

# Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Site	Land to the Rear of Regal House, Shripney Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 9NP	Written by	Chris Brown BSc (Hons) ACIEEM Independent Ecologist
Date	31 <sup>st</sup> March 2025	Reviewed by	Frances King-Smith BSc (Hons) CEcol MCIEEM Principal Ecologist/Company Director
For	Manhire LLP		

## Background

Ecology Works Limited was commissioned by Manhire LLP to prepare a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) at Land to the Rear of Regal House, Shripney Road, Bognor Regis, West Sussex, PO22 9NP (hereafter 'the site') in support of a planning application for the construction of 7no. residential properties and an access road. This PEA was required to update the previous Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) undertaken for the proposal by Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology in 2022 (Report Ref: LLD2707-ECO-REP-001-00-EclA) which is now out-of-date as ecological reports have a validity of around 18 months to 3 years<sup>1</sup>.

This technical note details the findings of the desk study and PEA conducted at the site by Ecology Works in November 2024. It provides details on the status of protected and notable species at the site, as well as an overall assessment of the potential ecological constraints to the proposed development. It includes recommendations for measures to avoid, mitigate or compensate for impacts to protected or notable species in line with the mitigation hierarchy. It also details specific enhancement measures required to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain in line with policy. This report should be read in conjunction with the Lizard Landscape Design and Ecology report from 2022.

## Site description

Land to the Rear of Regal House, referred to hereafter as 'the site', is located at National Grid Reference SU 93932 10968, situated east of Shripney Road, in the village of Shripney, West Sussex. The site comprises grassland, hardstanding and a building surrounded by hedgerows, a line of trees and scattered trees. The site is bound by residential properties to the north, south and west, with arable land to the east.

The site is located approximately 2.9 kilometres (km) north of Bognor Regis town centre and 8.2km south-east of Chichester town centre. The site's surrounds are characterised by a large swathe of residential development to the south and open farmland comprising permanent pasture and arable crops to the north, east and west.

## Proposals

The development proposal entails the construction of 7no. residential properties and an access road. Lighting proposals have not been finalised at the time of writing this report. The proposed site plan is provided in Appendix 1.

<sup>1</sup> Further information on the validity of ecological surveys is provided [here](#).

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National planning policy

Requirements of planning decisions in respect of biodiversity in England are laid out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024<sup>2</sup>, which states that the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal. Other relevant excerpts are listed below:

Paragraph 11 states that “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”. However, Paragraph 195 explains that “The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site”.

Paragraph 187 states that the planning system should both contribute to and enhance the natural environment by “minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs”.

Paragraph 193 details biodiversity principles for local planning authorities to apply, including:

- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;
- c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and
- d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Paragraph 194 states that the following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:

- a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
- b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites; and
- c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

<sup>2</sup> HM Government (2024) *National Planning Policy Framework*. Department for Communities and Local Government. HMSO

Circular 06/05<sup>3</sup> offers guidance on interpretation of planning and nature conservation law in England. Paragraph 98 states “the presence of a protected species is a material consideration when a planning authority is considering a development proposal that, if carried out, would be likely to result in harm to the species or its habitat”. Paragraph 99 states “it is essential that the presence or otherwise of a protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the Proposed Project Development, is established before planning permission is granted”.

#### Local planning policy

Local planning policy is provided by the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031 (adopted July 2018). Policies ENV DM1 to ENV DM5 relate to the Natural Environment:

*Policy ENV DM1 Designated sites of biodiversity or geological importance:* States that developments which would have an adverse effect on European, national or local status designated sites would not normally be permitted, and sets out criteria, rationale and other details for this.

*Policy ENV DM2 Pagham Harbour:* Sets out Zones A (within 400m of Pagham Harbour SPA) and B (0-5km), within which there are restrictions to any development which may impact the SPA.

*Policy ENV DM3 Biodiversity Opportunity Areas:* States that development shall retain and incorporate locally valued and important habitats, including wildlife corridors and stepping stones, and be designed to minimise habitat disturbance.

*Policy ENV DM4 Protection of Trees:* States that development shall not affect Tree Preservation Order (TPO) trees, that these and other trees will be appropriately protected during development and that developers shall provide tree surveys, tree constraints plans and arboricultural impact assessments where appropriate.

*Policy ENV DM5 Development and Biodiversity:* Requires developments to seek net gains for biodiversity and protect existing habitats, incorporate bat and bird boxes and other enhancement measures. The policy states that where there is evidence of a protected species, planning applications shall include a detailed survey of the subject species, providing detailed measures for the preservation of the species at the site. It goes on to state that all surveys shall consider direct and indirect impacts and shall be carried out at an appropriate time of year, being undertaken by a qualified and, where appropriate, suitably licensed person.

#### Legislation

##### European Protected Species (EPS)

British bats are afforded full protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). In addition, these species are protected under Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Schedule 2 defines European Protected Species (EPS). These animals and their habitats receive additional protection via the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act, 2000, and under the Bonn Convention, of which the UK is part.

<sup>3</sup> HM Government (2005) ODPM Circular 06/05 Government Circular: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System. HMSO.

