Carter Plantation, Meltham

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

HABITAT WORKS

April 2026

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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

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Executive Summary

Habitat Works Limited (Habitat Works) was commissioned in February 2026 by Paul Matthews Architectural to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for the land adjacent to Carter Plantation, Thick Hollins Road, Calmlands, Meltham, West Yorkshire, HD9 4JG (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 11155 08841), hereafter referred to as 'the Site'.

The Site boundary is detailed within the Paul Matthews Architectural drawing '*Location Plan* (Dwg No. 25/1208/01Revision P01 Dated 08/25). The PEA was required to inform proposals for the renovation of the existing house.

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

A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) has been commissioned to formally assess the impacts the proposals have on habitats on the Site. This identifies opportunities to increase the habitat value on the Site post-development and recommend measures necessary to achieve a 10% gain in-line with government policy.

The following is recommended with regards to protected or notable species:

- Works will follow Best Practice Measures (BPM) should be followed with regards to amphibians, badgers, nesting birds and reptiles; and,
- Consideration of enhancement opportunities for local species, including:
    - Installation of bat and bird boxes

1. Introduction

1.1 *Background*

1.1.1 Habitat Works Limited (Habitat Works) was commissioned in February 2026 by Paul Matthews Architectural to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) for the land adjacent to Carter Plantation, Thick Hollins Road, Calmlands, Meltham, Kirklees, West Yorkshire, HD9 4JG (central Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (OS NGR) SE 11155 08841), hereafter referred to as 'the Site'.

1.1.2 The Site boundary is detailed within the Paul Matthews Architectural drawing '*Location Plan'* (Dwg No. 25/1208/01Revision P01 Dated 08/25). The PEA was required to inform proposals for the renovation of the existing house.

1.1.3 This report details the findings of a PEA, comprising a data consultation and UK Habitat Classification survey undertaken in on the 10th February 2026. Methodologies employed during the surveys are described along with the survey findings, evaluation, assessment and recommendations for any further survey work and/or mitigation/enhancement as required.

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

2. Methodology

2.1 *Data Consultation*

2.1.1 Data consultation was undertaken by Habitat Works with the local records centre; West Yorkshire Ecology Service (WYES) in February 2026 as part of the ecological appraisal process, to determine whether any ecological features of note had previously been recorded within 2 km of the Site. Data requested included:

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

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

2.1.3 The Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) for Kirklees was also consulted for habitats and species afforded particular interest within the local area.

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

2.2 *Ecological Walkover Survey*

2.2.1 An ecological walkover survey was undertaken on the 10th February 2026 by Consultant Ecologist Ashleigh Brentnall BSc (Hons) ACIEEM and Graduate Ecologist Alice Shaw BSc (Hons) following best practice guidelines (UK Habitat Classification System (UKHab) (UKHab Working Group (UKHCWG) 2018)). This survey method aims to define habitats and vegetation types present and provide an indication of their relative abundance. This survey method aims to characterise habitats and communities present and is not intended to provide a complete list of all species occurring across the Site.

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

2.2.3 Survey findings are detailed in Section 3 and annotated on Figure 1, Site photographs are provided in Appendix 1.

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

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

2.3 *Protected and Key Species*

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

Amphibians

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

Badgers

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

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

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

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

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

Bats

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

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

2.3.10 Similar to structures, an individual tree may have several features of potential interest to roosting bats associated with it and it is not always possible to confirm usage of a feature by bats during a single daytime visit, given their highly transient natures. Consequently, it is customary when undertaking such surveys to assign each feature to a defined category of None, Further Assessment Required (FAR), Potential Roosting Feature – Individual (PRF – I) and Potential Roosting Feature – Multiple (PRF – M) (Collins, 2023).

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

Birds

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

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

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

Invertebrates

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

Reptiles

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

Riparian Mammals and White-clawed Crayfish

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

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

Other Key and Notable Species

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

2.4 *Invasive Species*

2.4.1 Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) were recorded and mapped as seen during the survey.

2.5 *Assumptions and Limitations*

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

2.5.2 In line with CIEEM guidance, this report is valid for a period of 24 months. In the event that works have not been commenced by March 2028, an update assessment should be undertaken.

3. Findings and Evaluation

3.1 *Site Description*

3.1.1 The Site is located approximately 1.5 km southeast of Meltham and is largely bound by an agricultural landscape in the wider area, with hedgerows providing connectivity. An area of woodland is located immediately east of the Site, as well as another woodland approximately 100 m north of the Site.

3.2 *Designated Sites*

3.2.1 A total of three statutory designated sites were identified for locations within 2 km of the Site through a search of MAGIC, relating to Dark Peak Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) Special Protection Area (SPA) and South Pennine Moors Phase Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

3.2.2 WYES returned a total of five non–statutory designated sites for locations within 2 km of the Site, four of which are Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), and a single designated Local Geological Sites (LGS).

