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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal & Preliminary Roost Assessment

Survey site:

19a Hamlet Road, Haverhill, Suffolk CB9 8EH

Client:

Mr Robert Blackman

Survey date:

25th June 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with West Suffolk Council. The proposal is described as the construction of a building to accommodate two residential units.

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion

Executive Summary

The following is work you will need to commission to obtain planning permission and to comply with legislation. Further information, along with opportunities for biodiversity enhancement, are outlined in Tables 1, 3 & 4 of this report.

Feature	Survey Results Summary	Impact Assessment	Recommendations
On site habitats	The site contains a residential dwelling and an associated outbuilding, hard standing surfaces, unsealed surfaces, and vegetated garden areas comprising amenity lawn and introduced shrubs. Habitats on site are widespread and common and are of low ecological value.	The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.02ha of unmanaged vegetated garden habitats. This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of these habitats. However, this will lead to a net loss in biodiversity at the site.	The proposed development may require a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment, to calculate the value of habitats on site and ensure the delivery of a minimum of 10% measurable biodiversity net gain.
Roosting bats	B1 is assessed to have low habitat value for roosting bats, owing to the presence of external roosting features, notably gaps under roof tiles, which could accommodate low numbers of crevice dwelling bats.	The proposed development will result in the construction of a new residential dwelling, which will be adjoined directly onto the northwestern elevation of B1. This will involve the partial loss of the single storey porch on the southern elevation, and extension of the tiles, which could accommodate low in the destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.	One bat emergence or re-entry survey is required during the active bat season (optimal May to August) to confirm presence or absence of a bat roost in the building. Two surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building. If bat roosts are confirmed in the building, two additional surveys may be required to characterise the roost and to inform a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) application to Natural England.

Contents

Introduction and Context

Introduction

The aim of the PEA was to obtain data on existing ecological conditions, and to conduct a preliminary assessment of the likely significance of ecological impacts on the proposed development. The aim of the PRA was to determine the presence or evaluate the likelihood of the presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting.

No previous ecology reports have been produced for this site by Arbtech Consulting Ltd or, to the author's knowledge, by any other consultancy.

Methodology

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.

Limitations

Whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report is a preliminary assessment and does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. Nor does it represent a full botanical assessment. It assesses the likelihood of protected, notable and important habitats and species being present, based on a site and landscape level habitat value-based risk assessment. This is based upon the ecology, biology and known distribution of species as currently understood.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

All limitations have been taken into account during the evaluation of the site and requirement for further surveys and mitigation.

Results, Impacts and Recommendations

Site Location and Landscape Context

Table 1: Site location and landscape context

Ecological Survey Factor	Conclusion, Impacts and Cecommendations
Site LSurvey	
The site is located at National Grid Reference TL 67607 45063 and has an area of approximately 0.04ha comprising a residential dwelling and an associated outbuilding, hard standing surfaces, Habitat Survey Planand vegetated garden areas comprising amenity lawn and Habitat Survey PlanThe site is located in a suburban setting, within the town of Haverhill. It is immediately surrounded by residential presence of roosting bats, and to gain an understanding of how bats could use the site for roosting, foraging or commuting. n infrastructure is limited to residential gardens, public parks and playing fields. A review of historic maps indicates that the local landscape has been altered extensively by urban development since the 19th century, resulting in a significant reduction of semi-natural habitats. No ponds or watercourses are located on or adjacent to the site. The site sits on Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation, overlain by freely draining slightly acid loamy soils. A site location plan can be found in Appendix 2.	
Priority Habitats and Designated Sites	
Summary of Survey Findings	<u>Priority habitats</u> There are 2no priority habitats located within 2 km of the site. These comprise lowland calcareous grassland and deciduous woodland. The closest priority habitat comprise a small, woodland isolated pocket ~225m southwest from the site. Connectivtiy to nearby habitats is limited, owing to the surrounding urban infrastructure, including dwellings and main roads. Though opportunities exist for faunal species adapted to more urban environments. <u>Designated sites</u> There is 2no statutory site within 2km of the site, described below:

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>
Table 1a: Statutory sites within 2km of the site
<table>
<tr><th>Designation</th><th>Reason for designation</th><th>, described below:</th></tr>
<tr><td>Haverhill Railway Walks Local Nature Reserve (LNR)</td><td>“With much of its length now covered with scrub and mature trees, the disused railway line provides a valuable wildlife corridor.”</td><td>~330m northeast</td></tr>
</table>

The site lies within the impact risk zone for Over and Lawn Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located Findingsnorthwest from the site, and Trundley and Wadgell’s Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), located ~4.75km northeast from the site. 2owever, the proposed development type is not listed as a possible high risk with Reserve (LNR)designation.

