



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

**LAND AT BACK LANE
GRANGE MOOR
WAKEFIELD
WF4 4EJ**

JULY 2026

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Land at Back Lane
Grange Moor
Wakefield
WF4 4EJ

A report for

Benjamin Hellowell
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AHJ architects

A report by



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

PENNINE ecological Glossop Ltd were commissioned by AHJ architects in June 2026 to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment (Pennine Ecological, 2026) of the land at Back Lane, Wakefield. Figure 1.1 illustrates the approximate red line boundary subject to survey.



Figure 1-1: Red line boundary subject to survey.

1.2 REASON FOR SURVEY

The assessment is required to support the submission of a planning application that will see the construction of four detached houses and 4 semi-detached houses with associated parking and soft landscaping.

Refer to Figure 1.2 which illustrates the draft site proposals.



Figure 1-2: Site proposals.

1.3 REPORT STRUCTURE

The study includes the following elements:

- A desk-based search of freely available online ecological information (e.g., Defra's MAGIC mapping tool, Google Earth, Ordnance Survey mapping etc.).
- A UK Habitat Classification field survey.
- Survey of the site to support protected and/or notable species (where applicable) including but not limited to:
 - Badger.
 - All bird species, including Schedule 1 listed species of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (e.g., barn owl, hobby, kingfisher, etc.) and those listed in Birds of Conservation Concern 5 etc. (Stanbury *et al.*, 2021).
 - A Preliminary Roost Assessment for bats (European Protected Species) on all buildings, trees, culverts etc. found within the site (if present).
 - All other European Protected Species excluding bats e.g., great crested newt (GCN), otter, dormice, etc.).

- Where relevant, other protected species (e.g., water vole, common toad, brown hare, hedgehog, reptiles, etc.) listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 (DEFRA, 2006).

This report also provides a full evaluation of the ecological significance of the desk based and field survey results and if required, recommendations for further survey and/or precautions when and where appropriate.

With the addition of 'site' value, the site evaluation will be considered within CIEEM's (2018) geographical context which is as follows;

- International and European
- National
- Regional
- Metropolitan, County, vice-county or other local authority-wide area
- River Basin District
- Estuarine system/Coastal cell
- Local and
- Site.

1.4 SITE LOCATION

The site is located along Back Lane in Grange Moor, WF4 4EJ. The area subject to survey is located within a small village in Grange Moor directly west of Grange Moor Primary School. Wakefield Road also runs approximately 525m south of the site boundary.

The central grid reference for the site is SE 21983 16012.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The methodologies relating to desk-based searches and field surveys undertaken in June 2026 are outlined below.

2.1.1 Desk Based Study

(a) MAGIC

The Multi Agency Geographical Information Centre www.magic.gov.uk was referred to in respect of the following;

- Statutory designated sites e.g., Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) etc. within 2km of the site boundary;
- Habitats of Principal Importance listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) within 500m of the site boundary;
- GCN licence returns within 500m of the site; and
- Granted European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) within 500m of the site.

The latest access to MAGIC was on the 22nd of June 2026.

2.1.2 UK Habitat Classification Survey

A UK Habitat Classification (UKHabs) 2.0 survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023) of the habitats within the red line boundary was undertaken on the 10th of June. Weather conditions were suitable for surveying with a temperature of 18°C, calm and no precipitation.

2.1.3 Protected and/or Notable Species Surveys

(a) Badger Survey

A badger survey was undertaken to identify evidence of badger utilising the site. Surveys were undertaken in accordance with 'Surveying Badgers', Harris *et al.*, (1989) and 'Badger', Roper (2010).

(b) Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Survey

A daytime survey was conducted in accordance with the methodology outlined in Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn) Collins, J. Bat Conservation Trust (2023).

There were two buildings within the sites boundary subject to assessment.

All trees within the site's boundary were subject to assessment.

During the survey, the surrounding habitat was also evaluated in relation to bats as very often roost selection is closely correlated with the surrounding habitat.