3.2.3 Table 1 below details the designated sites within 2 km of the Site.

Table 1 - Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Designated Site	Description from Citation	Approx. Distance & Direction from Site
Statutory		
Dark Peak (SSSI)	Large site comprised of bogs and dwarf shrub.	1.5 km west
Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) (SPA)	Large site which includes habitats such as moorland, moorland-fringe habitat, rush pasture, hay meadows and small wetlands.	1.5 km west
South Pennine Moors (SAC)	South Pennine moors consist of heathland, blanket bog, and old sessile oak woods.	1.5 km west
Non - Statutory		
New Faith Fields Holmbridge LWS	14 neutral grassland fields 12 of which are managed as hay meadows and two as permanent pasture. The landowner indicates the meadows have no artificial fertilizer or slurry and are not sprayed for weed control (this is done by hand)	1.5 km south
Honley Wood LWS	Large ancient woodland with semi-natural and replanted acid woodland. There are areas of previously quarried with steeply sloping sections. The surrounding land is mainly improved and semi-improved acid grassland with a golf course to the south.	1.6 km north
Carr Green Meadows Holmbridge LWS	Carr Green Meadows consists of a pair of small hay meadows on south facing slope. The grassland of the first field is relatively diverse featuring sweet vernal yellow rattle and lady's mantle amongst others. The second field is similar but less diverse.	1.7 km southeast
Digley Quarries LGS	Former quarries of Millstone grit adjacent to deciduous woodland and standing water (reservoir).	1.8 km south
Digley Resevoir and Marsden Clough	Large site containing a mixture of habitats including standing and running water, woodland, heath and acid grassland. Surrounding land is mainly semi-improved acid	2 km south

LWS	grassland and neutral grassland, with houses and gardens to the east and heath to the southwest.	

3.2.4 The Site lies approximately 1.5 km east of three statutory designated sites. The Site is within SSSI Impact Risk Zones for Dark Peak of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The impact risk zones for each of these sites indicate that at the Site location, the scale of the proposed development is unlikely to have a harmful effect on the designated areas.

3.2.5 Designated sites Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) Special Protection Area (SPA) and The South Pennine Moors Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) is located approximately 1.6 km east of the Site. Equally, given the scale of the proposals and the distance of the Site from them, it is not considered that the proposals will have any impact on the designated site and as such, will not be mentioned further in this report.

3.3 *Habitats*

3.3.1 A number of priority habitats are present within 2 km of the Site from a search of MAGIC, these habitats include upland heathland, wood pasture and parkland BAP priority habitat, deciduous woodland, lowland heathland, lowland meadows, and lowland dry acid grassland. Priority habitat present within 30 m of the Site consist of deciduous woodland. The proposals are confined to the Site boundary, and as such, it is not considered that there will be any direct impact upon priority habitats.

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

g4 Modified grassland (Secondary Code (SC): 101)

3.3.3 The majority of the Site is comprised of modified grassland, which is short sward. There is evidence of regular cattle grazing (SC: 101) throughout. Species present here include dock *Rumex sp*. and chickweed *Stellaria media.* Identification of individual grass species was not possible at time of the survey due to regular grazing. Species present are likely to include *lolium spp*., timothy *Phleum pratense*, and cock's foot *Dactylis glomerata.*

3.3.4 Modified grassland is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor is it listed within the LBAP. Other neutral grassland is a habitat that is common nationally, and likely to be common in the wider local landscape. As such, the habitat is considered to be of no greater than site level importance to nature conservation.

u1b Developed land; sealed surface (SC: 800)

3.3.5 Two areas of developed land, sealed surface is present within the south of the Site. These are comprised of a concrete hardstanding area surrounding the barn, as well as a road (SC: 800) leading onto the Site. These areas are completely artificial and contain no botanical value.

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

u1b5 Buildings (SC: 833)

3.3.7 A building is present within the south of the Site, which is comprised of a barn (SC: 833). This is currently used by livestock, as well as agricultural storage. There is an absence of any botanical interest.

3.3.8 Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor are they listed within the LBAP. The habitat was considered to be of negligible botanical value, however will be discussed further in relation to protected species.

u1c Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (SC:110)

3.3.1 Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface is present central within the Site, south of the proposed development. This is used as an agricultural storage area, with equipment and hay bales present (SC: 110). This area appears to be regularly used, with evidence of disturbed ground.

3.3.2 Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface is not a NERC Act 2006 Section 41 priority habitat nor are they listed within the LBAP. The habitat was considered to be of negligible botanical value, and will not be discussed further within this report.

3.4 *Species*

Amphibians

3.4.1 WYES returned a total of six records of amphibians, three of which are historic (outwith the last 10 years), for locations within 2 km of the Site, comprising three records of smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris*, two records of common frog *Rana temporaria* and a single record of common toad *Bufo bufo.* The closest record pertains to a common frog located approximately 1.4 km north of the Site in 2021.

3.4.2 No GCN EPS licences or GCN Class Survey Licence Returns were identified within 2 km of the Site.

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

3.4.4 A single waterbody was present within 500 m of the Site from a search of OS Maps; this was located approximately 270 m east of the Site. However, Thick Hollins Road separates the Site from the pond, creating a barrier to dispersal. In addition to this, superior habitat is available immediately adjacent to this pond, therefore, it is considered unlikely that any GCN present would commute to the Site.

3.4.5 No ponds or other water features were identified on the Site. Overall, terrestrial habitats on the Site offer some limited suitability for amphibians, with the wrapped hay bales providing areas for amphibians to shelter within. Much of the Site is short sward modified grassland which is grazed, offering extremely limited foraging and sheltering opportunities for amphibians, which is also limited in extent and of inferior quality when compared to other habitats in the wider local area.