The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from Suffolk Biodiversity Information Service, Whilst some habitats in the wider landscape may host designations, the immediate environs of the site, which is largely residential, do not host habitats likely to be of designable quality.
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Impacts</td><td>No direct impacts to any designated sites will occur as a result of the proposed development, due to the small scale and low overall impact of the development from such sites (where known), alongside additional factors such as distance in combination with connectivity disrupting barriers.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Recommendations</td><td>None.</td></tr>
</table>

Habitats and Flora

The site survey was undertaken by Emma Platts BSc, Consultant Ecologist (Accredited 2gent to Natural England Level 2 bat licence number 2018-33540-CLS-CLS)

Table 2: Survey weather conditions

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
25/06/2025	24	24	24	2	None

Table 3: Habitats and Flora

Ecological Survey Factor	Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations *This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.*
Onsite habitats	
Summary of Survey Findings	<u>Developed land; sealed surface (u1b)</u> Concrete hard standing forms a driveway on site (Figure 1), as well as concrete paving slabs located throughout the garden areas. <u>Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surfaces (u1c)</u> Gravel surfaces are present throughout the rear garden, forming pathways and a surface for decking (Figure 2). <u>Buildings (u1b5)</u> The site comprises one semi-detached residential dwelling and an associated garage (Figure 1)– 6). These are described in further detail in Table 4 of this report. <u>Built-up areas and garden, vegetated garden, introduced shrubs, unmanaged (u1, 828, 847, 521)</u> A private garden extends throughout the south, west and north of the main residential dwelling on site.

	Garden habitats to the north and south are actively managed, comprising an amenity lawn and introduced shrubs (Figure 7 & 8). The amenity lawn to the north appears newly sownArtificial unvegetated, unsealed surfaces (u1c) have been partially cleared in preparation for the works. Both lawns are species poor, with less than 6 vascular plant species per m^2. The assemblage includes abundant fescue Festuca sp., rough meadow grass, occasional daisy *Bellis perennis*, white clover T*rifolium repens*, and rare dandelion *Taraxacum sp.* and lesser trefoil *Trifolium dubium*– Introduced shrubs are present along the southern site peripheries. Species are mostly non-native comprising box honeysuckle *Lonicera ligustrinaTaraxacum sp. Ligustrum ovalifolium*, Japanese spindle *Euonymus japonicus*, firethorn *Pyracantha sp.japonicusCupressus sp. Bellis perennisAcer pseudoplatanus* (Figure 1) The western section of the garden appears to be unmanaged and is dominated by ruderals and tall forbs (Figure 9), including abundant common nettle *Urtica dioica*, frequent bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, occasional buddleia *japonicus davidii*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, and rare ground elder *Aegopodium podagraria*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*– field bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis* and false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* and wall barley and false oat grass– Rubble piles, likely associated with preparation for the works are scattered throughout these unmanaged areas (Figure 10). A habitat map can be found in Appendix 2.
Impacts	The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.02ha of unmanaged vegetated garden habitats. This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of these habitats. However, this will lead to a net loss in biodiversity at the site.
Recommendations	The proposed development may require a Biodiversity Net Gain assessment, to calculate the value of habitats on site and ensure the delivery of a minimum of 10% measurable biodiversity net gain.
Invasive/ Non-native species	
Summary of Survey Findings	No non-native invasive or otherwise problematic plants were recorded on site.
Impacts	None.
Recommendations	When designing the planting scheme for the new garden areas, the planting of any Schedule 9 invasive species, or any other non-native plants likely to escape into any semi natural habitats on site or adjacent must be avoided.

