Ecological Consultants
Environmental and Rural Chartered Surveyors

Ecological Appraisal

Rimington Leisure Park, Clitheroe

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ACCURACY OF REPORT

This report has been compiled based on the methodology as detailed and the professional experience of the surveyor. Whilst the report reflects the situation found as accurately as possible, all of the protected species this survey covers are wild and can move freely from site to site. Their presence or absence detailed in this report does not entirely preclude the possibility of a different past, current or future use of the site surveyed.

We would ask all clients acting upon the contents of this report to show due diligence when undertaking work on their site and/or in their interaction with protected species. If protected species are found during a work programme, and continuing the work programme could result in their disturbance, injury or death, either directly or indirectly an offence may be committed.

If in doubt, stop work and seek further professional advice.

Quality and Environmental Assurance

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Contents

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1.1 Envirotech NW Ltd were commissioned in August 2019 by Steven Abbott Associates LLP to carry out an ecological appraisal of three parcels of land at Rimington Leisure Park in Clitheroe. It is proposed that the park is extended to add additional caravan pitches.

1.1.2 A data search and desk study of the site and an area within 2km of the site were undertaken to establish the presence of protected species and notable habitats.

1.1.3 The site was then visited by two ecologists from Envirotech NW Ltd on the 16th September 2019. A full botanical survey of the site was initially undertaken and this was followed by surveys to establish the presence or absence of notable species at the site or in proximity such that they may be affected by the proposed development.

1.1.4 The plant species assemblages recorded at the site are all common in the local area and are considered to be of low ecological value. Sympathetically landscaped open space is considered to offer habitat of equal or greater ecological value.

1.1.5 None of the hedgerows around the site perimeter were considered important under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997).

1.1.6 Care should be undertaken to ensure that Himalayan balsam is not spread across the site.

1.1.7 Recommendations made with the Bat Survey Report must be adhered to.

1.1.8 Birds are likely to utilise scrub on site for nesting between March and September. Any vegetation clearance should therefore be undertaken outside of this period.

1.1.9 No other notable or protected species were recorded on the site.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

2.1.1 In August 2019 Envirotech NW Ltd were commissioned by Steven Abbott Associates LLP to carry out an Ecological Appraisal of three parcels of land at Rimington Leisure Park in Clitheroe, central grid reference SD824 469 (Figure 1). A site investigation was undertaken and a report compiled which includes recommendations for any future actions and or mitigation required.

2.1.2 The survey was requested in connection with the proposed extension of the park to add additional caravan pitches.

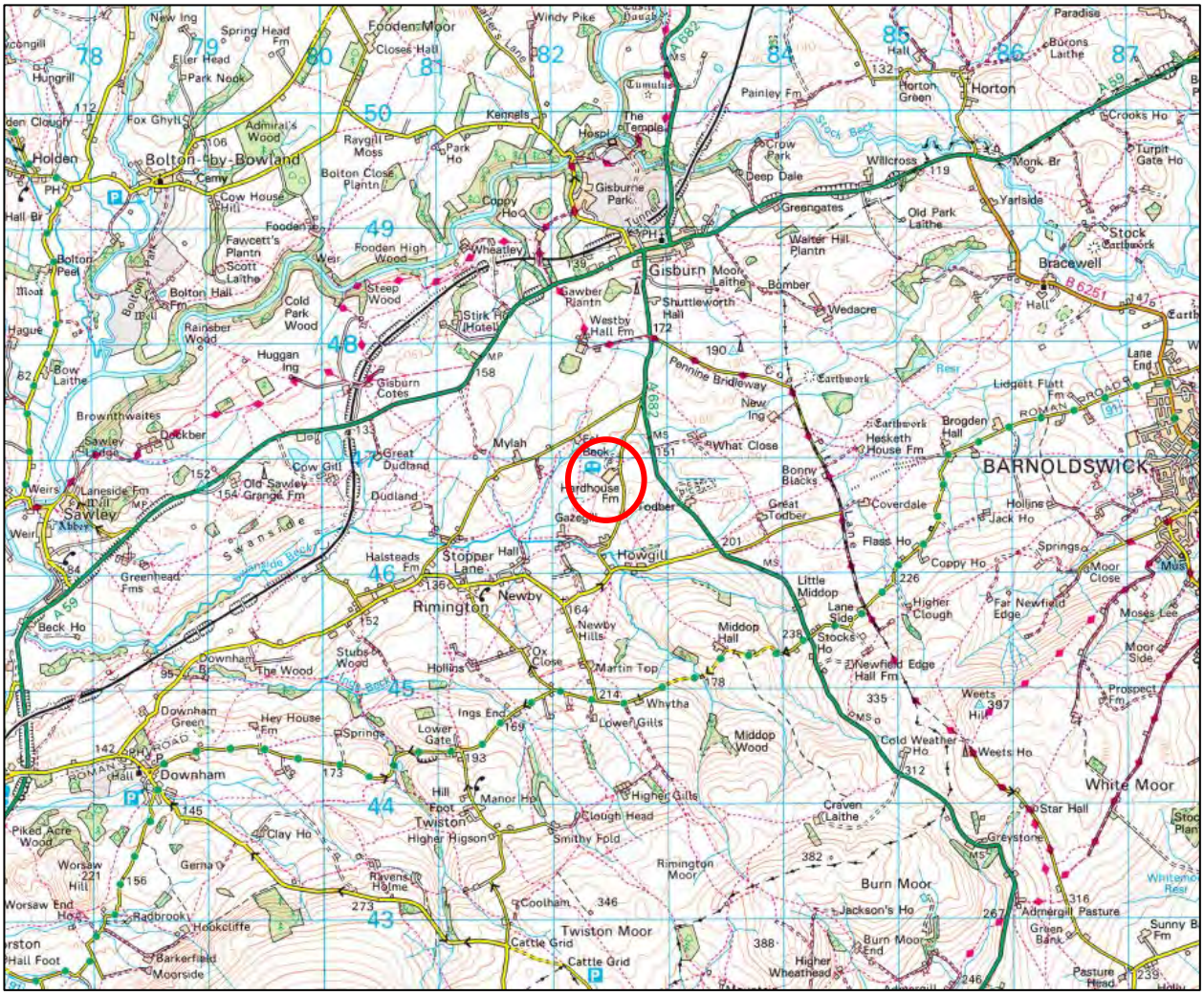

Figure 1 *Site location at SD824 469 circled red.*

2.2 Objectives

2.2.1 The main objectives of the study were:

- The completion of a Phase 1 Habitat Survey including the preparation of a vegetation and habitat map of the site and the immediate surrounding area.
- The survey and assessment of all habitats for statutorily protected species.
- An evaluation of the ecological significance of the site.
- The identification of any potential development constraints and the specification of the scope of mitigation and enhancement required in accordance with wildlife legislation, planning policy and other relevant guidance, and;
- The identification of any further surveys or precautionary assessments that may be required prior to the commencement of any development activities.

3. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

3.1 Data Search

3.1.1 The Envirotech dataset, and the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) were searched to establish the presence of any records of statutorily protected, notable or rare species, and any designated sites of international, national, regional or local importance within a 2km radius of the site boundary.