(c) Bird Survey

The site was assessed for its potential to support breeding birds. This included identifying any evidence of current or historic nesting within the site (i.e. within buildings, trees, scrub, hedgerows etc.).

(d) Great Crested Newts

The site was assessed through a desk study and informed by the surveyor's specialist knowledge of great crested newts (GCN).

There is one pond within a 250m radius of the site boundary. There are no records of any GCN license returns or surveys within 500m of the site on MAGIC.

(e) Scoping of Other Protected and Notable Species

Consideration was given to other protected and notable species potentially present within the site. The following species / species groups have been scoped out for further assessment, with reasoning provided below:

- Riparian mammals – Fulhouse Beck is located approximately 115m northwest of the site. The beck is relatively small and, due to its limited connectivity with larger watercourses, is considered highly unlikely to support significant populations of riparian mammals. Should riparian mammals be present along the beck, the landscape between the watercourse and the site comprises urban habitats, including residential properties and roads. These features act as a terrestrial barrier reducing the likelihood of riparian mammals accessing the site.
- Invertebrates – The site comprises mostly ruderal and modified grassland with localised areas of, bramble scrub, hawthorn scrub and mixed scrub. This

habitat does not comprise the elements indicating elevated site value for invertebrates (Dobson & Fairclough, 2021) and further investigative surveys would be disproportionate for the species likely to be encountered i.e., commonly occurring species. The site is considered highly unlikely to support notable invertebrate assemblages.

- Reptiles – There are no known records of reptiles within 500m of the site. Whilst there are localised areas of suitable habitat on site, the site is isolated from any other suitable reptile habitat in the wider landscape, with a dominance of developed land surrounding the site. Given the limited connectivity to suitable reptile habitat in the wider landscape and lack of reptile records locally, reptiles are considered to be absent from the site.
- Other notable mammals – Whilst it is accepted that species such as hedgehog may potentially be present locally, the site is not considered capable of supporting significant populations of any notable mammal species. No observations were recorded during the survey.

These species will not be discussed further in the report.

2.2 SURVEYOR EXPERIENCE

The survey undertaken and report was by Luke Pilling who is a Qualifying Member of CIEEM. Luke's key skills include;

- Experience of writing technical reports including Preliminary Ecological Appraisals and Biodiversity Net Gain reports.
- Experienced bat surveyor of three years undertaking Preliminary Roost Assessments and dusk emergence surveys.
- Experience in Ecological Clerk of Works.
- Experienced in a wide range of ecological surveys including great crested newts, reptiles, badger, and riparian mammals.

The survey findings and report has been reviewed by Stuart Macpherson. Stuart is an associate member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and has over 14 years' experience in ecological survey and evaluation. Stuarts key skills include;

- Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey / UKHabs Survey on both small planning applications and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
- Licensed bat surveyor (2021-10079-CL18-BAT) and Named Ecologists on bat mitigation licences.
- Licensed barn owl surveyor (CL29/0477).
- Licensed great crested newt surveyor (2015-16213-CLS-CLS).

- NPTC qualified tree climber (Units 206 and 306 Tree climbing and Aerial Rescue).
- Proficient field botanist.
- Breeding and wintering bird surveyor on a range of habitats including coastal, farmland and moorland habitats.
- Mammal surveys including badger.
- Riparian corridor and mammal surveys.
- Ecological Evaluation and Impact Assessments in association with large scale infrastructure project.

2.3 SURVEY CONSTRAINTS

The survey was undertaken on 10th of June 2026 in optimal weather conditions.

There are considered to be no additional survey constraints, and an appropriate evaluation of the site has been completed.

3. RESULTS

3.1 RESULTS SUMMARY

- There are no nationally statutory designated sites within 2km of the site.
- No EPSL within 500m of the site.
- Two buildings on site. The dwelling is of low suitability for bats. The garage is of negligible suitability for bats.
- All trees on site are of negligible suitability for bats.
- No evidence of current or historic bird nesting was recorded on site.
- No evidence or sightings of other protected and/or notable species were recorded within the site.

3.2 DESK BASED STUDY

A summary of the desk study records are provided below.