3.4.6 Given the limited suitability of terrestrial habitats present on the Site, albeit of inferior quality to adjacent habitats, and the absence of waterbodies within 250 m of the Site, it is considered extremely unlikely that GCN will be a receptor to the proposals, and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

3.4.7 Although it is not anticipated that amphibians will be associated with the Site due to the absence of nearby waterbodies, it should be noted that unidentified ponds/water features may exist within the wider area (within 250m of the Site). In general, such water features are usually relatively small and are more likely to be used by common amphibians i.e. smooth newt, and/or palmate newt and/or common frog (albeit GCN and common toad may use them in certain circumstances; for example, if there is a larger waterbody close by that supports either of these species). As well as this, woodland offering significantly better quality habitat is available immediately north of the Site. Therefore, it is unlikely that GCN will commute to the Site, which consists of less favourable habitat than those available in the wider local area.

3.4.8 The presence of common amphibian species, albeit unlikely, cannot be ruled out from the Site. Overall, the Site habitats are of no greater than site level value for common amphibians in their terrestrial stage.

This is based on the availability of similar and higher quality habitat (including aquatic habitat) in the wider area.

Badger

3.4.9 WYES returned no records of badgers *Meles meles* for locations within 2 km of the Site.

3.4.10 No evidence of badger was recorded throughout the survey, and the Site offers limited sett building potential, such as denser areas of vegetation. The Site also lacks significant suitable foraging/commuting habitat comprising solely of modified grassland and urban habitats. Given the absence of commuting and foraging habitat present, it is considered that any local badgers would not be reliant on the habitats present on the Site.

3.4.11 The adjacent plantation woodland was surveyed up to 30 m from the Site boundary, finding absence of badger activity, however some suitable sett building habitat was considered present within the woodland. Given the presence of suitable sett building and foraging potential in the wider local area, although not considered resident on the Site, there is potential for Site to form part of the wider territory for badger.

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

Bats

3.4.13 WYES returned a total of 114 records of bats, of which 47 are historic, for locations within 2 km of the Site. Of these records, 22 pertain to roosts, of which 17 are historic. The roost records comprise a total of 12 records of common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* roosts*,* three brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus* roosts and a single Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri* roost, in addition to a total of six unidentified bat roosts. The closest record pertains to a brown long-eared bat roost located approximately 900 m southeast of the Site in 2011. The most recent record of a roost pertains to a common pipistrelle roost located approximately 1.7 km southeast of the Site in 2025.

3.4.14 The remaining records pertain to foraging and unidentified bat activities which include common pipistrelle, brown long-eared bat and Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii,* Natterer's bat, Noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula* and soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus,* in addition to unidentified Myotis bat species *Myotis Sp.* and unidentified bats*.* The closest of these records pertains to a common pipistrelle bat located approximately 900 m southeast of the Site in 2011. The most recent record pertains to a common pipistrelle bat located approximately 1.8 km west of the Site in 2024.

3.4.15 A total of three EPS licences relating to bats were identified using MAGIC within 2 km of the Site. The first of these relates to the destruction of a common pipistrelle resting place. This licence was active between 2010 and 2012 which was located approximately 1.5 km northwest of the Site (EPSM2010-2036). The second licence within 2 km of the Site relates to the destruction of a common pipistrelle and Natterer's bat resting place. This licence was active between 23/08/2017 and 30/09/2017 and located approximately 1.1 km north of the Site (2016-27080-MIT-2). The third licence within 2 km of the Site relates to the damage of a common pipistrelle and Natterer's bat resting place. This licence was active between 20/01/2017 and 20/01/2017 and was located approximately 1.1 km north of the Site (2016-27080-EPS-MIT).

Roosting bats

3.4.16 An agricultural barn is present within the south of the Site boundary. This was subjected to a preliminary roost assessment (PRA) at the time of survey. Overall, there is an absence of potential roost features (PRF's), e.g. uplifted tiles or crevices. In addition to this, the structure is currently in use as an agricultural building,

housing livestock and equipment, therefore subjected to regular disturbance. This structure is considered to be of negligible suitability.

Foraging bats

3.4.17 The Site offers some potential for foraging and commuting bats, with the woodland edges and grasslands offering good suitability for local bats. These habits have connectivity to the wider landscape through hedgerows and other woodlands, in particular the woodland to the north of the Site, which therefore contribute to local foraging and commuting habitats.

3.4.18 The Site offers extremely limited potential for foraging and commuting bats, due to the limited scale of the habitats present on the Site in conjunction with the lack of mature vegetation that bats typically utilise for foraging and commuting. The wider local landscape contains habitats of superior quality for commuting and roosting bats, such as the plantation adjacent to the Site, and the woodland to the north of the Site. This is of superior quality to the habitats present on the Site, with the offsite habitats significantly greater opportunities for foraging and commuting bats in comparison to the habitats present on the Site. The proximity of the corridor to the Site however does mean that the Site is likely used by foraging bats as part of the wider local landscape, and as such, bats may utilise the habitats on the Site for foraging, alongside the hedgerow present to the west of the Site.

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

Birds

3.4.20 WBRC returned a total 1212 records comprising 93 bird species for locations within 2 km of the Site. Species returned include 18 Schedule 1 species as listed within the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA 1981), 36 Red species, 31 Amber and five Green species listed BoCC species. Bird species recorded within 2 km of the Site are summarised in Appendix 2.

