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Ecological Consultants
Environmental and Rural Chartered Surveyors

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Land at Valley View, Mytton Fold Golf Club, BB6 8AB

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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.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1.1 Envirotech NW Ltd were commissioned in October 2025 to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Land at Valley View, Mytton Fold Golf Club.

1.1.2 It is proposed an existing dog care facility is extended, with creation of an additional exercise field and parking. Permission will also be sought for retrospective elements (agility area and lean-to/cover).

1.1.3 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.

1.1.4 The site was then visited by a licenced ecologist from Envirotech NW Ltd on 24th October 2025. 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.

1.1.5 The plant species assemblages recorded on site are all common in the local area, comprising a mix of developed land and *Deschampsia* neutral grassland. *Deschampsia* neutral grassland is of some value at the 'site' level, but is to be retained and/or enhanced. Sympathetically landscaped open space is considered to offer habitat of comparable ecological value.

1.1.6 Whilst bats, badgers and nesting birds are known to occur within the wider local area, there was no conclusive evidence of any specifically protected species regularly occurring on site or the surrounding areas which would be negatively affected by site development following the mitigation proposed.

1.1.7 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.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

2.1.1 In October Envirotech NW Ltd were commissioned by Adams Planning and Development to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of Land at Valley View, Mytton Fold Golf Club, central grid reference SD 71372 34054 (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 a dog care facility, with creation of an additional exercise field and parking. Permission will also be sought for retrospective elements (agility area and lean-to/cover).

2.2 Objectives

2.2.1 The main objectives of the study were:

- The completion of a UKHabs Version 2 (UKHab Ltd (2023)) 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, National Biodiversity Network (NBN) 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.

3.1.4 Due to the scale of development, in accordance with CIEEM guidelines, a data search of the county records centre was not required. The likely presence and impact on protected species could be adequately determined from the level of data search undertaken.

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 UKHabs V2 survey and reporting methodology.

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 (2019).

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*).

3.2.4 The survey was also informed by questioning the landowner/site agent to ascertain the recent history of the site.

3.2.5 Habitats of Principal Importance (HPI) were cross referenced with Natural England's inventory against the site boundary and where found ground truthed.

3.3 Timing and Personnel

3.3.1 During the visit, weather conditions were suitable for the survey types undertaken.

3.3.2 The site and surrounding land were visited on 24th October 2025 by: -

- (BF) Mr Bradley Foster MEnv (Hons)
  Natural England Bat Class Licence (Level 1)
  Natural England Barn Owl Licence (Agent)
  Natural England Great Crested Newt Licence (Level 1)

4. SPECIES SURVEY METHODOLOGY

4.1 Amphibian

4.1.1 Great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) are protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 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 Licensing process was used to determine the suitability of ponds for great crested newts.

4.1.4 Where relevant, pond assessments were undertaken in order to determine which water-bodies, based on their potential to support great crested newts, should be subject to presence/absence surveys.

4.1.5 From a review of Ordnance Survey maps, modern satellite imagery and having ground-truthed the site, there are no known ponds within a 250m radius of the site boundary. Resultingly, the site was considered sufficiently low risk for GCN such that no further assessments were considered necessary.

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 Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, as a 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 Collins, J. (ed) (2023) 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.

4.3.4 Where relevant, all trees and structures 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) (2023) and categorised as No potential, PRF-I or PRF-M. PRF I is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats. PRF M is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

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 Species of Principal Importance (SPI).

4.4.2 Bird species and behaviour were noted during the field survey. All areas were 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 SPI.

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 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.

4.6.2 The extent of sampling was limited in that it could be confirmed that no SPI would be likely to be affected by the proposal.

4.7 Reptiles

4.7.1 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.

4.7.2 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.

4.7.3 Reptile surveys comprising visual encounter surveys were undertaken. Habitat at the site was not considered sufficiently suitable for full presence/absence surveys to be warranted.

4.8 Survey limitations

4.8.1 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.

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

4.8.3 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.