(a) MAGIC

(i) Statutory Designated Sites

There are no nationally statutory designated sites within 2km of the site.

The site does however lie within the Impact Risk Zones for the Denby Grange Colliery Ponds SSSI.

(ii) Habitats of Principal Importance listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006)

There are no priority habitats identified within 500m of the site's central point.

(iii) GCN Licence Returns

There are no GCN Licence Returns within 500m of the site's central point.

(iv) Granted European Protected Species Licences

There are no granted European Protected Species Licences within 500m of the site's central point.

3.3 HABITATS

3.3.1 UK Habitat Classification Survey

The following habitats were recorded within the survey area (refer to Figure 1 – UKHabs Plan – in Appendix A):

- g (81) Ruderal.
- g4 Modified grassland.
- h3d Bramble scrub.
- h3f Hawthorn scrub.
- h3h Mixed scrub.
- u1b Developed land; sealed surface.
- u1 (847) Introduced shrub.
- h2a6 Other native hedgerow.
- h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow.
- N/A Urban tree.

The site is a derelict plot within Grange Moor. The plot contains a dwelling and garage building with an associated driveway. The plot is supported by native and non-native hedgerows around the perimeter with areas of modified grassland and ruderal dominating the garden areas. There are also localised areas of bramble, hawthorn and mixed scrub across the overgrown garden. There are also three individual trees within the garden.

3.3.2 Target notes

(a) Target note 1 – Modified grassland

The site comprises overgrown garden along the western boundaries and south of the dwelling. The species identified within the grassland included; Yorkshire fog (D), annual meadow grass (A), meadow foxtail (F), dandelion (F), bramble (LF)m, broadleaf dock (LF), cleavers (LF), cow parsley (LF), creeping thistle (O), bent (O), vetch (O), and nettle (LO).

(b) Target note 2 – Ruderal

The southeastern area of the site was dominated by overgrown ruderal. The species identified within the ruderal included: Rosey willowherb (D), nettle (LD), cleavers (A), creeping buttercup (LF), downy rose (R), and common grape vine (R).

(c) Target Note 3 – Hedgerows

The hedgerows which bordered the eastern, southern and western boundaries were a mix of native and non-native hedgerows. The non native hedgerows species

included: English privet (D), buddleia (LA), bramble (LF), and dog rose (LF). The native hedgerows species included; hawthorn (D), sycamore (O), and bramble (O).

(d) Target Note 4 – Urban trees

There were three individual trees within the site boundaries. The species identified included hawthorn, apple and rowan.

3.4 PROTECTED SPECIES

3.4.1 Badger

(i) Setts

The survey found no setts within the site.

(ii) Foraging Signs and Pathways

No sign of badger activity was found within the site. Therefore, it can be concluded that the species is not using this area for foraging or commuting.

(iii) Boundary Search

All of the boundaries of the site were walked and examined for potential runs, pathways, and latrines. The search found no evidence to suggest badger activity along any of the site boundaries.

The absence of any activity signs indicates that badgers are not entering the site. The absence of latrines indicates a lack of territorial activity in the near vicinity of the site.

3.4.2 Bats

(i) Preliminary Roost Assessment

There were two buildings within the site subject to assessment. A two storey dwelling and an associated garage building. There were also three individual trees subject to assessment.

Dwelling

The dwelling is a detached, two storey dwelling which measures approximately 8m x 9m at its widest and longest points with an approximate height of 7-8m.

The building is constructed with an outer layer of stone brick with stone lintels and window surrounds as well as an internal layer of red brick (identified during the loft

inspection). Overall the walls of the dwelling are in good condition with no gaps/or cavities identified within the bricks or the surrounding mortar.

The building is supported by timber soffit boards which meet that the stone wall plate. Overall the soffits were in fair condition with localised gaps where the soffits meet the wall plate along the north, south, and west facing elevations.

The dwelling has a pitched roof with slate roof tiles and concrete ridge tiles. The roof tiles were in fair condition across all elevations except the north facing elevation where several dislodged roof tiles were identified. The ridge tiles were in good condition with no gaps or cavities identified.

