



BIODIVERSE
CONSULTING

ICKENHAM ROAD

**PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL
APPRAISAL**

FOR: LIDL GB

REF: BIOC23-242 | V2



CLIENT	PROJECT	
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DOCUMENT CONTROL

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V1	04/06/24	Initial to client.	N/A	AW	CC	VM
V2	21/01/25	Updated Figure 2: Proposed site layout	N/A	JK	CC	VM



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Biodiverse Consulting Ltd was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of land at Ickenham Road, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 7DR. The Site is proposed to be developed into a retail supermarket with associated infrastructure, landscaping and car park. This report presents the key ecological constraints and opportunities in relation to the development, as summarised in the table below.

ECOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ICKENHAM ROAD	
Designated Sites	Two statutory designated Sites were identified within 2km; a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).
Bats	The building on Site has suitability for roosting bats with lifted tiles and lead flashing providing Potential Roosting Features. The grassland and hedgerow within the Site afford foraging resources.
Birds	Hedgerow and building provide some suitable foraging and nesting habitat for birds however, ground nesting is limited due to human disturbance and light pollution.
Priority Species	The Site has the potential to support priority species including hedgehog.
Invasive Non-Native Species	Non identified.
Further Survey and Assessment	A single nocturnal Bat activity survey is recommended alongside a range of good practice avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures to address ecological impacts and reduce the likelihood of legal offences.



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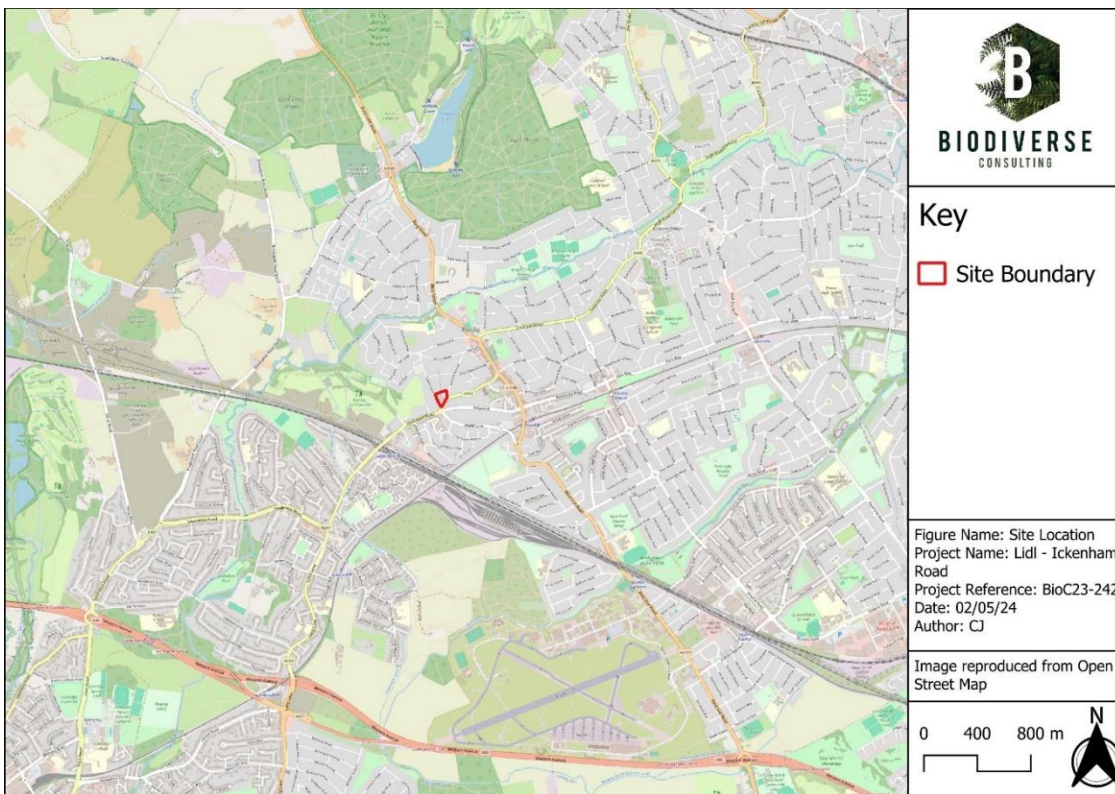


1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

The Site is located at Ickenham Road, Ruislip, Middlesex, HA4 at an approximate central grid reference of TQ 08807 87187 as illustrated in Figure 1. The 0.65ha Site currently comprises of a large redbrick building surrounded to the immediate south, east and a portion of the north by a car park. The car park was predominately hard standing but containing discreet areas of Modified Grassland.

FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION



1.2 REPORT OBJECTIVES

The aim of this report is to determine the potential ecological constraints and opportunities to development. The objectives of this report are to:

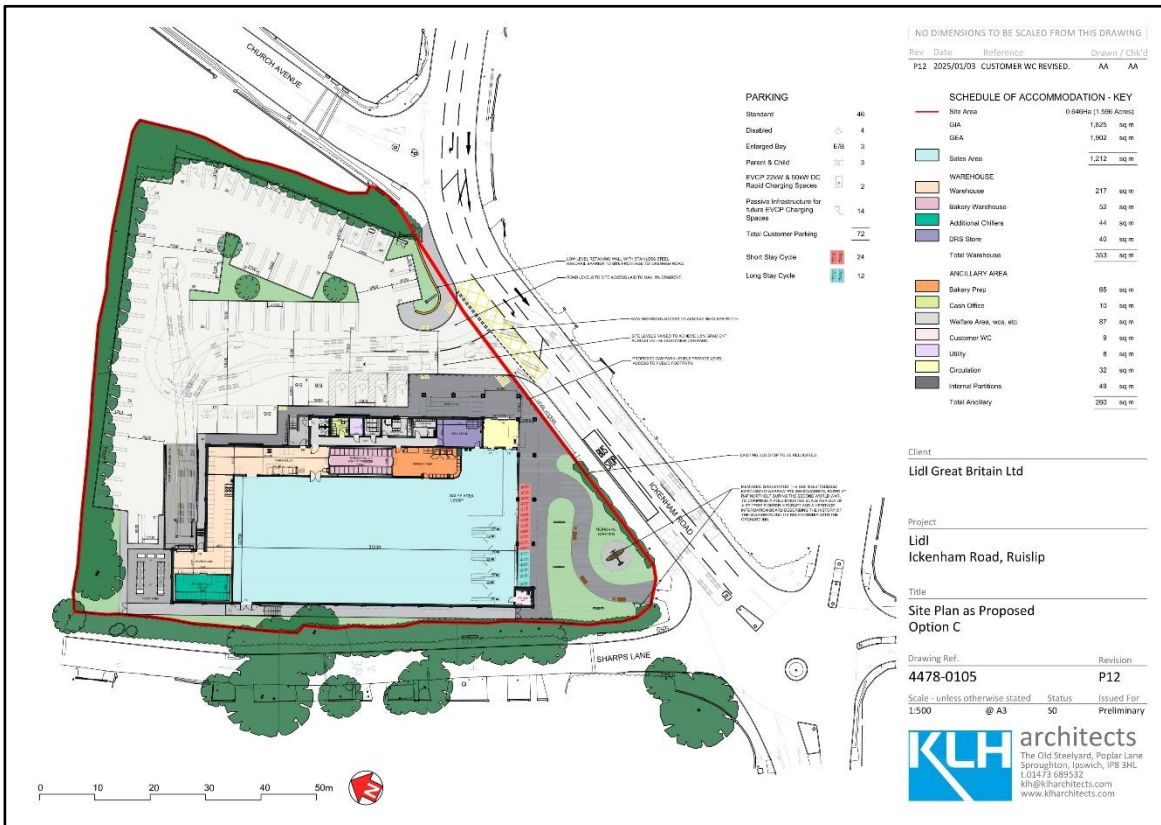
- Identify and describe ecological features/receptors that may be present on Site or within an identified Zone of Influence (ZoI).
- Outline potential mitigation, compensation or enhancement measures if required.
- Determine the need for and scope of further surveys.



1.3 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

The site is proposed to be developed into a retail supermarket with associated infrastructure including landscaping based on plans at the date of the production of this report (Drawing Reference: 4478-0105 P12).

FIGURE 2: PROPOSED SITE LAYOUT





2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 SURVEY AREA

The survey area comprised the 'Site' defined within Figure 3 (red line boundary) and, where access was available, an appropriate buffer

FIGURE 3: SURVEY AREA



2.2 DESK STUDY

A desk study was undertaken to obtain pre-existing ecological information relevant to the assessment. The desk study included:

- An assessment of aerial imagery and Ordnance Survey mapping.
- A search of the MAGIC website¹ for all statutory designated Sites within 2km and any additional Sites outside of this buffer that have the potential to be impacted by the development.
- A request to the Local Record Centre (LRC) for records of non-statutory designated Sites within 1km and protected and priority habitats and species within 2km.