4.8.4 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. There are however records of protected or notable species within 2km (Figure 2). These are discussed in the relevant sections below.

5.1.2 The nearest non-statutory protected site is the Parsonage Reservoir Lancashire Biological Heritage Site (BHS), located 2km south-west of the site boundary. There are also areas of mapped ancient woodland within ~350m (Figure 3).

5.1.3 The nearest statutory protected site is the Harper Clough and Smalley Delph Quarries, located ~2km south-east of the site (Figure 4).

Red Line Boundary

Mammals

Bats

Birds

Amphibians

Figure 2

Protected and
Notable Species

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Figure 3

Mapped Habitats of Principal Importance and Non-statutory Protected Sites

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Figure 4

Protected Sites
and Habitats

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6. UKHabs V2 SURVEY RESULTS

6.1 Habitat Results

6.1.1 A drone was overflown the site on 24th October 2025. This produced a number of images which were stitched together to form an orthomosaic map, providing upto date aerial imagery of the site from which UKHabs habitat mapping has been based. Figure 5a shows the hi-resolution imagery overlain Google Earth.

6.1.2 Figure 5b shows an aerial view of the site.

6.1.3 The site comprises a dog care facility with parking, lean-to/cover and agility field. The redline boundary comprises areas of *Deschampsia* neutral grassland to the east and west. It is understood an additional exercise field and parking will be created to the east.

6.1.4 See Figure 6 for the UK Habs V2 Plan and Table 1 for the descriptive Target Notes.

Red Line Boundary

Figure 5a

Orthomosaic Map

24/10/2025

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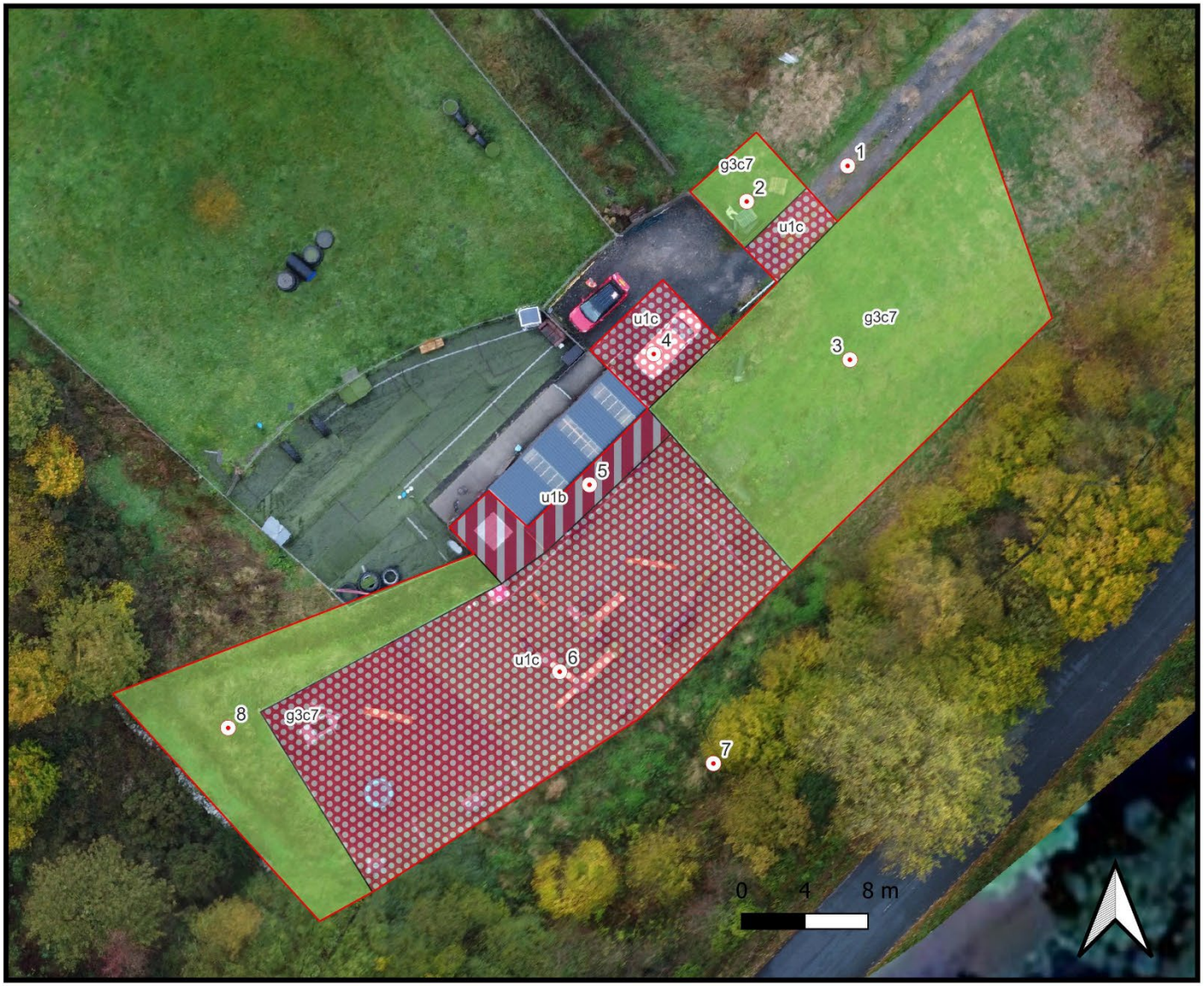
Figure 5b- *Aerial view of the site (looking south-west)*