3.1.2 The Envirotech dataset is compiled from extensive field surveys from the period 2004-present, as well as records obtained from third parties during this time.

3.1.3 Google Earth and Google Street View were consulted to establish the presence of any features of ecological importance within the local area.

3.2 Vegetation and Habitats

3.2.1 A vegetation and habitat map was produced for the site and the immediate surrounding area. The mapping is based on the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC 2003).

3.2.2 Searches were made for uncommon, rare and statutorily protected plant species, those species listed as protected in the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and indicators of important and uncommon plant communities. All plant nomenclature follows Stace (1991).

3.2.3 Searches were carried out for the presence of invasive species, including those listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), namely Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) on terrestrial habitat and aquatic species such as floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*), water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) and New Zealand pygmyweed (*Crassula helmsii*).

3.3 Timing and Personnel

3.3.1 During the visit, weather conditions were suitable for the survey types undertaken being warm and dry in autumn.

3.3.2 The site and surrounding land was visited on the 16th September 2019 by

- (FW) Miss Flora Whitehead BSc (Hons)
  Natural England Bat Class Licence Agent (Level 1)
  Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence Agent (Level 1)

- (SC) Ms Sian Comlay BSc (Hons), Grad CIEEM
  Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence (Level 2)
  Natural England Bat Class Licence Agent (Level 1)

4. SPECIES SURVEY METHODOLOGY

4.1 Amphibian

4.1.1 Great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) are listed on Annexes II and IV of the EC Habitats Directive and Appendix II of the Bern Convention. It is protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats) Regulations (2017) and Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981).

4.1.2 Water-bodies located within or adjacent to the study area were identified and where access was possible were assessed for their potential to support great crested newts.

4.1.3 The criteria used in the assessment are based on those contained in the Herpetofauna Workers Manual and Oldham et al, 2000, and in applying these criteria a precautionary approach was adopted. Following the criteria developed by Oldham et al (2000), the HSI tool developed for use with great crested newts and forming part of Natural England's EPS Licensing process was used to determine the suitability of ponds for great crested newts.

4.2 Badger

4.2.1 Badgers (*Meles meles*) and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act (1992). This legislation arises from animal welfare issues (rather than on the basis of nature conservation grounds) and protects badgers from being killed, injured or disturbed whilst occupying a sett.

4.2.2 A disturbance to badgers in their setts may occur as a result of construction operations. Natural England recommends that the use of heavy machinery in proximity of a sett entrance should be avoided, with a 'disturbance free-zone' being established.

4.2.3 The degree of disturbance attributed to construction activity is a function of the background level of activity badgers are accustomed to and that which will be attributed to a proposed activity. The "disturbance free zone" is therefore site specific.

4.2.4 The survey for badgers comprised an assessment of all suitable habitat within and outside the study area boundary (where this was possible) to a distance of 30m for indications of use by badgers.

4.2.5 Signs of badgers which were searched for included:

- Setts - 'D' shaped entrances at least 25cms wide and wider than they are high with large spoil mounds
- Discarded bedding at sett entrances (this includes grass and leaves)
- Scratching posts on shrubs and trees close to a sett entrance
- The presence of badger hairs which are coarse, up to 100mm long with a long black section and a white tip
- Dung pit latrines and footprints

- Habitual runs through vegetation and beneath fences
- Hedgehog carcases

4.3 Bats

4.3.1 All British bat species are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), and are included on Schedule 2 of the Conservation (of Natural Habitats) Regulations (2017), as European Protected Species. Taken together, these pieces of legislation make it an offence to:

- Intentionally or recklessly kill, injure or capture bats;
- Deliberately or recklessly disturb bats (whether in a roost or not);
- Damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts.

4.3.2 The Bat Conservation Trust (Hundt (2012) and Collins, J. (ed) (2016) issued guidelines on bat survey methodology, a key feature of their recommendation is for the undertaking of a pre-survey assessment – an initial desk-study and a walkover assessment of the survey area and its surrounding area to identify the relative value of the habitats present for bats and likely commuting routes. This is to be followed by a survey program that is appropriate to the likely level of bat activity within the survey area to be determined by and based on the experience of the surveyor.

4.3.3 The potential value of the survey area for foraging bats was assessed through consideration of two main factors: professional knowledge of bat ecology and foraging behaviour in combination with the geographical location, topography and habitats present within the survey area and surrounds. This resulted in the production of a map showing habitat quality both on and adjacent to the site.

4.3.4 Trees on and within the survey area boundary were assessed for their potential to support roosting or hibernating bats. This comprised a close inspection of all trees and buildings on the site to allow an assessment of their potential to be used by bats to be made by a licensed surveyor.

4.3.5 Trees were all assessed in accordance with Collins, J. (ed) (2016).

4.4 Birds

4.4.1 All breeding birds, other than pest species, are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981 when building a nest, rearing young or sitting on eggs. Some bird species, such as barn owl (*Tyto alba*), are protected when near an active nest site. Several birds are listed as UK and or County BAP species.

4.4.2 Bird species and behaviour was noted during the other field surveys. All areas are covered equally, in order to avoid the subjective survey of better quality 'bird habitat'.

4.5 Brown Hare

4.5.1 The brown hare (*Lepus europaeus*) is a UK BAP species.

4.5.2 The survey method involved walking boundaries and surveying with binoculars. The survey was conducted at a suitable distance to ensure that the hares were not disturbed. Generally, surveys were undertaken throughout the early afternoon and evening when hares are thought to be most active and feeding.

4.5.3 Where present the number of brown hares in each field or hedgerow was recorded, together with the nature and use of the field, climatic conditions and time of day. The presence of forms and faeces where present were also recorded.

4.6 Invertebrates

4.6.1 A general assessment was made of the study area's suitability for supporting invertebrates during the phase 1 survey. The study area's lack of habitat diversity, species-poor composition and uniformity of vegetation structure (i.e., lack of variation in height and microtopography) resulted in our belief that a low diversity of invertebrates would be likely to occur across the site.

4.7 Otter

4.7.1 Otters (*Lutra lutra*) are given protection by Annexes II & IV of the Habitats Directive and by Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended and Schedule 2 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats etc.) Regulations (2017).

This protection means that it is an offence to deliberately or recklessly:

- Kill or injure otters;
- Destroy, damage or obstruct their dens, and
- Disturb them whilst in the den.

4.7.2 Watercourses were assessed for their suitability and for the presence of otters within 10m of the banks.

4.8 Reptiles

4.8.1 All native reptiles are protected in Britain under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981. It is an offence to intentionally kill, injure, sell or advertise to sell any of the six native species.

4.8.2 The survey for these species was based on assessing the habitat type and suitability of the site. This comprised an assessment of satellite imagery for the site and surrounding area as well as comparison of the results from the records searches with habitat types. The general habitat at the site was evaluated in terms of its suitability to reptiles for foraging or breeding.

4.9 Water Vole

4.9.1 Water voles (*Arvicola amphibious*) and their habitat are fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). This provides protection from killing or taking by certain prohibited methods and their breeding and resting places are fully protected from destruction or obstruction, it is also an offence to disturb them in these places.

4.9.2 There is a beck running through the centre of the site. This watercourse was assessed for its suitability to support water vole.