3.4.21 The site offers some opportunity for nesting birds, however this is limited to the building present to towards the south of the Site boundary. No active bird nests were located on the Site during the walkover visit. This is limited in size and scale in comparison to the common and widespread availability of nesting habitat in the wider local area, particularly within the adjacent plantation and the woodland to the north of the Site.

3.4.22 Overall, due to the nature of habitats present on the Site, it is considered that the Site is of importance to nesting birds at no greater than the site level.

Invertebrates

3.4.23 WYES returned a total of six records for invertebrates comprising three species including beetle, butterfly and spider. The closest record to the Site pertains to Four-spotted carrion beetle *Dendroxena quadrimaculata* located approximately 1.7 km north of the Site date unknown. The most recent, and closest record with a date pertains to Wall *Lasiommata megera* butterfly located approximately 1.8 km southwest of the Site in 2020.

3.4.24 The habitats on the Site are unlikely to offer a range of opportunities for invertebrates, with the Site comprising mostly short-sward modified grassland, therefore they are not considered to offer the variety in plant species, structural diversity and habitat interfaces that would be necessary to support diverse communities of terrestrial invertebrates. The variety of plant species and habitat structures present are of limited diversity and generally sub-optimal for invertebrates and considered unlikely to support notable

species or large invertebrate populations but may contribute to foraging opportunities for common species.

3.4.25 Given the limited suitability of the habitats present on the Site, and the presence of more suitable habitat at a larger scale in the wider area, invertebrates are not considered to be a receptor to the proposals and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

Reptiles

3.4.26 WYES returned a single record of reptiles within 2km of the Site, which was historic. This record comprised a single species the common lizard *Zootica vivipara* from 1914, located approximately 550 m south of the Site.

3.4.27 Overall habitats on the Site are not considered to offer any significant suitability for reptiles, with the dominant habitat on the Site being modified grassland which is comprised of short swards and appears to be regularly grazed, offering limited sheltering and foraging opportunities for reptile species. Wrapped hay bales are present north of the existing agricultural barn which offer some suitability for basking and sheltering reptiles, however this is considered unlikely due to more suitable habitat being available within the wider local area, in particular the woodland located north of the Site. In addition to this, there is evidence that vehicles are regularly used across this extent of the Site, with tire tracks located across much of this area. This is likely to reduce the suitability of the Site as they generally prefer to avoid such human activities due to the noise and vibrations that will be caused by these activities.

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

Riparian Mammals and White-clawed Crayfish

Otter

3.4.29 WYES returned a single record of European otter *Lutra lutra* for locations within 2 km of the Site, which was historic record from 2006 located approximately 1.6 km m northwest of the Site.

3.4.30 No evidence of otter was recorded during the Site walkover.

3.4.31 No watercourses are present within 30 m of the Site, and as such, otter are not considered to be a receptor to the proposed works and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

Water Vole

3.4.32 WYES returned a total of six records of European water vole *Arvicola amphibius* for locations within 2 km of the Site, three of which were historic. Of these records, the closest was located approximately 800 m north of the Site in 1997.

3.4.33 No watercourses are present within 30 m of the Site, and as such, water vole are not considered to be a receptor to the proposed works and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

White-clawed Crayfish

3.4.34 WYES returned no records of white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes* for locations with 2 km of the Site.

3.4.35 No watercourses are present within 30 m of the Site, and as such, white-clawed crayfish are not considered to be a receptor to the proposed works and as such will not be discussed further within this report.

3.5 *Invasive Species*

3.5.1 WYES returned 15 records of invasive plant species seven of which were historic, for locations within 2 km of the Site. Comprising of 11 records of Rhododendron ponticum *Rhododendron ponticum,* two records of Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* and two records of Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica.* The closest record being of Japanese knotweed approximately 1.5 km south of the Site in 2019.

3.5.2 No evidence of invasive species was identified within the Site, and as such, will not discussed further in this report.

4. Impact Assessment, Mitigation and Enhancements

4.1 *Proposals*

4.1.1 Proposals for the Site comprise the renovation of the existing house and immediate gardens surrounding the property, as detailed within the Paul Matthews Architectural drawing '*Location Plan*' (Dwg No. 25/1208/03 Revision P01 Dated 08/2025).

4.2 *Habitats*

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

4.2.2 A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (BNGA) has been commissioned to formally assess the impacts the proposals have on habitats on the Site. This identifies opportunities to increase the habitat value on the Site post-development and recommend measures necessary to achieve a 10% gain in-line with government policy.

4.2.3 The Site is located adjacent to a plantation woodland. Although the woodland is not subject to the proposals, there is the risk that the woodland could be subject to indirect impacts associated with the development. As such, general principles of pollution prevention should be adhered to as detailed within the Guidance for Pollution Prevention (GPP) documents produced by Natural Resources Wales (NRW), Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) and Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). These include:

- GPP21 – pollution incident response planning (NRW, NIEA and SEPA, 2017); and,
- GPP22 – dealing with spills (NRW, NIEA and SEPA, 2018).

4.3 *Protected Species*

Amphibians

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

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

4.3.3 As the presence of common amphibians on the Site cannot be ruled out, it is recommended that Best Practice Measures (BPM) are implemented during the proposed development works. In the event that common amphibians i.e. smooth newt or palmate newt, common frog or common toad are encountered on Site during the works they should be allowed to move away of their own volition. If in immediate danger of injury, they should be carefully moved in gloved hands to an area of safe shelter away from the footprint of works.

