



Land adjacent to Tiled Barn

Station Road

Rustington

\*\*

**Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey**

**Internal and External Bat Survey**

**November 2014**

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**LIABILITIES:**

Whilst every effort has been made to guarantee the accuracy of this report, it should be noted that living creatures are capable of migration and whilst protected species may not have been located during the survey duration, their presence may be found on a site at a later date.

The views and opinions contained within this document are based on a reasonable timeframe between the completion of the survey and the commencement of any works. If there is any delay between the commencement of works that may conflict with timeframes laid out within this document, or have the potential to allow the ingress of protected species, a suitably qualified ecologist should be consulted.

It is the duty of care of the landowner/developer to act responsibly and comply with current environmental legislation if protected species are suspected or found prior to or during works.

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **Background**

- 1.1 PJC Ecology Ltd (PJC) were commissioned by Globe Estates to undertake an ecological appraisal of Land at Tiled Barn, Station Road, Rustington. The assessment included an extended Phase 1 habitat survey and internal and external bat survey of the buildings on site. The surveys were required to support a planning application.
- 1.2 This report presents the findings of the ecological surveys in an around the site, which aims specifically to assess the sites potential to support protected species and habitats. Potential mitigation measures and recommendations for the site will be included within this report.
- 1.3 Section 2 of this report sets out the methodology of PJC's survey. In Section 3 the results of the desk and field survey are presented. The discussion and implications for development are found in Section 4. Finally, conclusions are provided in Section 5.

### **Site Context and Status**

- 1.4 The site is situated within Rustington, West Sussex and is set within a largely residential landscape, approximately 450metres south of Angmering Station. Residential development surrounds the site in all directions, with many neighbouring plots containing spacious well maintained gardens. The site currently consists of a residential garden and associated outbuildings and garages, which was originally part of the adjacent property. The OS grid reference for the site is TQ 06432 02513.

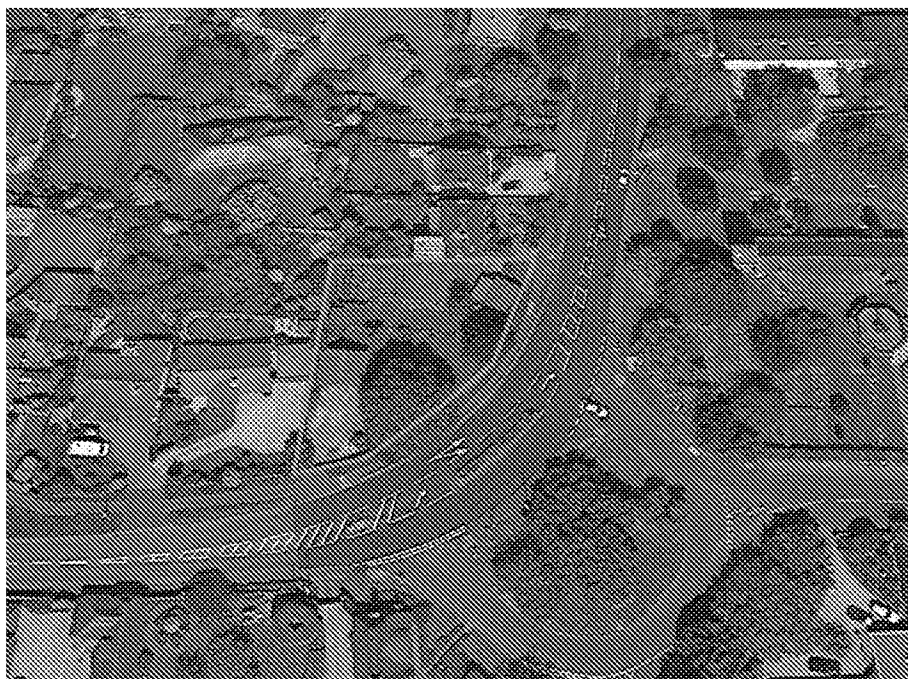


*Figure 1: The approximate red line boundary of the site.*

## **Description of the Proposed Development**

- 1.5 The current proposals include the erection of one 3 bedroom cottage and one 4 bedroom cottage. Any proposed master plan for the site will be informed by a number of surveys of which ecology is one.

## **Planning Policies**

- 1.6 National and local planning policies may have an affect on the proposed development. The following paragraphs identify relevant planning policies and discuss these in the context of the site.
- 1.7 The United Kingdom Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP), published in 1994, is the national response of the Convention on Biological Diversity signed in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The key objective of the UK BAP is avoidance of harm to ‘Species of Conservation Concern’.