Target Note	Description	Comment
TN1	Access Track	The site is accessed via a private track off Whalley Old Road.
TN2	Parking Extension	It is proposed the existing parking area is extended.
TN3	Deschampsia Neutral Grassland	An area of Deschampsia neutral grassland comprises the north-east end of the site. Vegetation consists of Tufted Hair-Grass (*Deschampsia cespitosa),* Cocksfoot *(Dactylis glomerata),* Yorkshire Fog *(Holcus lanatus),* Timothy-grass *(Phleum pratense),* Creeping Bent *(Agrostis stolonifera)*, Perennial Ryegrass *(Lolium perenne),* Soft Rush *(Juncus effusus),* Sharp-Flowered Rush *(Juncus acutiflorus),* Compact Rush *(Juncus conglomeratus)* and Common Sedge *(Carex nigra)*. Some of the vegetation had been strimmed prior to completion of the survey. Herbaceous forbs consist of Nettle *(Urtica dioica),* Creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), Dandelion *(Taraxacum officinale),* Common Sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), Daisy *(Bellis perennis),* Common Mallow *(Malva sylvestris),* Pineapple Mayweed *(Matricaria matricarioides)* and Mouse ear *(Cerastium fontanum)*. Grassland is to be retained, but is to be fenced and utilised as an additional exercise field.
TN4	Building Extension	It is proposed the existing dog care facility is extended to the north-east over the current car parking area. The current building constitutes a simple timber clad structure with pent box-profile corrugated metal roof.
TN5	Lean to/Cover (Retrospective)	Retrospective permission is sought for the erection of a timber and corrugated metal lean-to/cover.
TN6	Agility Field (Retrospective)	Retrospective permission is sought for the creation of an agility field (with agility equipment). The field has been surfaced with Astroturf and woodchip.
TN7	Deciduous Woodland	The site is screened to the south-east by a belt of deciduous woodland comprising Alder *(Alnus glutinosa),* Willow (*Salix sp.*), Silver Birch *(Betula pendula),* Hazel (*Corylus avellana)* and Gorse *(Ulex europaeus)*.
TN8	Deschampsia Neutral Grassland	The redline extends to the south-west to include an additional area of rough grass similar to TN3. There is a greater presence of tall ruderal vegetation such as Great Hairy Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), Cow Parsley *(Anthriscus sylvestris),* Hogweed *(Heracleum sphondylium),* Ragwort *(Senecio jacobaea)* and Creeping thistle.

