

# Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

**Survey site:**

Land Adjacent To 1 Russet Close, Uxbridge UB10 0ST

**Client:**

Bhumi Shah

**Survey date:**

9<sup>th</sup> December 2025

**Project:**

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the London Borough of Hillingdon. The proposal is described as:

*Erection of a three-storey building to create 2 x semi-detached dwellings with associated car parking and installation of vehicular crossover.*

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

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.

Site Location and Context					
<p>The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference TQ0824482046 and has an area of approximately 0.03 ha.</p> <p>The disused site is a small, triangular plot of land surrounded by residential houses and gardens. It appears to have likely been part of one of the adjacent gardens but is now fenced off and abandoned. The site is entirely comprised of unmanaged modified grassland with a few piles of discarded waste materials. There are some trees surrounding the red line boundary, but none inside. Apart from the immediate vegetated gardens, the surrounding area is predominantly urban, with the primary streets consisting of semi-detached houses, streets and the 40mph A4020 road ~25m north. The wider area is also mostly built-up with the exception of a few large sports fields, recreational grounds and parks. The most prominent green space nearby is Hayes Park, ~800m northeast which contains rough grassland and deciduous woodland. However, this space as well as most of the others in the area are not suitably connected to the development site.</p>					
Survey Details					
<p>The site survey was undertaken by Akash Barua BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist.</p>					
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (mph)	Rain
9th December 2025	9	83	100	4	Light
Further Recommendations					
<p><b>Biodiversity Net Gain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development will be required to demonstrate a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain through the use of the latest Defra Biodiversity Metric to comply with legislation (Environment Act 2021).</li> </ul> <p><b>Protected Species</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Precautionary working methods are recommended to minimize construction impacts on reptiles, amphibians and wild mammals.</li> <li>A low impact lighting strategy has been recommended to minimize light spill impacts on bats in the area.</li> </ul>					
Survey limitations					
<p>It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the searches of historical biological records.</p> <p>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.</p>					

<p><b>Ecological Survey Factor</b> <b>Conclusion, Impact or</b> <b>Recommendations</b></p>	<p>Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. 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.</p>
<p>Habitats and plants (see current habitat map in appendix 1, assumed 2020 baseline habitat map in appendix 1a, location plan in appendix 2, proposal 1 plan in appendix 3, proposal 2 plan in appendix 3a and photos in appendix 4). Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).</p>	
<p><b>Summary of Survey Findings</b></p>	<p>The site does not contain any habitats listed as a habitat of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006). Habitats within the site are common and widespread and have limited ecological value. Few notable habitats are present within 2km.</p> <p><b>On-site habitat descriptions</b></p> <p><u>g4 - Modified grassland – Figures 1 and 2</u> The site is comprised entirely of modified grassland. The grassland appears unmanaged due to its tall and varied sward height, with approximately 80% more than 30cm and 20% less than 7cm. Bare ground is common throughout. Species comprise <b>ABUNDANT</b> perennial ryegrass and stinging nettle, <b>FREQUENT</b> brassica spp., green alkanet, cleaver, dovesfoot cranesbill, purple nettle, common sowthistle, <b>OCCASIONAL</b> common nipplewort, dandelion, broad-leaved dock, and hedge mustard. There are approximately 6 vascular species per m2. There are three piles of discarded construction waste within the plot, consisting of timber planks, metal sheets and other miscellaneous materials. The grass is still growing within most of these mounds of waste.</p> <p><b>Condition Assessment</b> (assessed using the ‘Grasslands Low Distinctiveness’ habitat type condition assessment sheet):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. There must be 6-8 vascular plant species per m2, including at least 2 forbs. NB. this criterion is essential for achieving moderate condition. <b>PASS</b></li> <li>B. Varied sward height, with at least 20% less than 7cm and 20% more than 7cm. <b>PASS</b></li> <li>C. Some scattered scrub may be present but accounts for less than 20% of total grassland area. <b>PASS</b></li> <li>D. Physical damage is evident in less than 5% of total grassland area. <b>PASS</b></li> <li>E. Cover of bare ground is between 1% and 10%. <b>FAIL</b></li> <li>F. Cover of bracken is less than 20%. <b>PASS</b></li> <li>G. There is an absence of invasive, non-native species (as listed on Schedule 9 of WCA, 1981). <b>PASS</b></li> </ul> <p>Passes 6 of 7 criteria including criterion A therefore achieves <b>GOOD</b> condition</p> <p><u>32 - Off-site trees – Figures 3 and 4</u> There are four hazel trees along the western site boundary, belonging to the adjacent resident. There is also a mature sycamore immediately beyond the southern corner boundary, also belonging to a neighbouring home.</p>

