the site and there is a low risk that badgers could commute across the site.
- Bats: One building on site due to be impacted by the proposed development was found to have low bat roost potential and the habitats on site provide low potential foraging and commuting habitat.
- Birds: the habitats on site have potential for nesting birds and the pond has the potential to support Schedule 1 WCA (as amended) species, such as golden eye and whopper swan.
- Invertebrates: the habitats on site offers some foraging and sheltering/hibernating opportunities for invertebrates.
- Reptiles: the habitats on site provide some potential basking and sheltering/foraging opportunities for reptiles.
- Otter: no evidence of otter presence was recorded. The pond on site was considered to be of sufficient distance from other watercourses to aid otter dispersal. It was considered to be unlikely that otters utilise the site.
- Water vole: no evidence of water vole was recorded on site. Some suitable burrowing and foraging habitat was present on site. However, it was considered that the site lacks the connectivity to other habitats further afield. Water vole were not considered to be present on site.
- White-clawed crayfish: the site was considered to be unsuitable for white-clawed crayfish due to the lack of connectivity and suitable refuges.
- Brown hare: the habitats on site display some suitability for foraging/commuting brown hare. However, the potential of the site was considered to be limited in the context of the surrounding landscape.
- Invasive species: three invasive species were records: montbretia, pontic rhododendron and a suspected invasive cotoneaster species.

1.7.3 Recommendations

- Amphibians: proposed works should be undertaken using a GCN Reasonable Avoidance Measures (RAM) Method Statement (MS), including a Toolbox Talk as well as the provision of on-site and on call Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW).
- Badger: Best Practice Measures (BPM) for badgers should be implemented

throughout the construction phase to protect badgers in the unlikely event they are present at the time of works.

- Bats: One dusk emergence survey of B1 should be undertaken in the peak bat activity survey season (mid-May to August inclusive), ideally in the core maternity season (between mid-May and mid-July) to assess the presence/likely absence of roosting bats ahead of the proposed extension of the buildings.
- Birds: it is recommended that nesting bird checks are undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist if and where appropriate (if demolition of the building and/or vegetation clearance is scheduled to place during the nesting bird season (March to September inclusive).
- Invertebrates: Works should be carried out following BPM combined with the recommendations made for common amphibians within the GCN RAM MS.
- Reptiles: Works should be carried out following BPM combined with the recommendations made for common amphibians within the GCN RAM MS.
- Brown hare: Works should be carried out following BPM combined with the recommendations made for badgers.
- Invasive species: Should any INNS require removal to facilitate the proposals, plant material should be disposed following an INNS Method Statement (MS) in accordance with guidance published by Natural England, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and the Environment Agency (2022).

1.7.4 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment – Feasibility stage was conducted by ecus Ltd. in November 2024 (Ref: 24178).

1.7.5 An Amphibian Survey & Report was conducted by JCA Ltd. in June 2025 (Ref: 22888b/GB). A HSI survey and eDNA survey was conducted on the pond on site. The HSI result found the pond to have a HSI score of 0.63 (average). The eDNA result was negative for Great crested newts.

1.7.6 A Bat Emergence Survey Report was conducted by JCA Ltd. in July 2025 (Ref: 22888b/RPS). Dusk emergence surveys were undertaken on 10/07/2025 to identify any bat use of the building. The surveys found no emergence activity from the surveyed building, and moderate levels of commuting and forging activity around the site.

2. Methodology

2.1 Methodology for Ecological Assessment

2.1.1 This Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) was undertaken in line with guidance in the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK (2024, Version 1.3.).

2.1.2 The process prescribed by CIEEM's EcIA Guidelines, including an explanation of the key terminology that is used, is described below. In summary, the guidelines advocate the following step-wise approach to EcIA:

- Prediction of the activities associated with a proposed scheme that are likely to generate biophysical changes which may lead to significant effects (either positive or negative) upon ecological features of importance;
- Identification of the likely Zone of Influence of those activities;
- Scoping to select the ecological features (habitats, species, ecosystems and their functions/processes) that are likely to fall within the predicted Zone of Influence and be affected by the activities;
- Evaluation of ecological features likely to be affected (both negatively and positively) to determine their level of importance and likely sensitivity;
- Identification of likely impacts (positive and negative) on important ecological features, together with an assessment of the geographic scale at which they are likely to be significant;
- Refinement of the proposed scheme to incorporate impact avoidance and mitigation for negative effects on important ecological features, and enhancements to deliver net gains in biodiversity;
- An assessment of the significance of residual effects and the need for compensation; and
- Advice on conformance with applicable nature conservation related legislation and policy.

Method of Ecological Valuation

2.1.3 The evaluation method uses the following geographical scale of importance:

- International and European;
- National;
- Regional;
- Metropolitan/ County;
- Local; and

- Site (included to quantify sites of lesser ecological value).

2.1.4 Determining the importance of ecological features makes use of any national and local government and specialist organisation identified sites, habitats and species that provide the key focus for biodiversity conservation in the UK, supported by policy and legislation. The determination of importance may also be based on expert judgement taking into consideration various characteristics such as rarity, naturalness, diversity, functionality, fragility and typicalness.

2.1.5 Important ecological features of Local or greater importance are carried forward to the assessment of likely significant effects stage. Other features of lower (i.e. Site) importance may also be carried forward, particularly where there may be legislative requirements pertaining to these features not necessarily associated with their ecological importance.

2.1.6 Each feature is also looked at to determine their current conservation status (species and habitats) or the degree to which they are exhibiting 'integrity' (designated sites or ecosystems). This takes into account the effect of natural and man-made trends, including those known to be likely to come into effect in the near future. Conservation status or integrity is described using the approach used by Natural England to describe the status of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs):

- Favourable, improving;
- Favourable, stable;
- Favourable, declining;
- Unfavourable, improving;
- Unfavourable, stable; and
- Unfavourable, declining.

Assessing the Likely Significance of Effects on Important Ecological Features

2.1.7 The effects of activities associated with a proposed scheme and their resultant biophysical changes on important ecological features are described in terms of their magnitude, extent, timing and frequency, duration and reversibility.

2.1.8 Effects of activities are considered significant if they cause a change in the conservation status of the important ecological feature (CIEEM, 2018). Changes that improve the conservation status are termed positive, whilst those that reduce it are negative. Otherwise, if there is no change in conservation status the effects are termed not significant/insignificant.

2.1.9 For guidance as to whether an effect is likely to result in a negative effect on the integrity or conservation status of an important ecological feature, reference

has been made to the conservation objectives for that feature where they are available, for example, in habitat and species action plans. Otherwise, professional judgement has been made, based on available information.

2.1.10 The significance of likely significant effects and of residual effects is then stated in terms of the geographic scale of reference which takes account of the importance of ecological receptors, and the significance of potential effects upon them.

2.1.11 If a negative effect remains significant following the application of mitigation measures, then compensation is applied if this is possible.

Geographical Scope

2.1.12 The study area encompassed the Zone of Influence of the Project. The Zone of Influence is defined as "the area over which ecological features may be affected by biophysical changes as a result of the proposed project and associated activities" (CIEEM, 2018).

2.1.13 The Zone of Influence of the Project encompasses different areas in respect of each important ecological feature depending on its location and sensitivity, and the spatial extent of the relevant biophysical change (e.g. light, noise, habitat loss).

2.1.14 In order to predict the potential Zone of Influence, the spatial and temporal extent of biophysical changes likely to be generated by the Project with the potential to lead to effects upon important ecological features were predicted and are shown in Table 1.

2.1.15 However, the majority of the activities and resultant biophysical changes listed in Table 1 are unlikely to have an effect beyond the Site and the immediate surrounding area. The exceptions to this include birds and bats due to their highly mobile nature, potentially up to 5-7km for birds and usually 6km for bats (based on barbastelle bats, Bat Conservation Trust Core Sustenance Zones, 2023), and activities such as uncontrolled discharges of pollutants, changes to ground and surface water drainage, air pollution which can be catchment wide.

2.1.16 Therefore, the Zone of Influence, and the study area, is broadly considered to extend across the site or just beyond the site boundary in most cases and potentially up to or exceeding 5km.

Table 1: Activities Associated with Residential Proposals Likely to Generate Ecological Effects

Activity	Potential Effect	Zone of Influence
Site Clearance and Construction Phase		
Access and travel on/off site	Noise / visual / lighting disturbance of vulnerable species	Site and immediate surrounds
Assembly and storage areas for machines and materials, construction compounds	Loss and fragmentation of habitats Noise / visual / lighting disturbance to vulnerable species	Site and immediate surrounds in most cases but potentially up to 6km for bats
Vegetation clearance, ground excavation and structural works, demolition and alteration operations	Loss and fragmentation of habitats Damage to vulnerable habitats Killing/ Injury of vulnerable species Noise / visual / lighting disturbance to vulnerable species	Site and immediate surrounds in most cases but potentially up to 6km for bats
Lighting of work area	Disturbance to vulnerable species	Site and immediate surrounds in most cases but potentially up to 6km for bats
Drainage	Change of surface or groundwater flows Change of water quality in ground and surface water Change in habitats fed by ground and surface water flows	Site and immediate surrounds
Environmental incidents and accidents	Pollution of aquatic habitats as a result of chemical and fuel spills	Site and immediate surrounds
Operational Phase		

Activity	Potential Effect	Zone of Influence
Site Clearance and Construction Phase		
Access and travel on/off site	Noise / visual / lighting disturbance to vulnerable species Direct harm to vulnerable species	Site and immediate surrounds
New lighting	Lighting disturbance to vulnerable species	Site and immediate surrounds in most case but potentially up to 6km for bats
Drainage	Change of surface or groundwater flows Change of water quality in ground and surface water Change in habitats fed by ground and surface water flows	Site and immediate surrounds, nutrient impacts on certain designated sites is catchment wide
Recreation	Damage to or fragmentation of habitats by trampling and potential impacts upon ecological receptors Direct harm to vulnerable species Nutrient enrichment through dog fouling Noise / visual disturbance to vulnerable species by members of the public and/or dogs	Potentially up to 5km

2.2 Desktop Study

2.2.1 The Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website was used to assess the presence of statutory designated sites within a 5km radius of the site. A request for data was made to West Yorkshire Ecology Service (WYES) and West Yorkshire Bat Group (WYBG) for information they hold on protected and notable species records along with non-statutory designated sites within a 2km radius of the site.