4.10 Survey limitations

4.10.1 The survey was undertaken in autumn. At this time of year plant species are less easily identified and the activity of some species is reduced.

4.10.2 Due to the habitats present on site there were no significant constraints in respect of identifying the botanical interest of the site.

4.10.3 The duration, extent and scope of the surveys were considered sufficient to plan appropriate mitigation and recommend additional precautionary survey work required prior to the commencement of work.

4.10.4 No significant survey limitations were encountered.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Data Search

5.1.1 Envirotech hold no records of protected or notable species for the site or within 2km of the site (Figure 2). Protected species are discussed in the relevant sections below.

5.1.2 There are no statutory designated sites located within 2km of the survey areas (Figure 3).

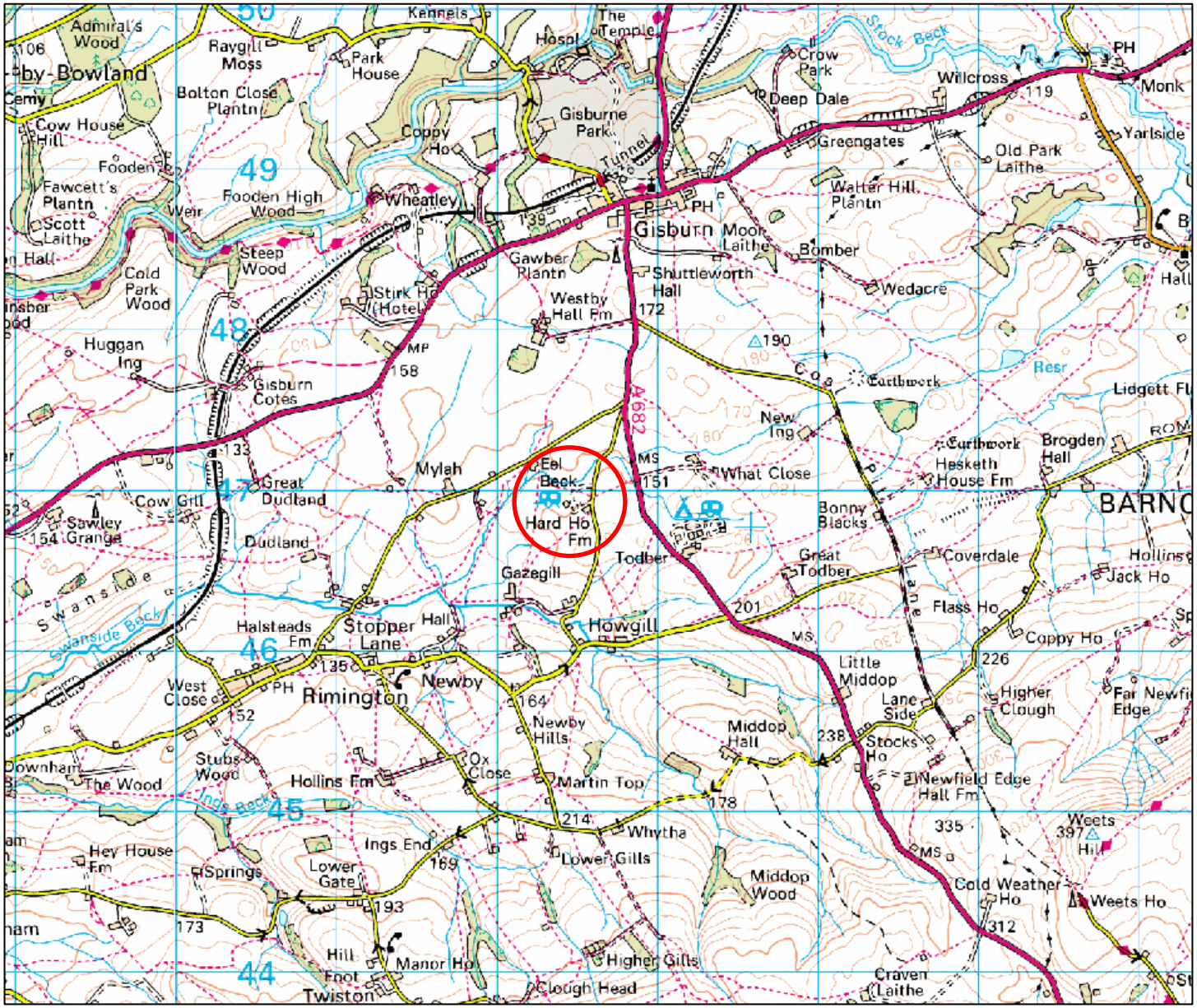

Figure 2 *Notable species records, site location is circled red.*

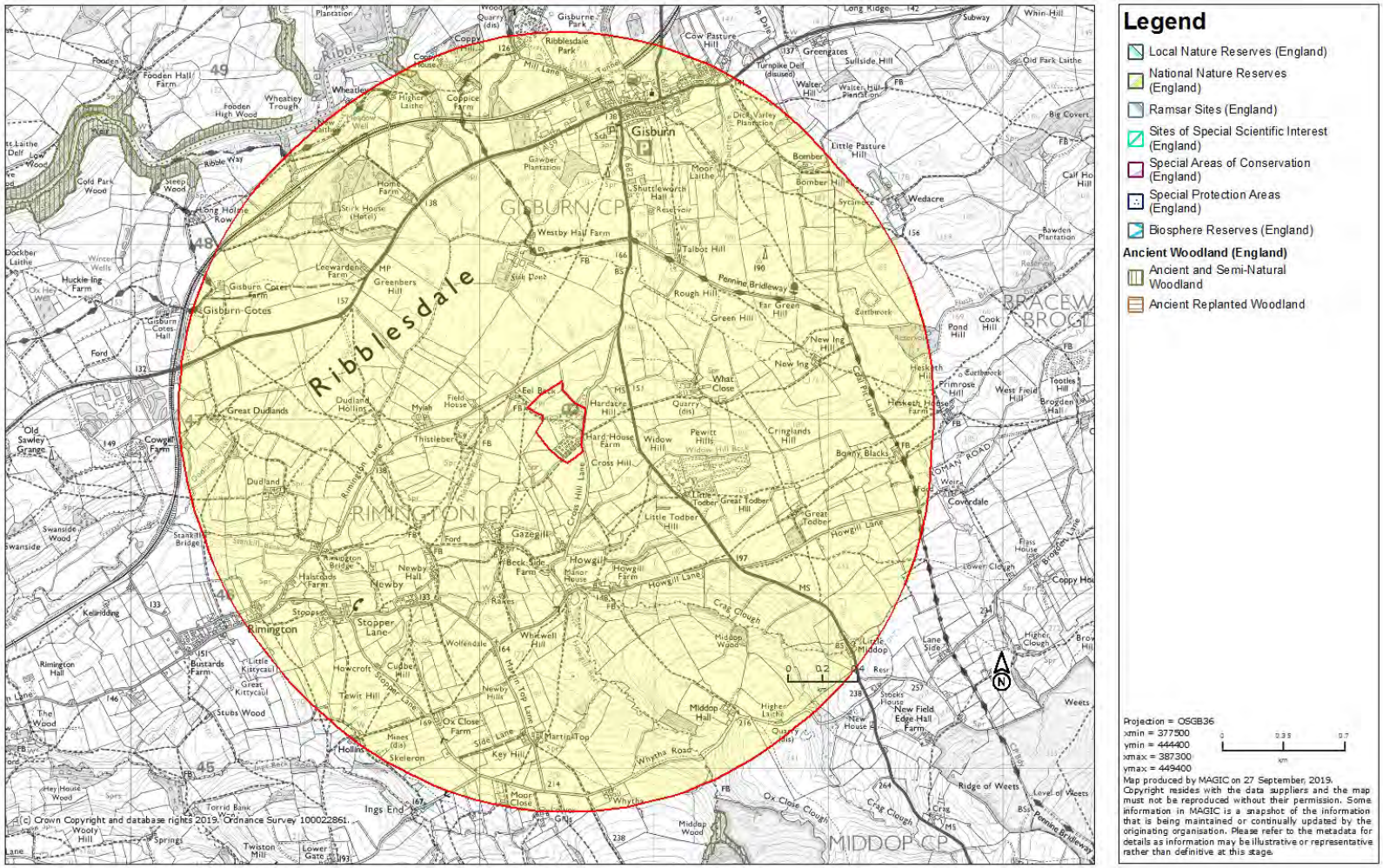

Figure 3 *Statutory sites 2km buffer*.

6. PHASE 1 SURVEY RESULTS

6.1 Habitat Results

6.1.1 The parcels of land are dominated by semi-improved grassland with associated hedgerows and trees along the peripheries. The parcels of land are surrounded by the existing caravan park and open pasture fields. The wider landscape is dominated by agricultural land, farms and caravan parks.

6.1.2 See Figure 4 for the Phase 1 Habitat Plan and Table 1 for the descriptive Botanical and Faunal Target Notes, hereafter referred to as BTN and FTN.

Target Note	Description	Comment
BTN1	Semi-improved grassland	Poor semi-improved grassland dominated the three parcels of land. The grassland has a relatively short sward, species recorded within these areas include perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), meadow grass (*Poa* sp.), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), false oat grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), broadleaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) with some soft rush (*Juncus effusus*) also present. A patch of soft rush, with tufted hair grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) was present within the center of the land parcel to the south.
BTN2	Defunct hedgerow	The parcel of land in the north is surrounded by defunct species poor hedgerows. These hedgerows are all unmanaged and do not have a significant ground flora. Hedgerow 1 - defunct hedgerow with some newly planted trees within it and standard trees. Species recorded within this hedgerow include hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), willow (*Salix* sp.), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). A patch of Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) was recorded to the west of the hedgerow. Hedgerow 2 – is a newly planted hedgerow, with trees in tree tubes. Species identified comprise hazel (*Corylus avellana*), poplar (*Populus* sp.) and hawthorn. Hedgerow 3 – has standard trees within the hedge. Species identified within the hedgerow include hawthorn, ivy (*Hedera helix*), elder and English oak (*Quercus robur*). Hedgerow 4 – species recorded within hedgerow 4 include hawthorn and alder (*Alnus glutinosa*). A ditch is present beyond the hedgerow along this boundary. A lot of Himalayan balsam is present within this area. A defunct hedgerow is present adjacent to a dry ditch within the parcel of land to the south of the leisure park. Hedgerow 5 – defunct hedgerow providing a boundary between the existing caravans and the field. Species recorded within this hedgerow include hawthorn, elder and cherry

		(*Prunus avium*). The ground flora of this hedgerow is dominated by Himalayan balsam, willowherb (*Epilobium* sp.) and meadow sweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*).
