



PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL

**LAND NEAR EAVES HALL,
WEST BRADFORD, LANCASHIRE**

APRIL 2026

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Land near Eaves Hall, West Bradford, Lancashire

A report for

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 REASON FOR SURVEY

PENNINE Ecological have been commissioned by Bowland Inns & Hotels Limited, to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of land near Eaves Hall, West Bradford, Lancashire.

The proposal includes the installation of 15no. 'eco lodges' with associated car parking, pathways and soft landscaping.

The study includes the following elements:

- UK Habitat Classification Survey.
- Badger Survey and Evaluation.
- Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment.
- Breeding Bird Survey and Evaluation.
- Reptile Scoping and Evaluation.
- Scoping for other protected or notable species potentially present within the site.

The study also includes a full evaluation of the ecological significance of the survey findings, and recommendations/precautions where appropriate.

1.2 SITE LOCATION

The site is located within the field parcel north of Eaves Hall off Moor Lane, West Bradford, Lancashire, BB7 3JG. The sites grid reference is SD 73674 44977.

The site comprises an unmanaged modified grassland with areas of disturbed land. An aerial image of the area subject to survey and the red line application boundary is shown below.

Figure 1.1: Surveyed area at Eaves Hall, West Bradford



2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The methodologies where specific surveys were applied are outlined below. Surveys were undertaken on 13/04/2026.

2.1.1 Desk Based Study

The Multi Agency Geographical Information Centre¹ was referred to in respect of statutory sites within 2km of the site. Priority habitats, European Protected Species Licences (EPSL) issued in respect of GCN and bats, and GCN licence returns were searched up to 500m from the site.

The Lancashire Environment Record Network (LERN) Environment Information Map² was referred to in respect of non-statutory sites within 500m of the site.

It should be noted that species records over 500m of the site are not reproduced here as they are considered to have no association with the site and are beyond the sphere of influence of the proposals. Records older than 10 years are also not included, unless they have ecological significance (e.g. historic bat roost or historic presence of GCN within a pond).

In addition, a review was undertaken of previous assessments completed at the site by Batworker Consultancy (Batworker Consultancy, 2018) in relation to a previous application (application ref: 3/2020/0544).

2.1.2 UK Habitat Classification Survey

A UK Habitat Classification (UKHabs) survey (UKHab Ltd, 2023) of the habitats within the red line boundary was undertaken.

A habitat condition score for each of the habitats was completed where applicable (Appendix C).

2.1.3 Badger Survey

A badger survey was undertaken to identify evidence of badger utilising the site and up to 50m from the site. Surveys were undertaken in accordance with 'Surveying Badgers', Harris et al., (1989) and 'Badger', Roper (2010).

2.1.4 Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment and Evaluation

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).

¹ www.magic.gov.uk

² <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/d429aa6435b849838af1d2cef68de43b/>

There are no buildings or trees within the survey area and therefore the site was evaluated for its habitat value for foraging and commuting bats only.

2.1.5 Bird Survey and Evaluation

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 and hedgerows).

All birds heard or observed during the survey were recorded.

2.1.6 Great Crested Newt Scoping and Evaluation

The site was evaluated by means of desk study and the surveyor's specialist knowledge of the species, in particular its terrestrial habits and breeding requirements. Two ponds are located within 250m however access was only possible to Pond One. The pond was subject to a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment.

The index applies ten suitability indices which are multiplied together to produce a score for each pond (Oldham et al, 2000). Based on the score a pond suitability for supporting GCN is applied to each pond (see Table 2.1 below).

Note: *The HSI system is not sufficiently precise to conclude that any particular pond with a high score will support newts, or that any pond with a low score will not support newts.*

Table 2.1: HSI scores

HSI Score	Pond Suitability
< 0.5	Poor
0.5 – 0.59	Below Average
0.6 – 0.69	Average
0.7 – 0.79	Good
> 0.8	Excellent

2.1.7 Reptile Scoping and Evaluation

The site was evaluated by means of desk study and the surveyor's specialist knowledge of the species.

2.1.8 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 – There are two watercourses in proximity to the site. An unnamed brook is located at least 10m west from the red line boundary. Greg Sike is located 5m from the eastern boundary. There will be no direct or indirect impacts to the

watercourses (i.e. no work within 10m of the watercourses). The site has no habitats which are of value for riparian mammal species. The proposed works are localised and impacts to habitats are not anticipated to extend beyond the red line boundary. It is concluded with reasonable certainty that riparian mammals are absent from the site and will be unimpacted by the proposals.