2.3 Field Survey

2.3.1 A UKHab survey of the site was conducted on 02/12/2026. All areas of the site were investigated and areas around the site where access permitted.

2.3.2 The survey employed techniques based on the UK Habitat Classification System. Botanical information was collected, focussing on the dominant and/or key indicator species for each habitat, to enable allocation of habitats to hierarchy levels 3 and/or 4, and where relevant to identify any priority habitats which are present on site. The conditions of the habitats on the site were assessed in line with the technical sheets supplied alongside DEFRA Statutory Metric /small sites metric. A map of the baseline habitats on site is provided in **Appendix 1**.

2.3.3 A detailed walkover survey was undertaken directly searching for legally protected and invasive species of plant and categorising any habitats of ecological value that were encountered. A general description of the vegetation was also noted, listing species encountered and scoring their abundance using the DAFOR scale:

- Dominant (D)
- Abundant (A)
- Frequent (F)
- Occasional (O)
- Rare (R)
- Local (L, used as a prefix to any of the above)

2.4 Protected Species

2.4.1 Whilst conducting the site walk-over, any features that may be of value to or have the potential to support protected species were noted and photographic evidence taken (please refer to **Appendix 3**). Such protected species include, but are not limited to the following:

<u>Amphibians</u>

2.4.2 Consideration was given to the presence of habitat potentially suitable for supporting amphibians including water bodies (ponds, ditches), woodland, scrub, rough grassland and features such as log piles that might provide hibernation areas. Where appropriate, effort to gather direct evidence of amphibians was undertaken using a preliminary search for eggs by examining vegetation within reach of the margins of water bodies, and for resting animals on land by looking under potential refuges such as stones, wood and rubbish near to water bodies.

2.4.3 Great crested newts are known to forage up to at least 500m from their breeding water bodies and suitable habitats that fall within 250m must be considered even in situations where the breeding site itself will not be affected.

Badgers

2.4.4 Consideration was given to the presence of habitat potentially suitable for supporting badgers including woodland, scrub and grassland. Potential evidence of the presence of badgers was noted including earthworks that might be badger setts, signs such as dung pits, mammal pathways through ground vegetation and under fences and hairs on fences.

Bats

2.4.5 The site was surveyed by James Foster, Assistant Ecologist, JCA Ltd., for foraging, commuting and roosting potential. A detailed search of the buildings and trees on site was conducted during daylight hours in order to identify potential bat roosting sites and look for evidence of bat activity and photographic evidence was taken (please refer to **Appendix 3**).

2.4.6 The survey was conducted by an experienced surveyor using the following equipment to ensure an accurate assessment; a printed site map, camera, a 1 million candlelight torch, binoculars, and ladders.

2.4.7 Signs that bats have previously or are currently using a potential roost site include:

- Droppings, carcasses and/or food remains found around the site.
- Bats observed within the building or tree.

The absence of signs of a potential bat roost cannot be treated as conclusive evidence that bats are not using the buildings and trees.

Buildings

2.4.8 During the bat scoping survey, the building on site was subject to an external and internal survey to establish the suitability of the structure to support roosting bats in accordance with Collins (2023). The criteria for assigning a roost suitability category are presented in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Guidelines used for assessing the bat roosting suitability of buildings (taken from Collins, 2023).

Roosting Suitability	Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) Present
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e., a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
Negligible	No obvious features on the 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 roosting opportunities that could be used by individual bats opportunistically. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough shelter, protection, surrounding habitats, or the appropriate conditions to be used on a regular basis by larger numbers of bats e.g. unlikely to support hibernation or maternity roosts.
Moderate	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to the size of the potential roosting feature which is sufficient to provide: shelter, protection, optimal conditions and surrounding habitats. The feature(s) are unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status.
High	A structure or tree with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to the size of the potential roosting feature which is sufficient to provide: shelter, protection, optimal conditions and high-quality surrounding habitats. The features have the potential to support large colonies of bats (e.g. maternity or hibernation) for long periods of time.
Confirmed roost	Evidence of bat occupation found during initial survey.

Trees

2.4.9 Bats often roost in trees. Features such as old woodpecker holes, splits, cavities and rot holes, loose or flaking bark and ivy creepers can be exploited by bats to roost. Any trees present on site were therefore assessed for their potential to support roosting bats by searching for suitable features. The presence of roosting bats can be spotted through signs such as accumulations of moth or butterfly wings, staining, bat droppings, or bats themselves.

2.4.10 The absence of these cannot, however, be treated as conclusive evidence that bats are not present, and therefore an assessment was made of the potential of the trees to support bats based on the scale presented in Table 3 below, in accordance with Collins (2023).

Table 3: Guidelines used for assessing the bat roosting suitability of trees (*taken from Collins, 2023*).

Roosting Suitability	Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) Present
None	Either no Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) in the tree, or highly unlikely to be any
FAR	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree.
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present.

2.4.11 The category of roosting suitability assigned to a building/tree is used to determine what further survey effort is required to ascertain the presence/likely absence of bats within that feature, as shown in Table 4 below:

Table 4: Recommended minimum number of survey visits for presence/likely absence surveys *(taken from Collins, 2023)*.

Negligible roost suitability	Low roost suitability	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability
No futher survey required	One survey visit. One dusk emergence survey, May to August (structures). No further surveys required (trees).	Two separate dusk emergence survey visits. May to September, with at least one survey between May and August.	Three separate dusk emergence survey visits. May to September, with at least two surveys between May and August
September surveys are both weather- and location-dependent. Conditions may become more unsuitable in these months, particularly in more northerly latitudes, which may reduce the length of the survey season. September surveys are likely to miss maternity roosts due to dispersal before this time but may pick up mating roosts. Multiple survey visits should be spread out to sample as much of the recommended survey period as possible; it is recommended that surveys are spaced out at **least three weeks apart**, preferably more. Survey timings **should consider the prevailing conditions in the year of survey, which will vary geographically**. In years with a cold spring, the surveys should not be started in early May, or all completed in May. The surveys should maximise the possibility of detecting maternity roosts, which can switch roosts between pregnancy and lactation, and the **optimum coverage includes the pre-parturition, post-parturition, and mating periods**. Structures that have been categorised as low potential can be problematic, and the number of surveys required should be judged on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, more than one survey may be needed, particularly where there are several buildings in this category.			

Habitats

2.4.12 A preliminary evaluation was also undertaken of the habitat on the site for the quality of potential commuting and foraging habitat for the local bat populations. Bats navigate using linear features in the landscape such as hedgerows and these can be important features for local roosts. The site itself may also provide important foraging habitat and support local bat roosts.

2.4.13 An assessment was therefore made of the potential of the habitat to offer suitable flight paths and foraging habitats based on the scale presented in Table 4 below, adapted from the Survey Guidelines (Collins, 2023):

Table 4: Site suitability for foraging and commuting bats *(taken from Collins, 2023)*.

Site Suitability	Habitat features present
High	Continuous, high quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape and likely to be regularly used by bats for flight-paths, such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge.

	High quality habitat that is well connect to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is connected to a known roost.
Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub, or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths, such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Negligible	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of year) i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).

Birds

2.4.14 Any birds seen whilst carrying out the survey were recorded and the type and quality of habitats available for birds was considered, including vegetation suitable for nesting and habitat with the potential to support valued species including breeding and wintering birds.

Dormouse

2.4.15 The habitat on the site was assessed for the potential to support dormice which are found in habitats such as woodlands, scrub and hedgerows with good connectivity and suitable food plants. Satellite images were used to assess the connectivity of any suitable habitat present on the site to other areas of woodland and hedgerow networks.

Reptiles

2.4.16 Habitat considered potentially suitable for supporting reptiles was recorded. This includes areas providing basking and foraging areas, hibernation and breeding sites such as rough grassland and scrub, banks, burrows, rubble piles, compost heaps, hedge banks and water bodies.

2.5 Survey Limitations

2.5.1 The optimum time of year for completing surveys is between April and

September, as many plant species have a seasonal expression in spring and summer only. The survey was undertaken on 02/12/25. This is outside of the optimum time for conducting surveys as the flora species are typically not in flower/leaf and many faunal species are less active, meaning field signs are more likely to be scarcer. However, the majority of flora species were still readily identifiable and the habitat types can still be accurately identified and their potential to support notable and protected species correctly determined.

2.5.2 There were no perceived limitations that would significantly impact on the conclusions and recommendations given within this report.

3. Baseline Ecological Conditions

3.1 Statutory Nature Conservation Sites

Internationally important sites

3.1.1 There are two statutory internationally important conservation sites within the search area.

- South Pennine Moors, Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Located 1860m southwest of the site. Annex 1 habitats: European dry heaths, blanket bog (Priority Feature), Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum*, Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix and Transition mires and quaking bog.

- South Pennine Moors Phase 1 & 2, SPA. Located 1860m southwest of the site. Supports an internationally important assemblage of birds. During the breeding season the area regularly supports: *Asio flammeus* 0.3% of the GB breeding population, *Falco columbarius* 2.2% of the GB breeding population. Count as at 1995. and *Pluvialis apricaria* [North-western Europe - breeding] 1.3% of the GB breeding population. No count period specified.