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

Badger

4.3.5 Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. It is an offence under the

act to kill, injure or take a badger. It is also an offence to destroy, damage or obstruct a currently active badger sett, or to disturb animals within the sett.

4.3.6 Although badgers are not considered to be resident on the Site, badgers are highly mobile species and have the potential to disperse on to areas of the Site and into working areas. As such it is recommended that Best Practice Measures (BPM) be implemented throughout the works to protect badgers, should they subsequently pass through these areas of the Site. The BPM should include:

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

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

Bats

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

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

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

Roosting Bats

4.3.11 A single building is present within the south of the Site. This was assessed at the time of survey, resulting in the identification of no PRF's. The structure is considered to be of 'negligible' roosting potential in line with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2023), and as such, further survey in this instance is not required.

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

chances of occupation.

Foraging and Commuting Bats

4.3.13 The habitats on the Site were considered to be of negligible suitability for foraging/commuting bats.

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

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

Birds

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

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

4.3.18 The habitats present on the Site are unlikely to support nesting birds. Much of the Site is comprised of short-sward modified grassland, and other habitats are largely urban. The agricultural building present towards the south of the Site may offer some suitability for nesting birds, however, it is not anticipated that this will be damaged during the works. If an active birds nest is identified during the works, a suitability experienced ecologist should be contacted immediately for further advice.

Reptiles

4.3.19 Common reptile species including grass snake, common lizard and slow worm are protected under Schedule 5 of the WCA 1981 (as amended) against intentional killing or injury.

4.3.20 Due to the limited size and scale of suitable habitats present the Site is considered unlikely to support reptiles, and the loss of habitats present is considered unlikely to impact reptiles at greater than the site level.

4.3.21 Measured outlined within the BPM for amphibians will also help to protect any reptiles present on the Site.

4.3.22 The following BPM are recommended with regards to reptiles (these will also help to protect common amphibians):

- All Site personnel to keep a high level of vigilance for reptiles (and amphibians) during works;
- Good general housekeeping of the Site will be employed. All materials (construction materials/arisings) on Site will be stored in a suitable location at least 5 m away from suitable reptile habitat, e.g. scrub habitats/off-site woodland edge, ideally risen off the ground (e.g. on pallets) or on hard stand/bare ground away from vegetation. Materials arising from the works should be removed from the Site as quickly as possible or placed in a skip or other sealed

container immediately if stored on Site. This will avoid colonisation by reptiles and other wildlife and will ensure there is no build-up of debris or other waste which may create suitable habitats for protected species that then has to be removed at a later date; and,

- Should reptiles be encountered works in the area will cease and an ecologist contacted immediately for advice.

5. References

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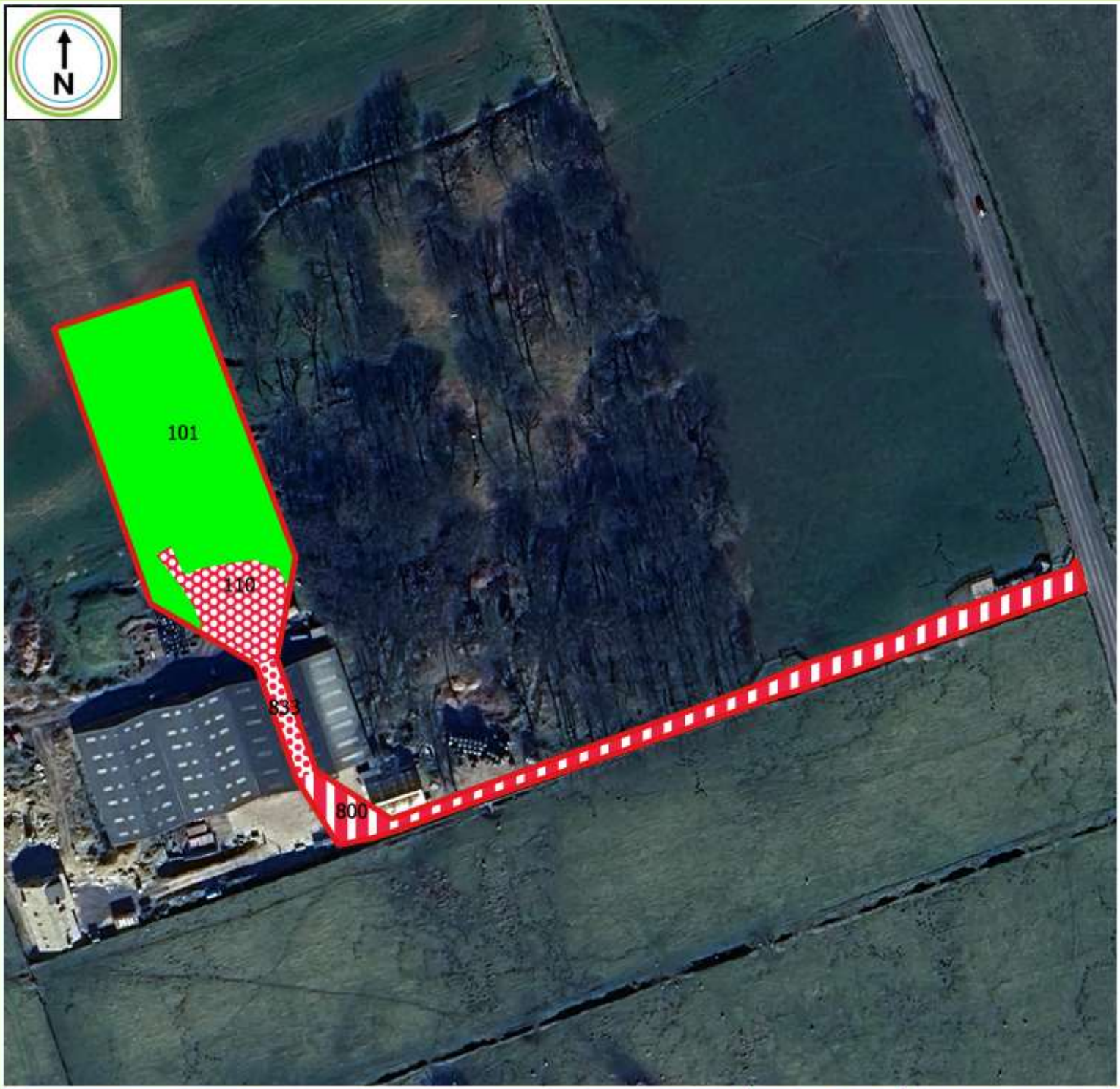
Figure 1. UK Habitat Classification Map