## Badgers

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## Birds

In the UK, all wild birds are afforded protection under Section 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it an offence to intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird or to take, damage or destroy a nest (while in use or during its construction) or eggs. Some species receive further protection via inclusion in Schedule 1 of the Act, which makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb these birds whilst building a nest or in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young; or to disturb dependent young. Schedule 1 species include, for example, barn owl *Tyto alba*.

## Reptiles

British reptile species are included in Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are therefore protected from intentional killing or injury. This includes the widespread species: adder *Vipera berus*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica*, slow-worm *Anguis fragilis* and common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*.

Smooth snake *Coronella austriaca* and sand lizard *Lacerta agilis* are classed as rare reptiles and are afforded full protection under the Act. This makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, disturb, take, possess or sell these species (of any life stage). It is also illegal to damage, destroy or obstruct access to places they use for breeding, resting, shelter and protection.

All species of reptile are listed as Species of Principal Importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, and must therefore be taken into consideration as part of planning for any development.

## Other species

The NERC Act 2006 requires due consideration be given to biodiversity and its potential enhancement when considering proposed developments, i.e. as part of the planning process. Section 41 of the Act defines a number of species as Species of Principal Importance for consideration during planning, which include several bat species, dormouse and a number of species which are not strictly legally protected, such as hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* and stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*.

All wild mammals, including fox *Vulpes vulpes*, receive protection from harm with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering, including crushing and asphyxiation, under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996. This is relevant where burrows need to be removed as part of construction activity.

## Invasive non-native plant species

Invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) pose a threat to native biodiversity and habitats. It is an offence under the Act to cause these species to grow in the wild, and care must therefore be taken to ensure species are identified, removed and disposed of correctly and responsibly during the process of development. Schedule 9 includes Japanese knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*, and a range of other species including the following five cotoneaster species, although not Franchet's cotoneaster *Cotoneaster franchetii*.

## Biodiversity Net Gain

The Environment Act 2021<sup>4</sup> states that there is a duty on local authorities to publish biodiversity reports and secure mandatory biodiversity net gain. Part 6 (Nature and Biodiversity) sets out the following key elements relating to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):

- The Act amends the Town & Country Planning Act
- A minimum 10% BNG is required, calculated with the Biodiversity Metric, supported by a BNG assessment
- BNG habitat must be secured for at least 30 years via planning obligations or conservation covenants
- This can be delivered on- or off-site, or via the statutory biodiversity credits scheme
- Off-site BNG land will be recorded on a national register

The Act does not affect existing legal protection for habitats and species. It maintains the mitigation hierarchy of avoid impacts first, then mitigate and only compensate as a last resort. The 10% BNG requirement became mandatory on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024 for major developments of 10 units or more, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024 for small developments with less than 9 units, such as this one.

## Methods

### Desk study

The desk study was carried out within the zone of influence, which is an area around the site set by the assessor that may be affected by the proposals because of factors such as alterations to habitats, lighting, noise, the water table or human presence. For the purpose of the EclA, the zone of influence has been set at a 1km radius around the site. This is increased to 2km for bats, which are highly mobile, and is increased further where the site falls within any impact zones of European sites, which have radiuses of several kilometres or more.

The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside<sup>5</sup> (MAGIC) online resource was accessed on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to search for the following features:

- Internationally and nationally designated sites: Special Protection Areas (SPAs), potential SPAs, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), possible SACs, Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) within 1km of the site
- European Protected Species (EPS) bat licences granted within 2km
- EPS hazel dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* and great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* licences within 1km
- Natural England great crested newt class licence returns within 1km
- Habitats of Principal Importance listed under the NERC Act within 1km of the site

Online mapping was used to identify ponds within 500m of the site, based on standard best practice for great crested newt, which spends much of the year on land. This is taken as the maximum reasonable distance this species will migrate between breeding ponds and terrestrial habitats, such as woodlands. In practice, great crested newt will often stay in terrestrial habitat in immediate or close vicinity to its aquatic breeding habitat.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted>

<sup>5</sup> MAGIC Map Application. <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>.

## Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

The PEA entailed a daytime walkover survey undertaken on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024, comprising a UKHab habitat survey, a protected species assessment and a PRA of the building for bats. The field survey was carried out by licensed bat ecologist and Natural England Registered Bat Consultant Frances King-Smith BSc (Hons) CEcol MCIEEM (Natural England Level 2 Bat Class Licence ref. 2020-48552-CLS-CLS, Registered Consultant no. RC152). Weather conditions were dry with a Beaufort Force 1 easterly breeze, 100% cloud cover and an ambient temperature of 9°C.

The habitat survey was undertaken following the user manual, habitat key and definitions for UK Habitat Classification (UKHab)<sup>6</sup>, and entailed a detailed survey of on-site vegetation to identify key plant species present and to categorise the primary habitats and define them further using the UKHab secondary codes, where appropriate. Condition assessments were completed on-site for each habitat parcel. Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal were also followed<sup>7</sup>. Where relevant, dominance was noted based on the DAFOR scale<sup>8</sup>. Target notes were made to identify particular features/species within the site. Coreo™ was used to retrospectively map the site. A UKHab habitat map is provided in Appendix 3. The site visit also included an assessment of the suitability of habitats present to support protected or notable species. These methods are detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Methods used for establishing site suitability for protected and notable species