- Invertebrates –The site comprises predominantly unmanaged and modified grassland. There are localised areas within the site that may provide suitable microclimates for some invertebrate species (e.g. tall forbs, ruderal and disturbed ground areas providing varied structure), however these areas are small and are unlikely to support notable invertebrate assemblages (Buglife, 2015). It is concluded with reasonable certainty that notable invertebrate assemblages are absent from the site.
- Other notable mammals – The site is highly suboptimal for use by terrestrial mammals. Whilst it is accepted that species such as hedgehog may stray into the site, the site is not considered capable of supporting significant populations of any notable mammal species. No observations were recorded during the survey. Proposals are confined to developed land and impacts to other notable mammals are considered unlikely. Standard precautionary working measures would avoid impacts on individual mammals.

These species are not discussed further within this report.

2.2 SURVEYOR EXPERIENCE

The surveyor and author of this report is Patrick Leatham. Patrick is a full member of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (MCIEEM) and has over 14 years' experience in ecological survey and evaluation. Key skills include the following.

- Over 14 years completing Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey / UKHabs Survey on both small planning applications and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).
- Experienced bat surveyor and accredited agent on Stuart Macpherson licence (2021-10079-CL18-BAT).
- Experienced bird scoping and breeding bird check. Good knowledge of common and widespread birds.
- Extensive experience in great crested newt (GCN) survey, evaluation, licensing, and mitigation. Natural England Class Licence WML-CL08 held. Part of the Pennine Ecological survey team that undertook Great Crested Newt Surveys of over 40 ponds/slacks at Ainsdale Sand Dunes NNR/Sefton Coast SAC/SSSI for the Dynamic Dunescape (DuneLIFE) project / Natural England.
- Extensive experience undertaking terrestrial mammal surveys including badger (accredited agent on multiple badger sett closure licences).
- Riparian corridor and mammal surveys for numerous flood alleviation schemes across north west England.

- Ecological Evaluation and Impact Assessments in association with large scale infrastructure projects.
- Experienced Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). Undertaking over 20 HRA's to assess significant effects on internationally and nationally designated sites.

2.3 SURVEY CONSTRAINTS

The surveys were undertaken on 13/04/2026 in suitable weather conditions (dry weather).

Full access to the site was possible during the survey.

Pond Two was located within an adjacent field under separate ownership and could not be accessed for a HSI survey. However, this has not affected the surveyors ability to undertake a comprehensive scoping assessment for GCN.

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

3. RESULTS

3.1 RESULTS SUMMARY

- There are no statutory designated sites within the proposal site or within 2km of the site.
- There are no non-statutory designated sites within the proposal site. Drakehouse Wood Biological Heritage Site (BHS) is located 100m east of the site.
- The site is a field parcel which has been unmanaged for around three years. Disturbance had occurred at the site with the installation of artificial paths. Tall forbs and ephemeral had colonised parts of the artificial substrate.
- There are no trees and buildings within the site. The sites habitats are of 'moderate' habitat suitability for bats.
- No evidence of current bird nesting was recorded on site. The site has limited nesting provisions.
- Two ponds are located within 250m. Pond 1 was subject to a HSI assessment and scored 'average' for GCN suitability. Pond 1 returned a negative eDNA result in 2018. Pond 2 could not be accessed during the survey.
- No evidence of reptiles was recorded. The site has localised reptile suitability.
- No evidence or sightings of other protected / notable species was recorded within the site.

3.2 DESK BASED STUDY

3.2.1 Statutory Designated Sites

There are no statutorily designated sites on site or within 2km of the site.

3.2.2 Non-Statutory Designated Sites

There are no non-statutorily designated sites on site. One BHS is located within 500m of the site;

- Drakehouse Wood BHS – Located approximately 100m east of the site. The BHS is designated for its woodland habitat of which part of it is ancient woodland (an irreplaceable habitat).

3.2.3 Protected and Notable Species

There are no protected or notable species records within 500m of the site.