Legend

- Site Boundary
- g4 - Modified grassland
- u1b - Developed land; sealed surface
- u1b - Artificial unvegetated; sealed surface
- u1b5 - Buildings

Secondary codes:
101 - Cattle grazed
110 - Silage and haylage
800 - Road
833 - Barn

0 20 40 60 80 m

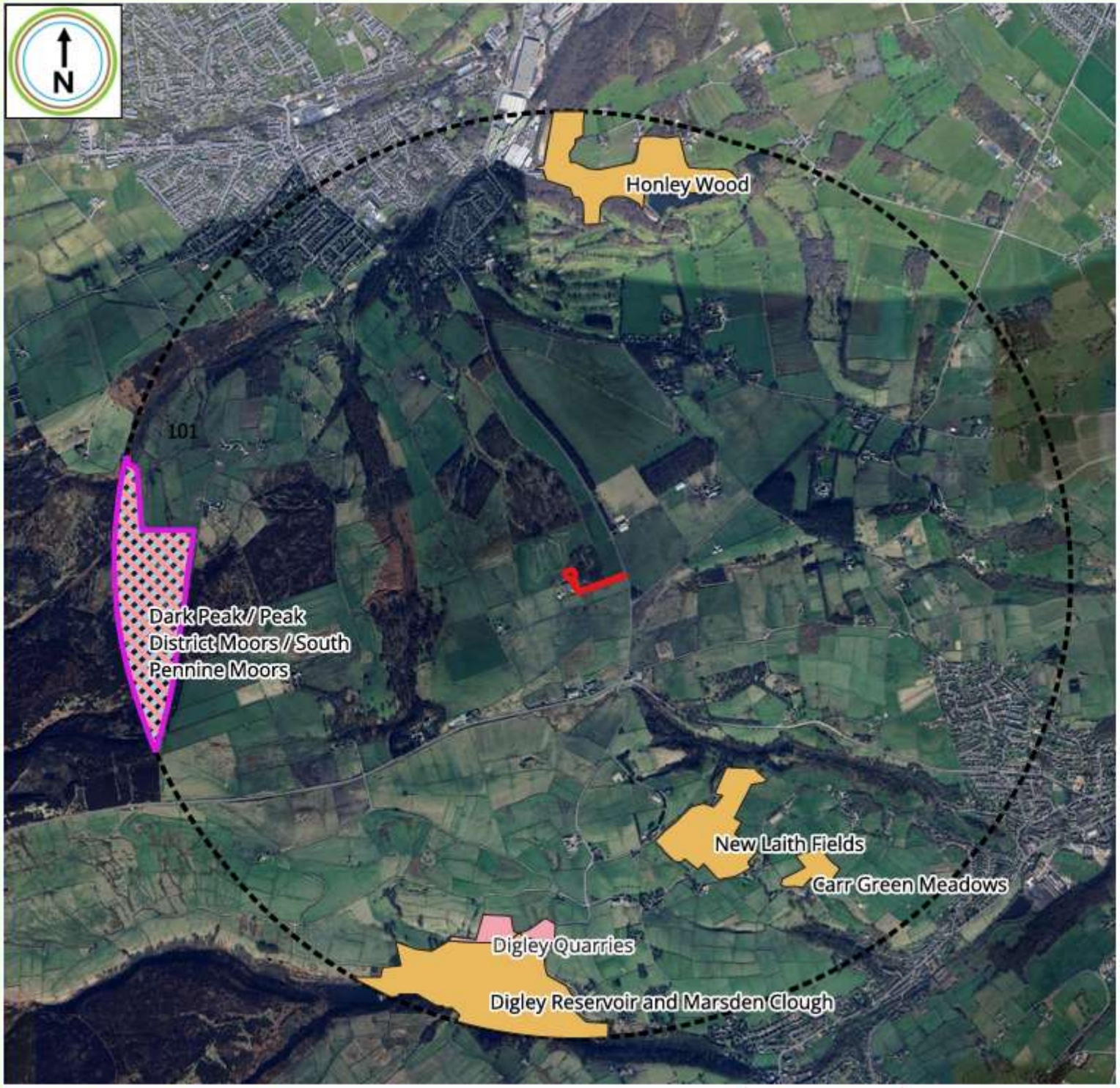
HABITAT WORKS

Paul Matthews Architectural

Carter Plantation Farm, Meltham

Figure 1
UKHAB Habitat Map

Figure 2. Designated sites within 2 km of the Site



Legend

UKHab

- 2km buffer
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Local Geological Site (LGS)
- Local Wildlife Siite (LWS)