	<p><b>Local notable habitats</b>                  There are few priority habitats within 2km of the site, including a handful of deciduous woodland parcels, the closest being ~630m northeast. There are approximately 10 small parcels of traditional orchard, ~500m northeast being the closest one. Finally, one large parcel of good quality, semi-improved grassland lies ~1750m east. No further known priority habitats are present within 2km.</p>
<p><i>Foreseen Impacts</i></p>	<p><b>On-site habitats</b>                  The proposed development will result in the loss of all modified grassland on site. Despite common and widespread, this is likely to have a significant impact on biodiversity at the site level and may result in a biodiversity net loss.</p> <p><b>Notable habitats</b>                  Due to the proximity of works to the trees immediately surrounding the boundary and in the neighbouring gardens, indirect effects (e.g. pollution, dust, litter, surface run off, etc.) could occur to them during construction.</p> <p>No impacts to any further notable habitats are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such habitats as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers.</p>
<p><i>Recommendations</i></p>	<p><b>On-site habitats</b>                  None required.</p> <p><b>Biodiversity net gain</b>                  Due to the removal of grassland on site, the development will be required to demonstrate a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain through the use of the latest Defra Biodiversity Metric to comply with legislation (Environment Act 2021).</p> <p><b>Notable habitats</b>                  The adjacent trees surrounding the site boundary and in the neighbouring gardens should be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - Recommendations" (BS 5837) (2012).</p>

Locality and Designated Sites	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p><b>On-site designations</b> The site is not subject to any designation.</p> <p><b>Statutory designated sites (within 2km)</b> There are no statutory sites within 2km of the site.</p> <p><b>Non-statutory designated sites (within 2km)</b> Non-statutory sites were retrieved from Greenspace Information for Greater London’s Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation Open Data (GiGL, 2025). There are no non-statutory SINC’s within 1km of the site.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p><b>On-site designations</b> No impacts foreseen.</p> <p><b>Statutory and non-statutory designated sites</b> No impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such sites (where known) as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p><b>On-site designations</b> None present.</p> <p><b>Statutory and non-statutory designated sites</b> None required.</p>
Invasive / Non-native species	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No problematic or invasive species were recorded on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys are required but remain vigilant.

Invertebrates	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The grassland on site likely provides common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for notable or protected invertebrates.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the removal of all grassland on site. This will result in a reduction of foraging and sheltering habitat for invertebrates in the local area.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys are required.  <b>Biodiversity enhancements</b> The site should be enhanced with the planting of native wildflowers or wildflower turf, which would provide foraging opportunities for invertebrates.
Bats	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<b>EPSL data</b> A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. 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. No EPSL's for bats are present within 2km of the site.  <b>Roosting habitat</b> No buildings or trees are present within the red-line boundary.  <b>Foraging and commuting habitat</b> The grassland on site is assessed to provide some foraging and commuting opportunities for bats although it likely doesn't attract significant invertebrate populations that would in turn support significant bat populations.  The surrounding area is predominantly urban and lacking in optimal bat foraging and roosting habitat, such as woodland, mixed scrub or mature hedgerows/treelines. The site is surrounded by a small number of vegetated gardens, comprised of grass lawn, shrubs and trees. These offer some foraging and commuting opportunities for bats. The site is not suitably connected to any of the high value habitats in the wider area. The site and surrounding area have low habitat value for bats.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<b>Roosting habitat</b> None foreseen.  <b>Foraging and commuting habitat</b> The proposed development will result in the loss of all grassland on site. Given its small size, low value and the presence of more areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality (although limited), this is likely to be inconsequential for bats.  <b>Artificial lighting</b>

	<p>The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats without mitigation. This may disturb foraging and commuting bats.</p>
<p><i>Recommendations</i></p>	<p><b>Foraging and commuting habitat</b>                  No further surveys are required.</p> <p><b>Artificial lighting</b>                  A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors (vegetated gardens with trees southeast, south and southwest). Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: <a href="https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting">https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting</a></p> <p><b>Suggested biodiversity enhancements</b>                  The installation of at least two bat boxes at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be incorporated into the fabric of the new dwelling/s. They will be suitable for pipistrelles. Suitable bat boxes include Habibat Bat Box, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box or similar alternative brand. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.</p>

Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p><b>Vegetation</b> No bird nests were identified on site. Further, the site offers no nesting opportunities or nest-building resources for birds.</p> <p>The off-site trees offer nesting opportunities for birds.</p> <p><b>Barn owls</b> The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls.</p> <p><b>Overwintering birds</b> Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p><b>Vegetation</b> None foreseen.</p> <p><b>Barn owls/ Overwintering birds</b> None foreseen.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p><b>Vegetation</b> 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 until the young have fledged.</p> <p><b>Barn owls and overwintering birds</b> None required.</p> <p><b>Suggested biodiversity enhancements</b> The installation of a minimum of two integrated bird boxes on the new dwelling/s will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "AfS S-Brick" (Integrated swift brick)</li> <li>• "Bird Brick Houses" – Tit, sparrow, starling brick houses</li> <li>• Or a similar alternative brand</li> </ul>

Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p><b>EPSL data</b> A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site.</p> <p><b>Habitat suitability</b> The areas of tall sward grassland offer commuting, refuge and foraging opportunities for reptiles. Further, the piles of waste materials may provide refuge and hibernation opportunities. However, the surrounding area is predominantly built-up and lacking in optimal reptile habitat. For example, the site is immediately surrounded by fenced, managed vegetated gardens and houses, of limited value for reptiles. The site could support low numbers of common reptiles, such as slow worms, and as a result, their presence on site during construction cannot be discounted.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p>The proposed development will result in the removal of all grass on site. The loss of such habitat is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations owing to its small area and sub-optimal location, being isolated/contained within a residential settlement and disconnected from optimal reptile habitat. Nevertheless, site clearance could result in the death or injury of widespread reptiles, if present.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the grassland/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.</li> <li>• Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.</li> <li>• Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats.</li> <li>• Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