3.1.2 The SAC and SPA are of a sufficient distance from the site that no impacts are likely to occur as a result of the development proposals and are therefore considered to be outside of the zone of influence.

Nationally important sites

3.1.3 There are two nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the search area.

- South Pennine Moors SSSI. Located 1860m southwest. Regionally important diversity of upland plant communities and the fauna it supports.

- Dark Peak SSSI. Located 1860m southwest. Blanket bog, woodlands, willow carr, mire, flush, wet/dry heaths and acid grassland habitats that supports a full range of breeding birds found in the south Pennines, such as golden plover, dunlin, merlin, curlew, short-eared owl and twite.

3.1.4 The site is included in the SSSI Impact Risk Zone. However, due to the nature of the development, consultation with Natural England is not required.

3.1.5 The two SSSI are considered to be of a sufficient distance from the site that no impacts are likely to occur as a result of the development proposals and are therefore considered to be outside of the zone of influence.

County important sites

3.1.6 There are three locally important Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within the search

area.

- Morton Wood, located 1040m east of the site. Ancient woodland with areas of wet woodland that supports bluebells.

- Wild Boar Clough located 1080m east of the site. Nuetral and acid grassland and mire with a stream that supports brown hare.

- Malkin House Wood, located 1680m northwest of the site. Acid woodland that supports nesting birds and bluebells.

3.1.7 The Local Wildlife Habitat Network is located approximately 260m east of the site.

3.1.8 The LWS and Local Wildlife Habitat Network are considered to be of a sufficient distance from the site that no impacts are likely to occur as a result of the development proposals and are therefore considered to be outside of the zone of influence.

3.2 Habitats

3.2.1 Descriptions of the habitats recorded on site are given below, a map of the habitats is given as **Appendix 1**, with site photographs in **Appendix 3**.

3.2.2 There is no priority habitat shown on MAGIC in the zone of influence.

Strategic Significance

3.2.3 There are no priority habitats and potential ecological network areas within the vicinity of the site. The site is poorly linked to the wider landscape and priority habitats due to the lack of linear features such as hedgerows, tree lines and other potentially suitable habitat networks. The site is therefore not considered to be ecologically desirable.

3.2.4 The site is not part of any designated site, or listed on any local plan, neighbourhood plan or other policy document for ecology. It is considered to have low strategic significance (Area/compensation not in local strategy/ no local strategy).

UKHab Habitats

The following habitat types were recorded on site.

3.2.5 g3c – Other neutral grassland.

There are two areas of other neutral grasslands present on the center and east of the site. Both are dominated by native grass and wildflower species, the grassland on the south of the site has been used for grazing (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 1 - 6**).

3.2.6 g3c 1: 522 – Native

Located on the centre of the site.

Dominant species identified here include common bent *Agrostis capillaris*.

Frequent species identified here include creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and clover species *Trifolium* sp.

Occasional species identified here include false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius,* crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus,* Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus,* and perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne.*

Rare species identified here include bramble *Rubus fruticosus.*

3.2.7 g3c 2: 100 – Grazed, 522 – Native

Located on the east of the site.

Dominant species identified here include common bent *Agrostis capillaris*.

Abundant species identified here include tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* and creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense.*

Frequent species identified here include ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens.*

Occasional species identified here include false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius,* crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* and sorrel *Rumex acetosa*.

Rare species identified here include shepherd's purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris,* mouse-eared chickweed *Cerastium fontanum,* marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre,* spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, Franchet's cotoneaster *Cotoneaster franchetii,* cock's-foot *Dactylus glomerata,* rush species *Juncaceae* sp, perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne,* meadow buttercup *Ranunculus acris,* broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius,* ragwort *Senecio jacobaea,* prickly sowthistle *Sonchus asper,* common sowthistle *Sonchus oleraceus,* tansy *Tanacetum vulgare,* dandelion *Taraxacum officinale,* clover species *Trifolium* sp. and common vetch *Vicia sativa.*

3.2.8 g4 – Modified grassland: 32 – Scattered trees, 108 – Frequently mown.

There is an area of modified grassland on the north and center of the site. The grassland has a very short sward and is dominated by rye grasses and clover. The grassland is frequently mown and contains scattered trees (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 7 - 10**).

Dominant species identified here include perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne* and clover species *Trifolium* sp.

Abundant species identified here include creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*.

Frequent species identified here include broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius* and dandelion *Taraxacum officinale.*

Occasional species identified here include mouse-eared chickweed *Cerastium fontanum,* common sowthistle *Sonchus oleraceus* and chickweed *Stellaria media.*

Rare species identified here include common bent *Agrostis capillaris,* false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense,* ash *Fraxinus excelsior,* common plantain *Plantago major,* goat willow *Salix caprea,* rose spiraea *Spiraea douglasii* and stinging nettle *Urtica dioica.*

3.2.9 h3g – Rhododendron scrub: 32 – Scattered trees, 523 – Non-native, 524 – Invasive non-native species, 532 – Scattered grass.

There is an area of rhododendron scrub on the northeast of the site. The scrub is dominated by non-native species: pontic rhododendron (which is an invasive non-native species) and cherry laurel. There are several scattered trees and scattered grasses (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 11 - 14**).

Dominant species identified here include cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus* and pontic rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum.*

Abundant species identified here include Franchet's cotoneaster *Cotoneaster franchetii*.

Frequent species identified here include hairy willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*.

Occasional species identified here include creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense,* foxglove *Digitalis purpurea*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens,* bramble *Rubus fruticosus* and broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius.*

Rare species identified here include common bent *Agrostis capillaris,* cock's-foot *Dactylus glomerata,* tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa,* beech *Fagus sylvatica,* rush species *Juncaceae* sp., holly *Ilex aquifolium*, spruce species *Picea* sp., bracken *Pteridium aquilinum,* goat willow *Salix caprea* and rowan *Sorbus aucuparia.*

3.2.10 f2d – Aquatic marginal vegetation: 14 – Scattered rushes, 81 – Ruderal or ephemeral

There are areas of aquatic marginal vegetation on the banks of the pond on site which is dominated by reed grass and contains scattered rushes. (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 15 - 16**).

Dominant species identified here include reed canary grass *Phalaris arundinacea*.

Abundant species identified here include creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense,* hairy willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* and creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens.*

Frequent species identified here include rush species *Juncaceae* sp. and ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata.*

Occasional species identified here include cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris*, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius,* crested dogs-tail *Cynosurus cristatus,* tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa,* common reed *Phragmites australis* and prickly sowthistle *Sonchus asper.*

Rare species identified here include common bent *Agrostis capillaris,* hairy bittercress *Cardamine hirsuta*, marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*, cock's-foot *Dactylus glomerata* bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, sorrel *Rumex acetosa,* broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius,* ragwort *Senecio jacobaea,* tansy *Tanacetum vulgare* and common vetch *Vicia sativa*.

3.2.11 u1 – Urban: 81 – Ruderal or ephemeral.

There is a small area of ruderal vegetation on the centre of the site (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 17**).

Dominant species identified here include creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, hairy willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* and stinging nettle *Urtica dioica*,

Abundant species identified here include hairy bittercress *Cardamine hirsute*.

Frequent species identified here include creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens.*

Occasional species identified here include broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*.

Rare species identified here include foxglove *Digitalis purpurea*.

3.2.12 u1 – Urban: 523 – Non-native, 847 – Introduced shrub.

There is a small area of introduced shrub on the north of the site. The shrubs are composed of Japanese acuba *Aucuba japonica* only (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 18**).

3.2.13 u1b – Developed land; sealed surface

There are areas of developed land sealed surface on the north of site, in the form of access to the existing buildings on site (**Appendix 1**).

3.2.14 u1b5 – Buildings.

There are six buildings on site. Building 1 is the only building to be impacted by

the proposed development (**Appendix 1**). The building is a single story constructed of traditional stone with a single pitched roof made of metal. There are wooden fascia boards on east and west elevations.

3.2.15 u1c – Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface.

There is a farm track constructed of compacted hardcore on the east of the site and an area that has been recently cleared on the south of the site (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 19**).

3.2.16 u1f – Sparsely vegetated urban land: 202 – Young trees – self set, 203 – Mature tree, 510 – Bare ground, 532 – Scattered grass.

There is an area of sparsely vegetated urban land present on the west of the site. (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 20**).

Abundant species identified here include creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* and clover species *Trifolium* sp.

Frequent species identified here include creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens.*

Occasional species identified here include cock's-foot *Dactylus glomerata*, fringed willowherb *Epilobium ciliatum*, nipplewort *Lapsana communis,* poplar species *Populus* sp. and prickly sowthistle *Sonchus asper*.

Rare species identified here include Franchet's cotoneaster *Cotoneaster franchetii,* foxglove *Digitalis purpurea,* holly *Ilex aquifolium*, cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus,* bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, elder *Sambucus nigra,* chickweed *Stellaria media* and yew *Taxus baccata.*

3.2.17 r1g – Other standing water: 41 – Pond (non-priority).

(**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 15, 16 & 21**).

3.2.18 h2b – Non-native and ornamental hedgerow: 532 – Non-native, 829 – Vegetated garden.

There a single non-native and ornamental hedgerow on the north of the site, bordering a vegetated garden which is adjacent to site. The hedgerow contains mixed species, the vast majority of which are non-native species (**Appendix 1 & Appendix 3 photos 22**).

Dominant species identified here include cypress species *Cupressus* sp. and cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*.

Abundant species identified here include bamboo species *Bambusa* sp.