0 400 800 1,200 1,600 m

HABITAT WORKS

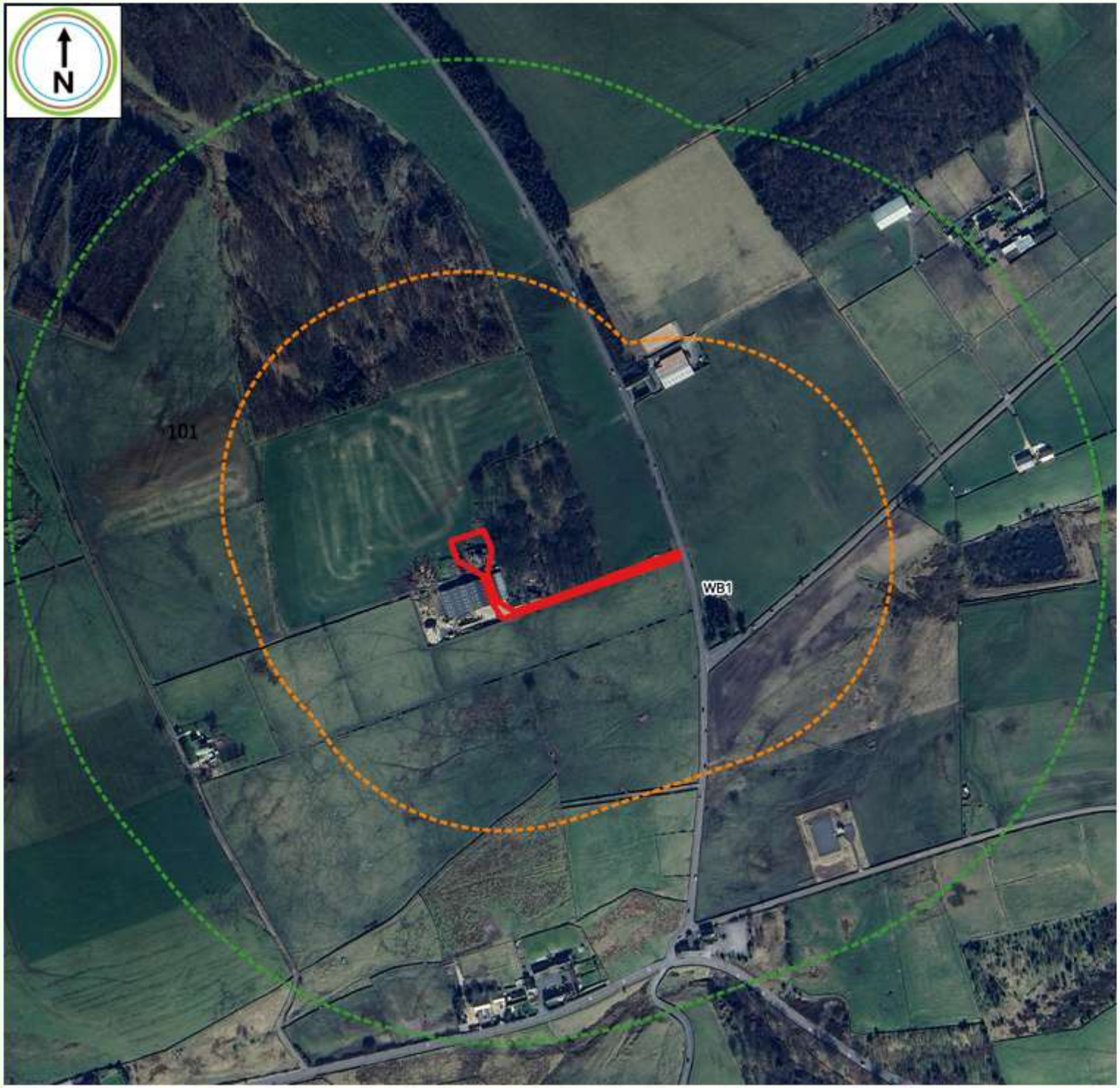
Paul Matthews Architectural

Carter Plantation Farm, Meltham

Figure 2
Designated Sites within 2 km of the Site

Basemap: Copyright Google 2026 | April 2026 | Scale - 1: 1000 @ A4 | Drawing Reference: 020326/F2/AB

Figure 3. Waterbodies within 500 m of the Site



Legend

UKHab

- Site Boundary
- Waterbodies
- 500 m buffer
- 250 m buffer

0 100 200 300 400 m

HABITAT WORKS

Paul Matthews Architectural

Carter Plantation Farm, Meltham

Figure 3
Waterbodies within 500 m of the Site

Appendix 1. Site Photographs

Photograph1. Agricultural barn (north facing).

Photograph 2. Agricultural barn (south facing), sealed surface.

Photograph 3. Access road into the Site.