- 1.8 Under the CROW Act (2000) it is now the duty of every Government department in carrying out its functions “*to have regard, so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biological diversity in accordance with the Convention*”.
- 1.9 National policy guidance is provided by National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. Section 11 of the document is entitled ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment’. This section highlights the following:

*‘The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:*

- Protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;*
- Recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services;*
- Minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*
- Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and*
- Remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate’*

- 1.10 In addition to this the following paragraphs are also considered to be relevant:

*‘In preparing plans to meet development needs, the aim should be to minimise pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment. Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework.’*

- 1.11 The site is under the jurisdiction of Arun District Council. The Arun District Local Plan 2003 was adopted on the 17<sup>th</sup> April, 2003. Several saved policies from this local plan which are pertinent to nature conservation include; GEN28 Trees and Woodlands and GEN29 Nature Conservation Across the District. These saved policies will be superseded by the 2011-2031 local plan, which is currently at the publication stage of consultation.

*GEN 28: Trees and Woodlands. Development will not be permitted if it would damage or destroy one or more trees protected by TPOs, identified as ancient woodland or in a conservation area unless:*

- The removal of one or more trees would be in the interests of good arboricultural practice; or*
- The benefits of the proposed development outweigh the amenity value of the protected trees.*

*GEN 29 Nature Conservation Across the District. Development will only be permitted on sites which contain semi-natural habitats, features of nature conservation interest, or within wildlife corridors, where these can be largely retained and sympathetically incorporated into the scheme. Legal agreements may be used to offset the loss of, or impact on, any nature conservation resource present on the site prior to development.*

- 1.12 This report addresses the site in relation to nature conservation and wildlife and indeed to the local planning requirements as well as national planning and nature conservation legislation.

## **2.0 Methodology**

### **Desktop Study**

- 2.1 A desk top study search was completed using two internet-based mapping service ([www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)) for statutory designated sites and two internet-based aerial mapping services ([www.bing.com/maps](http://www.bing.com/maps) and [maps.google.co.uk](http://maps.google.co.uk)) were used to understand the habitats present in and around the survey area and habitat linkages and features (such as ponds, woodlands etc) within the wider landscape.

### **Site Inspection**

- 2.2 PJC ecologist Chris Jennings BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM, undertook an extended Phase 1 habitat survey, which included assessing the site for the potential for badgers, great crested newts, and other protected species on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014. The surveyor identified the habitats present, following the standard ‘Phase 1 habitat survey’ auditing method developed by the Nature Conservancy Council (NCC). The site was surveyed on foot and the existing habitats and land uses were recorded on a map. In addition, the dominant plant species in each habitat were recorded, as was any evidence of protected species and the habitat suitability for reptiles. The potential for the site to support protected species was also assessed.
- 2.3 The likelihood of occurrence of a particular species is ranked as follows and relies on the current survey:
- Unlikely – while presence cannot be absolutely discounted, the site includes very limited or poor quality habitat for a particular species or species group. The site may also be outside or peripheral to known national range for a species
  - Low – on-site habitat of poor to moderate quality for a given species/species group. Presence cannot be discounted on the basis of national distribution, nature of surrounding habitats, habitat fragmentation, recent on-site disturbance etc
  - Medium – on-site habitat of moderate quality, providing all of the known key-requirements of given species/species group. Factors limiting the likelihood of

occurrence may include small habitat area, habitat severance and fragmentation, disturbance

- High – on site habitat of high quality for a given species/species group. Good quality surrounding habitat and good connectivity
- Present – presence confirmed from the current survey or by recent, confirmed records

### **Internal and External Bat Surveys**

2.4 An internal bat survey was undertaken on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2014 by PJC ecologist Chris Jennings BSc (Hons) MSc MCIEEM. The surveyors undertook an internal and external examination of the buildings including all accessible roof voids. The surveyors assessed the buildings visually and searched for evidence such as:

- Staining beneath or around a hole caused by natural oils in bat fur.
- Bat droppings beneath a hole, roost or resting area.
- Bat droppings and/or insect remains beneath a feeding area.
- Audible squeaking from within a hole.
- Insects (especially flies) around a hole.
- Dead bats.

2.5 The buildings on site were accessed during the day. An external investigation assessed the tiles and structural timber joints of the building. This was undertaken in order to see if there were access points readily available for bats to utilise or crevices that bats could be roosting in.