Frequent species identified here include spruce species *Picea* sp.

Occasional species identified here include yew *Taxus baccata* and goat willow *Salix caprea*.

Rare species identified here include box *Buxus sempervirens.*

3.3 Protected Species

Plants

3.3.1 There are species records for bluebell within the search area.

3.3.2 No Protected or notable plant species were recorded on site. The floral species present on site are widespread, common and typical of the habitat type. Protected plants are not considered further in this assessment.

3.3.3 There are species records for Curley waterweed, Himalayan balsam, Japanese knotweed and variegated yellow archangel within the search area.

3.3.4 Pontic rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* was recorded on site in the rhododendron scrub habitat. The vast majority of the area is made up of rhododendron (**Appendix 1 target note & Appendix 3 photos 11 - 14**). Further recommendations are provided in Section 4.

Invertebrates

3.3.5 There are no records for stag beetle from the search area, and there is limited habitat suitable for stag beetle and stag beetle larvae on site.

3.3.6 There are species records for small heath and wall, within the search area.

3.3.7 There is potentially suitable habitat on the site to support generalist invertebrates. The grassland and mature trees on site have the potential to support common and widespread invertebrate species. Further recommendations are provided in Section 4.

Amphibians

3.3.8 There are no Natural England mitigation licences, class licences or eDNA pond results which appear to be present within the vicinity shown on MAGIC.

3.3.9 There were records of common frog within the search area.

3.3.10 There were no records for great crested newt within the search area.

3.3.11 The site was assessed for its suitability to support great crested newt and other amphibians – in its current state the site is considered to hold average suitability for great crested newt. The pond on site is potentially suitable habitat for breeding Great crested newts and the rhododendron scrub adjacent offers

suitable habitat for sheltering/hibernating Great crested newts. The pond on site was subjected to a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) for Great crested newts. The pond scored 0.63, giving the pond average suitability for great crested newt. Further recommendations have been provided in section 4.

Table 6: The Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) results for ponds surveyed on site.

Great crested newts HSI results	
Pond reference number	Pond 1
Grid reference	SE 14539 06146
Factor 1: Location	1.00
Factor 2: Area	*
Factor 3: Pond permanence	0.90
Factor 4: Water quality	0.33
Factor 5: Shade	1.00
Factor 6: Waterfowl	0.67
Factor 7: Fish	0.33
Factor 8: Pond density	1.00
Factor 9: Terrestrial habitat quality	0.67
Factor 10: Macrophyte cover	0.35
HSI Score	**0.63**
Suitability for great crested newts	**Average**

*Factor 2: pond area was omitted from the calculation, as the pond was greater than 2000 m^2.

Badger

3.3.12 There were records for badgers within the search area. Additionally, the site falls within the area of increased probability of badger activity.

3.3.13 No field signs of badger or badger setts were recorded on site. There is however potential foraging habitat in the grassland habitats and opportunities for sett creation in the rhododendron scrub on the site. Additionally, badgers are highly mobile and may be utilising the site for dispersal. Further recommendations have been provided in Section 4.

Bats

3.3.14 There are no Natural England mitigation licences which appear to be present within the vicinity shown on MAGIC.

3.3.15 There were field records for unidentified bats, Daubenton's bat, Leisler's bat, noctule, brown long-eared bat, unidentified myotis species, whiskered/Brandt's bat and common pipistrelle within the search area.

3.3.16 There were one roost records for noctule (unspecified roost: 30 individuals) three for unidentified pipistrelle species (all unspecified, largest roost: 21 - 50 individuals), two for common pipistrelle (day roosts, largest roost: 2 individuals) and three for unidentified bats (day roosts, largest roost: 2 individuals) within the search area.

Buildings

Building One

3.3.17 The building is a single storey, constructed of traditional stone with a single pitched roof made of metal and fascia boards. The building is currently used for manufacture of dairy products.

3.3.18 **PRFs PRESENT:** there is a gap between the flashing and barge board on the northern aspect, gaps on the fascia on the eastern and south aspects and missing mortar/stone and gaps in the eave on the southern aspect.

BAT ROOST POTENTIAL: LOW

Trees

3.3.19 None of the trees on site were of sufficient age to contain any cavities suitable for tree roosting bats and no potential roosting features were recorded.

Foraging and Commuting Habitat

3.3.20 The site contains habitats suitable for foraging and commuting bats: grasslands, rhododendron scrub, pond and scattered trees.

3.3.21 The site is surrounded by agricultural grasslands and doesn't contain linear features in the vicinity of the site. The site is therefore considered to be relatively isolated within the wider landscape. Therefore, the habitat present on site is assessed as low quality.

3.3.22 Therefore, the bat assemblage is assessed of low importance for nature conservation. Further recommendations for further surveys/regarding lighting impacts are given in Section 4.

Birds

3.3.23 There were records for curlew, golden plover, lapwing, house martin and swallow within the search area.

3.3.24 The buildings, scrub and trees on site have the potential to support nesting birds. Further recommendations have been provided in section 4.

Dormice

3.3.25 There were no records for dormice within the search area.

3.3.26 The site is considered to hold no suitability for dormice as the site lacks vegetative complexity, protective cover, foraging opportunities and connectivity to the wider landscape. Dormouse will not be mentioned further in this report.

Otter

3.3.27 There were no records for otter within the search area.

3.3.28 In its current state the site is considered to hold negligible suitability to support otter. There is potential suitable habitat for foraging in the pond habitat on site and potential for otter holts in the rhododendron scrub adjacent to the pond. However, the site lacks potentially suitable habitat connectivity to other suitable habitats further afield. The closest watercourse is the River Ribble, which is located 530m to the west of the site. The proposed development is not anticipated to adversely affect otters. However, precautionary measures are advised. Further recommendations have been provided in Section 4.

Reptiles

3.3.29 There were no records for reptiles within the search area.

3.3.30 In its current state the site is considered to hold negligible suitability for reptiles. The rhododendron scrub and dry-stone wall on the borders of the site is potentially suitable habitat for sheltering/hibernating reptiles. However, there is limited habitat connectivity between the site and other potentially suitable habitat further afield due to the agricultural grassland, road and built-up areas adjacent to the site. Reptiles will not be mentioned further in this report.

Water vole

3.3.31 There were no records for water vole within the search area.

3.3.32 In its current state the site is considered to hold negligible suitability to support water vole. There is potential suitable habitat for foraging in the pond habitat on site and potential for burrows in the banks of the pond. However, the site lacks potentially suitable habitat connectivity to other suitable habitats further afield. The closest watercourse is the River Ribble, which is located 530m to the west of the site. Water vole will not be mentioned further in this report.

3.3.33 Fish

3.3.34 There were records of brown trout within the search area.

3.3.35 These records are associated with the River Ribble which is located approximately 500m to the west of the site. There are no watercourse connections between the site and the river. Additionally the outflow of the pond is judged to be of insufficient size to support brown trout dispersal. Brown trout will not be mentioned further in this report.

Other mammals

3.3.36 There were no records for hedgehog and records for brown hare within the search area.

3.3.37 The grassland on site is potentially suitable foraging habitat for brown hare and brown hare are also a highly mobile species and may be also utilising the site

for dispersal. Further recommendations are provided in Section 4.

3.3.38 The rhododendron scrub on site is potentially suitable habitat for breeding, resting and hibernating hedgehogs. Hedgehogs are also a mobile species and may be also utilising the site for dispersal. Further recommendations are provided in Section 4.

4. Assessment of Effects

4.1.1 This section identifies and characterises potential impacts of the proposed development on each Important Ecological Feature identified in the preceding section. Measures to avoid, mitigate and compensate for these impacts are described, and any further surveys required are outlined below.

Protected species

Invertebrates

Impacts

4.1.2 Any vegetation clearance has the potential to adversely affect invertebrate species and the species which feed upon them. A significant permanent negative effect at the site level is possible.

Mitigation

4.1.3 The proposed works provide an opportunity to institute enhancement for biodiversity through native species planting and the addition of faunal boxes. A landscaping plan should be devised which incorporates, as far as practicable, native species with known benefits to wildlife common in the area.

4.1.4 During site clearance a watching brief will be maintained for the removal of any dead trees/dead wood. Should stag beetle larvae be found these will be re-buried in a safe shady place with some of the original rotting wood.

4.1.5 Prior to the removal of the tree stumps a section of felled broadleaved tree (oak, ash, elm, sycamore, lime, hornbeam, apple, cherry) should be buried to act as a receptor for any stag beetle larvae found. These should be 10-50 cm in diameter with the bark still attached and buried to a minimum depth of 60 cm.

Amphibians

Impacts

4.1.6 Adverse impacts to the waterbodies on site and removal of scrub on site has the potential to disturb, injure or kill great crested newts and other amphibians, resulting in a breach of legislation.

Mitigation

4.1.7 One eDna survey between mid-March and the end of June is required to determine presence/likely absence of great crested newts on site.

4.1.8 A precautionary approach should be adopted to include an **Ecological Clerk of Works** (ECoW) being present. Scrub and brash piles to be removed should be hand searched by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist prior to removal, to ensure no amphibians are currently resting in vegetation.

Badger & Otter

Impacts

4.1.9 Any vegetation clearance, open excavations or open pipes have the potential to adversely affect badgers and otters, through injury, death or entrapment.

Mitigation

4.1.10 Any excavations created during the development stage must be covered at night or appropriate escape routes implemented. Planks are to be placed at a 45-degree angle for badgers and otters to escape safely. Any open pipes must be capped.

Bat assemblage

4.1.11 Should any bats be found during any stage of the development, all work must stop immediately and a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist must be contacted. Natural England will provide advice on the best course of action. It must be stated that this is a legal requirement, and that bats may only be handled and their roost disturbed by an experienced ecologist holding an appropriate licence.