BTN3	Intact hedgerow	A species rich intact hedgerow was present along the western boundary of the parcel of land associated with the proposed store building and yard. This hedgerow has not been subject to recent management. Species recorded within this hedgerow include blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), hawthorn, horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), hazel, bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), ivy and elder. The ground flora comprised creeping buttercup, cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), ivy, common hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), meadow sweet and grass species.
BTN4	Scattered trees	Scattered trees were present along the dry ditch along the western boundary of the southern parcel of land. Species recorded within this area comprise hawthorn, ash, English oak, alder and birch (*Betula* sp.) species. Silver birch (*Betula pendula*) and leylandii (*Cupressus x leylandii*) trees were recorded overhanging the small parcel of land to the east.
BTN5	Dry ditch	A dry ditch was recorded along the western and north eastern boundary of the southern parcel of land.
BTN6	Running water	Adjacent to the site boundary is Eel Beck, there is lots of Himalayan balsam present along the banks of the beck.
BTN7	Fence	Wooden post and wire fences are located across the site. Some of these fences support vegetation.
BTN8	Tall ruderal vegetation	Tall ruderal vegetation was present within and around the dry ditches. Species recorded within these areas include nettle (*Urtica dioica*), Himalayan balsam, willowherb, meadow sweet, broadleaved dock and bramble.
BTN9	Other	Rubble piles, spoil heaps and earth mounds were present to the east of the northern parcel of land.
FTN1	Birds	An old birds nest was identified within hedgerow 3. The hedgerows and scattered trees have potential to support foraging and nesting birds.
FTN2	Bats	Some of the old trees within the hedgerows have potential to support roosting bats.

Table 1 *Details of Botanical and Faunal Target Notes.*

Key

- Site Boundary
- Botanical Target Note
- Faunal Target Note
- Broadleaved Parkland/ scattered trees
- Dry ditch
- Intact hedge - species-poor
- Defunct hedge - species-poor
- Running water
- Fence
- SI — Poor semi-improved grassland
- Other tall herb and fern - ruderal

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Figure 4
Results* of Extended
Phase 1 Habitat Survey

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*Habitats outside the site boundary are indicative only
and have been mapped from within the site boundary or from publicly accessible land

	Poor semi-improved grassland field to the east (proposed storage area). Intact hedgerow along the eastern boundary and overhanging trees to the west.
	Open semi-improved grassland field in the south of the site
	Open semi-improved grassland field in the north of the site. Bound by defunct hedgerows.

	Scattered trees along dry ditch to west of southern parcel of land
	Dry ditch, defunct hedgerow and tall ruderal vegetation including Himalayan balsam along the north eastern boundary of the southern parcel of land
	Scattered trees along the dry ditch

Table 2 *Photographs*

6.2 Vegetation

6.2.1 Details of the plant species found on site are included in the target notes. Species recorded are all commonly occurring and undoubtedly occur elsewhere in similar habitats in the local area.

6.2.2 The poor semi-improved grassland has a very low species diversity and ecological value. Whilst the assemblage of species within it is higher than improved pasture, the species are all indicative of regular disturbance, this habitat does not constitute a BAP habitat.

6.2.3 An intact hedgerow is present along the eastern boundary of the eastern parcel of land. The hedgerow is species poor and contains a low diversity of woody plant species but all hedgerows are a UK BAP habitat. They should be retained in any proposed scheme and where lengths need to be lost, they should be transplanted or new hedges planted as compensation.

6.2.4 Defunct species poor hedgerows also have a low ecological value. They have no understory. Should these need to be lost, transplanting them is unlikely to be of ecological benefit. New shrub/ scrub planting would be suitable compensation for their loss.