2.6 Buildings which are considered to have a higher potential to support roosting bats would include the following:

- Agricultural buildings (e.g. farmhouses, barns and out buildings) of traditional brick or stone construction and/or with exposed beams;
- Buildings with weatherboarding and/or hanging tiles that are within 200m of woodland and/or water;
- Pre 1960s detached buildings and structures within 200m of woodland and/or water;

- Pre 1914 buildings within 400m of woodland and/or water;
- Pre 1914 buildings with gable ends or slate roofs regardless of location;
- Buildings which are located within or immediately adjacent to woodland and/or immediately adjacent to water;
- Dutch barns or livestock buildings with a single skin roof and board and gap or Yorkshire boarding if, following a preliminary roost assessment the site appears to be particularly suited to bats.

### **Tree Assessment for Bats**

2.7 As well as roosting in buildings, bats can use trees to rest, give birth, raise young and/or hibernate. Roosts may be found in the following features:

- Woodpecker holes, natural cracks and rot holes in trunks and branches
- Frost cracks.
- Trunk and branch splits.
- Hollow sections of trunk and branches.
- Loose bark.
- Cavities beneath old root buttresses and coppice stools.
- Dense epicormic growth.
- Dense ivy cover.

2.8 Veteran trees typically exhibit many of these features and should usually be regarded as sites with clear potential, but any tree possessing one or more such feature, may host bats. Any tree species can be suitable but oak and beech often seems to be the preferred option. However, bats rarely restrict themselves to one tree. They change their roost sites frequently, sometimes every two to three days, looking for small differences in temperature and humidity.

2.9 Roosts of bats in trees may be identified from the following field signs:

- Black stains beneath cracks, splits and other features where bat dropping have fallen;
- Dark marks at entrance points where bats have rubbed against the wood and left natural body oils;

- Feeding remains beneath roosts, such as insect wings;
- Chattering of bats;
- Bat droppings under access points;
- Scratch marks around a feature (cavity or split) caused by bat claws;
- Urine stains below the entrance or end of split;
- Large roosts or regularly used sites may produce an odour;
- Flies around the entrance, attracted by the smell of guano.

2.10 Trees were recorded as having high, medium or low potential following standard practise where:

- High potential = upward developing holes, splits and crack and woodpecker holes. Old trees with complex growth forms are of particular interest.
- Medium potential = downward developing holes, splits and cracks, features which could support several bats or a group of bats.
- Low potential = ivy covering only, few or no holes, splits or crevices.
- Confirmed roosts = evidence of use by bats (bats chattering, seen flying in and out of roost, presence of droppings etc).

### **Habitat Suitability for Reptiles**

2.11 Habitat surveys were carried out to assess the potential of the site to hold populations of reptile species. This involved looking for the presence of factors that would increase the suitability of the site for reptiles such as:

- Scrub and grassland (long sward) mosaic across the site;
- Features that can be potential hibernation sites for common reptiles such as log piles;
- Grass tussocks within the grassland that can act as shelter and burrowing sites;
- Water bodies or damp places on site (grass snakes);
- Compost heaps or decaying vegetation (slow worms);
- Features that can act as refugia on the ground such as disused roofing felt.

## **Limitations**

- 2.12 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no single investigation could ensure the complete characterisation and prediction of the natural environment.
- 2.13 The protected species assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on site, based on the suitability of the habitat and any direct evidence on site. It should not be taken as providing a full and definitive survey of any protected species group. The assessment is only valid for the time when the survey was carried out. Additional surveys may be recommended if, on the basis of this assessment it is considered reasonably likely that protected species may be present.

## **3.0 Results**

### **Desk Study**

- 3.1 The site does not fall within any statutory designated areas. No statutory sites are found less than 2km from the site.
- 3.2 There are no designated sites within the site boundary or within 2km of the site, such as SSSIs, SPAs and SACs. There are also no areas of ancient woodland on site or located within 2km of the site.

### **Site Visit**

- 3.3 The site consists of amenity grassland, ornamental borders, an old vegetable patch consisting of bare ground and tall ruderal species and three outbuildings with some associated hardstanding.
- 3.4 The majority of the site consists of very short sward amenity grassland, although a section of less maintained lawn, which was considered to be a medium sward was present to the south of the site. Species present within the grassland areas included:

perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), dandelion (*Taraxacum agg*) and daisy (*Bellis perennis*).