Further survey

4.1.12 As the site has been considered to have a low potential of supporting bat roosting sites, we recommend that one dusk emergence survey should be carried out to establish the absence/presence of roosting bats at **Longley Farm, Longley Lane**.

4.1.13 Dusk bat surveys are conducted between May until September and are used to determine whether bats are currently roosting at a site. It can also give you an indication of the level of bat activity at a survey site and any specific foraging patterns. Dusk surveys are started around 30 minutes before sunset and up to 2 hours after and look for the emergence of bats from their roost sites. If bats are then confirmed to be roosting on the site, a Bat Mitigation Licence may be applied for from Natural England, and a mitigation plan devised so development causes as little impact on local bat populations as possible. It is recommended at Longley Farm, Longley Lane Centre that One survey is required.

Impacts

4.1.14 Construction activity, noise and lighting would have the potential to disturb commuting and foraging bats and may result in abandonment of roosts or core foraging areas adjacent to the Site.

4.1.15 The significant negative effect of disturbance during the construction phase are likely to be short-term in localised areas, and the bulk of any disturbance from construction work could be expected to take place mainly during daylight hours

even in the absence of controls, when bats would not be foraging or commuting.

4.1.16 Therefore, disturbance from operational lighting from the new building is a possible significant permanent negative effect at the site level.

Mitigation

4.1.17 The production and implementation of a Construction Method Statement (CMS) will be put into place prior to the beginning of the construction phase.

4.1.18 The CMS being implemented will prevent any disturbance impacts to bats during the construction period.

Lighting

4.1.19 All lighting installed as part of the development will be in line with Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at night. The following will be required:

- LED lighting will be used and light levels will be kept as low as possible. Metal halide, fluorescent sources will not be used.
- Lighting will be directed to where it is required.
- Only luminaires with no light output above 90 degrees and/or an upward light ratio of 0% and with good optical control will be used, luminaires will always be mounted on the horizontal, i.e. no upward tilt.
- Any external security lighting will be set on motion-sensors and short (1min) timers.
- Internal lighting within the new rooms will be recessed where installed in proximity to windows to reduce glare and light spill.
- Light sources will emit minimal ultra-violet light, peak higher than 550nm and be of a warm white spectrum (ideally <2700 Kelvin).
- The use of bollard or low-level downward directional luminaires is strongly discouraged.

4.1.20 Providing the Lighting Strategy is adhered to, there will be an insignificant effect on the bat assemblage from lighting during the operational phase.

<u>Nesting birds</u>

Impacts

4.1.21 The clearance of the vegetation on site and works to the building have the potential to cause killing or injury to nesting birds. A significant permanent negative effect at the site level is possible.

Mitigation

4.1.22 Vegetation clearance should be conducted outside of the nesting bird season

to avoid disturbing the birds (the nesting season is considered to run between 1st March and 31st August).

4.1.23 Where this is not possible a suitably qualified ecologist should check potential nesting habitat immediately prior to clearance. Where nesting birds are encountered works must be postponed until the nestlings have fledged.

4.1.24 No residual negative impacts are anticipated from loss of nesting habitat on the bird assemblage at a site level given the proposed mitigation.

Brown hare & Hedgehog

Impacts

4.1.25 The clearance of vegetation has the potential to cause the loss of some of the existing foraging opportunities, as well as killing or injury to individuals present. A significant permanent negative effect at the site level is possible.

Mitigation

4.1.26 The mitigation proposed above for vegetation clearance should prevent impacts to hedgehogs and brown hare. No clearance will be undertaken during the winter hibernation period and staged clearance would allow animals to move safely out of the works area.

4.1.27 Any excavations created during the development stage must be covered at night and appropriate escape routes implemented. Planks are to be placed at a 45-degree angle for brown hares or hedgehogs to escape safely. Any open pipes must be capped.

4.1.28 No residual impacts on badger, brown hare or hedgehog from killing or injury are anticipated following implementation of this mitigation.

Schedule 9 plants

4.1.29 Species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) were recorded on site, Schedule 9 makes it illegal to allow or cause these plants to grow ‘in the wild’ and they should be removed from site to prevent their spread.

4.1.30 Control of the pontic rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum* on site should be dealt with prior to or during the construction process. The plants should be completely removed as part of the re-development to prevent their further spread throughout the site and into surrounding areas. Details of the measures required to control invasive plant species on site should be detailed in a separate report prior to commencing works on site.

5. Enhancements

5.1.1 In line with both local and national planning policy, the opportunity has been taken to design habitat enhancements into the proposed development. These enhancements, described below, will also be of benefit to the Section 41 species (and local BAP species) known to be present within the ZoI. Measures which may be included within the Biodiversity Enhancement Plan are outlined below.

- The provision of nest boxes for bird species such as swift and house sparrow on the walls of the new building (if possible) will provide permanent nesting for species in decline. Swift boxes have the added benefit of being used often by other non-target species such as house sparrows.
- Both swift and house sparrows are colonial species and therefore the bricks/boxes will be fitted in groups with a minimum of three within proximity to each other to form colonies. The provision of groups of swift bricks/ boxes on site (if possible) will enhance the habitat for the local bird population. Swift bricks will be fixed no less than two storeys (4.5-5m) above ground level and nest boxes can be sited on any aspect of a building except the southern side (unless shaded by the eaves) to prevent the young becoming heat stressed.
- Provision of integrated bat boxes/bricks (if possible) within the new building to provide new roosting opportunities for the local bat populations. The box/brick will be fitted on south or west facing walls, as close to the eaves as possible. Bat bricks/boxes should not be fitted above or immediately adjacent to windows. These bat boxes are self-contained with only a small entrance slot visible on the external wall and can be rendered over or stone/brick faced.
- Installation of bee bricks (if possible) within the walls of the new building. Provision of bee bricks can provide excellent alternative habitat for solitary non-stinging bees. Six bee bricks will be incorporated within the design of the site. These bricks will be erected 1 metre above ground level within the stonework.
- Planting of fruit trees within the landscaping. A minimum of one fruit tree will be planted within the landscaping. This will provide excellent autumn and winter foraging for a number of species particularly birds as well as fruit for the new owners.
- The areas to be planted as flowerbeds should include plants that provide good nectar sources for invertebrates such as bees and attract insects which will provide foraging for birds and attract moths for bats. Species include honeysuckle, jasmine, evening primrose, hebe, sedum, night scented stock, lavender, chives, geranium, foxgloves, aquilegia, wallflower, ragwort and fuchsia.

6. Survey Results

6.1.1 An Amphibian Survey & Report was conducted by JCA Ltd. in June 2025 (Ref: 22888b/GB). A HSI survey and eDNA survey was conducted on the pond on site. The HSI result found the pond to have a HSI score of 0.63 (average). The eDNA result was negative for Great crested newts.

6.1.2 A Bat Emergence Survey Report was conducted by JCA Ltd. in July 2025 (Ref: 22888b/RPS). Dusk emergence surveys were undertaken on 10/07/2025 to identify any bat use of the building. The surveys found no emergence activity from the surveyed building, and moderate levels of commuting and forging activity around the site.

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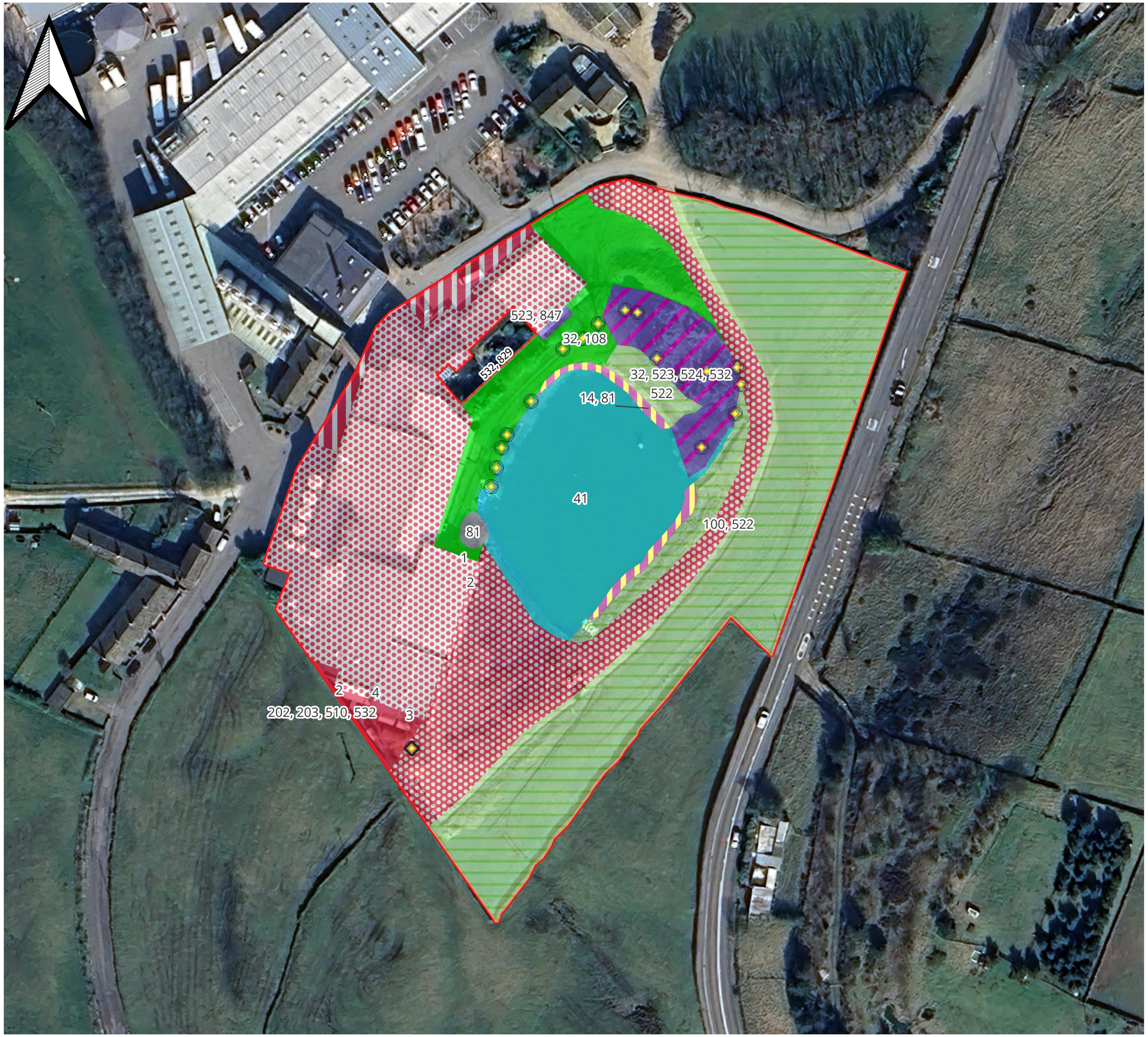
Appendices