Species/ species group	Details
Bats	<p>Roosting opportunities for bats are referred to as Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) and can take the form of a wide range of features within a building or structure. Examples of such features are within roof voids (particularly along the ridge beams), eaves spaces, within mortice joints, and within gaps on the exterior of a building, such as under roof tiles, ridge tiles or hanging tiles (or slates), soffit or fascia gaps, gaps beneath lead flashing, cladding, weatherboarding and barge boards, and many other features. Trees also provide suitable features such as loose or peeling bark, splits, cracks, woodpecker holes, callous rolls, snags and hazard beams. The presence of dense ivy on trees can both conceal and create suitable roosting features.</p> <p>The PRA entailed a detailed visual inspection of on-site trees and of the exterior and interior of the building/s on-site to look for PRFs, wherever access was possible and safe. It included a search for bats and their evidence, such as droppings, urine stains, rub marks, feeding remains and bat corpses. All PRFs and bats/bat evidence was recorded (including taking photographs and droppings samples where necessary). Trees and buildings within the assessment are assigned a level of roosting suitability from the following categories, in line with the criteria set out in the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Negligible</li><li>• Low</li><li>• Moderate</li><li>• High</li></ul> <p>. These guidelines were also used to assess the suitability of the surrounding habitats and landscape for foraging and commuting bats. The survey was conducted using a using a 1,400 lumen P7R Core LED Lenser torch, 8x42 binoculars and a ladder. All PRFs were recorded in one of the following three categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• NONE: PRFs absent or highly unlikely</li><li>• FAR: Further Assessment Required to establish whether any PRFs are present</li><li>• PRF: At least one PRF recorded. PRFs recorded were categorised either as:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PRF-I: only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats; or</li><li>• PRF-M: suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.</li></ul></li></ul> <p>The Bat Tree Habitat Key<sup>9</sup> database was consulted to check the likelihood of roosting bats in any PRFs recorded.</p>

<sup>6</sup> UKHab Ltd. (2023) UK Habitat Classification User Manual V2.0 (at <https://www.ukhab.org>)

<sup>7</sup> CIEEM Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Second Edition (CIEEM, 2017)

<sup>8</sup> The DAFOR scale was used to note levels of dominance within habitats present for each plant species, from Dominant, Abundant, Frequent, Occasional or Rare.

<sup>9</sup> Bat Tree Habitat Key (2023). (<http://battreehabitatkey.co.uk/>)

Badger	A badger <i>Meles meles</i> survey was undertaken of all areas within the site boundary. The site was searched for signs of badger activity including setts, tracks, caught guard hairs on fencing and brambles over mammal paths, snuffle holes and dung pits or latrines. Any mammal burrows recorded were closely examined to assess whether their shape and size was consistent with those of badger, and to check for diagnostic evidence such as paw prints, tracks, guard hairs and bedding material pulled from setts by badger. Any badger setts recorded were assigned a category of either 'main', 'annexe', 'subsidiary' or 'outlier' sett, and a status of 'active' or 'disused', based on the presence or lack of recent evidence, cobwebs and accumulations of leaf litter in sett entrances.
Otter	The site was assessed for its suitability for otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> , predominantly based on the presence of ditches, streams, rivers or other waterbodies. Where present, areas in and around waterbodies were searched for holts, couches, lie-ups, feeding remains and spraints (otter droppings).
Water vole	Any waterbodies present were also searched for evidence of water vole <i>Arvicola amphibius</i> , such as burrows, latrines, tracks and feeding lawns.
Hazel dormouse	The habitat on and adjacent to the site was assessed for its suitability to support hazel dormouse, indicated by the presence of woodland, scrub or hedgerows with food plants such as hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , bramble <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> aggregate (agg.) and honeysuckle <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i> , which would provide a food contingent throughout the active season.
Birds	Vegetation, buildings and other structures on the site were broadly assessed for their suitability for breeding birds. Any nests observed were noted.
Reptiles	Grassland, scrub, woodland edges and garden habitats within the site, if present, were appraised for their suitability for providing opportunities for basking, breeding, foraging and hibernating by widespread reptile species, such as grass snake and slow-worm. Materials resting on the ground, referred to as refuges, are routinely lifted to check for reptiles.
Great crested newt	Supported by the desk study for this species, waterbodies and terrestrial habitats on the site were assessed for their suitability for supporting great crested newt. Refuges, including logs, were routinely lifted to check for sheltering newts. In addition, publicly accessible ponds within 250m were visited and a great crested newt Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment <sup>10</sup> was undertaken, to enable rapid assessment of how suitable the ponds are for this species. Ponds with a score of 'below average' or lower are not routinely surveyed for great crested newt, as the species is unlikely to be present.
Invertebrates	The habitats on and adjacent to the site were broadly assessed for their suitability to support rare or notable invertebrates or important assemblages.
Invasive plant species	Where observed, the presence of invasive plants listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, such as Japanese knotweed <i>Fallopia japonica</i> , was noted during the survey. Please note, this does not represent an exhaustive search of the site.
Other species	As well as the species above, the PEA included an assessment of the site's suitability to support Species of Principal Importance defined under the NERC Act 2006, such as hedgehog and brown hare <i>Lepus europaeus</i> .