¹ Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (www.magic.gov.uk)



2.3 FIELD SURVEY

Table 1 provides a summary of the field surveys undertaken. Full details of each survey are provided in the subsequent sections. All surveys were undertaken by suitably experienced and/or licenced ecologists; full details are available on request.

TABLE 1: SURVEY SUMMARY

SURVEY TYPE	DATE	TEMPERATURE	CLOUD	PRECIPITATION	WIND ²
PEA	02/05/2024	13°C	40%	None	BF2

2.3.1 Habitats/Protected Species

The Site was subjected to a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) walkover survey during which habitats were assessed in line with the UK Habitat Classification (UKHab) methods³. As part of the survey, the Site was also checked for evidence of protected and priority species, and habitats were assessed for their potential to support them.

2.3.2 Bats

Survey methods and assessment are based on the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines⁴. A Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) determined the value of trees and a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) determined the value of structures to roosting bats and the need for further survey and/or mitigation.

A Daytime Bat Walkover (DBW) assessed habitats for bats to roost, commute, and forage both on Site and in the surrounding area. The aim is to determine the suitability of the Site for bats, to assess whether further bat surveys will be needed and how those surveys should be safely carried out.

2.4 LIMITATIONS TO SURVEY

There was no access to the building interior during survey, but due to the generally good condition of the exterior, and the features of the limited access points to the interior of the building this is not considered to be prejudicial to the survey assessment.

² Beaufort wind force scale available at: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/guides/coast-and-sea/beaufort-scale>

³ UKHAB Ltd (2023) The UK Habitats Classification User Manual Version 2 at <http://www.ukhab.org/>

⁴ Collins, J. (ed) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th Edition). Bat Conservation Trust



2.5 ASSESSMENT

The PEA survey may provide sufficient information to accurately determine the value of some features, whereas other features may require further study to allow this. Features for which sufficient information is available at this stage are assigned a value using a geographic frame of reference in line with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) (Appendix D).



3 RESULTS

3.1 DESK STUDY

3.1.1 Designated Sites

Two statutory designated Sites were identified within 2km; a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserve (NNR). Fifteen non-statutory “Site of Importance for Nature Conservation” Sites (SINC) were identified within 2km. A summary of statutory and non-statutory designated Sites is provided in Table 2.

In addition, the Site is within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ), however the development is not of a type that triggers consultation between the LPA and Natural England.

SSSI and NNR are considered to be of national value and SINC are considered to be of up to local value.

TABLE 2: DESIGNATED SITES

DESIGNATION	SITE NAME	REASON FOR DESIGNATION	DISTANCE FROM SITE
Statutory Designated Sites			
SSSI/NNR	Ruislip Woods	The Ruislip Woods form an extensive example of ancient semi-natural woodland, including some of the largest unbroken blocks that remain in Greater London. A diverse range of oak and hornbeam woodland types occur, with large areas managed on a traditional coppice-with-standards system.	1190m
LNR	Ruislip Wood	This site is a predominantly marshy area on alluvial soils where the Ruislip Common Brook enters the Ruislip Reservoir and includes reedbeds, willow carr and several artificial pools.	1700m
Non-Statutory Designated Sites			



DESIGNATION	SITE NAME	REASON FOR DESIGNATION	DISTANCE FROM SITE
SINC	Ruislip Woods and Poor's Field	One of London's two National Nature Reserves, this site includes a large area of ancient woodlands, as well as heathland and grassland.	N/A
SINC	Ickenham Marsh, Austin's Lane Pastures and Freezeland Covert	A mosaic of fields, old hedges, woodlands, rivers and wetlands.	N/A
SINC	West Ruislip Golf Course and Old Priory Meadows	Old meadows, wetlands, woodland and green lanes.	N/A
SINC	High Grove	An area of landscaped gardens that have returned to nature.	N/A
SINC	Ickenham Pond	Pond adjacent to the hustle and bustle of High Road, Ickenham	N/A
SINC	Old Pumping Station Field	Large area of rich grassland with good native hedgerow boundaries	N/A
SINC	Breakspear Road South Pond	A secluded pond, rich with wildlife.	N/A
SINC	Mad Field Covert, Railway Mead and the River Pinn	There is public access to this site which includes a covert, some grassland, and the shallow, slow-flowing River Pinn.	N/A