Fauna

Table 4: Fauna

Ecological Survey Factor	Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations *This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.*
Invertebrates	
Summary of Survey Findings	The vegetated garden provides habitat value for a variety of commonplace species but is unlikely to support important Tpecies and assemblagesi
Impacts	The proposed development will result in the loss of 90.02ha of unmanaged vegetated garden habitats. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local invertebrate populations owing to the presence of more extensive habitat locally.
Recommendations	The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for invertebrates: Planting of pollinator friendly, native grassland species Installation of insect hotels Incorporation of bee bricks into the fabric of the new buildingT These should be installed 0.5m above ground level on a south-facing elevation with no obscuring vegetation
Foraging and commuting bats	
Summary of Survey Findings	Vegetated garden habitats could be used by local bat populations for foraging. However, given the open nature and lack of linear features present, such habitats are considered suboptimal. In addition, the site borders two roads which are well lit from street lighting, which is likely to further deter bats. The site is poorly connected to more extensive habitats within the wider landscape, owing to the surrounding urban infrastructure. As such, the site is likely to be of value to low numbers of species adapted to urban environments such as pipistrelle bats.
Impacts	The proposed development will result in the loss of 9by local bat populations for foraging.i Given the low value of habitats on site, the loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential for bats. However, construction works and external lighting fixtures on the proposed development could include the use of additional lighting which could spill onto bat foraging and commuting habitat and could deter bats from using these areas.

<table>
<tr><td>Recommendations</td><td colspan="2">A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development, which will be designed to incorporate the measures laid out in the latest (2023) bat lighting guide Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting[1].</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">Roosting bats</td></tr>
<tr><td>Summary of Survey Findings</td><td colspan="2">A review of MAGIC database found no granted European Protected Species Licenses (EPSL) for bats within 2km of the site. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2"></td><td>B1 building description</td><td>Photographs</td></tr>
<tr><td>B1 is a semi-detached two storey residential dwelling. A single storey extension is present on the northeastern elevation, and a single storey porch is present on the southwestern elevation. The building is brick built and features hanging tiles. Windows and doors are framed with UPVC. A Soffit box is present on the southwestern and northeastern elevations. B1 has a gable roof fitted with pantile tiles and hosts one and north

In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B1 is assessed to have low habitat value for roosting bats, owing to the presence of external roosting features, notably minor gaps under roof tiles, which could accommodate low numbers of crevice dwelling bats. In addition, the site is assessed to have low habitat value for foraging and commuting bats.</td><td>  </td></tr>
</table>

[1]Bat Conservation Trust/Institute of Lighting Professionals (2023). Guidance Note 8 Bats and Artificial Lighting. https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/

	Feature	Materials	Condition / Suitability	Photograph
	Walls	Brick, clay hanging tiles	Brickwork noted in good condition with no cracks or areas of missing mortar. Hanging tiles noted to be in good condition and sit flush. One hanging tile has partially slipped, however this has not provided an opening which could be used for roosting access.	
	Roof	Concrete	Roof tiles noted to be in overall good condition. Two minor gaps are present beneath tiles on the main roof space. Further gaps were identified throughout the single storey porch, which could provide suitability for low numbers of crevice dwelling bats.	 

	Chimney	Brick	Brickwork in good condition and sealed with lead flashing. Minor gap under roof tile associated with flashing, which is otherwise well sealed, which could provide roosting suitability for low numbers of crevice dwelling bats.	
	and north	UPVC	Good condition, sits flush against wall bats.	
	Windows and north frames and lintels	UPVC	foraging and commuting bats.	

	Internal void	Timber Internal southwestern Floor lined with mineral wool insulation.	B1 hosts one loft space, L1. L1 is supported with modern planed timber beams and lined with bitumen felt which appear to be in very good condition. One opening was observed within the bitumen lining to accommodate a vent, numbers of crevice dwelling bats. pantile roof tile and lining. The loft void otherwise appears well sealed, with no daylight observed. The brickwork at the gable ends, including the chimney, appear to be in good condition with no gaps. L1 is used for household storage and is somewhat cluttered. L1 measures ~4.5m(l) x ~8m(w) x ~2.2m(h). Temperature and humidity measured 22°C and 68%. No bats, or evidence of bats was found inside B1.	 
	B2 building description			Photographs
	B2 is a detached single storey garage. It is brick built, with UPVC framed windows and doors. A UPVC fascia board sits flush along all elevations. B2 has a flat roof fitted with bitumen felt which appears to be in very good condition and is tightly fitted. B2 is very well sealed with no external roosting features identified. No void is present within the interior. In line with Good Practice Guidelines (Collins, J (Ed) 2023), B2 is assessed to have negligible habitat value for roosting bats, owing to a lack of external roosting featuresl			