Appendix 1: UKHab Habitat Map



Site name & address

Longley Farm, Longley Lane, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD9 2JD

Key

Red Line Boundary

INDIVIDUAL TREES
- Existing Large Urban Tree
- Existing Medium Urban Tree
- Existing Small Urban Tree

HEDGEROWS
- Non-native and ornamental hedgerow

HABITATS
- g3c – Other neutral grassland
- g4 – Modified grassland
- h3g – Rhododendron scrub
- Urban: 81 – Ruderal or ephemeral
- u1 – Urban: 523 – Non-native, 847 – Introduced shrub
- u1b – Developed land; sealed surface
- u1b5 – Buildings
- u1c – Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- u1f – Sparsely vegetated urban land
- r1g – Other standing water
- f2d – Aquatic marginal vegetation

Potential Roosting Feature

1 - Gap in Flashing/Barge board, 2 - Gap in fascia

3 - Missing mortar/stone, 4 - Gap in eave

Secondary codes:
14 – Scattered rushes, 32 – Scattered trees,
41 – Pond (non-priority), 81 – Ruderal or ephemeral,
100 – Grazed, 108 – Frequently mown,
202 – Young trees – self set, 203 – Mature tree,
522 – Native, 523 – Non-native,
524 – Invasive non-native species, 510 – Bare ground,
532 – Scattered grass, 829 – Vegetated garden,
847 – Introduced shrub.

Scale 0 25 50 m

Site	Client
Longley Farm	J & E Dickinson
Project: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal	Author: JF
Plan ref: 22888f/JF	Revision: 0

Appendix 2: Proposed Development Plan

KEY

- Planning application boundary
- Existing building extents
- Proposed Extension
- Existing boundary wall/ Low stone wall
- Proposed sandstone wall
- Proposed indicative levels (refer to Engineer) FFL: Finished Floor Level TOW: Top of Wall TOK: Top of Kerb BOK: Bottom of Kerb
- Existing levels (in brackets) FFL: Finished Floor Level TOW: Top of Wall TOK: Top of Kerb BOK: Bottom of Kerb
- Gradients - Indicative (Refer to Engineer) Proposed (underlined) Existing (in brackets)
- Fall of Ground
- Post and Wire Fence
- Proposed footway to east of extention ; Reclaimed Sandstone Yorkstone (locally sourced)
- Proposed Apron footway : Resin bound gravel KBI Flexistone - Meadow
- Proposed Accessway: Heavy duty HGV trafficable cell system - Geo synthetics TTE. Seeded with low growing meadow
- Proposed Embankment Reinforcement: Flex MSE or similar Vegetated Wall System: Hydro seeded
- Proposed Embankment Reinforcement: Geogrid Matting
- Proposed Natural Erosion Protection: Coir Rolls
- Proposed hedge planting
- Proposed Marginal Aquatic Planting
- Proposed Mown Grass
- Proposed Low Scrubland
- Proposed Rough Grassland
- Proposed Native Meadow
- Proposed Woodland Understorey
- Extents of Waterbody & Wading Pool
- Proposed Pontoon: Floating Wetland
- Proposed Wading Pool Plug Planting
- Proposed Sedum Green Roof
- Existing Tree (Removed)
- Existing Tree (Retained) Refer to Arb Report
- Proposed Tree

GENERAL NOTES:

1. Do not scale from this drawing.
2. All levels, dimensions & setting out to be checked & agreed on site.
3. All dimensions are in millimetres unless otherwise stated.
4. All drawings must be read in conjunction with all Landscape, Civil, Geotechnical & Structural Engineers, National Highways, British Waterways and Architectural Documentation.
5. The contractor shall be responsible for confirming the position of all existing services, structures and works including building set out, in and around the site, prior to the commencement of works.
6. Contractor to confirm all dimensions and levels with Landscape Architect, prior to commencing work and ordering materials.
7. The contractor is to protect all listed structures during works.
8. This drawing is copyright protected & may not be reproduced in whole or part without written authority.
9. Typical detail drawings are to be considered as design intent and not construction drawings. Selected Fabricators and Manufacturer's to provide fabrication drawings for XQLA approval

REFER TO:

XQLA Drawings:
842-XQL-00-00-DR-L-0110 - General Arrangement
842-XQL-00-00-DR-L-0200 - Sections
842-XQL-00-00-DR-L-0300 - Typical Junction Detail-
842-XQL-00-00-DR-L-0400 - Softworks Plan
842-XQL-00-00-DR-L-0401 - Typical Softwork Detail
842-XQL-00-00-DR-L-0402 - Tree Protection Plan

Architects Drawing:
120 103 Existing Cottage Cheese Site Plan Rev B
120 110 Proposed Cottage Cheese Site Plan Rev E
120_203 Existing Dairy Roof Plan.pdf
120_220 Proposed Dairy Ground Floor Plan Rev B
120_222 Proposed Roof Plan Rev A
120_301 Existing Dairy Elevations
120_310 Proposed Dairy Elevations Rev A

Arb and Ecologist Reports:
22888f Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report
22888b Biodiversity Accounting Issue
22888-D/A/B Arboricultural Report and Arboricultural Impact Assessment

Refer to Architect's drawings for building interface
Refer to Arboricultural & Topographical survey

SCALE 1:200

0m 5m 10m

REVISION	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN BY	APPRVD BY
PL06	260112	Pre App Comments update	EL	XQ
PL05	260106	Planning Issue	EL	XQ
PL04	251222	Draft Planning	EL	XQ
PL03	250917	BNG Update	EL	XQ
PL01	250804	First issue	SK	XQ

PLANNING

842_LONGLEY FARM, HOLMFIRTH
PROJECT

GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
DRAWING NAME

1:200 @ A0	JULY'25	S2	PL06
SCALE	DATE	STATUS	REVISION

842-XQL-00-00-DR-L-0100
DRAWING NO.

SK	KoH	XQ
DRAWN BY	CHECKED BY	APPROVED BY

Xanthe Quayle Landscape Architects
01484 841000 studio@xanthequayle.com
Globe Arts Studio, Slaithwaite, HD7 5AD. Reg. 09288639 xanthequayle.com

Appendix 3: Photographic Evidence

Photo 1: Other neutral grassland on the centre of the site, viewed from the northwest.

Photo 2: Other neutral grassland on the centre of the site, viewed from the southeast.

Photo 3: Other neutral grassland (g3c2) on the southeast of the site, viewed from the southwest.

Photo 4: Other neutral grassland (g3c2) on the northeast of the site, viewed from the west.

Photo 5: Other neutral grassland (g3c2) on the south of the site, viewed from the northeast.

Photo 6: Other neutral grassland (g3c2).

Photo 7: Modified grassland on the north of the site, viewed from the southeast.

Photo 8: Modified grassland on the north of the site, viewed from the east.

Photo 9: Modified grassland on the north of the site, viewed from the south.

Photo 10: Modified grassland on the centre of the site, viewed from the south.

Photo 11: Rhododendron scrub on the north of the site.

Photo 12: Rhododendron scrub on the north of the site.

Photo 13: Rhododendron scrub on the north of the site, viewed from the southwest.

Photo 14: Rhododendron scrub on the north of the site, viewed from the south.

Photo 15: Aquatic marginal vegetation on the northern shore of the pond on site, viewed from the west.

Photo 16: Small areas of aquatic marginal vegetation on the southeastern shore of the pond on site, viewed from the southwest.

Photo 17: Ruderal vegetation on the centre of the site, viewed from the north.

Photo 18: Introduced shrub on the north of the site, viewed from the south.

Photo 19: Artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface on the south of the site, viewed from the east.

Photo 20: Sparsely vegetated urban land on the south of the site, viewed from the west.

Photo 21: Pond on the centre of the site, viewed from the north.

Photo 22: Non-native and ornamental hedgerow on the northwest of the site, viewed from the south.

Appendix 4: Relevant Nature Conservation Legislation and Policy

This Appendix is intended to provide an overview of the main features of legislation and policy relating to nature conservation in England and the implications for development.

KEY WILDLIFE LEGISLATION

ENVIRONMENT ACT 2021

The Environment Act 2021 received royal assent in November 2021 and introduces new environmental protection regimes. This includes the creation of the Office for Environmental Protection who will oversee the framework. The Act includes several measures which impact on the planning application process to provide measures to ensure developments result in a net gain in biodiversity.

The Act provides a timeframe of 2 years from receiving royal assent for the production of the required regulations to implement the mandatory requirement of 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) for new developments. This apples from the 12th February for major applications and 2nd April for small sites. In England, BNG is becoming mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (known as the "Habitats Regulations") was recently amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.