Photograph 4. Internal agricultural barn.

Photograph 5. Modified grassland.

Photograph 5. Off-site ditch and woodland/ plantation.

Appendix 3. Bird Species Records Summary

Common Name	Scientific Name	BoCC Status
Common Scoter	*Melanitta nigra*	Schedule 1, Red
Fieldfare	*Turdus pilaris*	Schedule 1, Red
Goldeneye	*Bucephala clangula*	Schedule 1, Red
Hen Harrier	*Circus cyaneus*	Schedule 1, Red
Merlin	*Falco columbarius*	Schedule 1, Red
Ruff	*Calidris pugnax*	Schedule 1, Red
Scaup	*Aythya marila*	Schedule 1, Red
Black Redstart	*Phoenicurus ochruros*	Schedule 1, Amber
Black-throated Diver	*Gavia arctica*	Schedule 1, Amber
Green Sandpiper	*Tringa ochropus*	Schedule 1, Amber
Greenshank	*Tringa nebularia*	Schedule 1, Amber
Osprey	*Pandion haliaetus*	Schedule 1, Amber
Redwing	*Turdus iliacus*	Schedule 1, Amber
Whooper Swan	*Cygnus cygnus*	Schedule 1, Amber
Barn Owl	*Tyto alba*	Schedule 1, Green
Brambling	*Fringilla montifringilla*	Schedule 1, Green
Crossbill	*Loxia curvirostra*	Schedule 1, Green
Peregrine	*Falco peregrinus*	Schedule 1, Green
Common Gull	*Larus canus*	Red
Cuckoo	*Cuculus canorus*	Red
Curlew	*Numenius arquata*	Red
Dunlin	*Calidris alpina*	Red
Grasshopper Warbler	*Locustella naevia*	Red
Greenfinch	*Chloris chloris*	Red
Grey Partridge	*Perdix perdix*	Red
Herring Gull	*Larus argentatus*	Red
House Martin	*Delichon urbicum*	Red
House Sparrow	*Passer domesticus*	Red
Kittiwake	*Rissa tridactyla*	Red
Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*	Red
Linnet	*Linaria cannabina*	Red
Marsh Tit	*Poecile palustris*	Red
Mistle Thrush	*Turdus viscivorus*	Red
Pochard	*Aythya ferina*	Red
Ring Ouzel	*Turdus torquatus*	Red
Ringed Plover	*Charadrius hiaticula*	Red
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*	Red
Spotted Flycatcher	*Muscicapa striata*	Red
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*	Red
Swift	*Apus apus*	Red
Tree Pipit	*Anthus trivialis*	Red
Tree Sparrow	*Passer montanus*	Red
Turtle Dove	*Streptopelia turtur*	Red
Twite	*Linaria flavirostris*	Red
Whinchat	*Saxicola rubetra*	Red
Willow Tit	*Poecile montanus*	Red

Woodcock	*Scolopax rusticola*	Red
Yellow Wagtail	*Motacilla flava flavissima*	Red
Yellowhammer	*Emberiza citrinella*	Red
Black-headed Gull	*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*	Amber
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*	Amber
Common Redpoll	*Acanthis flammea*	Amber
Common Sandpiper	*Actitis hypoleucos*	Amber
Common Tern	*Sterna hirundo*	Amber
Dipper	*Cinclus cinclus*	Amber
Dunnock	*Prunella modularis*	Amber
Great Black-backed Gull	*Larus marinus*	Amber
Grey Wagtail	*Motacilla cinerea*	Amber
Kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus*	Amber
Lesser Black-backed Gull	*Larus fuscus*	Amber
Mallard	*Anas platyrhynchos*	Amber
Meadow Pipit	*Anthus pratensis*	Amber
Moorhen	*Gallinula chloropus*	Amber
Oystercatcher	*Haematopus ostralegus*	Amber
Pied Flycatcher	*Ficedula hypoleuca*	Amber
Redshank	*Tringa totanus*	Amber
Reed Bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus*	Amber
Rook	*Corvus frugilegus*	Amber
Sedge Warbler	*Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*	Amber
Shelduck	*Tadorna tadorna*	Amber
Short-eared Owl	*Asio flammeus*	Amber
Shoveler	*Spatula clypeata*	Amber
Snipe	*Gallinago gallinago*	Amber
Song Thrush	*Turdus philomelos*	Amber
Sparrowhawk	*Accipiter nisus*	Amber
Spotted Redshank	*Tringa erythropus*	Amber
Stock Dove	*Columba oenas*	Amber
Tawny Owl	*Strix aluco*	Amber
Teal	*Anas crecca*	Amber
Wheatear	*Oenanthe oenanthe*	Amber
Whitethroat	*Curruca communis*	Amber
Wigeon	*Mareca penelope*	Amber
Willow Warbler	*Phylloscopus trochilus*	Amber
Woodpigeon	*Columba palumbus*	Amber
Wren	*Troglodytes troglodytes*	Amber
Golden Plover	*Pluvialis apricaria*	Green
Goldfinch	*Carduelis carduelis*	Green
Great Crested Grebe	*Podiceps cristatus*	Green
Grey Heron	*Ardea cinerea*	Green
Red Grouse	*Lagopus lagopus*	Green
Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*	Green
Redstart	*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*	Not Assessed
Tundra Swan	*Cygnus columbianus*	Not Assessed