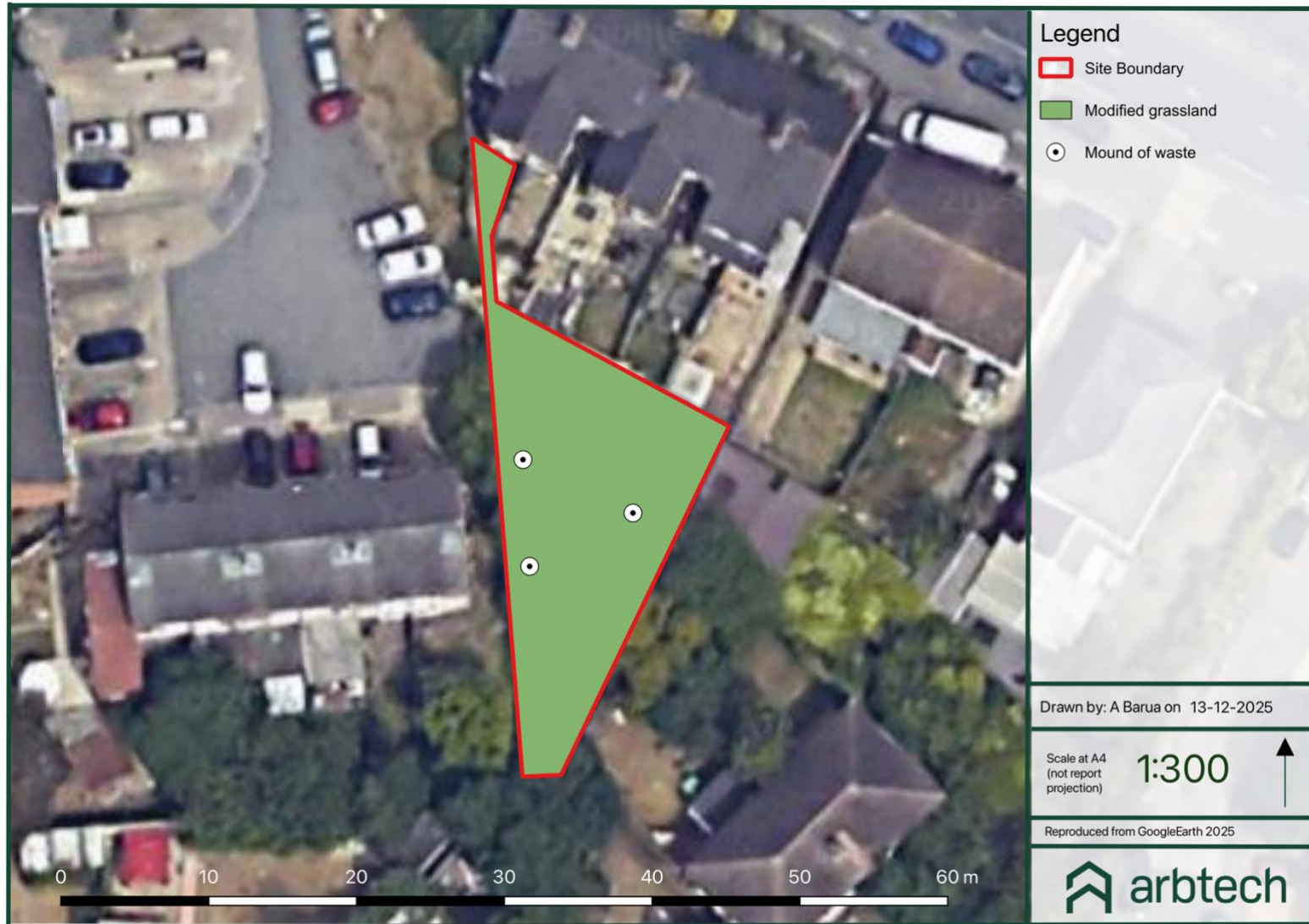
Amphibians	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p><b>EPSL and survey data</b></p> <p>A review of the MAGIC database returned one granted EPSL record for great crested newts within 2km of the site. Located ~900m northwest, the EPSL allowed for the destruction of a resting place for great crested newts (2014-696-EPS-MIT and 2014-696-EPS-MIT-1).</p> <p>No further EPSL's, positive class survey licence returns or DLL historic survey data (2017 – 2019) were present within 2km of the site.</p> <p><b>Habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m)</b></p> <p>Great crested newts (GCN) exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton <i>et al.</i> 2001).</p> <p>There are no ponds on site, and a review of aerial imagery and spatial data (MAGIC and OS Maps) confirms that there are no ponds within a 500 m radius of the site. As a result, the presence of breeding great crested newts on or near the site is considered highly unlikely. The absence of suitable aquatic habitat within the core terrestrial range (0–500 m) significantly limits the potential for the species to be present or affected by the proposed works.</p> <p>Given the lack of suitably connected ponds, the presence of great crested newts on site is considered unlikely. However, common amphibians may still be present within suitable areas of habitat on-site as they can travel great distances from ponds. Areas of shrubbery and the waste piles on site may provide foraging and sheltering opportunities for amphibians.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p>The proposed development will result in the removal of all grassland on site. Common amphibians could be present within the grassland during construction and could be injured or killed in the process.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use.</li> <li>• Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.</li> <li>• 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.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.</li> </ul>
<b>Badger</b>	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p>No badger setts were noted on site or suspected within a 30m radius of the site.</p> <p>The grassland provides sub-optimal foraging, commuting and sett excavation opportunities for badgers. Further, the site is surrounded by urban development and there are no connecting features leading to any optimal badger habitat (i.e. scrub, woodland) in the surrounding area, further reducing the likelihood of badgers being present within the surrounding area of the site. Nevertheless, badgers could be present within the vegetated gardens connected to the site, and transient badgers could therefore be present on-site during construction.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	<p>No works will be undertaken within 30m of a known badger sett.</p> <p>The proposed development will result in the removal of all grass. The loss of such habitat is likely to be inconsequential to local badger populations owing to its small size and sub-optimal location. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of badgers, if present.</p>
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to badgers, further badger surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.</li> <li>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 badgers could use.</li> <li>Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.</li> <li>In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified, works must cease and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.</li> </ul>