The Habitats Regulations provide for the designation of both Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in the UK. The Regulations also prohibit certain actions relating to European Protected Species (EPS), which include Hazel Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius*, Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus*, European Otter *Lutra lutra* and all native species of bat.

Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the principal mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Certain species of bird, animal and plant (including all of the European Protected Species listed above) are afforded protection under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. The Act also contains measures for the protection of the countryside, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and public rights of way as well as preventing the establishment of invasive non-native species that may be detrimental to native wildlife in Schedule 9.

Countryside & Rights of Way Act 2000

Many of the provisions of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000 have been incorporated as amendments into the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and some provisions have now been superseded by later legislation such as The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006).

The most relevant changes provided by the CRoW Act include the added protection given to SSSIs and other important sites for nature conservation. Importantly, under the Act it became a criminal offence to "recklessly disturb" Schedule 1 nesting birds and species protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. It also enabled heavier penalties on conviction of wildlife offences.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 was intended to raise the profile of biodiversity amongst all public authorities and to make biodiversity an integral part of policy and decision-making processes. The NERC Act also improved wildlife protection by amending the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Section 40 (S40) of the Act places a 'Biodiversity Duty' on all public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions. This includes giving consideration to the restoration and enhancement of species and habitats.

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. This was published in 2007 and is commonly referred to as the "S41 list". Public authorities have a responsibility to give specific consideration to the S41 list when exercising their normal functions.

PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

Listed below is the main planning policy and government guidance that relates to the conservation of nature and development at all levels of government.

National Level

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied in local-level policy and decision making. The National Planning Framework was re-issued in July 2018 and updated in February 2019, July 2021 and September 2023. Key points relevant to the Natural Environment are given below.

> *8. Re: Sustainable development. The NPPF recognizes "that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives).*

These are the economic objective, the social objective, and the environmental objective; the full text of paragraph c) relating to this third objective reads as follows:

> *"to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy."*

174. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity … (in a manner commensurate withy the statutory status or identified quality in the development plan)

b) Recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits form natural capital and ecosystem services.

d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.

175. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value.

176. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National

Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

177. permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:

a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;

b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and

c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

180. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

> *a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
>
> *b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
>
> *c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
>
> *d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*

181. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

> *a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;*
>
> *b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and*
>
> *c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.*

182. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site."

Local Level

- *Kirklees Local Plan Strategy and Policies*

BIODIVERSITY PLANS AND STRATEGIES

An overview of the key biodiversity plans and strategies in the UK, and their implications for development, are set out below.

National level

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan 2007 (UK BAP) has been superseded by the *UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework* and individual national biodiversity strategies. The UK framework sets out the overarching vision, strategic goals and priority activities for the UK. The Framework's overall vision is that "by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people." In England, *Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services* is the national biodiversity strategy, which has the stated mission "(…)to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people."

Note some local plans and government guidance documents/circulars still refer to the UK BAP and 'UK BAP priority habitats and species'. These habitats and species are listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act, and **remain a material consideration in the planning process.** They are now described as 'Species/Habitats of Principal Importance', though they are also commonly referred to as 'Section 41 Species/Habitats' or simply 'Priority Species/Habitats'. Further guidance is given in the relevant sections below.

Local level

Despite the changes to national level biodiversity policy described above, county and district level BAPs still apply.

Delivering Biodiversity Opportunities

Where practicable, opportunities should also be sought to achieve a **net gain** (i.e. enhancement) of biodiversity. Support for biodiversity enhancement is provided in the Public Authority 'Biodiversity Duty' under the NERC Act 2006 and in the key principles of the NPPF, as described above.

SITES DESIGNATED FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURE

Statutory Sites

Internationally Important Sites

Ramsar Sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) provide the primary legal basis for the protection of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in Great Britain. Ramsar sites are, as a matter of national planning policy, subject to the same strict protection. Any plan or project considered likely to affect a SAC, SPA or Ramsar site must be subject to an assessment.

Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance. The majority of terrestrial Ramsar sites in England are also notified as SPAs and/or Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

SACs are sites which support internationally important habitats and/or species listed as being of Community. SPAs are sites which support internationally important numbers of bird species. Together, SACs and SPAs make up the National Site Network.

Any plan or project considered likely to affect a SAC, SPA or Ramsar site must be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), as set out under Regulation 63 of the Habitats Regulations 2017(as amended).

The Local Authority (or other 'competent authority') carries out the HRA, but the onus is on the developer to provide the necessary information to inform this process.

Under the Habitats Regulation 2017(as amended), the competent authority must determine in the first instance whether a proposed development is likely to have a significant effect on the National Site Network site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The stage of the HRA is known as 'screening'.

If a likely significant effect cannot be screened out, then an 'Appropriate Assessment' must be undertaken to assess the implications against the site's conservation objectives.

Nationally Important Sites

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the CRoW Act 2000 provide the primary legal basis for the protection of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). These sites have been designated to capture the best examples of England's flora, fauna, geological or physiographical diversity.

National Nature Reserve (NNR)

NNRs are declared under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended by Environmental Protection Act 1990. They are managed to conserve their habitats or to provide special opportunities for scientific study of the

habitats communities and species represented within them. NNRs represent the very best parts of England's SSSIs. The majority of NNRs also have European nature conservation designation.

Regionally & Locally Important Sites

Local Nature Reserves

Local Nature Reserves are declared by local authorities under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 as living green spaces in towns, cities, villages and countryside. They provide opportunities for research and education, or for simply enjoying and having contact with nature. LNRs are usually protected from development through local planning documents which may be supplemented by local by-laws.

Non-Statutory Sites

Local Wildlife Sites

Local authorities may designate non-statutory sites for their nature conservation value based on important, distinctive and threatened habitats and species within a national, regional and local context. These sites are not legally protected but are given some protection through the planning system. These sites may be declared as 'County Wildlife Sites', 'Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation' (SINCs), or 'Sites of Nature Conservation Importance' (SNCIs) in local and structure plans. Non-statutory sites are a material consideration when planning applications are being determined.

Nature Conservation in Areas Outside Designated Sites

Various other features exist outside designated sites that are important for the conservation of nature and which are a material consideration in the planning system.

Habitats of Principal Importance in England

Fifty-six habitat types have been identified as Habitats of Principal Importance in England for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006. The NPPF, Government Circular 06/05, good practice guidance and the NERC Act place a clear responsibility on planning authorities to further the conservation of these habitats. They can be a material consideration in planning decisions, and so developers are advised to take reasonable measures to avoid or mitigate impacts to prevent their net loss and to enhance them where possible. Additional guidance to developers is typically provided in local level planning policy.

SPECIES PROTECTION

Legally Protected Species

Mammals

All wild mammals are protected against cruelty under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996, which makes it an offence to mutilate, kick, beat, nail or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

The following species of mammal are protected further by law in England:

Bats

There are 18 species of bat in the UK, seven of which are Species of Principal Importance in England. All bats and bat roosts are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Bats are also protected under the Habitat Regulations 2017 as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, where protection is retained under UK domestic legislation. It is an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture bats;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly disturb bats in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of bats to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young or the local distribution of or abundance of a species of bat;
- Intentionally, or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection (i.e. bat roosts) or intentionally or recklessly disturb a bat whilst it is occupying such a place;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat; and
- Possess, sell or transport a bat, or anything derived from it.

Development proposals affecting bats or their roosts require a Protected Species licence from Natural England. It should be noted that a licence is enacted under the Habitat Regulations 2017 and will continue to apply in UK Law through the Conservation of Habitats and Species (amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 and the European Union Withdrawal Act 2018 following the implementation of Brexit.

Dormouse

The Dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* is a Species of Principal Importance in England. It is legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and is afforded significant further protection as a European Protected Species under the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended). Collectively, this legislation makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture Dormice;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly disturb Dormice in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of Dormice to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young or the local distribution of or abundance of the species;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to places used by Dormice for shelter or protection (whether occupied or not) or intentionally or recklessly disturb a Dormouse whilst it is occupying such a place;

- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a Dormouse;
- Possess or transport a Dormouse (or any part thereof) unless under licence; and
- Sell or exchange Dormice.

Development proposals affecting the Dormouse require a European Protected Species licence from Natural England.

Badger

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 offers considerable protection to both badgers and badger setts. This legislation was enacted to protect the Badger *Meles meles* against baiting and not as a means of species recovery for it is common in England. It is an offence to cruelly treat, kill or take Badgers, but it is also illegal to intentionally or recklessly damage or disturb a badger sett whilst it indicates signs of current use by a Badger.

Natural England has issued guidance to help developers and their proponents avoid sett disturbance and to identify setts that are in current use[1]. It is important to maintain adequate foraging territory in development proposals affecting badgers as the destruction or severance of large areas of foraging territory could also be taken to include habitat loss. Licences to disturb Badgers and their setts in respect of development may be issued by Natural England provided provisions are made to minimise disturbance.

Birds

49 species of bird are listed as Species of Principal Importance in England. All birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it an offence, with certain exceptions (e.g. game birds), to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird and to take, damage or destroy their nests or eggs.

Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 affords extra protection for a number of species and applies harsher penalties for offences. Any intentional or reckless disturbance of a Schedule 1 bird, whilst it is nesting or rearing dependant young, constitutes an offence.

Regulation 10 of the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended) required appropriate authorities and conservation bodies, in the exercise of their functions, to take steps to secure ' the preservations, maintenance and re-establishment of sufficient diversity and area of habitat for wild birds in the United Kingdom, including by means of the upkeep, management and creation of such habitat..'