3.3 HABITATS

3.3.1 UKHabs Classification Survey

The following habitats were recorded within the survey area:

- g4 Modified grassland
- g4 (16) Tall forbs
- h3d Bramble scrub
- u1 (81) Ruderal / ephemeral
- u1c Artificial unsealed surfaces

The site comprises a field parcel to the north of Eaves Hall, West Bradford. The field has been unmanaged for around three years and as such the sward was tussocky and overgrown at the time of survey. An artificial substrate path and parking area was laid within the field, around 2022. Parts of the artificial substrate had been colonised with ruderal / ephemeral and tall forb species. Localised patches of bramble scrub were encroaching into the field from the wooded field boundaries on the west and eastern boundaries.

Where applicable, habitat condition assessments were undertaken for each habitat parcel. A detailed description to support these has been provided in the target notes below.

(i) Target Note 1: g4 Modified grassland

The majority of the site comprises an unmanaged modified grassland which is dominated by a number of palatable grasses. The average species per m² is 5.5. Due to the lack of management over recent years, the forb % has increased with an abundant coverage of common knapweed. However the majority of forb species present are indicative of nutrient enriched grassland (e.g. broadleaved dock, ribwort plantain, field horsetail, meadow buttercup). A review of historical imagery indicates that the field has been cut and baled and likely subject to nutrient enrichment.

Species recorded within the grassland include; cock's-foot (LA), meadow foxtail (LA), false oat-grass (LA), Yorkshire fog (A), soft rush (LA), common knapweed (A), raspberry (LA), common nettle (LA), great horsetail (LA), lesser celandine (LA), broadleaved dock (F), common hogweed (LF), meadow buttercup (LF), ribwort plantain (LF), common sorrel (O), spear thistle (O). Target Note 2: Ruderal / ephemeral species

The grassland is assessed as being in 'poor' habitat condition (Appendix C).

(ii) Target Note 2: Ruderal / ephemeral herb

Within the southern section of the site there was an area of artificial substrate. The disturbed area of the site had been colonised in part by ephemeral and ruderal species.

Species recorded include; great horsetail (LD), dandelion (A), hard rush (LA), creeping thistle (F), broadleaved dock (F), ragwort (LF), ribwort plantain (LF), Yorkshire fog (LF), annual meadow-grass (LF), colt's-foot (LF), pendulous sedge (LF), greater willowherb (O), common mouse-ear (O), spear thistle (O), cow parsley (LO), common hogweed (LO).

The ruderal / ephemeral herb is assessed as being in 'good' condition (Appendix C).

(iii) Target Note 3: Tall forbs

Around the u1c substrate, more established areas of vegetation are dominated by tall forb species. This is particularly upon the earth mounds and along the southern boundary of the site.

Species recorded include; common hogweed (F), greater willowherb (F), common nettle (LA) and pendulous sedge (LF).

The tall forb stands are assessed as being in 'moderate' habitat condition (Appendix C).

3.4 PROTECTED SPECIES

3.4.1 Badger

(i) Setts

The survey found no setts on site or within 50m of the site.

(ii) Other evidence

A well-used latrine was identified adjacent to the site within the north west corner of the field. The latrine included a number of fresh dung pits indicating badgers were utilising the field recently.

A number of mammal pathways were recorded leading into the site from the latrine. The pathways followed the riparian corridor of Greg Sike and also along the northern extent of the site. The pathways were also found to cross Greg Sike at two locations.

An unidentified mammal print was recorded upon a sand bank in the channel of Greg Sike. Whilst the print was inconclusive, it is suspected that this was a badger print as the pathway across the river led directly to the latrine.

Refer to Appendix A, Figure 1 for locations of badger evidence recorded.

3.4.2 Bats

(i) Preliminary Roost Assessment

There are no buildings or trees within the site boundary. Therefore potential roost features are absent from the site.

(ii) Bat Habitat Suitability

The site was almost entirely unmanaged, tussocky grassland. Riparian corridors were situated along the western and eastern boundaries of the site. The tree lines are likely to provide suitable commuting corridors for bats, as well as foraging opportunities. Pond 1 was situated immediately north of the site is also likely to provide good foraging opportunities with heightened levels of invertebrates.

The wider landscape was a continuation of the site, with a network of hedgerows, watercourses with vegetated riparian corridors and agricultural fields.

Overall the habitat associated with the site is considered to be of '**moderate**' suitability for bats (refer to Figure 3.1 below).