- 3.5 Ornamental borders which contained species such as lavender (*Lavandula x intermedia*), fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) and Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and rose varieties (*Rosa sp.*).
- 3.6 An old vegetable patch was present within the site, this was partially overgrown, with species present such as raspberry (*Rubus idaeus*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and chickweed (*Stellaria media*) with patches of bare earth.
- 3.7 Scattered trees were found present across site, with silver birch (*Betula pendula*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), yew (*Taxus baccata*) and some small fruit trees including apple (*Malus domestica*).

### **Internal and External building inspection**

- 3.8 Three outbuildings were present on site; this included a large double garage, a smaller garage with attached log store and a small summer house. These buildings were inspected for the presence of roosting bats.

#### ***Building 1 – Large double garage***

- 3.9 This garage was located within the south west corner of site. The garage building was brick built with a pitched fitted tile roof. The building was well maintained and considered to be in a good condition. Internally the building was subject to high levels of natural light through windows present in the elevations. The garage is used regularly as a workshop and to store a car and is subject to high levels of disturbance. The internal roof space was not enclosed into a void and was open to the rest of the building. The tiles were lined internally with bitumen felt and no potential access points for bats were observed. Externally the roof was considered to be in good condition, with no slipped or missing tiles present. The roof was tiled with fitted curved concrete tiles, which fit together tightly and offer less opportunity for crevice dwelling bat species than traditional

clay tiles. No bats or evidence of bats was recorded internally or externally. It is understood that this building will be removed under proposals.

***Building 2 – Smaller wooden garage and log store***

- 3.10 Building 2 was a smaller garage than building 1 and was constructed of wooden weatherboarding and was used to store some household belongings. The weatherboarding walls did not contain a void, or contain back panelling, presenting limited opportunity for crevice dwelling bats. Internally the building was light, due to the presence of three windows and a window within the door. There was no internal roof void and a lack of suitable roosting features. Externally the roof was covered with bitumen felt and was very slightly sloping. A small open log store was present on the western elevation. No evidence of bats was recorded internally or externally within building 2. It is understood that building 2 will be removed under proposals.

***Building 3 – Small summer house***

- 3.11 Building 3 was a small summer house situated to the north of building 1 close to the western boundary of the site. The building was largely built of tight wooden weatherboarding, with a large amount of windows. No evidence of bats was recorded within the building and the building was considered to have limited potential, with a lack of suitable features for roosting. This building will also be removed under proposals.

**Tree Surveys for Bats**

- 3.12 The trees present on site at the time of survey, were considered to be unsuitable for roosting bats due to their small size and lack of suitable features which bats could exploit as roosting sites such as cracked limbs, woodpecker holes and lifted bark. It is not considered that bats are roosting within the trees on site. The trees did offer some limited potential for commuting and foraging bats in the area.

### **Habitat Suitability for Reptiles**

- 3.13 The gardens present on site were well maintained, with short sward grassland and ornamental borders, habitats which offer little in the way of cover from predators or offer good foraging habitat. Although a small area of rougher grassland was present to the south of the site, this area was isolated from suitable reptile habitats and is likely to have been subject to heavy maintenance in the past. It is considered unlikely that reptiles are present onsite.

### **Other Species**

- 3.14 No signs of badgers were recorded on site. No setts or snuffle holes, or latrines were recorded.
- 3.15 No ponds were present on site or in the surrounding area and therefore there were no water bodies on site, which would support common amphibian species.
- 3.16 Birds are likely to use the trees and shrubs and even the buildings on site, as habitat to build nests. It is recommended that any works on site be carried out outside of the breeding season, which is March-September.

## **4.0 Discussion**

### **Ecological Value of the Site**

- 4.1 The site consisted of three outbuildings and residential gardens. The gardens were well managed, with ornamental species and large areas of short sward lawn, with some scattered trees and shrubs. The habitats present on site are considered to be common and widespread throughout the UK and are only considered to have ecological value at site level only.