Timber beams and rafters support the buildings loft space as well as roofing felt which separates the roof tiles from the loft space. The loft space is lined with blanket roll insulation which is rolled out to the eaves. No light was identified penetrating the roof/eaves. No evidence of bats was found during the loft inspection.

Overall, the dwelling is considered to be of **'low'** suitability for bats.

Garage

The garage building is a small structure measuring approximately 5.5m x 5.5m at its longest and widest points with an approximate height of 3-4m.

The garage is constructed of an outer layer of stone bricks with an internal layer of red brick in a stricter bond pattern. The walls were in fair condition with no gaps or cavities identified within the brickwork.

The garage has a wooden door with timber supports. The door was in poor condition as it was loose from the wall creating a large gap and access point into the building.

The garage has a pitched roof constructed from asbestos with two plastic panels. The roof is in poor condition with one of the plastic panels having a large hole in it.

The roof was supported by a mix of timber and steel beams. There is no loft/void space in the garage. Due to the poor condition roof and open garage door, the garage will be subject to very damp conditions and fluctuating temperatures which is unfavourable for roosting bats.

Overall, the garage is considered to be of **'negligible'** suitability for bats.

Trees

All trees within the site were assessed for their suitability for bats. There were no inverts or cavities identified within any of the trees on site.

Overall, the trees on site are considered to be of '**negligible**' suitability for bats.

(ii) Bat Habitat Suitability

Foraging opportunities within the site itself are moderate with large areas of grassland and ruderal are supported by areas of scrub and hedgerows around the site perimeters as well as individual trees. The further surroundings comprise residential properties to the north and south as well as Grange Moor Primary School immediately east of the site. More suitable habitats can be found northwest of the site along Fulhouse Beck where trees and scrub border the corridor of the watercourse.

Overall, the habitat associated with the site is considered to be of '**moderate**' suitability for bats

3.4.3 Birds

No evidence of bird nesting was recorded during the survey.

Bird activity within the site and locally was low with the following bird species heard or seen within or adjacent to the site.

Robin, blackbird, and wood pigeon.

The site itself has some opportunities for breeding birds with the presence of scrub and individual trees. More suitable habitats can be found northwest of the site along Fulhouse Beck where trees and scrub border the corridor of the watercourse.

Overall, the habitat associated with the site is considered to be of '**moderate**' suitability for birds.

3.4.4 Great Crested Newts

There is one pond within 250m of the site. The pond is approximately 80m west of the site. The pond located 80m east of the site is a larger body of water in which the Fulhouse Beck flows into. There are also several residential properties and the road Back Lane which comprises the landscape between the pond and the site. Figure 3.1 below shows the surrounding habitat and ponds within 250m of the site.

Figure 3-1: Ponds within a 250m radii of the site and the adjacent habitats.



4. ECOLOGICAL EVALUATION

The following section discusses the significance of the survey findings. It should be noted that this part of the evaluation relates to habitats and species and includes reference to the following statutory/non-statutory instruments.

- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (and later amendments), with particular reference to protected species listed in Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the above act.
- Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019.
- Section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance in England as listed in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
- Reference to any relevant Red Data List/Book species and Nationally Scarce species not covered by the above or any other lists / schedules of species rarity or importance.

The evaluation is based on the commissioned surveys and desk study only.

The following statements are relevant in respect of the above.

4.1 DESK STUDY

4.1.1 MAGIC

(i) Statutory Designated Sites

There are no nationally statutory designated sites within 2km of the site.

The site does lie within several Impact Risk Zones. The Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZ's) has been reviewed (see Figure 4.1 below).

Figure 4.1: IRZ summary for proposal site

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?
• Infrastructure: Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals. • Air Pollution: Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (including: industrial processes, livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 750m² & manure stores > 3500 tonnes). • Combustion: General combustion processes >50MW energy input. Including: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/combustion.

(ii) Habitats of Principal Importance listed in Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006

There are no confirmed S41 habitats or species within the survey area.