Figure 3.1: Extract taken from Collins, BCT (2023); Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition) - Table 4.1

Table 4.1. Guidelines for assessing the potential suitability of proposed development sites for bats, based on the presence of habitat features within the landscape, to be applied using professional judgement.		
Potential suitability	Description	
	Roosting habitats in structures	Potential flight-paths and foraging habitats
None	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year (i.e. a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).	No habitat features on site likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e. no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines, or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible ^a	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.	No obvious habitat features on site likely to be used as flight-paths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains in order to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions ^b and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity and not a classic cool/stable hibernation site, but could be used by individual hibernating bats ^c).	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flight-paths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolated, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by other habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or a patch of scrub.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flight-paths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions ^b and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g. maternity or classic cool/stable hibernation site.	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flight-paths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, tree-lined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

a Negligible is defined as 'so small or unimportant as to be not worth considering, insignificant'. This category may be used where there are places that a bat could roost or forage (due to one attribute) but it is unlikely that they actually would (due to another attribute).

b For example, in terms of temperature, humidity, height above ground level, light levels or levels of disturbance.

c Evidence from the Netherlands shows mass swarming events of common pipistrelle bats in the autumn followed by mass hibernation in a diverse range of building types in urban environments (Korsten *et al.*, 2016 and Jansen *et al.*, 2022). Common pipistrelle swarming has been observed in the UK (Bell, 2022 and Tomlinson, 2020) and winter hibernation of numbers of this species has been detected at Seaton Delaval Hall in Northumberland (National Trust, 2018). This phenomenon requires some research in the UK, but ecologists should be aware of the potential for larger numbers of this species to be present during the autumn and winter in prominent buildings in the landscape, urban or otherwise.

3.4.3 Birds

(i) Breeding Birds

No evidence of bird nesting was recorded during the survey. The site had limited nesting opportunities due to an absence of trees, scrub, hedgerows.

Bird activity during the survey was high and predominantly confined to the vegetated riparian corridors adjacent to the site. The presence of Drakehouse Wood to the east of the site is also likely to increase bird activity locally.

The following bird species were heard or seen within or immediately adjacent to the site. Where applicable, bird species are coloured coded based on their UK conservation status³:

Song thrush, rook, wood pigeon, chaffinch, nuthatch, blackcap, blue tit, chiff chaff, blackbird, goldfinch, coal tit, robin.

Overall the habitat within the site is considered to be of low suitability for birds.

3.4.4 Great Crested Newt

(i) Pond Scoping

Two ponds were identified within 250m of the proposal site. Pond 1 was located immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. Pond 2 is a field pond located approximately 65m west of the site. Both ponds are in close enough proximity to the site to be scoped in for further assessment.

Pond 1 was an artificially constructed 'reservoir'. The pond was rectangular shaped measuring approximately 24m x 18m. The banks of the pond were occupied with tall forb species and bramble scrub. There was limited submerged aquatic vegetation. Localised stands of bulrush were located around the pond edge. The water within the pond appeared brown and murky and water quality was considered poor.

Pond 2 could not be accessed during the survey. The pond was situated within an agricultural field and measured at approximately 18m x 15m. The ponds perimeter was surrounded by scrub. Greg Sike was located between the pond and the site.

(ii) HSI Result

A HSI assessment was undertaken on Pond 1 and the results are provided in 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Pond 1 HSI Survey Result

Pond Ref / Grid Ref	Pond 1
Suitability Index Description	SD 3931 0465
Geographic location	1.00
Pond area	1.00
Pond permanence	0.90
Water quality	0.33
Shade	1.00
Water fowl effect	0.67

³ Birds of Conservation Concern 5 (2021) – Red, amber, green status.

Pond Ref / Grid Ref	Pond 1
Suitability Index Description	SD 3931 0465
Fish presence	0.67
Pond Density	0.55
Terrestrial habitat	0.67
Macrophyte cover	0.30
HSI SCORE	0.66
POND SUITABILITY	Average

No sightings or evidence (egg searches of vegetation) of GCN was recorded within Pond 1.

An eDNA survey was undertaken on Pond 1 in 2018 and returned a negative result for GCN (Batworker Consultancy, 2018).

No access to Pond 2 was possible. A HSI assessment could not be undertaken.

3.4.5 Reptile

No sightings or evidence of reptiles was recorded during the survey.

The majority of the site was considered unfavourable for reptiles due to the overgrown, unmanaged nature of the grassland with limited variation in the sward.