### Limitations

The visibility of plant species varies throughout the year, and the initial UKHab habitat survey was undertaken in November, when many plants are in a vegetative (non-flowering) state and can be more difficult to identify. However, due to the common and widespread habitats present, the species were easily recognised and the habitats were straightforward to classify under UKHab. The timing of the survey is therefore not considered a limitation.

The PEA was undertaken by an experienced and suitably qualified ecologist, who was able to access all areas of the site using suitable equipment. Therefore there are no significant limitations to the PEA.

It is not always possible to access every PRF (e.g. soffits, gaps between roof tiles and roof felt etc) and therefore the PRA is based on the suitability of such features to support roosting bats. This is a standard, unavoidable constraint of PRAs and is not considered a significant limitation.

<sup>10</sup> Oldham R.S., Keeble J., Swan M.J.S. & Jeffcote M. (2000). *Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (Triturus cristatus)*. Herpetological Journal 10(4), 143-155

The garage could not be accessed internally for the purpose of the PRA. However, as no external PRFs were identified, this is not considered a limitation as no bats could be present inside the building.

## Ecological baseline

### Desk study

The desk study identified the below statutory designated sites of nature conservation within the zone of influence. The sites are detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Designated sites within the zone of influence

Name	Distance/direction of centre	Reasons for designation
The Brooks LNR	450m south-west	Areas of meadow, narrow reedbeds and ditches, permanent and temporary ponds and floodplain woodland.
Felpham SSSI	2.8km south-east	Geological site with unique and diverse assemblage of seeds and fruits from the Palaeocene strata.
Bognor Reef SSSI	3.3km south-west	Geological and ecological site. The foreshore is a key site for plant fossils from the London Clay and the vegetated shingle is a rare British habitat that supports an interesting plant and invertebrate community.
Pagham Harbour SSSI/SPA/Ramsar	7.2km south-west	An extensive area of salt-marsh and tidal mudflats with surrounding habitats including shingle, open water, reed swamp and wet permanent grassland. Nationally important site for wintering wildfowl and waders, and also for breeding birds both within the Harbour and the surrounding grazing pasture. The site also supports nationally important communities of plants and invertebrates.

The MAGIC resource confirmed the presence of a range of Habitats of Principal Importance (HPIs) identified under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 located within the 1km search area. The nearest is a parcel of deciduous woodland located 55m west of the site. HPIs in the search area are as follows:

- Coastal floodplain and grazing marsh
- Deciduous woodland

The MAGIC resource confirmed that one EPS bat licence has been granted within a 2km radius of the site. The licence (Ref: 2014-4435-EPS-MIT) was granted for the destruction of a common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* resting place. The licence was approximately 900m north-west of the site.

### Habitats

Habitats recorded on the site are mapped, where possible, according to UKHab symbology<sup>11</sup> in the habitat map; see Appendix 3 UKHab Habitat Map. The habitats recorded on the site are detailed below.

#### *g4 Modified grassland*

A vegetated garden comprising a frequently mown modified grassland with scattered trees (*g4/108/200/828 Modified grassland/frequently mown/tree/vegetated garden*) dominates the site. This habitat has a consistent sward height of approximately 5cm and a species density of approximately four species per m<sup>2</sup>. Species present include dominant meadow grass *Poa* species (sp.), red

<sup>11</sup> UK Habitat Classification Basic Edition: Suggested Symbology for Maps (September 2020) UKHab

fescue *Festuca rubra* and white clover *Trifolium repens*, abundant creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, frequent dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* aggregate (agg.) and occasional ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata* and broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*. Smooth cat's-ear *Hypochaeris glabra* is also present, but rare. Tree species present within the grassland include Norway maple *Acer platanoides* and field maple *Acer campestre*.

An area of rough grassland (*g4/128/828 Modified grassland/tall or tussocky sward/vegetated garden*) is present within the vegetated garden, on the eastern boundary of the site. This habitat has a varying sward height between 20 – 30cm and a species density of approximately six species per m<sup>2</sup>. Species present include dominant meadow grass, abundant Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and cleavers *Galium aparine*, frequent bristly ox-tongue *Helminthotheca echoides*, petty spurge *Euphorbia peplus*, cut-leaved cranesbill *Geranium dissectum*, prickly sow-thistle *Sonchus asper* and common nettle *Urtica dioica*, and occasional ribwort plantain and red dead-nettle *Lamium purpureum*.

Five areas of bare ground (*g4/200/510/828 Modified grassland/tree/bare ground/vegetated garden*) are present within the vegetated garden and across the site. There are no species growing in these areas with the exception of a sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, two Monterey cypress *Cupressus macrocarpa* and a horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*.

#### *w1g/33/50 Other broadleaved woodland/line of trees/ditch*

A line of trees denoted TL1 (*w1g/33/50 other broadleaved woodland/line of trees/ditch*) approximately 55m in length is present on the eastern boundary of the site. Species present include dominant poplar *Populus* sp. and occasional horse chestnut. The line of trees is associated with a wet ditch which runs parallel to the east. The wet ditch has significant duckweed *Lemna* sp. coverage.

#### *h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow*

Four non-native and ornamental hedgerows (H1, H2, H3 and H4) are present within the site.