Table 1 *Details of Target Notes.*



Red Line Boundary

Target Notes

u1b Developed Land
Sealed surface

u1c Artificial Unvegetated
Unsealed Surface

g3c7 Deschampsia Neutral
Grassland

Figure 6

UK Habs V2 Map
Pre- Development

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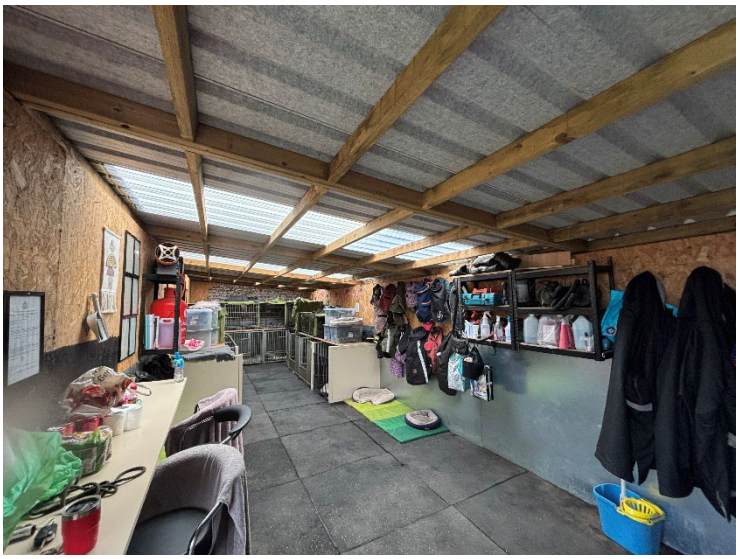
	The site is reached via a private access track
	The site is open to Mytton Fold Golf Club, which sits adjacent the site to the north
	The site is bordered by margins of rough grass and tall ruderal vegetation

	It is proposed an additional exercise field is established to the north-east end of the site Grassland is to be retained (but fenced, similar to the exercise field to the north-west)
	It is proposed the existing dog care facility is extended from its north-east gable end
	The building comprises a simple timber clad structure with pent roof

	Building internals
	Retrospective permission is sought for the erection of a timber and corrugated metal lean-to/cover to the rear of the dog care facility
	Retrospective permission is sought for the creation of an agility field

	The agility field has been surfaced with AstroTurf and woodchip
	The site is bordered to the south-west by an area of rough grass and tall ruderal vegetation It is proposed this area is enhanced

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 site comprises a mix of developed land; sealed surface, artificial unvegetated; unsealed surface and Deschampsia Neutral Grassland.

6.2.3 The Deschampsia Neutral Grassland has a moderate species diversity and ecological value, being indicative of poorly drained non-intensively managed grassland on mesotrophic soils. Whilst the assemblage of species within it is higher than improved pasture, this habitat is not associated with any rare flora and does not constitute a Habitat of Principal Importance (HPI). This habitat is however of value at the 'site' level.

6.2.4 There are no hedgerows within the redline boundary.

6.2.5 There is no tree stock within the redline boundary.

6.2.6 There is no evidence of Japanese knotweed, giant hogweed or Himalayan balsam 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 is a single amphibian record within 2km of the site on the Envirotech dataset, relating to Common Frog *(Rana temporaria)*. The record is located ~1500m south-west of the site towards Wilpshire Moor.

6.3.2 From a review of Ordnance Survey maps, modern satellite imagery and having ground-truthed the site, there are no known ponds within a 250m radius of the site boundary.

6.3.3 The core development area has a low value to amphibians being open and exposed. There are no breeding ponds in proximity to the site.

6.3.4 Structural diversity at ground level across the site is mostly poor. There are no areas with log, rubble piles or compost heaps which would be particularly favourable to amphibians.

6.3.5 Amphibians would be unlikely to attempt to cross the site as it comprises an area of open grass and developed land surrounded by security fencing. Whilst not a physical barrier to the dispersal of amphibians, the site is regarded as being a potentially hostile environment to them.