Impacts	The proposed development will result in the construction of a new residential dwelling, which will be adjoined directly onto the northwestern elevation of B1. This will involve the partial loss of the single storey porch on the southern elevation, and extension of the existing roof space. This could result in the destruction of any bat roosts present and could cause disturbance, death or injury to bats.
Recommendations	B1 One bat emergence or re-entry survey is required during the active bat season (optimal May to August) to confirm presence or absence of a bat roost in the building. Two surveyors are required to provide full coverage of the building. Infra-red cameras should be used as an aid. If bat roosts are confirmed in the buildingI two additional surveys may be required to characterise the roost and to inform a European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) application to Natural England. Surveys should be a minimum of three weeks apart. The EPSL application requires that surveys have been undertaken within the most recent active bat season and planning permission must have been granted and all relevant wildlife-related conditions have been discharged prior to submission. No works to the property that may block of remove potential roosting features should be carried out util the required surveys have been completed. Undertaking such work beforehand could unlawfully affect bats if present and may compromise the validity of the surveys and hinder the planning application process.
Birds	
Summary of Survey One bat	B1 evidence of nesting birds was identified on site, however the shrubs within the vegetated garden provide shelter and could be used by common nesting birds. Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected or notable birds.
Impacts	The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.02ha of vegetated garden. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local bird populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat on site However, the proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests.
Recommendations	Any vegetation removal should be undertaken outside the period 1st March to 31st August. If this timeframe cannot be avoided, a close inspection of the vegetation should be undertaken immediately, by a qualified ecologist, prior to the commencement of work. All active nests will need to be retained until the young have fledged.

	Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests, depending on species present, until the young have fledged. The installation of a minimum of 1no bird box on will provide additional nesting habitat for birds. This can be placed on on proposed dwelling. 1no boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.
Reptiles	
Summary of Survey Findings	The vegetated garden, notably the unmanaged area of ruderal dominated vegetation, provide. commuting and foraging opportunities for reptiles. The wider landscape offers limited habitat for reptiles due to the surrounding urban infrastructure and lack of mosaic habitat favoured by reptiles, however residential gardens will provide some value for common species such as slow worm. Any population present is likely to comprise common species at low density and scattered distribution.
Impacts	The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.02ha of vegetated garden. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations owing to their low can be placed , site clearance could result in the death or injury of reptiles, if present.
Recommendations	A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures: A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any reptiles to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter reptiles from the working area. Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent reptiles from utilising these areas. Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats. Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.

	If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed develdprovide which would be beneficial for reptiles: Relaxed mowing regime along lawn edges Creation of compost heap.
Amphibians	
Summary of Survey Findings	A review of MAGIC database found no granted European Protected Species Licenses (EPSL) or Class Survey Licence Returns for great crested newts within 2km of the site. The site lies within a green risk zone for great crested newts, indicating suboptimal habitat and lower likelihood of presence. No ponds are located on, or adjacent to, the site. A review of aerial imagery indicates no ponds present within 500m of the site. The vegetated garden, notably the unmanaged area of ruderal dominated vegetation, provides terrestrial habitat opportunities for amphibians. The wider landscape offers limited habitat for amphibians due to the surrounding urban infrastructure, however residential gardens will provide some value for common species. Given the lack of ponds within 500m of the site, and poor connectivity throughout the landscape, great crested newts are considered absent from the site. However, the presence of other common amphibians cannot be ruled out.
Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on great crested newt, as a result of the proposed development as this species is considered to be absent from the site. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of other common amphibians, if present.
Recommendations	A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures: A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any amphibians to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter amphibians from the working area.