H1 on the southern boundary of the site is approximately 5 – 6m tall and 50m in length. The hedgerow comprises dominant garden privet *Ligustrum ovalifolium*, abundant bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. and occasional plum *Prunus* sp. and elder *Sambucus nigra*. H2 is located on the northern boundary of the site and is approximately 4 – 5m tall and 20m in length. Species present include locally dominant bramble and occasional holly *Ilex aquifolium*, evergreen spindle *Euonymus japonicus*, red robin *Photinia* sp. and field maple.

H3 is located on the northern boundary of the site and is approximately 5 – 6m tall and 30m in length. H3 is dominated by Leyland cypress *Cupressus x leylandii*. H4 is located on the western boundary of the site. H4 is approximately 4m tall, 5m in length, and is dominated by cherry laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*.

#### *u1b5 Building*

One building, a garage, is present within the site.

#### *u1b6 Other developed land*

Areas of hardstanding is present within the site in the form of a gravel access track and parking area and a paved path.

## Species

### *Bats*

The site is in a rural location near Bognor Regis. The grassland, hedgerows and trees within the site provide suitability for foraging and commuting bats, with the hedgerows and trees ensuring the site is functionally linked to valuable foraging and commuting habitat for bats in the wider landscape. The site falls under the category of moderate suitability for foraging and commuting bats in accordance with guidelines.

All trees within the site have been assessed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats.

The building is a single-storey double garage with concrete panel walls rendered with painted pebbledash. The garage has a flat roof lined with bitumen felt and wide wooden soffits in good condition with no gaps. No Potential Roost Features (PRFs) and no suitable access points were observed during the survey. The building has been assessed as having negligible suitability for roosting bats.

### *Badger*

### *Otter*

The ditch, grassland, hedgerows and line of trees all provide suitable foraging and commuting habitat for otter. This species is likely to be transiently present within the site.

### *Water vole*

The ditch provides suitable foraging, commuting and burrowing opportunities for water vole. However, no evidence of water vole was observed during the survey and this species is considered to be likely absent from the site.

### *Birds*

The grassland provides suitability for foraging birds and wintering thrushes, and the hedgerows and line of trees provide suitable habitat for breeding birds.

### *Other species*

The grassland provides suitability for foraging and commuting hedgehog. The hedgerows and line of trees provide suitable nesting and breeding habitat for hedgehog.

The habitats within the site were deemed to be unsuitable for the following species, which are given no further consideration within this report:

- Dormouse

- Water vole
- Reptiles
- Great crested newts
- Invertebrates

## Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA)

### *Designated sites*

Given the scale and nature of the proposals, it is unlikely that any designated sites will be impacted. Designated sites are not considered further.

### *Habitats*

There are no HPIs within the site and the habitats present are widespread including modified grassland, non-native and ornamental hedgerows and other developed land. Some of these habitats will be lost to facilitate new housing and landscaping. Therefore, in the absence of mitigation or compensation, any vegetation removal would cause a net loss of biodiversity.

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report has been provided under separate cover to address the loss of biodiversity. Current proposals will deliver an overall 18.96% gain for area-based habitats and a 33.39% gain for hedgerow habitats.

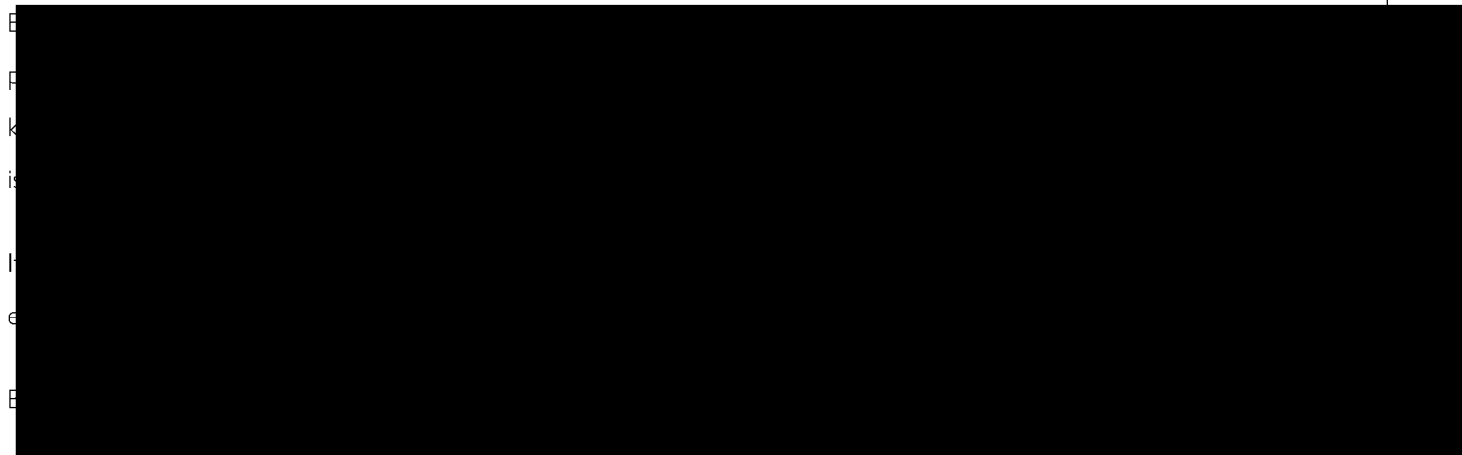
### *Bats*

The loss of modified grassland to facilitate the proposal will result in a loss of foraging habitat for bats. However, the hedgerows and line of trees will all be retained by the proposal, ensuring there will be no impact on foraging or commuting bats through habitat severance.