DESIGNATION	SITE NAME	REASON FOR DESIGNATION	DISTANCE FROM SITE
SINC	Herlwyn Park Recreation Ground and railway banks	A recreation ground containing some wildlife habitats, with an adjacent area of railway lineside.	N/A
SINC	Yeading Brook between Roxbourne Park and Ruislip Gardens	Riverside walk beside this stretch of the Yeading Brook.	N/A
SINC	King's College Playing Fields	A stretch of the River Pinn runs through this site, which contains a range of wildlife habitats.	N/A
SINC	River Pinn near Eastcote	The River Pinn flows through a series of open spaces, forming a green corridor.	N/A
SINC	Ickenham Moat	An ancient monument consisting of a wooded ditch.	N/A
SINC	River Pinn between St Martin's Approach & Woodville Gardens	A section of river corridor with a good range of habitats, including grassland and ancient woodland.	N/A
SINC	Bury Street Open Space & Wallington	Public park with a good range of wildlife habitats, including a stream.	N/A



DESIGNATION	SITE NAME	REASON FOR DESIGNATION	DISTANCE FROM SITE
	Close streamside		

3.1.2 Priority Habitats

No Priority Habitats are recorded on Site.

Four records of Priority Habitats within 2 km of the Site: Good quality Semi-Improved Grassland, Lowland Meadow, Ancient Woodland and Deciduous Woodland.

3.1.3 Protected and Priority Species

A summary of recent (2014–present) records of protected, priority or otherwise notable species was provided by the LRC and relevant records are discussed in the results sections below. The full LRC search results are available on request.

3.1.4 European Protected Species (EPS) Licencing

The MAGIC website identified four granted EPS licences and ten Great Crested Newt Class Survey Licence Returns within 2km (see Table 3).

TABLE 3: EUROPEAN PROTECTED SPECIES LICENCING

REFERENCE	SPECIES	LICENCE DATE	TYPE	DISTANCE
EPSM2010-1919	Common pipistrelle	28/06/2010 - 30/11/2010	Destruction of a resting place	540m
EPSM2012-4855	Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle.	08/10/2012 - 01/09/2015	Destruction of a resting place	700m
EPSM2012-5295	Great Crested Newt	25/02/2013 - 01/12/2013	Destruction of a resting place	1660m
EPSM2009-534	Great Crested Newt	13/02/2009 - 31/03/2009	Destruction of a resting place	1700m



3.2 FIELD SURVEY

3.2.1 Habitats

The approximately 0.65ha Site is dominated by a large redbrick building with tiled roof and car park, small areas of modified grassland and introduced scrub within/adjoining the carpark area. The carpark boundary consists of native and species rich hedgerow. Detailed accounts of the UKHab habitats are provided below. A map of the UKHab habitats is provided in Appendix A.

IMAGE 1 - ONSITE BUILDING



IMAGE 2 - CAR PARK



IMAGE 3 - MODIFIED GRASSLAND



IMAGE 4 - HEDGEROW



3.2.1.1 u1b – Developed Land; Sealed Surface and u1b5 – Buildings

An area of Developed Land; Building to an area of approximately 0.14ha and Developed Land; Sealed Surface to an area of approximately 0.28ha was located on Site (Image 1 and 2). Both habitats are considered to be of negligible value.



3.2.1.2 g4 – Modified Grassland

Six areas of Modified Grassland were located on Site to a total area of approximately 0.10ha (see Image 3). The grassland was dominated by perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*. The grass:forb ratio was 95:05, with a sward height of up to 20cm and bare ground coverage of approximately 1%. Other species present included dandelion *Taraxacum spp.* common ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*, white clover *Trifolium repens*. This habitat is considered to be of low value as it is of low diversity and supports locally and nationally common species.

3.2.1.3 h2a1 – Native Hedgerow

An approximately 90m long native hedgerow forms the Western Site boundary, with an average height of 4m and a width of 2.5m. Species include ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, common ivy *Hedera helix*, bird cherry *Prunus padus* and sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*. This habitat is considered to be of low value as it is of low diversity and supports locally and nationally common species

3.2.1.4 h2a5 – Native Species Rich Hedgerow

An approximately 60m long species rich native hedgerow forms the south-eastern boundary of the Site, with an average height of 4m and a width of 2m. Species include hawthorn, common ivy, bird cherry and sycamore, horse-chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*, field maple *Acer campestre*, field-rose *rosa arvensis*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, Holly *Ilex aquifolium* and Elder *Sambucus nigra*. This habitat is considered to be of local value due to its diversity and relative scarcity.

3.2.1.5 81 – Ruderal or Ephemeral

A strip of approximately 0.05ha of Ruderal or Ephemeral vegetation is situated on the Site's northern boundary. This habitat is considered to be of low value as it is of low diversity and supports locally and nationally common species.

3.2.2 Invasive Non-Native Species.

No invasive non-native species were observed on Site during the survey.

3.2.3 Protected Species

Protected species are afforded a level of legal protection which means that their presence may pose a constraint to development. A summary of relevant legislation and associated species is provided in Appendix C.