6.2.5 None of the hedgerows are classified as important under the Hedgerow Regulations (1997) (See Appendix 1).

6.2.6 Trees within the site boundary comprise young to mature specimens, some within the hedgerows.

6.2.7 Himalayan balsam is present along the beck through the centre of the survey area and along the dry ditches.

6.2.8 There is no evidence of Japanese knotweed or giant hogweed on the site. No other invasive or notable weed species listed on Schedule 9 (Section 14) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended) was identified within the site or adjacent land.

6.3 Amphibian

6.3.1 There are no records for amphibians within 2km of the site.

6.3.2 There is no standing water on site. The closest pond is located over 200m to the east of the survey area, however, no access was provided to this water body during the survey.

6.3.3 The ditches around the southern parcel of land were drying during the survey reducing there suitability to support amphibians.

6.3.4 NBN dataset holds no records of amphibians within a 2km radius of the survey area.

6.3.5 The core development area has a low value to amphibians being open and exposed. The boundary hedgerows could be utilised as refuges and/or hibernacula but there are no breeding ponds in proximity to the site and the hedgerow structure of the defunct hedgerows is poor.

6.3.6 The rubble piles to the east of the northern parcel of land have only recently been created and are associated with the construction of the adjacent caravan plots so it is therefore considered that the rubble pile will not be in-situ for long. There are no other areas with log, rubble piles or compost heaps which would be particularly favourable to amphibians.

6.3.7 Amphibians would be unlikely to attempt to cross the site as it comprises an area that is mostly open with uniform length grass. Whilst not a physical barrier to the dispersal of amphibians, the site is regarded as being a potentially hostile environment to them.

6.3.8 The proposed development will not result in the permanent loss of or a substantial negative effect on any waterbodies or foraging areas linked to them. Boundary areas which may provide foraging or refuge sites, are to be retained and enhanced. As such precautionary mitigation would be appropriate in respect of construction activities.

6.4 Badger

6.4.1 No records of badgers occur within 2km of the site.

6.4.2 Badger setts do not occur on site and a lack of feeding signs or runs across the site would suggest that they do not occur within 30m of site boundaries.

6.4.3 The proposed development will not impact on any existing badger runs or setts. The porosity of the surrounding fields to the passage of badgers will not be affected.

6.5 Bats

6.5.1 There are no records of bat species within 2km of the site.

6.5.2 The foraging habitat at the site is poor for bat species being open and exposed. The poor semi-improved grassland offers negligible foraging opportunities for bats. The hedge and tree lines are poor in terms of their structure, diversity and interconnectivity.

6.5.3 Despite being poor, the trees and hedgerows on the site offer the best foraging habitat for bats on the site as the remainder of it comprises open and exposed pasture. Whilst these areas of the site are the most structurally diverse but they are not considered exceptional in the local area. More extensive areas of medium and high quality habitat occur locally, including the beck running through the centre of the leisure park and fragmented woodland (Figure 5).

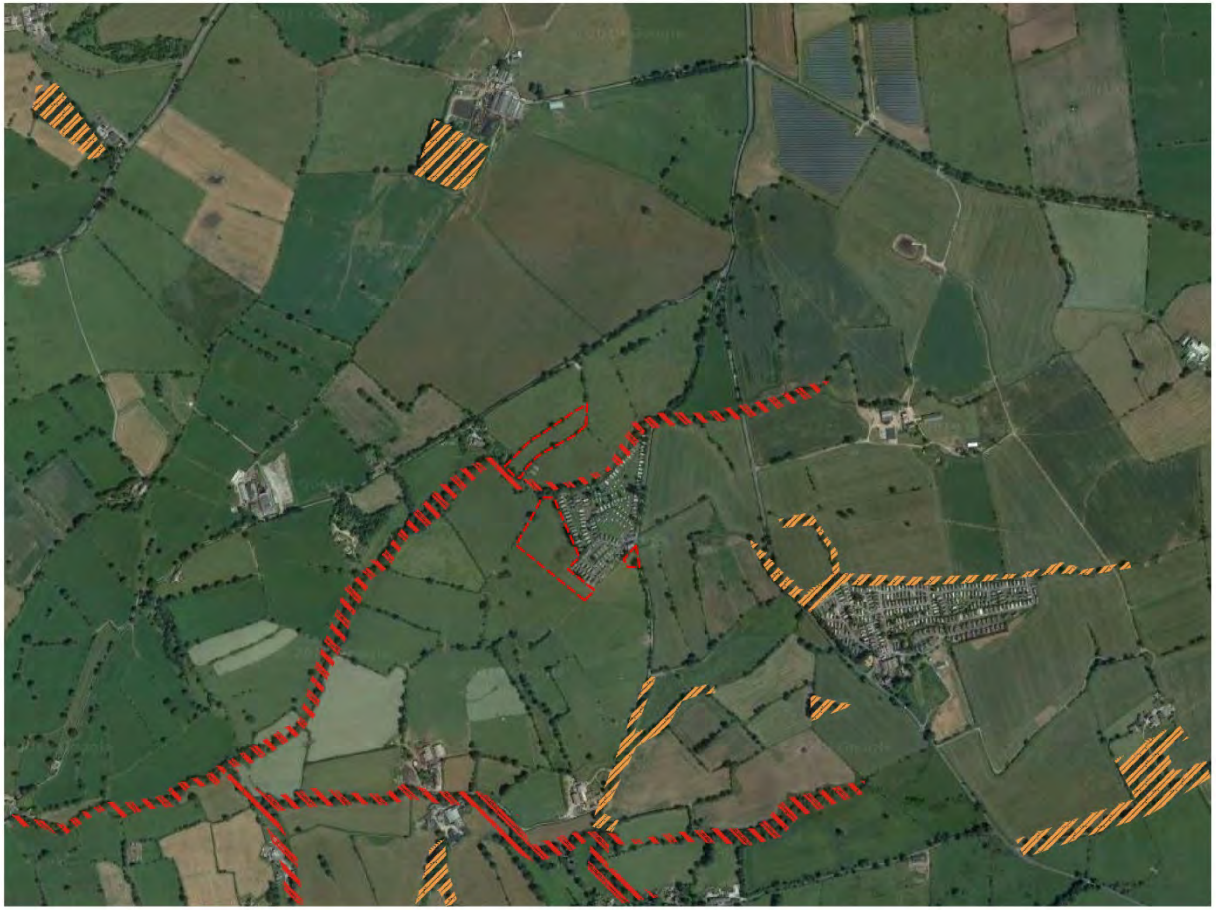
6.5.4 It is not considered there would be significant degradation of foraging habitat as a result of the proposal so long as the hedgerows and trees are retained and or their loss is compensated for in any landscaping scheme.

6.5.5 Semi-mature and Mature trees around the site perimeter were also assessed in accordance with Collins ed. (2016) and assigned a risk category. All of the trees on site were category 2 (low) or category 3 (negligible) risk. No indications of roosting or highly suitable roost sites were located within the trees. All of the trees could be adequately inspected. Risk categories from Hundt (2012) and the requirement for

mitigation for each tree category are shown on Figure 6. It is understood that the trees on site will not be impacted by the proposed development.