An increase in external lighting at the site could have a minor impact on low numbers of foraging and commuting bats and their prey in close proximity.

All bats are protected in the UK under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). See the Legislation Section for details.

### *Badger*



### *Otter*

No evidence of otter was recorded on the site and, although the site offers foraging and commuting habitat for this species, this species is considered likely absent from the site. There will be no impacts to individual otters or their holts or other resting places.

### *Birds*

Tree removal will result in a loss of habitat for breeding birds. The loss of grassland will result in a loss of foraging habitat and wintering habitat for thrushes. However, the grassland is unlikely to represent a key feature in the wider landscape due to the abundance of foraging and wintering habitat nearby, so the impacts to these species caused by the loss of the grassland are likely to be minor.

Breeding birds, their eggs, nests and young are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). See the Legislation Section for details.

### *Hedgehog*

Suitable hedgehog foraging and nesting habitat is present within the site. This species could therefore undergo direct harm in the event of becoming trapped in excavations, and through the loss of foraging habitat as a result of the proposed development, in the absence of mitigation. Hedgehog are a Species of Principal Importance under the NERC Act 2006. See the Legislation Section for details.

## Recommendations

### *Summary*

No further surveys are required to support the planning application, unless this report exceeds the validity period of 18 months to 3 years, in line with CIEEM guidance<sup>12</sup>.

The site supports some ecological features and the presence of a range of protected species is possible. With suitable, detailed measures to avoid, mitigate and compensate for any impacts in line with the mitigation hierarchy, it will be feasible to ensure the site is developed in line with biodiversity policy and legislation.

### *Habitats*

Mitigation and compensation will be provided for vegetation removal at the site via the following measures:

- Appropriate root protection measures will be installed around any on-site retained hedgerows and trees, in accordance with arboricultural advice and BS5837:2012 *Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – Recommendations* during the construction period to ensure retained hedgerows and trees are not damaged by heavy plant or stored materials.
- The developed site will see a loss of biodiversity, via its transformation from a vegetated garden to a developed site comprising seven dwellings with associated access, gardens and landscaping.
- All new landscaping will be designed to achieve maximum native plant species diversity, avoiding the use of horticultural varieties, which can have a lower yield for nectaring invertebrates.

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<sup>12</sup> Further information on the validity of ecological surveys is provided [here](#).

### *Bats*

Hedgerow and tree planting would benefit the local bat community by providing additional foraging and commuting habitat alongside an increased invertebrate resource at the site. Further enhancement will be provided for bats via the installation of 1no. Schwegler 1FR bat tube or suitable equivalent on each of the proposed dwellings. The boxes will be integrated into the buildings at a minimum height of 3m and will be orientated to face between south-east and south-west. These measures will ensure that the local population of bats will be maintained at a Favourable Conservation Status, and will be provided with a range of additional high quality roosting opportunities.

In order to avoid impacts to foraging and commuting bats, external lighting on the site will be maintained at similar levels to existing, and no additional lighting will be angled directly towards boundary habitats. Any lighting necessary within the new development will be limited to motion-activated and task-related lighting. The bulbs used will be at the warmer end of the spectrum between 2200 Kelvins (K) and 2700K, avoiding white LED lighting, which causes greater disturbance to bats and their prey. Luminance of boundary habitats will be below 0.5 lux (lx). BCT guidance<sup>13</sup> will be followed when choosing suitable lighting for the scheme.

### *Badger*

### *Birds*

Any removal of hedgerows or trees will take place outside the main nesting season, which runs from March to August, inclusive. If work must take place during the nesting season, an ecologist will perform a nesting bird check of the hedgerow immediately prior to the start of works. Any active nests identified will need to be left with a 5m undisturbed buffer until the nesting cycle has concluded naturally (i.e. the young have fledged and the nest is no longer in use). These measures will ensure that potential impacts to breeding birds are avoided.

To enhance the site for nesting birds, integrated bird boxes or equivalents shall be provided on each new dwelling, as detailed below:

- 5no. standard bird brick box
- 2no. sparrow terrace bird brick box

The boxes will be distributed across the development following manufacturer's installation instructions, which will include specific heights for installation, and for all features to be orientated to face between north and east in order to provide optimal conditions. These measures will ensure there is an overall gain in nesting habitat for breeding birds.

### *Other species*

If any hedgehogs are encountered during the works, work will cease and the animal/s should be allowed to disperse of their own accord. If required, hedgerow removal works should avoid the hedgehog breeding season of April to September, to minimise

<sup>13</sup> Bat Conservation Trust (2018) Guidance Note 08/18: Bats and Artificial Lighting in the UK. Bat Conservation Trust, London

disturbance to this species at its most vulnerable time. This timing coincides well with the requirements for breeding birds. If this timing is not possible, an ecologist will perform a fingertip search of all vegetation to be removed for nesting hedgehogs.

Excavations will be covered overnight during the construction phase, or alternatively a scaffold plank or other suitable ramp will be inserted, to ensure animals can escape.