Reptiles

All four of the widespread British species of reptile, including the Common Lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, Slow-Worm *Anguis fragilis*, Grass Snake *Natrix natrix* and Adder *Vipera berus,* are Species of Principal Importance in England. They are protected under Schedule 5 (Sections 9.1, 9.5a, 9.5b) of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) from intentional killing, injury and trade. The habitat of the four widespread reptiles is not legally protected; however the replacement of habitat lost through development may be required through the planning system. Mitigation for these species

[1]Natural England (2009). Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended) Interpretation of 'Disturbance' in relation to badgers occupying a sett. Available from: http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/WMLG16_tcm6-11814.pdf
Natural England (2009). Guidance on 'Current Use' in the definition of a Badger Sett. Available from: http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/WMLG17_tcm6-11815.pdf

is not subject to licensing by Natural England but should nonetheless be planned to minimise disturbance.

The Smooth Snake *Coronella austriaca* and the Sand Lizard *Lacerta agilis* are the rarest reptile species in Britain. In addition to the protection that is afforded to the widespread species of reptile listed above, these species are protected further under Schedule 5 (Sections 9.4b and 9.4c) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). They are also European Protected Species protected under the Habitat Regulations 2017 (as amended). This legislation makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture Sand Lizards or Smooth Snakes;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly disturb Sand Lizards or Smooth Snakes in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of Sand Lizards or Smooth Snakes to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young or the local distribution or abundance of either species;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used by Sand Lizards or Smooth Snakes for shelter or protection, or intentionally or recklessly disturb a Sand Lizard or Smooth Snake whilst it is occupying such a place;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a Sand Lizard or Smooth Snake;
- Keep, sell, or exchange Sand Lizards or Smooth Snakes or their eggs; and
- Deliberately take or destroy their eggs

Development proposals affecting Smooth Snake or Sand Lizard require a European Protected Species licence from Natural England.

Great Crested Newt

The Great Crested Newt *Triturus cristatus* is a Species of Principal Importance in England. It is legally protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and is afforded significant further protection as a European Protected Species under the Habitats Regulations 2017 (as amended). Collectively, this legislation makes it an offence to:

- Intentionally or deliberately kill, injure or capture Great Crested Newts;
- Intentionally, deliberately or recklessly disturb Great Crested Newts in such a way as to be likely to significantly affect the ability of any significant group of Newts to survive, breed, or rear or nurture their young or the local distribution of or abundance the species;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used by Great Crested Newts for shelter or protection, or intentionally or recklessly disturb a Great Crested Newt whilst it is occupying such a place;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a Great Crested Newt; and
- Possess, sell or transport a Great Crested Newt, or anything derived from it.

Development proposals affecting the Great Crested Newt require a European Protected Species licence from Natural England. Intentional or reckless behaviour leading to an offence being committed as detailed above may result in maximum penalties of:

- Up to £5,000 fine per offence committed;
- A custodial sentence of up to six months instead of, or in addition to, a fine; and/or
- Items of equipment involved in committing the offence may be seized and detained.

In addition to the above penalties, it is likely that any European Protected Species mitigation Licence (EPSL) obtained for a site will be revoked whilst any wildlife offence is investigated. This will lead to immediate temporary and, depending on investigation outcomes, possible permanent restrictions on site works, as well as associated cost.

Species of Principal Importance in England

943 species have been identified as being of Principal Importance in England for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 (S41) of the NERC Act 2006. This list of species includes species found in England which have been identified as requiring action under the now superseded UK Biodiversity Action Plan 2007 (plus the Hen Harrier). While these species may not be legally protected, there is a clear responsibility on planning authorities to further their conservation. These species can be a material consideration in development control decisions and so developers are advised to take reasonable measures to avoid or mitigate impacts to prevent the net loss of these species and habitats and to enhance them where possible.

Invasive Non-Native Species

There are a number of species not ordinarily resident to the UK. Those which pose a significant threat to our ecology and economy are listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). For an offence to be committed, a species must be released or allowed to escape into the wild. For example, if a plant listed on Schedule 9 is not adequately controlled by a land owner, once they are aware that it is present, and the species is allowed to spread into adjoining areas, then this could constitute an offence.

Appendix 5: Author Qualifications

Adam West, Principal Ecologist

BSc (Hons) Animal and Wildlife Management, ACIEEM.

Adam joined JCA to lead the expanding ecology department. Having returned to education as a mature student, Adam studied Countryside Management for two years before undertaking a Batchelor's degree in Animal and Wildlife Management, for which he was awarded First Class Honours. Adam has many years' experience in ecological consultancy, working on projects ranging from individual planning applications to national infrastructure projects. Adam holds a Natural England Level 1 great crested newt survey class licence and a Natural England Level 2 bat survey class licence.

James Foster, Assistant Ecologist

BSc (Hons) Biology.

James gained his undergraduate degree in biology in 2012 from University of Leeds. James has plenty of experience in ecology, having worked countless projects of different scales all over the north and midlands. James has over 11 years of experience surveying anything from reptiles to hedgerows and holds a Great crested newt licence level 1 and is working towards his bat licence and barn owl licence.

Alex Donovan, Assistant Ecologist

MBiol BSc (Hons) Biology (Industrial)

Alex joined JCA in 2023 after graduating from the University of Leeds with a First Class Honours Integrated Master's degree in Biology, including an industrial placement year working in the Uplands Research Department of the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust. Alex is a CIEEM Qualifying Member, and a member of the BTO's Bird Ringing Scheme and Nest Record Scheme. Alex holds a Natural England barn owl survey licence, and is working towards additional survey licences for bats, great crested newts, and white-clawed crayfish.

Grace Bramley, Assistant Ecologist

BSc (Hons) Design and Innovation with Environmental Science

Grace joined JCA in 2024 after completing her degree from The Open University with a first-class honour's degree in design and environmental science. Prior to this she spent six years working in the automotive industry followed by three years in the chemical industry. She is conducting Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessments and working towards her protected species licenses.

The Information and advice which we have prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the CIEEM's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and bona fide opinions.

Signed

.....

James Foster *BSc (Hons)*

14/01/2026

Authorised by

REDACTED

.....

Grace Bramley *BSc (Hons)*

15/01/2025

For and on behalf of ***JCA Ltd***
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ECOLOGICAL SERVICES

Ecological Pre-Planning Services

- Phase 1 Habitat Surveys
- Great Crested Newt eDNA Sampling
- Protected species: Bat, Wintering and Nesting Bird, Badger, Amphibian, Otter, Water Vole, White-Clawed Crayfish, Dormice and Reptile Surveys.
- Preparation for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)
- Invasive Species Surveys
- Code for Sustainable Homes
- Butterfly & Insect Surveys

Ecological Post-Planning Services

- Biodiversity Enhancement Plans
- Protected Species Mitigation
- Ecological Management (Bat and Bird box installation and inspection)
- Planting Schemes
- Monitoring of bird or bat boxes.

ARBORICULTURAL SERVICES

Guidance for Architects & Developers

- British Standard 5837 Surveys
- Arboricultural Implications Assessments (AIA)
- Arboricultural Method Statements (AMS)

Advice for Engineers, Loss Adjusters and Insurers

- Tree Surveys for Subsidence
- Heave Assessment
- Tree Root Identification

Advice for Local Authorities and Social Housing

- Tree Safety Surveys
- Specialist Decay Detection
- Landscape and Orchard Design

Tree Advice for the Legal Profession

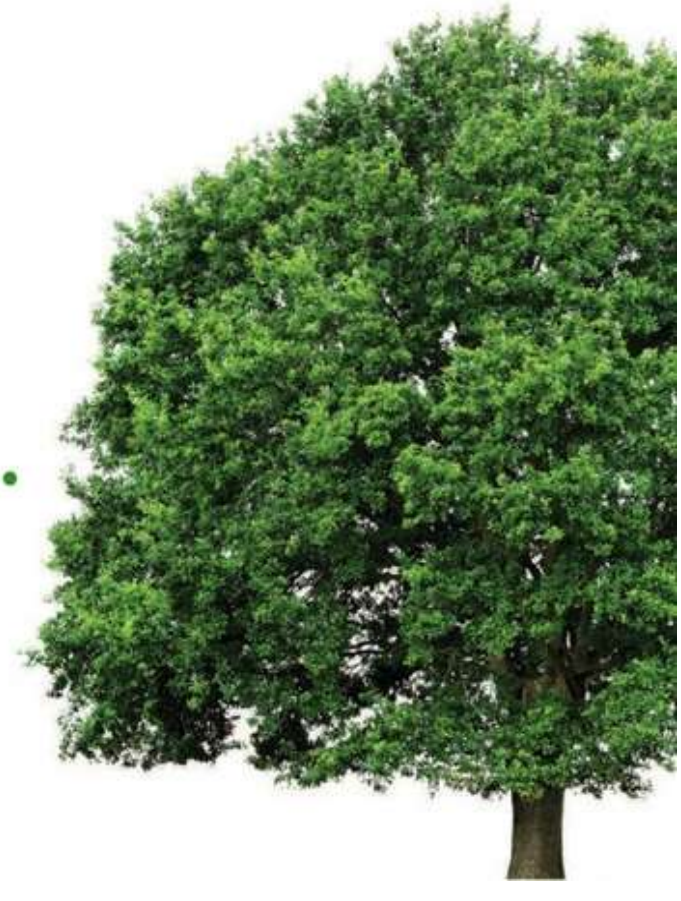
- Subsidence Litigation
- Personal Injury and Accident Investigation
- Expert Witness, Planning Inquiries and Appeals

Veteran Tree Management

- Ancient Woodland Management
- Veteran Tree Management

Tree Health and Pest and Disease Management

- Pest and Disease Surveys
- Tree Health Checks
- Disease Mitigation and Control



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