4.1.2 Nationally Scarce/County Red Data List Species

There are no Nationally Scarce/County Red Data list plant species on the site

4.2 HABITATS

The existing habitats on site pre-degradation are of very low to medium distinctiveness (in accordance with the BNG metric calculation tool). The site comprised habitats of limited ecological value. The loss of habitats as a result of the proposals are evaluated at site value only.

4.3 PROTECTED SPECIES

4.3.1 Badger

No evidence of badger activity was found within the site or the wider area during the survey.

It is concluded that badger are absent on site and locally.

4.3.2 Bats

Bats are comprehensively protected under European legislation (Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019).

The dwelling was assessed to have '**moderate**' bat roost suitability.

The habitats associated with the site and surrounding area are of 'moderate' suitability for bats. The sites habitats are capable of supporting bat assemblages of 'site' ecological value.

4.3.3 Birds

No evidence of current or historic bird nesting was recorded on site.

Based on the sites size and habitats present, the value of the site for breeding birds does not exceed 'site' ecological value.

Due to the scale and nature of the proposals, impacts are not anticipated to extend beyond the land directly affected by the proposals.

4.3.4 Great Crested Newts

There is one pond within 250m of the site. The pond is situated 80m east of the site where urban habitats such as residential properties and roads act as terrestrial barriers preventing any connectivity from the pond and the site. The pond is also a larger waterbody which the Fulhouse Beck runs through. Large waterbodies such as this are usually unsuitable for GCN as they are very often occupied by fish and waterfowl which predate on GCN eggs and young. In addition, the waterbody is surrounded by dense scrub and woodland which would support the vast majority of any GCN population which may be present within this waterbody.

Given the low likelihood of GCN being present within the waterbody, and the relative distance between the site and waterbody, any potential impacts have been scoped out.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section outlines any mitigation or precautions required in respect of the survey findings.

5.1 DESK STUDY

5.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

No further assessments or precautions are required.

5.2 HABITATS

Appropriate habitat enhancement and creation measures will be required to compensate the loss of any habitat which is of low distinctiveness or higher. The compensation measures will need to ensure there is a measurable 10% net gain overall.

It is recommended that a Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation is completed to support this application due to the anticipated loss of other native hedgerow, modified grassland, ruderal and introduced shrub (low distinctiveness) as well as the loss of hawthorn scrub, bramble scrub, mixed scrub, and individual trees (medium distinctiveness).

5.3 PROTECTED SPECIES

5.3.1 Badger

There are no requirements for any further surveys or assessment.

5.3.2 Bats

It is recommended that one dusk emergence survey is undertaken to determine the presence / absence of bats within the dwelling.

Table 5.1: Extract from BCT guidance (2023) for recommended survey effort

Table 7.2. Recommended minimum number of survey visits for presence/absence surveys to give confidence in a negative result for structures (also recommended for trees but unlikely to give confidence in a negative result).		
Low roost suitability or PRF-I	Moderate roost suitability	High roost suitability or PRF-M
One survey visit. One dusk emergence survey^a (structures). No further surveys required (trees).	Two separate dusk emergence survey visits^b.	Three separate dusk emergence survey visits^b.
a 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 (see para 5.2.44). In some cases, more than one survey may be needed, particularly where there are several buildings in this category. b Multiple survey visits should be spread out to sample as much of the recommended survey period (see Table 7.1) as possible; it is recommended that surveys are spaced at least three weeks apart, preferably more.		

The quantity and type of bat roost provisions would be determined following the completion of the dusk emergence surveys. However, several indicative bat roost provisions are provided below. Irrespective of the dusk survey results, a minimum of 2no. bat roost provisions outlined below could be included within the new design of the buildings.

External bat boxes

A number of externally fitted box model for bats exist for buildings and trees. Suitable models for both buildings and trees may include the Eco Kent Bat Box.



Integrated bat boxes

The Habibat Bat Box is also recommended for new buildings. This is a solid box made of insulating concrete with internal roosting space. The box blends seamlessly into brick-built properties and may be incorporated into the fabric of buildings.