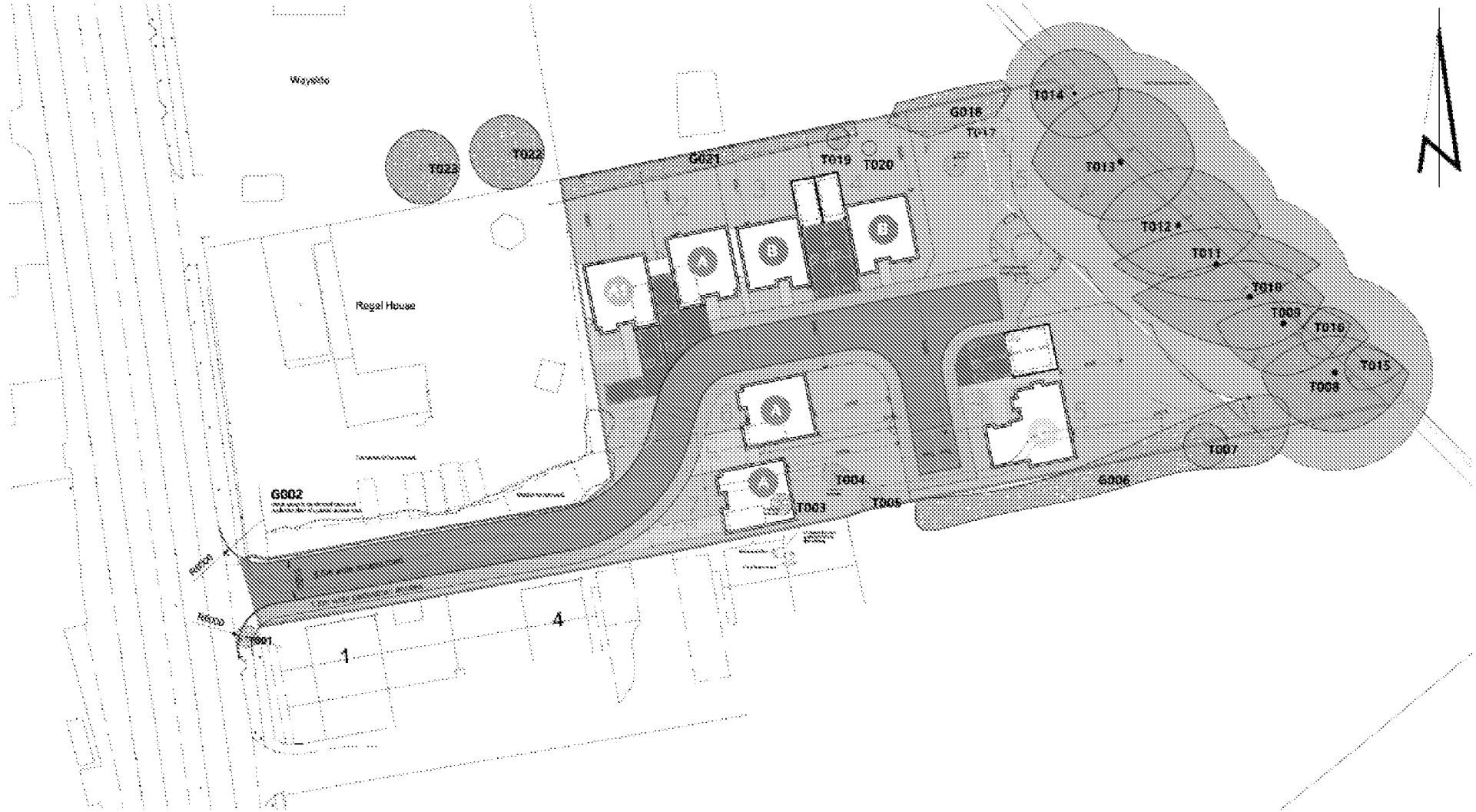
The loss of limited hedgehog habitat at the site will be mitigated via the creation of new garden habitats at the site. The new dwellings will incorporate two hedgehog holes measuring 13x13cm for each garden fence to allow relatively free movement of hedgehog across the site.

To enhance the site for hedgehog, a nest box will be installed within retained vegetation within the site. A wide range of products are available, such as the RSPB Silhouette Hedgehog Home. The box will be installed in line with the manufacturer's instructions.

#### Conclusion

The survey conducted shows a likely absence of roosting bats, water vole, dormouse, reptiles, great crested newts and invertebrates from the site. The proposed development of the site includes a range of avoidance, mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures for foraging and commuting bats, badgers, otter, breeding birds and hedgehog to ensure there are no adverse impacts on protected species, retained habitats or other local wildlife. In line with the NPPF and the Environment Act 2021, the proposals will deliver Biodiversity Net Gain. As no designated sites or protected species should be significantly impacted once these measures are in place, the local planning authority can be assured that the proposal should be compliant with relevant legislation, the NPPF and Policies ENV DM1 to ENV DM5 of the Arun Local Plan 2011-2031.