6.3.6 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.

6.4 Badger

6.4.1 There is a single record of badger within 2km of the site on the Envirotech dataset, located ~625m north-east 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 is a single record of bats within a 2km radius of the site on the Envirotech dataset, relating to Common Pipistrelle *(Pipistrellus pipistrellus)*.

6.5.2 The foraging habitat within the redline boundary is considered poor for bat species being open and exposed. There are no trees or shrubs on site. The Deschampsia Neutral Grassland does not possess a particularly high abundance of flowering or night-scented vegetation.

6.5.3 The woodland to the south-east does however contain flowering species such as Willow and Gorse, which are likely to attract winged insects. This habitat is

6.5.4 Whilst this area of the site's boundary vegetation is the most structurally diverse, it is not considered exceptional in the local area. The site is however connected to well-defined corridors of trees and woodland to the north and south, including those with Mytton Fold Golf Club. Such habitats are likely to provide a high value to foraging bats.

6.5.5 It is not considered there would be significant degradation of foraging habitat as a result of the proposal so long as the site is managed sympathetically and all trees bordering the site are retained.

6.5.1 There is no tree stock within the redline boundary. Trees to the perimeter of the site were however assessed in accordance with Collins, J. (ed) (2023) and assigned a risk category. All of the trees were considered Negligible Risk.

6.5.2 No indications of roosting or highly suitable roost sites were located within the trees. All of the trees could be adequately inspected using a ground-based assessment. No additional aerial or emergence surveys were considered necessary to confirm risk. Risk categories from and the requirement for mitigation for each tree category are shown on Figure 7.

6.5.3 The existing dog care facility comprises a simple timber clad structure with pent box profile corrugated metal. It is proposed the building is extended from its north-east gable end. The structure has a negligible potential for use by roosting bats, comprising a single skin building of poor thermal mass. There are no potential roost features to the roof and walls- the roof vaulted and covered with sheeting material. We do not consider the need for emergence activity surveys.

6.5.4 We consider bat species are highly unlikely to rely on the site for feeding but undoubtedly occur within the local area and may therefore pass through the site. Roosting by bats will not occur on site.

Table 6.3. Showing types of survey approaches that are relevant to tree surveys following steps taken in Figure 6.1.

Scenario	Types of approaches after considering impact avoidance as first step in mitigation hierarchy.
Known bat roosts	Roost characterisation surveys (see Section 7.3) followed by EPS licensing (for loss) or PWMS (for e.g. disturbance impacts where buffers are required).
INCREASING: numbers of trees number of PRF-Ms likelihood of maternity/hibernation roosts likelihood of nationally or locally rare tree-roosting species	**ALBST** Consider trapping, tagging and radio-tracking to find roosts of high conservation significance (see Chapter 9). This method is likely to be appropriate on (a) nationally significant infrastructure projects, (b) projects that impact sites designated for tree roosting bats, and/or (c) areas of woodland with high suitability for bats or ancient woodlands. See Box 6.1. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT SNCB IS ESSENTIAL, A BESPOKE APPROACH MAY BE REQUIRED[79]. **FURTHER SURVEYS APPROACH (but consider cost-effectiveness when compared to ALBST)** PRF inspection surveys for PRF-M features in summer (see Table 6.4. and Section 6.8). Where features inaccessible or too extensive for PRF inspection, carry out emergence surveys in summer with NVAs (see Table 6.4. and Section 7.2). Consider winter roosting potential. MAY NEED TO CONSULT WITH RELEVANT SNCB. **ROOST RESOURCE APPROACH (if only PRF-Is[a])** No further surveys. Provide appropriate compensation for all PRF-Is in advance of impacts and a PWMS for works (see Reason & Wray, 2023).

a If there are larger numbers of trees with features categorised as PRF-I then this increases the likelihood of a roost being present. Conversely, if there are very few trees in the landscape then PRF-I features may have increased importance. Context should always be understood and considered.