However, the southern section of the site provided an area of suitable reptile habitat. The approximate area of suitable reptile habitat measures 0.27ha.

The southern section of the site comprised a mosaic of disturbed land which included spoil heaps, artificial refugia, and varying heights of vegetation (ephemeral, tall forbs, short grassland). The area also sloped towards the southern boundary providing some wetter areas and drier areas.

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 and Species of Principal Importance in England. 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 Statutory Sites

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

The Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones⁴ (IRZ's) has been reviewed (see Figure 4.1 below).

Figure 4.1: IRZ summary for Land near Eaves Hall, West Bradford



Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest

For local planning authorities to determine if a proposed development is likely to affect a terrestrial Site of Special Scientific Interest and when to consult Natural England.

Does the proposed development match any of the descriptions below?

- **Air Pollution:** Livestock & poultry units with a floorspace > 500m², slurry lagoons > 4000m².
- **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.

It is considered that the proposal site does not match any of the descriptions outlined in the IRZ.

⁴ The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make an initial assessment of the likely risk of impacts on SSSIs posed by developments.

4.1.2 Biological Heritage Sites / Non-statutory Sites

There are no known non-statutory designated sites within the site boundary.

Drakehouse Wood BHS is located approximately 100m east of the site and is designated for its woodland habitat (part ancient woodland).

The site is separated from the BHS by residential housing and modified (amenity) grassland. There are no hydrological links between the site and the woodland. The proposals are for the installation of 15no. holiday lodges with associated hard standing. The proposals are considered to be low impact and impacts are not anticipated to extend beyond the site boundary.

Based on the lack of ecological and hydrological connectivity between the site and the BHS, no direct/indirect impacts to the BHS are anticipated from the proposals.

4.1.3 Section 41 NERC Act 2006 Habitats and Species

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

4.1.4 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 are of very low to medium distinctiveness (in accordance with the BNG metric calculation tool). The majority of the site comprised an unmanaged species poor grassland. The grassland was dominated by palatable grasses and forbs which were indicative of historic nutrient enrichment. The grassland was assessed as being in poor condition due to the average species count per m² being less than 6 species.

An area of disturbed land was located in the southern section of the site. This area comprised a mosaic of artificial substrate, ruderal / ephemeral species (good condition), tall forbs (moderate condition) and bramble scrub.

Based on the size and condition of the habitats on site, the value of the current sites habitats cannot exceed 'site' ecological value.

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

4.3 PROTECTED SPECIES

4.3.1 Badger

No badger setts were recorded within the survey area.

A well-used latrine was recorded within the north west corner of the field, adjacent to the site boundary. A number of mammal paths lead from the latrine into the site. The paths were also found to cross Greg Sike in at least two separate locations.

Based on the findings of the survey, the site is considered to be used by badgers for foraging and commuting purposes.

Based on the findings of the survey the sites value for badger does not exceed 'local' ecological value for badger.

4.3.2 Bats

There are no buildings or trees within the site.

The sites habitats are considered to be of 'moderate' suitability for bats. The wooded riparian corridors adjacent to the site, along with presence of tussocky grassland and a pond would provide localised opportunities for bat populations. There is clear connectivity to woodland and buildings which may provide suitable roosting provisions.

Given the size of the site, the value of the site for bats does not exceed 'site' ecological value.

Due to the scale and nature of the proposals (i.e. no impact to key commuting and foraging features adjacent to the site), impacts to bats are not anticipated to extend beyond the land directly affected by the proposals.

4.3.3 Birds

(i) Breeding Birds

No evidence of current bird nesting was recorded on site.

The habitat within the site boundary has limited bird nesting value, with an absence of suitable nesting habitat such as hedgerows, trees and scrub. The wooded riparian corridors adjacent to the site provide localised nesting opportunities for common and widespread bird species. There will be no impact on these corridors from the proposals.

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 Newt

Two ponds were identified within 250m of the site. Pond 1 was subject to a HSI assessment and was scored as 'average' for GCN suitability. Pond 2 could not be accessed as this was within an agricultural field which is under 3rd party ownership.