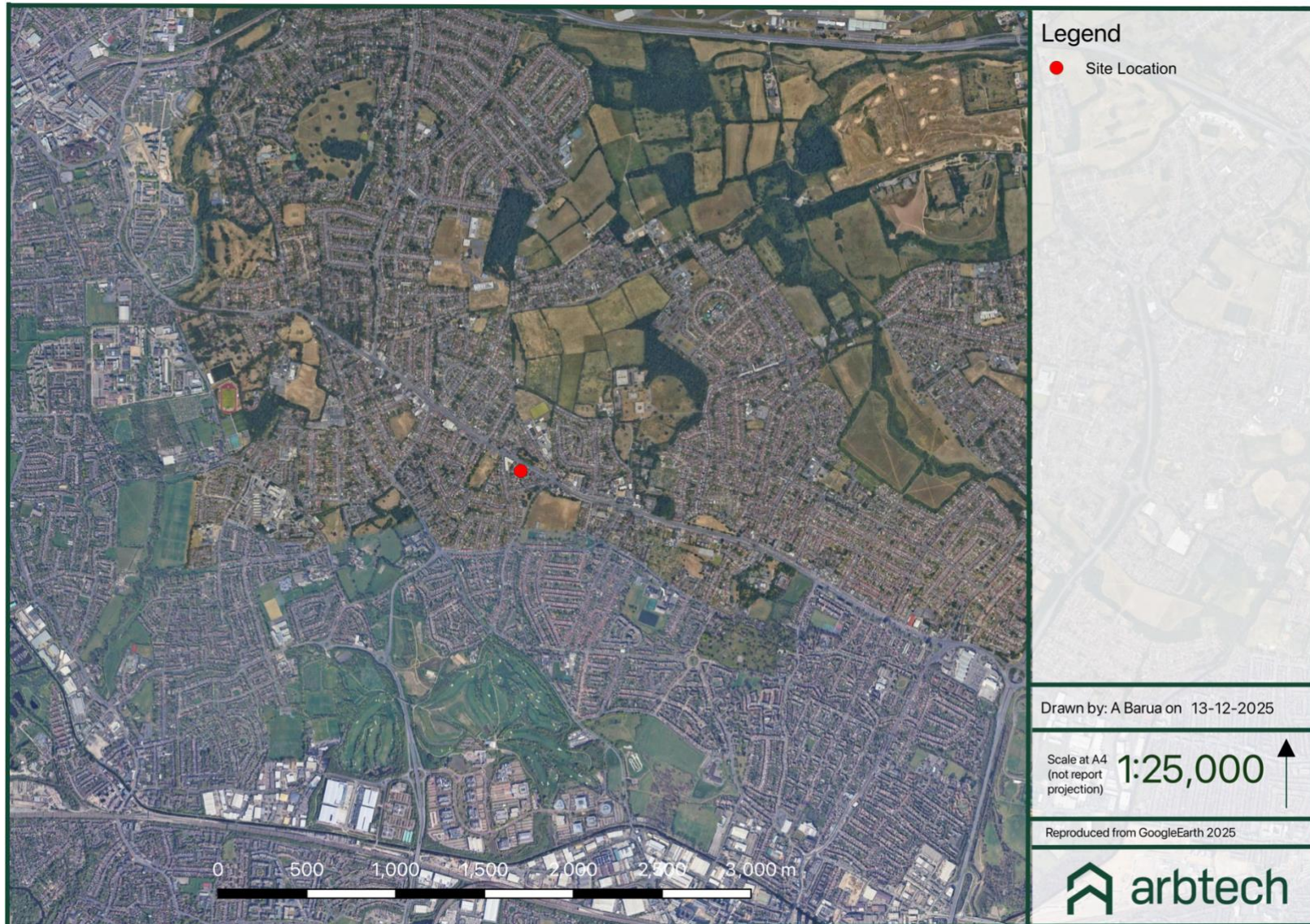
Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for otters or water voles within 2km of the site. There are no water courses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None required.
Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	<p><b>EPSL data</b></p> <p>A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for hazel dormice within 2km of the site.</p> <p><b>Habitat suitability</b></p> <p>The habitats on site offer unsuitable foraging and nesting opportunities for dormice. Dormice require habitats such as woodland and mature hedgerows, none of which are on site or suitably connected to the site. As such, the likelihood of this species being present on site is considered to be acceptably low.</p>
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None required.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Hedgehogs, foxes and common rodents are extremely mobile and highly adapted to urban landscapes. There is suitability for foraging, commuting and sheltering within the areas of grassland, and the site is directly connected to vegetated gardens. As a result, the presence of these mammals on site during construction cannot be discounted.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	The proposed development will result in the removal of all grassland. While this is unlikely to have a significant effect at the local population level, individual hedgehogs or other small mammals could still be harmed or displaced during site clearance and construction work.
<i>Recommendations</i>	<p>A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations.</li> <li>• If any hedgehogs, foxes or common rodents 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.</li> <li>• Grassland clearance to be staggered. Firstly, to a height of approximately 40-50cm so greater visibility of the ground level can be achieved to allow a search for hedgehog nests or resting individuals unimpeded by the dense growth. Any individuals should be</li> </ul>

	<p>moved gently out of harms way to a quiet area of the site to disperse of their own accord. Thereafter cutting may commence to ground level.</p> <p><b>Suggested biodiversity enhancements</b></p> <p>The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs and other small mammals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities.</li><li>• Creation of brash piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas.</li><li>• Installation of gaps under boundary fencing to enable hedgehogs to move freely through the site.</li></ul>
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Appendix 1: Habitat/Survey Map



Appendix 2: Location Map





**Appendix 4: Habitat Photos**



*Figure 1 (above) and figure 2 (below) showing the modified grassland and piles of waste on site.*





*Figure 3 (above) and figure 4 (below) showing the off-site trees.*

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Version control			
Status	Issue	Name	Date
Final	1.0	Akash Barua BSc (Hons), Consultant Ecologist	16/12/2025