Figure 7- *Tree risk categories from Collins, J. (ed) (2023)*

6.6 Birds

6.6.1 There are four records of four species of bird within a 2km radius of the site on the Envirotech dataset. Records relate to Kestrel *(Falco tinnunculus)*, Tawny Owl *(Strix aluco)*, Little Owl *(Athene noctua)* and Sparrowhawk *(Accipiter nisus)*.

6.6.2 The site is undoubtedly frequented by common garden birds and those indicative of open farmland and urban fringes.

6.6.3 There are no trees or hedgerows within the redline boundary available for small opportunistic nesting birds such as Wren *(Troglodytes troglodytes)* and Dunnock *(Prunella modularis)*.

6.6.4 There were no rot holes or cracks to the trees within the boundary wood that would support cavity nesting species such as woodpeckers.

6.6.5 There is no recorded use of the dog care building by Swallow *(Hirundo rustica)* or House Martin *(Delichon urbicum)*.

6.6.6 Whilst ground foraging birds such as Blackbird *(Turdus merula)* and Pied Wagtail *(Motacilla alba)* may opportunistically frequent the site, the site's ground vegetation is considered to possess negligible potential for ground nesting birds given the risk of trampling and other disturbance.

6.6.7 The habitat on site is not considered to be of anything more than of local significance, with habitats present well represented within the local area. The impact on nesting birds is therefore considered likely to be minor. Precautionary mitigation is advised.

6.7 Brown Hare

6.7.1 Brown hare are a SPI. There is a single record of Brown hare within a 2km radius of the site on the Envirotech dataset. This record is located ~1350m east of the site.

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

6.7.3 The site boundaries have some potential for brown hares to create forms, but use of the site and wider area is likely limited given its open and exposed nature and regular human presence.

6.7.4 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.

6.8 Invertebrates

6.8.1 There are 231 records of notable invertebrates within 2km of the site on the NBN database.

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

6.8.3 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.

6.8.4 Trees to the site boundaries contain comparatively little rotten wood in their canopies.

6.8.5 Tall ruderal vegetation such as Great Hairy Willowherb, Creeping thistle and Hogweed has some value to common species of moth, butterfly and other winged insects, although this is not considered to be locally significant.

6.8.6 The significance of the site to invertebrates is likely to be limited in the local context although the habitat on site will undoubtedly support common invertebrate species. Mitigation can be incorporated into the design and landscaping scheme with the retention of green space and enhancement of field margins.

6.9 Reptiles

6.9.1 There are no records for reptiles within 2km of the site on the Envirotech dataset.

6.9.2 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.

6.9.3 Reptiles may however occur along the boundaries of the site, providing linkages across the local landscape. Such areas are however outside the site boundary and will be unaffected by the proposal.

6.9.4 No specific mitigation for these species is considered necessary.

6.9.5 No indication of reptiles was recorded at the site.

6.9.6 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.

6.10 Other

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

6.10.2 Nearby field margins of tall grass and Bramble *(Rubus fruticosus agg)* may provide suitable habitat for small mammals such as field vole (*Microtus agrestis*) and Hedgehog *(Erinaceus Europaeus)*.

6.11 Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites

Direct Impacts:

6.11.1 There are no statutory or non-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.

6.11.2 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:

6.11.3 There are no statutory or non-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 all trees bordering the site 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. It is proposed the grassland to the south-west corner of the site is enhanced as part of the site's landscaping.

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 The following precautionary points should however be followed: -

- All work must take place during daylight hours as amphibians are more likely to be commuting overnight 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 known to occur within 2km of the site. These 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 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.

7.5 Birds

7.5.1 Nesting by birds within the development area is considered unlikely to occur. Birds may however nest within the woodland and treelines to the south and north-west.

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 Artificial bird nesting sites for Swallow or House Martin could be incorporated into the new buildings under the eaves in suitable locations.

7.5.5 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 Reptiles

7.8.1 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.

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

8. REFERENCES

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