An eDNA was undertaken on Pond 1 in 2018. The survey returned a negative result. The only other pond within 250m of Pond 1 is Pond 2 which is located approximately 190m south. Greg Sike is located between the two ponds and whilst the watercourse is not considered to be a barrier to dispersal, it is considered to be a deterrent for movement. Given that there is no

connectivity to any other ponds within the wider landscape, it can be concluded with reasonable certainty that GCN have not occupied Pond 1 and are considered absent from the pond.

Pond 2 is located approximately 65m west of the site. There is no information regarding the presence / absence of GCN from Pond 2. For the purposes of this evaluation, GCN are assumed present and impacts discounted based on the following points:

- Pond 2 located within an agricultural field on the opposite side of Greg Dike to the site. Whilst Greg Dike is not considered a barrier to dispersal for GCN, it does have a perceivable flow that would act as a deterrent for GCN movement towards the site.
- Pond 2 is surrounded by a strip of scrub. The riparian corridor along Greg Dike also provides optimal terrestrial habitat for GCN. Suitable GCN habitat is limited beyond these habitat areas. The presence of suitable terrestrial habitats in relative proximity to this pond will act as a 'terrestrial sponge' effect, since where suitable habitats are present in close proximity (within 100m) of a pond, it has been demonstrated that they usually support the majority of the breeding population. The following statement from English Nature Research Report 576 below is particularly relevant in this respect. NE state that:

“The most comprehensive mitigation, in relation to avoiding disturbance, killing or injury is appropriate within 50m of the breeding pond. It will almost always be necessary to actively capture newts 50-100m away. However, at distances greater than 100m, there should be careful consideration as to whether attempts to capture newts are necessary or the most effective option to avoid incidental mortality.”

Based on the evaluation above, and using professional judgement, the presence of GCN within the site is considered to be highly unlikely and any impacts relating to GCN can be discounted.

4.3.5 Reptile

The southern section of the site provided an area of suitable reptile habitat. The approximate area of suitable reptile habitat measures 0.27ha.

The southern section of the site comprised a mosaic of disturbed land which included spoil heaps, artificial refugia, and varying heights of vegetation (ephemeral, tall forbs, short grassland). The area also sloped towards the southern boundary providing some wetter areas and drier areas.

When looking at the site on a wider landscape level, there does not appear to be any connectivity to suitable reptile habitat. The vast majority of the local area is intensively managed agricultural land.

Reptile populations within the Ribble valley are sparse and fragmented. Whilst it is possible that reptile species such as common lizard and slow worm could be suited by the site conditions, given the lack of connectivity to any known reptile populations or suitable reptile habitat more widely, the presence of reptiles within the site is considered highly unlikely.

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 Sites

No further assessments or precautions are required.

5.1.2 Non-Statutory 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 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment is undertaken. The Statutory Biodiversity Metric Calculation should be completed to support this assessment.

The metric will need to consider impacts on habitats within the red line application boundary.

If habitats have been cleared or degraded since January 2020 and the clearance has not been in accordance with an approved planning application, then a 'habitat degradation' assessment will need to be applied to the BNG assessment.

5.3 PROTECTED SPECIES

5.3.1 Badger

There are no requirements for any further surveys or assessment.

Badger are considered to be using the site for foraging purposes only. The following Precautionary Working Measures should be applied:

- All excavations must be covered or infilled at the end of each working day to ensure badgers and other mammals do not become entrapped.
- If excavations cannot be covered, then a ramp must be placed within the excavation that would allow badgers and other mammals to escape.

- Piles of bare earth substrate should not be stored within the site. If piles are stored, they must be checked daily, prior to any movement of materials to ensure badgers have not dug into the earth and occupied the earth mounds.
- Badgers are highly mobile species and can create setts in very short spaces of time. If a sett is found during construction, works must stop immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.

5.3.2 Bats

There are no requirements for any further surveys or assessment.

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; links are provided below.

- Bat Conservation Trust's Artificial Lighting Guidance. Webpage link <https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting>
- Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance Note 08/23: Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK. Webpage link <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

To enhance the bat roosting provisions locally, it is recommended the 4no. bat boxes are erected on trees. Indicative locations of the bat boxes have been provided on proposed site plan (refer to Appendix A, Figure 2).

5.3.3 Birds

No strategic bird surveys are required.

To enhance the bird nesting provisions locally, it is recommended the 6no. bird boxes are erected on trees. Indicative locations of the bird boxes have been provided on proposed site plan (refer to Appendix A, Figure 2).

5.3.4 Great Crested Newt

No further surveys are required.