The following sections describe the results of the field surveys and an appraisal of desk study data. Species not addressed below are considered extremely unlikely to be present and/or affected by the development and so are scoped out of further assessment.



3.2.3.1 Great Crested Newt (*Triturus cristatus*)

Two EPS licences for the destruction of a GCN resting place and ten GCN class survey licence returns were identified within 2km of the Site. Fifty-eight occurrences of GCN were returned from the LRC, with the most recent being in 2020 at 1870 meters north-east of the Site, and the closest occurrence being 972 metres south of the site in 2006.

No ponds were identified on site or within 500m, and thus the Site is considered to be of negligible value to GCN, and scoped out of further assessment.

3.2.3.2 Bats

The desk study returned records for the following bat species within 2km of the Site: common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, Nathusius’s pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*, brown long- eared bat *Plecotus auritus* and non-identified bats.

Potential roosting features (PRF’s) are provided in the form of lifted roof tiles/gaps and gaps to lead flashing on the roof. (see Table 4) It is considered that the building onsite has low suitability for roosting bats and is classified as PRF-1. The trees onsite offer no potential roosting opportunities for bats.

Foraging and commuting opportunities are limited to the hedgerow and open areas of grassland on Site with connectivity to the wider area is provided by adjoining treelines and gardens. The Ruislip Golf Course is close to the Site’s western boundary is likely to provide good foraging opportunities.

TABLE 4: BUILDING DESCRIPTION

BUILDING REFERENCE: B1	
DESCRIPTION	Split level building made from brick; part rendered with pebble dash. The front aspect of the of the building has mock decorative Tudor Beams. The roof is clay roof tiles, with steel soffits and bargeboards. Windows and doors were double glazed PVC.
PRF	Lifted and cracked roof tiles, areas of raised lead flashing
SUITABILITY	PRF-1



BUILDING REFERENCE: B1

IMAGE 5: BUILDING REAR VIEW



IMAGE 6: BUILDING SIDE VIEW



3.2.3.3 Birds

Hedgerows and grassland provide some suitable foraging for birds with the hedgerows providing nesting habitat, ground nesting is limited due to human disturbance and light pollution from the Site and adjacent street lights. Table 5 provides a summary of bird species recorded on Site. The Site is considered to be of low value for birds

TABLE 5: BIRD SPECIES RECORDED

SPECIES	COMMENT	CONSERVATION STATUS
Greenfinch <i>Carduelis Chloris</i>	Singing in hedgerow	Red listed
Rose Ringed Parakeet <i>Psittacula kramier</i>	Flying over Site	None

3.2.3.4 Badger (*Meles meles*)

The desk study returned three badger records within 2km of the Site, with the most recent being in 2022. Habitats on Site offer very limited potential foraging for badger and no opportunity for sett creation. Connectivity to the wider area is considered poor, with main roads and a fence surrounding the majority of the Site. No badger activity or signs of badger, such as setts, snuffle holes, latrines or hair were recorded during the walkover survey. Badger is therefore scoped out of further assessment.



3.2.3.5 Reptiles

The desk study returned three reptile records within 2km of the Site, with the nearest being a slow-worm in 2006 at a distance of 745m, the most recent reptile record is another slow-worm at a distance of 1412m in 2021.

The Site had small patches of ruderal and ephemeral vegetation which could be of value to commuting reptiles. However, these patches are very small and isolated. It is possible that small holes and gaps in the fencing exist to allow entry, however, ariel imagery and survey observation shows the surrounding gardens to be well maintained with limited scrub cover or long vegetation. No signs of reptiles were noted during the survey.

The Site is considered to be of low value to reptiles and are scoped out of further assessment, though a precautionary approach should be adopted during construction.

3.2.3.6 Priority Species

The Site has the potential to support priority species including hedgehog.

The desk study returned 80 records within 2km, with the nearest being 303m from site and the latest record being in 2022. No evidence of priority species was found at the time of survey. The fencing surrounding the Site has no visible holes allowing entry/exit and the immediate surrounding area leads to main roads and the nearby household gardens are well-kept with limited scrub cover or long vegetation. It is considered the Site is of low value to Priority species.



4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

The development has the potential to adversely impact valuable ecological features and some of these impacts may also constitute legal offences. The broad impacts include:

- Direct harm of animal species
- Disturbance of animal species
- Loss and degradation of valuable habitats
- Loss and degradation of habitats that support protected/priority species

Many of these impacts can be adequately addressed at this stage and therefore a range of good practice avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures are recommended below. Impacts to some features cannot be robustly assessed without additional information and so further surveys and assessments are recommended for such features.