SITE AREA = 6,400 sqm		PLANT AREAS	Type	Shading
Area 1	2,000 sqm	Area 1	Shaded	100%
Area 2	1,500 sqm	Area 2	Shaded	100%
Area 3	1,000 sqm	Area 3	Shaded	100%
Area 4	1,500 sqm	Area 4	Shaded	100%
Area 5	1,000 sqm	Area 5	Shaded	100%
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Area 8	1,000 sqm	Area 8	Shaded	100%
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Area 10	1,000 sqm	Area 10	Shaded	100%
Area 11	1,000 sqm	Area 11	Shaded	100%
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Area 98	1,000 sqm	Area 98	Shaded	100%
Area 99	1,000 sqm	Area 99	Shaded	100%
Area 100	1,000 sqm	Area 100	Shaded	100%

**Proposed Site Layout Plan**

July 2024 1:250 at A1  
 CAD: 24/10/2024 09:00:00 Rev 001 - Rev 001.dwg

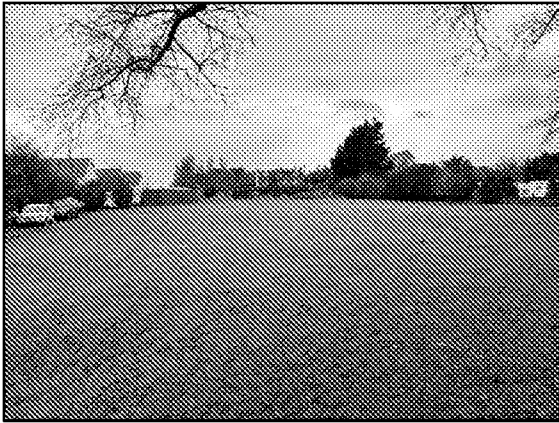


Land to the East of Shimney Rd, Shimney, Bognor Regis PO22 9NF1 - Proposed Site Layout Plan

55A North Street, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1DB, Tel: 01243 815720, email: info@manhire.co.uk

REF: 24/10/2024

Appendix 2      Photographs



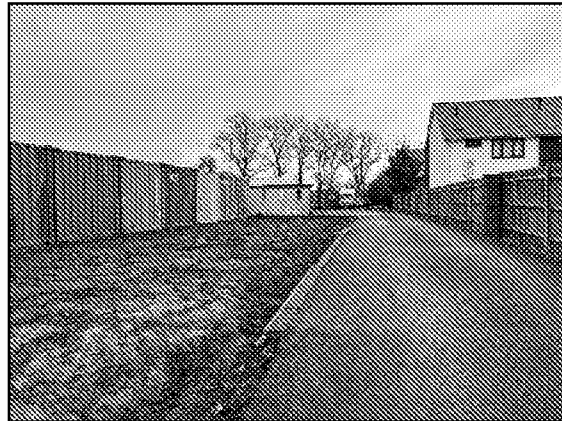
Photograph 1. Vegetated garden (g4 modified grassland) dominates the site



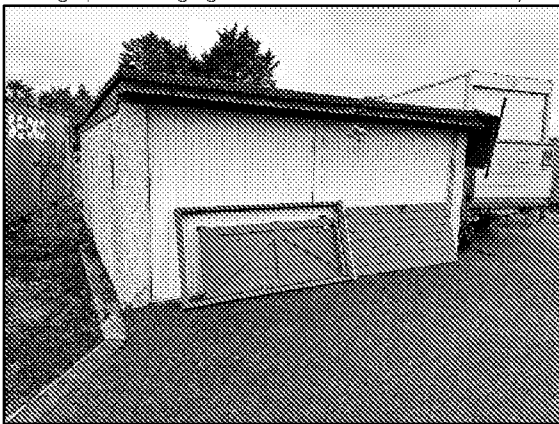
Photograph 2. Hardstanding path bisects the grassland



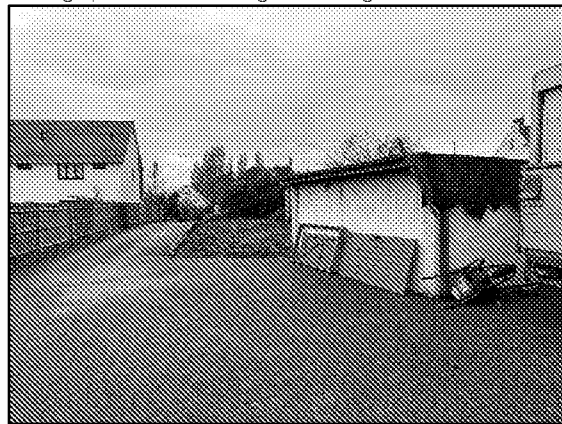
Photograph 3. Rough grassland on the eastern boundary



Photograph 4. Hardstanding and bare ground



Photograph 5. Double garage in the centre of the site



Photograph 6. Building surrounded by hardstanding and bare ground



Photograph 7. Wet ditch to the east of the site



Photograph 8. Badger snuffle holes (TN1) in the grassland



Photograph 9. Hedgerow H1



Photograph 10. Hedgerows H2 and H3



Photograph 11. Hedgerow H3




Photograph 12. Line of trees on the eastern boundary

**Appendix 3** UKHab Habitat Map



Key:

-  Site boundary
-  Target notes
-  Trees
- Habitats**
-  Vegetated garden (Modified grassland)
-  Vegetated garden (Rough grassland)
-  Bare ground
-  Building
-  Other developed land
- Linear features**
-  Non-native hedgerow

Site	Land to the Rear of Regal House, Bognor Regis
Report	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
Map	UKHab Habitat Map
Date	March 2025

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