6.5.6 We consider bat species are highly unlikely to rely on the site for feeding but may occur in the local area.

6.5.7 The Bat Survey Report should be referred to for further detail on bat species using the site.



Key

Site Boundary

High Quality Habitat

Medium Quality Habitat

Low Quality Habitat

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Figure 5
Results* of Extended
Bat Habitat Survey

SCALE: NTS | REV 01

*Habitats outside the site boundary are indicative only
and have been mapped from within the site boundary or from publicly accessible land

Tree category and description	Stage 1 Initial survey requirements	Stage 2 Further measures to inform proposed mitigation	Stage 3 Likely mitigation
Known or confirmed roost	Follow SNCO guidance and these guidelines wherever possible, to establish the extent to which bats use the site. This is particularly important for roosts of high risk species and/or roosts of district or higher importance and above		The tree can be felled only under EPS licence following the installation of equivalent habitats as a replacement.
Category 1* Trees with multiple, highly suitable features capable of supporting larger roosts	Tree identified on a map and on the ground. Further assessment to provide a best expert judgement on the likely use of the roost, numbers and species of bat, by analysis of droppings or other field evidence. ***A consultant ecologist is required***	Avoid disturbance to trees, where possible. Further dusk and pre-dawn survey to establish more accurately the presence, species, numbers of bats present and the type of roost, and to inform the requirements for mitigation if felling is required.	Felling would be undertaken taking reasonable avoidance measures[3] such as 'soft felling' to minimise the risk of harm to individual bats.
Category 1 Trees with definite bat potential, supporting fewer suitable features that category 1* trees or with potential for use by single bats	Tree identified on a map and on the ground. Further assessed to provide a best expert judgement on the potential use of suitable cavities, based on the habitat preferences of bats. ***A consultant ecologist required***	Avoid disturbance to trees, where possible. More detailed, off the ground visual assessment. Further dusk and pre-dawn survey to establish the presence of bats, and if present, the species and numbers of bats and type of roost, to inform the requirements for mitigation if felling is required.	Trees with confirmed roosts following further survey are upgraded to Category 1* and felled under licence as above. Trees with no confirmed roosts may be downgraded to Category 2 dependent on survey findings
Category 2 Trees with no obvious potential, although the tree is of a size and age that elevated surveys may result in cracks or crevices being found; or the tree supports some features which may have limited potential to support bats.	None. ***A consultant ecologist is unlikely to be required***	Avoid disturbance to trees, where possible. No further surveys.	Trees may be felled taking reasonable avoidance measures. Stop works and seek advice in the event bats are found, in order to comply with relevant legislation.
Category 3 Trees with no potential to support bats	None. ***A consultant ecologist is not required unless new evidence is found***	None.	No mitigation for bats required.

Figure 6 *Tree risk categories from Hundt (2012).*

6.7 Birds

6.7.1 There are no records of birds within 2km of the site. Woodpigeon (*Columba palumbus*) and magpie (*Pica pica*) were noted on site during the survey. An old birds nest was noted within hedgerow 3, the hedgerow along the southern boundary of the northern parcel of land.

6.7.2 The intact hedgerow to the east of the site offers potential habitat for feeding and nesting birds. The poor semi-improved grassland has a low potential for use by nesting birds as the grassland is disturbed and as such is usually short. Trampling risks are also high within this area of the site.

6.7.3 The gappy defunct hedges within the site have insufficient density to be of high value to nesting birds.

6.7.4 There were no rot holes or cracks in the trees within the site boundary which would support tree hole nesting species such as woodpeckers.

6.7.5 A risk assessment of the site in respect of its future potential for and value to nesting birds could be adequately made.

6.7.6 Precautionary mitigation is considered appropriate. The landscaping scheme should include species such as rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) which are seed bearing and will provide food for birds in the winter.

6.7.7 The habitat on site is not considered to be of anything more than of local significance, habitats present are well represented in the local area. The impact on nesting birds is therefore considered likely to be minor.

6.8 Brown Hare

6.8.1 Brown hare are a UK BAP priority species. There are no records of brown hares within 2km of the site.

6.8.2 No indication of brown hares was recorded on the site.

6.8.3 The site boundary has some potential for brown hares to create forms but use of the site is likely to be limited due to its open and exposed nature.

6.8.4 A risk assessment of the site in respect of its future potential for and value to brown hares could be adequately made. We consider the risk to brown hares is very low.

6.9 Invertebrates

6.9.1 No notable invertebrates have been recorded within 2km of the site.

6.9.2 No deadwood or vegetation on site was recorded which would provide an important resource for invertebrates in the local area.

6.9.3 Given the poor quality habitats contained within the site in comparison to the wider area, it is not considered that this site is of any local significance for invertebrates.

6.9.4 Semi-Improved pasture and tall ruderal vegetation has some value to species such as common butterflies but this is not considered to be locally significant.

6.9.5 Species such as Bumblebees which relay on nectar would be negatively impacted by the removal of Himalayan balsam on site as this is a good source of nectar. The benefits of the removal of Himalayan balsam are however considered to outweigh the impact as a result of the loss of nectar sources on site. Flowering plant species such as lavender should however be incorporated into the landscape scheme as compensation.

6.10 Otter

6.10.1 There are no records of otters within 2km of the site.

6.10.2 The beck running through the centre of the site has limited suitability for use by otter as it is considered unlikely to support significant populations of fish.

6.10.3 Whilst the site is considered to offer suboptimal foraging and refuge opportunities for otter, Eel Beck may provide a commuting or dispersal route through the local landscape. This species is considered to be absent from the site and is unlikely to be significantly impacted by site development.

6.10.4 The trees around the Beck should be retained so as to continue to provide a suitable commuting feature in the future. Precautionary mitigation would be appropriate in respect of construction activities which will need to be restricted at night.

6.11 Reptiles

6.11.1 There are no records for reptiles within 2km of the site.

6.11.2 The majority of the site has a very low value to reptiles being devoid of significant ground cover. There are no areas of the core development area which would be particularly favourable to reptiles.

6.11.3 Reptiles may occur along the boundary of the site and this provides linkage across the local landscape. It is however outside the proposed works area.

6.11.4 Grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) may occur along the dry ditches and Eel Beck, however, the open and exposed nature of the core development area is unsuitable for these species.

6.11.5 As a consequence, precautionary mitigation would be appropriate in respect of construction activities so as to ensure reasonable avoidance measures are taken to avoid the killing or injury of these species.

6.12 Water vole

6.12.1 There are no records of water voles within 2km of the site.

6.12.2 Eel Beck is considered to be unsuitable for water vole as it is densely shaded.

6.12.3 We consider this species is likely to be absent from the site and there are no records within 2km of the site. However, precautionary mitigation in relation to otter would also be appropriate for water vole.

6.13 Other

6.13.1 The boundary hedgerows are species poor and provide little potential for use by hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*). Fragmentation of habitat locally and existing land use do not provide optimal conditions for the free passage of this species across the site and slugs and snails are likely to occur only at very low numbers.

6.13.2 The site may be crossed by species such as fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) and rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) are known to occur locally.