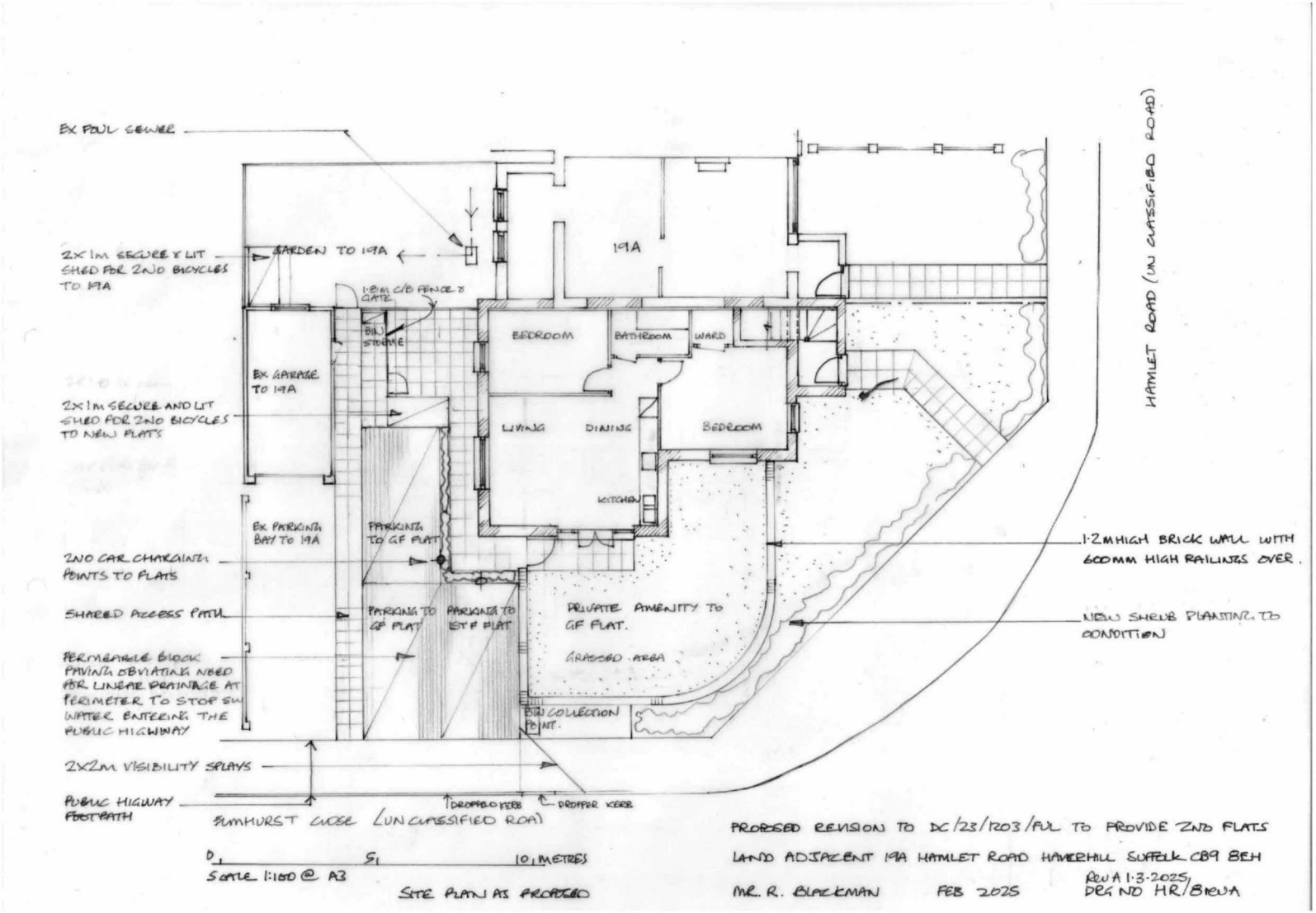
	• Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent amphibians from utilising these areas. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. • If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. • In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advise must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for amphibians: • Relaxed mowing regime along lawn edges • Creation of compost heaps • Creation of rock gardens

[redacted]

Riparian animals	
Summary of Survey Findings	There are no riparian habitats on or adjacent to the site.
Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None.