The presence of GCN is considered highly unlikely within the site. However it is recommended that the following Precautionary Working Measures should be applied:

- All excavations must be covered or infilled at the end of each working day to ensure herpetofauna do not become entrapped.
- It is recommended that the removal of the earth mounds and stored artificial refugia (i.e. wood piles, stone piles, portacabins around Target Notes 2 and 3) are removed under the supervision of a suitably qualified ecologist.
- Although considered highly unlikely, should a GCN be found during construction, works must stop immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist consulted.

5.3.5 Reptile

No further reptile surveys are required.

It is recommended that the Precautionary Working Measures provided within Section 5.3.4 above, should be applied.

REFERENCES

- Buglife (2015) *Good planning practice for invertebrates: information sheets on surveys and mitigation*
- CIEEM (2017) Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, Winchester.
- Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edn) Bat Conservation Trust.*
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2025). *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide Date: July 2025*
- Harris, S., Creswell, P. & Jefferies, D. (1989) *Surveying Badgers*. The Mammal Society
- Roper, T. J, (2010) *Badger*. New Naturalist Library – Collins.
- Stanton Andrews (2026) Proposed Site Plan
- UKHab Ltd (2023). *UK Habitat Classification Version 2.01* (at <https://www.ukhab.org>)

Online References

- Joint Nature Conservancy Council - DEFRA (2006) Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 – Habitats and Species of Principal Importance in England. DEFRA/Natural England - <https://jncc.gov.uk/our-work/uk-bap-priority-habitats/> latest access 08/04/2026.
- Google Earth. Accessed various dates. Latest access 08/04/2026.
- Greater Manchester Local Record Centre – Map app - <https://gmlrc.org/mapapp/> latest access 08/04/2026
- Natural England – MAGIC. Accessed various dates.
<http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/MagicMap.aspx> Latest access 08/04/2026