4.2 FURTHER SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT

The following surveys are recommended to provide a robust baseline for the assessment of the potential ecological impacts of the development.

SURVEY/ASSESSMENT	DESCRIPTION
Nocturnal Bat activity survey	Single Bat activity survey to confirm absence/presence of bat roosts

4.3 AVOIDANCE

The following measures should be incorporated into the design of the development, including the construction phase, to avoid and reduce impacts on wildlife:

- A Construction Ecological Management Plan (CEcMP).
- Avoid clearance works during the nesting bird season (March to August inclusive) unless the Site is checked by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE) and active nests are confirmed to be absent no later than 48 hours before works commence.
- A toolbox talk to be completed by a Suitably Qualified Ecologist (SQE), covering Hedgehog, Birds, Reptiles.



- External lighting will be designed in line with BCT guidance⁵ to reduce impacts bats and a range of other wildlife associated with retained and offsite habitats.

4.4 MITIGATION

Mitigation is proposed to reduce the impacts on wildlife that cannot be avoided through design:

- All construction activities will be programmed to daytime hours to reduce disturbance to sensitive nocturnal species, such as bats and roosting bird species.
- Excavations should be securely covered or fenced overnight, or otherwise provide a means of escape for animals that may become trapped in the form of a ramp at least 300mm wide and angled no greater than 45°. Excavations should be inspected for the presence of animals before work recommences and, in the event of trapped animals, an ecologist contacted for advice.
- Gaps of at least 13cm x 13cm for hedgehogs and other small animals will be created within fencing to facilitate movement through the Site.

4.5 COMPENSATION/ENHANCEMENT

Compensation is proposed to address the impacts on habitats which cannot be avoided or mitigated:

- Landscape planting to compensate for any tree/shrub loss shall include species native to the local area as well as berry and fruit-bearing species alongside pollinator species, to provide increased foraging opportunities in the local area.
- The incorporation of opportunities for roosting bats and nesting birds within the development.

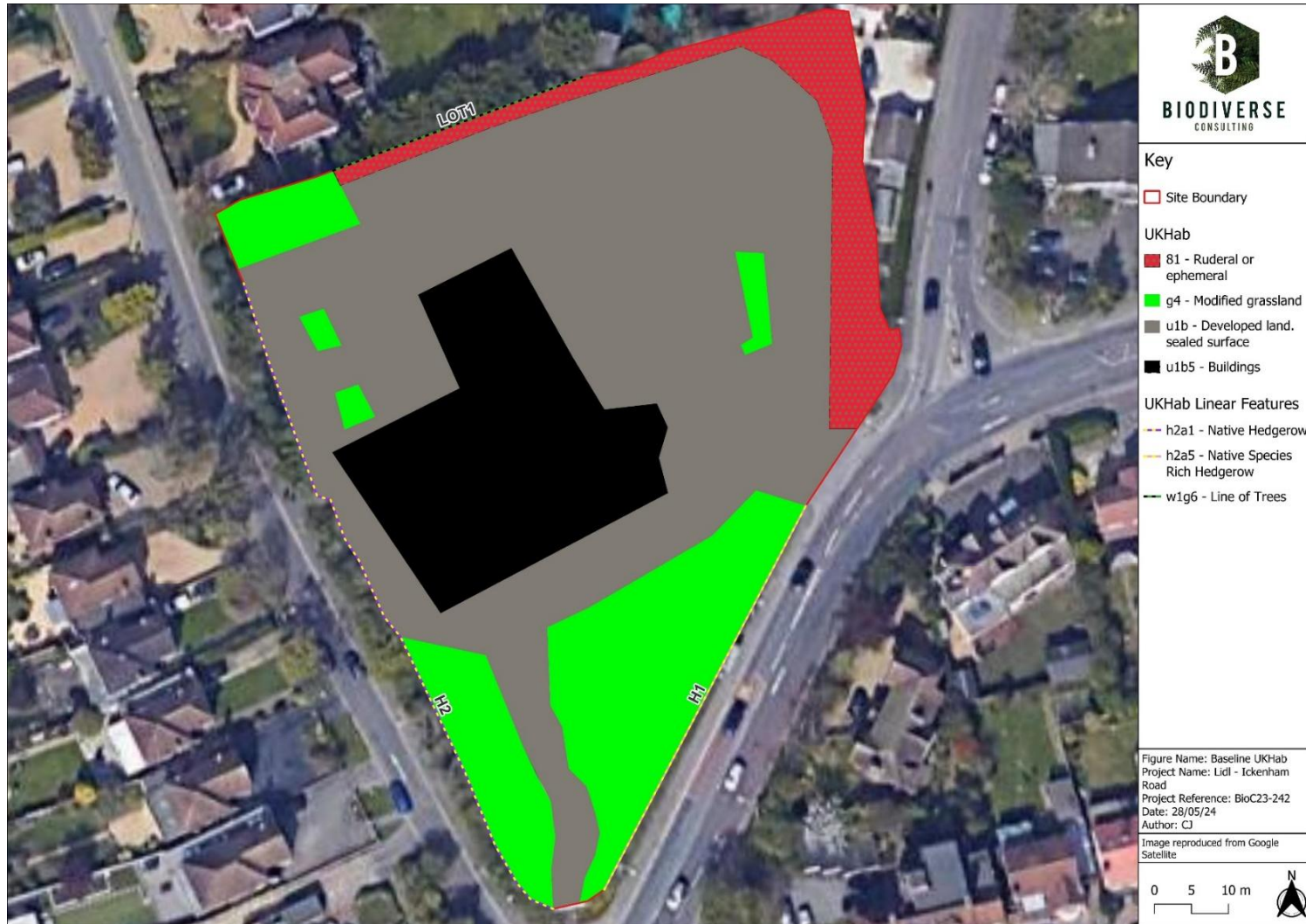
⁵ Bat Conservation Trust (2018) Guidance Note 08/18: Bats and artificial lighting in the UK