Lighting in Relation to Bats

In all cases illumination of peripheral boundary areas should be avoided. Where lighting is required, this must be low level, low intensity and directed downwards away from boundaries. The following principles will apply;

- Where and if lighting is required, this will be directed internally within the site avoiding spillage towards boundary habitats.
- The use of low powered sodium lights or similar will be used and these will be fitted with cowls / covers that prevent lateral light spillage towards boundary habitats.
- Wherever possible and only if required low level (1-1.5m high) bollard lighting will be used.
- If required lights will be fitted with timer controls that minimise the duration of lighting.

Lighting requirements will follow guidance provided by the Bat Conservation Trust.

- <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

5.3.3 Birds

No strategic bird surveys are required.

Any removal of suitable nesting habitat (i.e. scrub and individual trees) should take place outside of the breeding season, i.e., between September 1st and February 28th. Following the removal, any piles of brash should be removed from the site, failure to do so could provide potential nest sites if left in situ until the following breeding season.

If the vegetation removal is envisaged during the breeding season, prior to removal, checks should be made immediately prior to any clearance by a suitably experienced ecologist to establish any nesting or breeding activity. Should it be identified that birds are nesting or breeding then works should be paused until the young have naturally fledged the nest.

5.3.4 Great Crested Newts

There are no requirements for any further surveys or assessment.

REFERENCES

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Appendix A - Figures

Figure 1: UKHabs Baseline Map – (Pennine Ecological, June 2026).



Appendix B – Photographs 10th of June 2026



Photograph 1: View along the sites northern boundary. Overview of introduced shrubs.



Photograph 2: View of the overgrown grassland along the western boundary.



Photograph 3: View of western boundary from the south of the site.



Photograph 4: View of ruderal within the southeastern area of the site. Native hedgerows bordering the ruderal.



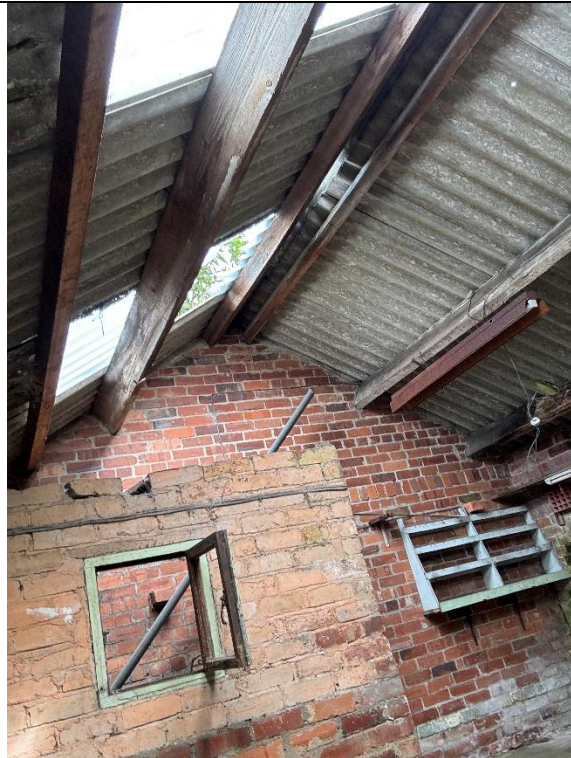
Photograph 5: View of mixed scrub along the centre of the eastern boundary.



Photograph 6: View of the non-native hedgerow along the western boundary.



Photograph 7: View of the garage building. Poor condition doorway.



Photograph 8: View of the poor condition roof of the garage.



Photograph 9: Overview of the internal area of the garage.



Photograph 10: View of the north facing elevation of the dwelling.



Photograph 11: View of the west facing elevation of the dwelling.



Photograph 12: View of the south facing elevation of the dwelling.



Photograph 13: View of the east facing elevation of the dwelling.



Photograph 14: View of the dislodged roof tiles on north facing elevation.



Photograph 15: View of the localised gaps where eaves meet the wall plate.



Photograph 16: View of the loft space. Timber beams and rafters support the roof felt lined loft space.

Appendix C – Habitat Condition Assessment Sheets

Provided as a separate excel file.