Appendix A - Figures

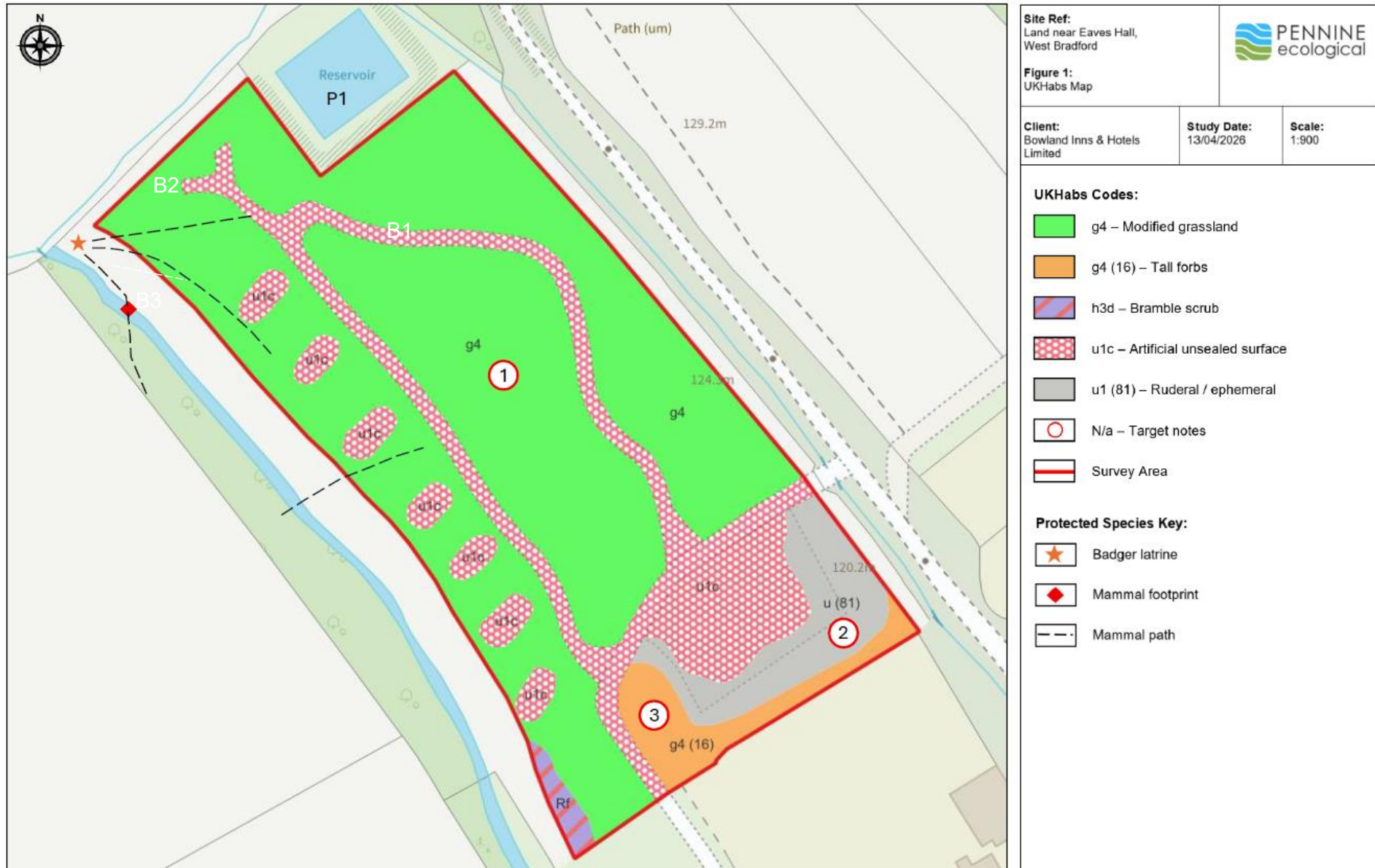


Figure 2 – Proposed Site Plan with Ecological Enhancements (Stanton Andrews, 2026 - Proposed Site Plan)



Appendix B – Photographs



Photograph 1: Target Note 1, unmanaged modified grassland.



Photograph 3: Modified grassland with u1c substrate paths laid.



Photograph 2: View looking to north boundary. Target Note 1.



Photograph 4: Target Note 1. Unmanaged grassland.



Photograph 5: Target Note 2. Areas of ruderal / ephemeral colonising u1c substrate.



Photograph 7: Piles of stones around the u1c substrate providing localised reptile suitability.



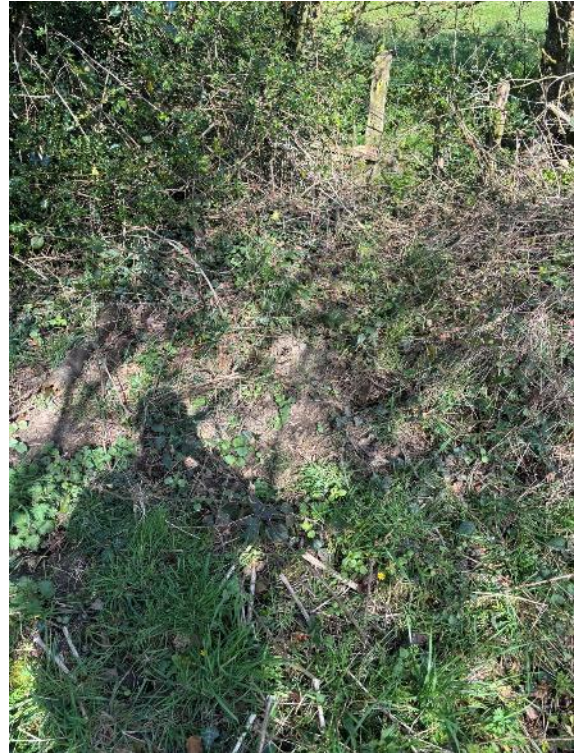
Photograph 6: Ruderal ephemeral on u1c substrate. Log piles and stored materials providing localised suitable reptile habitat.



Photograph 8: Earth mounds located within the south of the site, colonised with tall forbs (TN3).



Photograph 9: Tall forbs and ruderal herb along the southern boundary of the site (TN2 and TN3).



Photograph 11: Badger latrine in north west corner of the site. Fresh dung present.



Photograph 10: Pond 1 located adjacent to the site. Negative eDNA in 2018. GCN discounted.



Photograph 12: Greg Dike located outside of the site boundary. Unimpacted by the proposals.



Photograph 13: Greg Dike riparian corridor. 10m off set from the bank. Unimpacted by the proposals.

Appendix C – Condition Assessment Sheets

Provided as a separate excel file - *Land near Eaves Hall, West Bradford* -
Condition_assessments_version_1.02