6.13.3 The boundary hedgerows may provide suitable habitat for small mammals such as field vole (*Microtus agrestis*) but these areas are small and the sites value to small mammals is limited.

6.14 Statutory Sites

Direct Impacts:

6.14.1 There are no statutory sites which are connected to the site such that site development would directly affect the dispersal of species between them or directly impact upon their integrity.

6.14.2 The habitats on site do not represent or are linked to those found in any of the statutory or non-statutory sites locally.

Indirect Impacts:

6.14.3 There are no statutory sites which are connected to the site such that site development would indirectly affect the dispersal of species between them or indirectly impact upon their integrity.

7. MITIGATION/RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Compensatory planting and habitat enhancement

7.1.1 The roots of trees on the site and its boundaries should be adequately protected during work in accordance with industry standards. All trees should as far as possible be retained in the scheme.

7.1.2 The landscaping scheme should utilise plants which are native and wildlife friendly. In particular night flowering species would be beneficial to bats. Wildflower seed could be used to plant verges to enhance the ecological value of the site and continuity between the site and the wider area.

7.1.3 Hedgerows around the site should be retained or improved where possible. Any lengths of intact hedgerow to be removed to facilitate development should be transplanted and or replanted in order that there is no net negative impact on this BAP habitat due to development. The roots of hedgerow plants/trees should be adequately protected during development from compaction/ground disturbance.

7.1.4 If the defunct species poor hedges are removed, transplantation of them is not considered to be of significant ecological benefit as there are no notable species assemblages associated with them, replanting of linear lines of trees/ shrubs would be more beneficial.

7.1.5 Contaminants should not be allowed to enter the beck or ditches during work. To effect this, spill kits should be provided on site. Re-fuelling of all plant and machinery should be undertaken away from open drains and water courses. Drip trays should be used under static machinery.

7.1.6 Care should be taken to ensure that Himalayan balsam is not spread during works. It is understood that works will not be undertaken within areas containing Himalayan balsam. Plant leaving site should be cleaned of soil to prevent the off site transfer of seed. A programme of control for this species should be implemented across the site.

7.2 Amphibians

7.2.1 There is no requirement for specific mitigation for these species. There are currently no suitable breeding sites on or near the site. However, as a precautionary measure, in the unlikely event that any signs of any amphibian activity is subsequently found, all site works should cease and further ecological advice should be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.

7.2.2 In order to further minimise impacts on amphibians the following points should also be followed.

- All work must take place during daylight hours as amphibians are more likely to be commuting over night and this will ensure the risk to any amphibians commuting through the site will be minimised.

- During the development, measures should be put in place to discourage amphibians from using the development area, the creation of any piles of earth, materials and rubble which could form potential artificial hibernacula and refuge should be avoided at all times. It is recommended that any spoil or rubble will be removed immediately to skips, or on hard standing or short grass. This will ensure that no potential amphibian hibernation or resting sites are created.

- The storage of all loose materials must be palletised or similar so they are off the ground whenever possible.

- Should any trenches and excavations be required, an escape route for animals that enter the trench must be provided, especially if left open overnight. Ramps should be no greater than of 45 degrees in angle. Ideally, any holes should be securely covered. This will ensure amphibians are not trapped during work.

- All excavations left open overnight or longer should be checked for animals prior to the continuation of works or infilling. Back filling should be completed immediately after any excavations, ideally back filling as an on-going process to the work in hand.

7.3 Badger

7.3.1 Badger setts are not known to occur within 2km of the site, however the site is surrounded by suitable areas for sett building. Any setts will be undisturbed by work but in order to minimise impacts on badgers passing over the site the following points should also be followed.

- All work must take place during daylight hours as badgers are more likely to be commuting over the site at night and this will ensure the risk to any badgers passing through the site will be minimised.

- Should any trenches and excavations be required, an escape route for animals that enter the trench must be provided, especially if left open overnight. Ramps should be no greater than of 45 degrees in angle. Ideally, any holes should be securely covered. This will ensure badgers are not trapped during work.

- All excavations left open overnight or longer should be checked for animals prior to the continuation of works or infilling. Back filling should be completed immediately after any excavations, ideally back filling as an on-going process to the work in hand.

- Boundary fences/walls should incorporate gaps at their base to facilitate the passage of badgers across the site.

7.4 Bats

7.4.1 Work at night should be restricted, new planting within the site should enhance structural diversity and light spill onto the boundary should be minimised.

7.4.2 New roosting provision for crevice dwelling bats could be incorporated into the buildings on site or bat boxes could be erected in retained trees.

7.4.3 Any category 2 trees to be felled should be re-inspected for bats to confirm they remain absent.

7.4.4 Overall it is considered there is more than sufficient scope for mitigation and compensation at the site such that there will be no adverse impact on the favourable conservation status of bats affected by the proposal.

7.4.5 Recommendations made within the Bat Survey Report must be adhered to.

7.5 Birds

7.5.1 Nesting by birds within the development area is considered unlikely to occur. Birds may nest within hedgerows and trees on the peripheries of the survey areas.

7.5.2 Any vegetation to be trimmed or cleared should be checked for nesting birds before it is removed. Ideally this should occur outside the bird nesting period March-September. If vegetation clearance is to occur in the March-September period a check for nesting birds should be conducted first by a suitably qualified individual.

7.5.3 New planting within the site and the retention of trees and shrubs on the site boundary will maintain the ecological functionality of the site for breeding birds.

7.5.4 If nesting birds are found at the site all site works shall cease and further ecological advice shall be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.

7.6 Brown Hares

7.6.1 There is no requirement for specific mitigation for this species. However, as a precautionary measure, in the unlikely event that any signs of any brown hare activity is subsequently found, all site works should cease and further ecological advice should be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.

7.6.2 The points in respect of not working at night and leaving open trenches with means of escape detailed for badgers are also applicable to this species.

7.7 Invertebrates

7.7.1 Landscaping should include native or wildlife friendly species including night flowering plants.

7.8 Otter

7.8.1 There is no requirement for specific mitigation for this species. However, as a precautionary measure, in the unlikely event that any signs of any otter activity is subsequently found, all site works should cease and further ecological advice should

be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.

7.8.2 The points in respect of not working at night and leaving open trenches with means of escape detailed for amphibians are also applicable to this species which is only likely to pass through the site at night.

7.9 Reptiles

7.9.1 There is no requirement for specific mitigation for these species. However, as a precautionary measure, in the unlikely event that any signs of any reptile activity is subsequently found, all site works should cease and further ecological advice should be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.

7.9.2 Vegetation along the beck and ditch on the edge of the development site should be retained such that it is in proximity to open areas of ground which will also be suitable for basking.

7.9.3 The points in respect of not leaving open trenches without means of escape detailed for badgers are also applicable to these species.

7.10 Water vole

7.10.1 There is no requirement for specific mitigation for this species. However, as a precautionary measure, in the unlikely event that any signs of any Water vole activity is subsequently found, all site works should cease and further ecological advice should be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.

7.10.2 The points in respect of not working at night and leaving open trenches with means of escape detailed for amphibians are also applicable to this species which is only likely to pass through the site at night.