APPENDICES



APPENDIX A – UKHAB MAP





APPENDIX C – POLICY AND LEGISLATION

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981⁶, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000⁷ and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006⁸, is the main legislation that protects wildlife in Great Britain and is the mechanism for defining and protecting nationally important Species of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The legislation makes it offence to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or their eggs or nests (with certain exceptions) and disturb any bird species listed under Schedule 1 to the Act, or its dependent young while it is nesting;
- Intentionally kill, injure or take any wild animal listed under Schedule 5 to the Act; intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct any place used for shelter or protection by any wild animal listed under Schedule 5 to the Act; intentionally or recklessly disturb certain Schedule 5 animal species while they occupy a place used for shelter or protection; and
- Pick or uproot any wild plant listed under Schedule 8 of the Act. Schedule 9, Part II of the Act also lists many species for which it is an offence to plant, or otherwise cause to grow, in the wild. Any material containing Japanese knotweed is also identified as controlled waste under the Environmental Protection Act 1990⁹ and must be disposed of properly at licenced landfill according to the Environmental Protection Act (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991¹⁰.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species a Regulations 2017¹¹ (the ‘Habitat Regulations’), as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019¹², establish the requirements for protecting s that are internationally important for

⁶ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69>

⁷ The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37/contents>

⁸ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents>

⁹ The Environmental Protection Act 1990. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/43/contents>

¹⁰ The Environmental Protection Act (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1991/2839/made>

¹¹ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made>

¹² The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2019/9780111179512/contents>



threatened habitats and species – the National Network – and thus the requirement for a ‘Habitat Regulations Assessment’ of plans or developments with potential to affect them.

The Habitat Regulations also establish the strict protection of some species – European Protected Species – and make it an offence to deliberately capture, kill or disturb certain wild animals, and to damage or destroy a breeding or resting place of such an animal even if the animal is not present at the time.

Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

The NERC Act 2006⁸ places a duty on local planning authorities to have due regard for biodiversity and nature conservation during their operations, and thus ensures that biodiversity is a key consideration in the planning process. The Act also establishes a list of species and habitats of principal importance (‘Priority’ Species and Habitats) for the conservation of biodiversity.

The Environment Act 2021¹³

The Environment Act 2021 provides a framework for environmental protection in the UK. It is a wide-range piece of legislation affecting many aspects of the natural environment, including biodiversity. The act sets clear targets to halt the decline in wildlife populations through a legally binding target for species abundance by 2030 and a requirement to increase species populations by 10% by 2042. The Act also establishes mandatory requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain in new developments.

Ramsar Convention

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (the ‘Ramsar Convention’¹⁴) provides the only international mechanism for protecting internationally important wetlands; such s are designated as Ramsar s. It is government policy that Ramsar s are afforded the same level of protection as s in the National Network and so they are also subject to HRA.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

Badgers receive strict protection under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992¹⁵, which prohibits the taking, injuring, selling, possessing or killing of badgers and makes it an offence to ill-treat any badger, damage, destroy, disturb or cause a dog to enter a badger sett.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

¹³ The Environment Act 2021. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>

¹⁴ The Ramsar Convention <https://www.ramsar.org/>

¹⁵ Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Available from: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/51/contents>



The Hedgerow Regulations 1997¹⁶ establishes the legal protection of important countryside hedgerows, principally ancient and species-rich hedgerows. The Hedgerow Regulations also provide arrangements for planning authorities to protect important hedgerows in the countryside by controlling their removal through a system of notification.