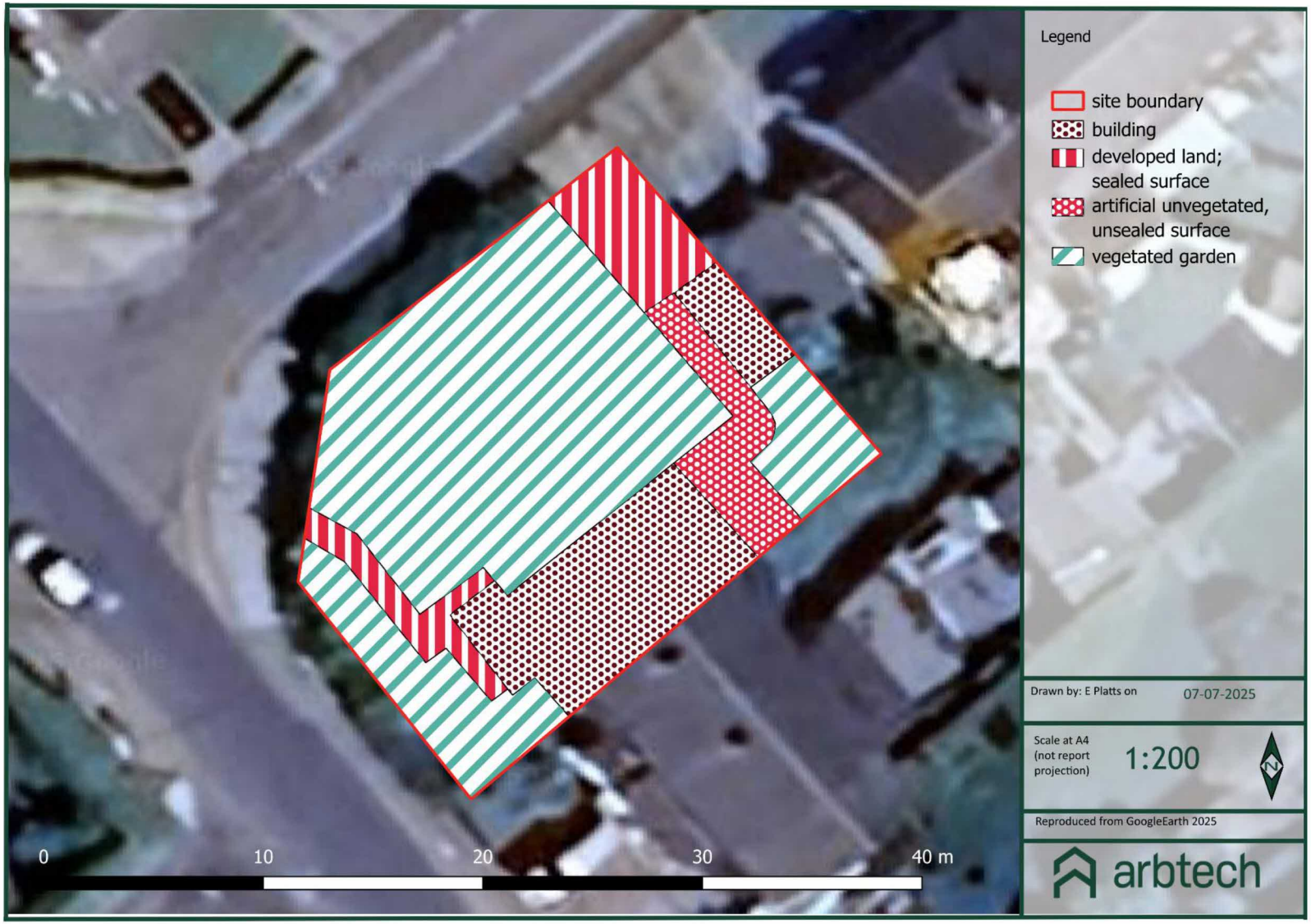
Hazel dormouse	
Summary of Survey Findings	There are no suitable habitats on site to support hazel dormice
Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None.
Other e.g. small mammals	
Summary of Survey Findings	The vegetated garden on site offers suitable foraging and commuting suitable foraging small terrestrial mammals such as hedgehogs. Although the connectivity of the site is limited with the surrounding urban infrastructure, hedgehogs are common to urban areas and can commute through gardens and gaps in fencing. As such, the presence of foragings sheltering and commuting habitat for on site cannot be discounted.
Impacts	The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.02ha of vegetated gardens The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local small mammal populations owing to their low value. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
Recommendations	~ precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. Any pipework exceeding 100mm will be capped overnight. The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. If any small mammals are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs: Creation of fence gaps (14cm x 14cm) to enable small mammals to travel freely through the site

Appendix 1: Proposed Development Plan



Appendix 2: Site Location Plan

Appendix 3: Habitat Survey Plan



Appendix 4: PRA & BERS Plan

Appendix 6: Site Photographs

Figure 1: Hard standing driveway

Figure 1: Unsealed gravel surfaces in rear garden, B1 northeast elevation

Figure 1: B1 northwest elevation

Figure 1: B1 southwest elevation

Figure 1: B1 northwest elevation

Figure 1: B2 southeast elevation

Figure 1: Shrubs within vegetated garden

Figure 1: Newly sown amenity lawn

Figure 1: Unmanaged garden, dominated by ruderals

Figure 10: Rubble piles within unmanaged garden areas

Version control

Status	Issue	Name	Date
Draft	1.0	Emma Platts Bsc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	08/07/2025
Reviewed	1.0	Natalie Evans BA (Hons), MA, MRSB, Principal Consultant, Bat Licence Lead	15/07/2323
Final	1.0	Emma Platts Bsc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	08/07/2025