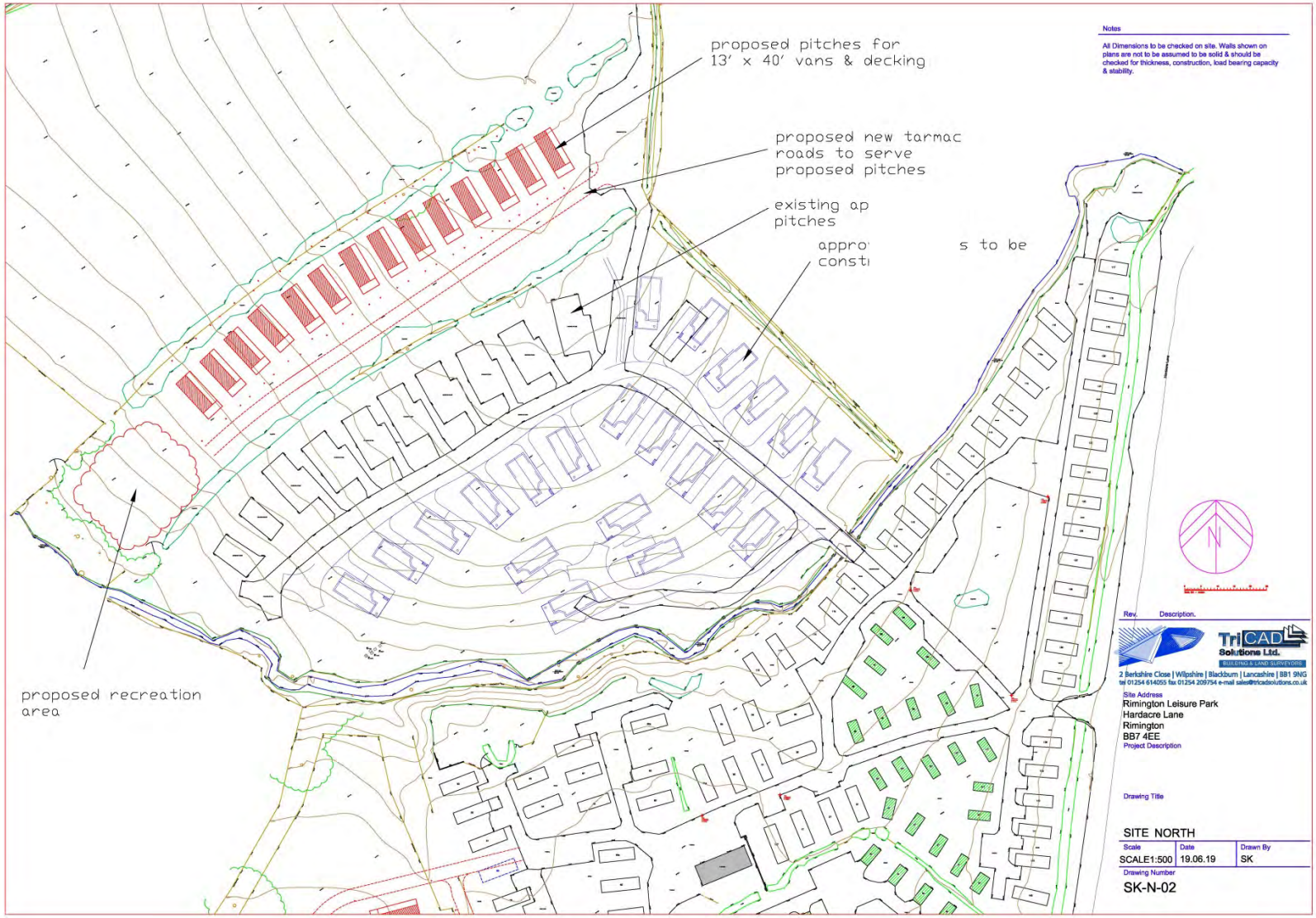

Figure 7 *Proposed Site Plan North.*

Figure 8. *Proposed Site Plan South*

8. CONCLUSION

8.1.1 Ecological surveys, site appraisals and impact assessments were carried out with respect to three parcels of land at Rimington Leisure Park in Clitheroe. It is proposed that the existing leisure park is to be extended to add additional caravan pitches.

8.1.2 There is potential for bats, badgers, otter, water vole, reptiles and nesting birds to occur in the local area, there was however no conclusive evidence of any specifically protected species regularly occurring on the site or the surrounding areas which would be negatively affected by site development following the mitigation proposed.

8.1.3 Recommendations made within the Bat Survey Report must be adhered to.

8.1.4 The vegetation to be cleared has a low ecological significance in the local area; the trees along the site boundary are not to be impacted by the proposed development.

8.1.5 The protection of trees on the site boundary and landscaping will promote structural diversity in both the canopy and at ground level and will encourage a wider variety of wildlife to use the site than already occurs.

8.1.6 Any vegetation to be trimmed or cleared should be checked for nesting birds before it is removed. Ideally this should occur outside the bird nesting period March- September. If vegetation clearance is to occur in the March-September period a check for nesting birds should be conducted first by a suitably qualified individual.

8.1.7 Care should be undertaken to ensure that Himalayan balsam is not spread across the site.

8.1.8 Contractors will be observant for protected species and all nesting birds. Should any species be found during construction, all site works should cease and further ecological advice should be sought with a view to a detailed method statement and programme of mitigation measures being prepared and implemented.

9. REFERENCES

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Joint Nature Conservation Committee (2010). Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey - a Technique for Environmental Audit. Reprinted by JNCC, Peterborough. - See more at: http://www.cieem.net/habitats-general#sthash.mJYlrP8L.dpuf

Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (Triturus cristatus). Herpetological Journal 10 (4), 143-155.

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10. APPENDIX

Key

Site Boundary

Hedgerow Number

N

envirotech

Hedgerow Regulations Assessment

SCALE: NTS

REV 01

*Habitats outside the site boundary are indicative only and have been mapped from within the site boundary or from publicly accessible land

Feature / Hedge	Length 20m +	Hedge is not bounding the curtilage of dwelling	Hedge established more than 30years	Hedge boundary of protected or common land or land used for agriculture or forestry	ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY	Archaeological feature which is included in the schedule of monuments	Situated wholly or partly within an archaeological site	Boundary of a pre-1600 AD estate	Integral part of a field system	Protected species records	FEATURES	Bank or wall	Gaps less than 10%	Standard trees	Ditch	Parallel hedge	Footpath/ Bridleway	Connection points	Woody species	Average ground flora species	HEDGE CLASSIFIED AS IMPORTANT
1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		No*	No*	No*	No*	No		No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	2	5	0	**No**
2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes		No*	No*	No*	No*	No		No	No	No	No	No	No	2	3	0	**No**
3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		No*	No*	No*	No*	No		No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	2	3	0	**No**
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		No*	No*	No*	No*	No		No	No	No	No	No	Yes	2	2	0	**No**
5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		No*	No*	No*	No*	No		Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	0	3	0	**No**
6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		No*	No*	No*	No*	No		No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	0	4	0	**No**
	No = Automatic failure					Yes = Automatic pass						7 woody species or 6 woody species + 3 features or 5 woody species + 4 features or highway + 4 woody species and 2 features									

* Historic and archaeological records have not been checked for this site.