National Planning Policy Framework 2023

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023¹⁷ sets out the Government's requirement for the planning system in England and in doing so establishes the framework within which local planning authorities can develop their own planning policies. The NPPF explicitly addresses the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including biodiversity, through paragraphs 174–177.

Government Circular ODPM 06/2005 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (England only)

This Circular provides administrative guidance on the application of the law relating to planning and nature conservation as it applies in England.

Part IV – *Conservation of Species protected by Law* states that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when considering a development proposal that may result in harm to the species or its habitat and that planning authorities must have regard to European Protected Species protected under the Habitat Regulations.

The presence or otherwise of European Protected Species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, must be established before the planning permission is determined, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.

Biodiversity Action Plans

The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) was developed to fulfil the Rio Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992, to which the UK is a signatory. The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework¹⁸ succeeded the UKBAP and expired in 2019, but the UKBAP priority species and habitats are retained through the NERC Act 2006. Regional and local BAPs have also been developed for species/habitats of nature conservation importance at regional and local levels.

¹⁶ The Hedgerow Regulations 1997. Available from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1997/1160/contents/made>

¹⁷ National Policy Planning Framework 2023. Available from: [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk/national-planning-policy-framework)

¹⁸ UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework. Available from: <https://hub.jncc.gov.uk/assets/587024ff-864f-4d1d-a669-f38cb448abdc>



APPENDIX D – VALUE OF ECOLOGICAL FEATURES

VALUE	EXAMPLES
International	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An internationally designated site or candidate site (SPA, pSPA, SAC, cSAC, pSAC, Ramsar site) or an area which meets the designation criteria for such sites. • Internationally significant and viable areas of a habitat type listed in Annexe 1 of the Habitats Directive, or smaller areas of such habitat, which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole. • Any regularly occurring, globally threatened species. • A regularly occurring population of an internationally important species, which is threatened or rare in the UK, of uncertain conservation status • A regularly occurring, nationally significant population/number of any internationally important species.
National	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A nationally designated site (<u>e.g.</u> SSSI, NNR) or a discrete area which meets the published selection criteria for national designation (e.g. SSSI selection guidelines) irrespective of whether or not it has yet been notified. • A viable area of a UK BAP priority habitat, or smaller areas of such habitat which are essential to maintain the viability of a larger whole. • A regularly occurring significant number/population of a nationally important species <u>e.g.</u> listed on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). • A regularly occurring population of a nationally important species that is threatened or rare in the county or region. • A feature identified as being of critical importance in the UK BAP.
Regional / County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viable areas of key habitat identified in the Regional or County BAP or smaller areas of such a habitat, which are essential to maintain the viability of the larger whole. • Regional/county significant and viable areas of key habitat identified as being of regional value in the appropriate English Nature (now Natural England) Natural Area. • A regularly occurring significant population/number of any important species important at a regional/county level. • Any regularly occurring, locally significant population of a species which is listed in a Regional/County Red Data Book or BAP on account of its regional rarity or localisation. • Sites of conservation importance that exceed the district selection criteria but that fall short of SSSI selection guidelines.
City/District/ Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas of habitat identified in a District/City/Borough BAP or in the relevant Natural Area profile. • Sites that the designating authority has determined meet the published ecological selection criteria for designation, including Local Nature Reserves selected on District/City/Borough ecological criteria. • Sites/features that are scarce within the District/City/Borough or which appreciably enrich the District/City/Borough habitat resource.



VALUE	EXAMPLES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A diverse and/or ecologically valuable hedgerow network. • A population of a species that is listed in a District/City/Borough BAP because of its rarity in the locality or in the relevant Natural Area profile because of its regional rarity or localisation. • A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a District/City/Borough important species during key phases of its life cycle.
Parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A feature considered scarce within a Parish, or which appreciably enriches the Parish resource.
Local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas identified in a Local BAP or the relevant natural area profile. • Sites/features which are scarce in the locality, or which are considered to appreciably enrich the habitat resource within the local context, e.g. species-rich hedgerows. • Local Nature Reserves selected on Parish/Local ecological criteria. • Significant numbers/population of a locally important species <u>e.g.</u> one which is listed on the Local BAP. • Any species, populations or habitats of local importance.
Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitats of moderate to low diversity which support a range of locally and nationally common species, the loss of which can be easily mitigated.



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