**Internal and external building inspection**

- 4.2 No evidence of bats was recorded within the buildings on site. All three buildings were considered to have limited potential for roosting bats, due to a lack of features. All three buildings were subject to high light levels due to the presence of windows. Bats prefer dark spaces to roost, with the presence of natural light within all of the buildings seen as a significant limitation to bats using the buildings as a space.
- 4.3 Building 1 was considered to be in good condition and is regularly used to store a car and as a workshop. Regular disturbance is likely to significantly reduce the likelihood of the presence of bats. Although the garage had a pitched tiled roof, no slipped, lifted or missing tiles were observed on the roof, which may provide opportunities for crevice dwelling bats. The roofing tiles were curved style fitted tiles, which prevented very little opportunity for roosting as the tiles lay on roof flush with no potential entrance points for bats observed. The building had no internal roof void and was considered to have very limited opportunities for roosting bats. It is not considered that building 1 is used by roosting bats or has the potential to support roosting bats. No further surveys are recommended and the building is not considered to be constrained by bats.
- 4.4 Building 2 was a small wooden garage with a very gentle sloping felt roof. The weatherboarding on the walls were tight with no gaps observed and the wall had no cavity which bats maybe able to exploit as roosting space. The internal environment was subject to natural light from windows. It is not considered that building 2 is used by roosting bats or has the potential to support roosting bats. No further surveys are recommended and the building is not considered to be constrained by bats.
- 4.5 Building 3 was a small summer house style building. Again the internal environment was subject to high light levels of natural light from windows and contained no internal roof void. The building lacked external features which bats could exploit, with tight weatherboarding and small pitched roof with tight felt style tiles. No evidence of bats was recorded within building 3 and it was considered that the building lacked any potential to support roosting bats. No further surveys are recommended and the building is not considered to be constrained by bats.

### **Tree Assessment for Bats**

- 4.7 It was considered that the trees on site did not possess features that could be utilised by roosting bats. Works to these trees are not considered to be constrained by the presence of roosting bats and no further
- 4.8 It is considered possible that bats use the use the gardens for commuting and foraging, and the other residential gardens beyond the site boundary.

### **Habitat Suitability for Reptiles**

- 4.9 Due to the regular maintenance of the site, with short sward mown grassland present, with ornamental borders, the potential for reptile species is considered limited. A small area of slightly longer less maintained grassland was present to the south of site, although this area was isolated from any suitable reptile habitat and is likely to have been maintained in the recent past. It considered highly unlikely that reptiles are present on site and it is recommended that development can proceed without constraint and the need for further survey work for these species.

### **Other Species**

- 4.10 No suitable breeding ponds for great crested newt were found on site, or with direct habitat connectivity to the site. Great crested newts are not considered a constraint to proposed development.
- 4.11 A small wood pile and compost pile were found near the southern boundary of the site. These should be dismantled sensitively by hand due to the potential for to support species such as common toad and frogs.
- 4.12 No evidence of badgers using the site was found and badgers are therefore not considered to be a constraint to the proposals.

- 4.13 Birds are likely to use the trees and shrubs and even the buildings on site, as habitat to build nests. It is recommended that any works on site be carried out outside of the breeding season, which is March-September or after a nesting bird check.

### **Ecological Enhancements**

- 4.14 A number of enhancements can be made to the final development to help reduce potential ecological impacts. It is important to utilise native species of local provenance in landscaping schemes to enhance the ecological value of a development.
- 4.15 Bird boxes may be hung on retained mature trees to increase the number of breeding opportunities throughout the site. Recommended boxes include:
- Schwegler 1N Deep Nest Box – give added nest protection from predators
  - Schwegler 1B Bird Box – general purpose bird box, suitable for many species
- 4.16 Any trees that are removed should be replaced elsewhere on the site or with native species such as: oak, ash, hazel, beech and cherry, this will mitigate against the loss of habitat that could be considered important under planning local policies.

## **5.0 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The habitats found on site are common and widespread throughout the UK and are considered to be of ecological value at a site level only.
- 5.2 The gardens on site were well maintained and offered limited opportunities for reptiles species. Although a small area of medium sward grassland was present to the south of the site, this habitat was isolated from any other suitable habitat from reptiles is considered to have been subject to regular maintenance in the past. It is considered that the site is highly unlikely to support reptile species and no further survey work for reptiles are recommended.

- 5.3 The buildings on site were inspected internally and externally for potential and evidence of roosting bats. No evidence of roosting bats, such as droppings or staining was found. The buildings had high internal light levels and lacked features such as roof voids, lifted weatherboarding or lifted or slipped tiles, which bats could exploit. It is not considered that the development of the site is restricted by the presence of bats within the buildings.
- 5.4 The trees and shrubs on site did not contain suitable features for roosting bats. The trees on site are therefore not considered to be constrained by roosting bats. The trees and shrubs did have some potential for breeding birds, it is recommended that any site clearance is carried out outside nesting bird season.
- 5.5 No evidence of badgers was observed on site, such as setts, latrines or snuffle holes. Although badgers from the local area may use the site for commuting or foraging, it is not considered that development of the site, would be constrained by the presence of badgers.
- 5.6 It is considered that the proposed development of the site will not affect the nature conservation value of the site or indeed the surrounding area and the site is not constrained in terms of ecology. Enhancements have been provided in this report.

## 6.0 References

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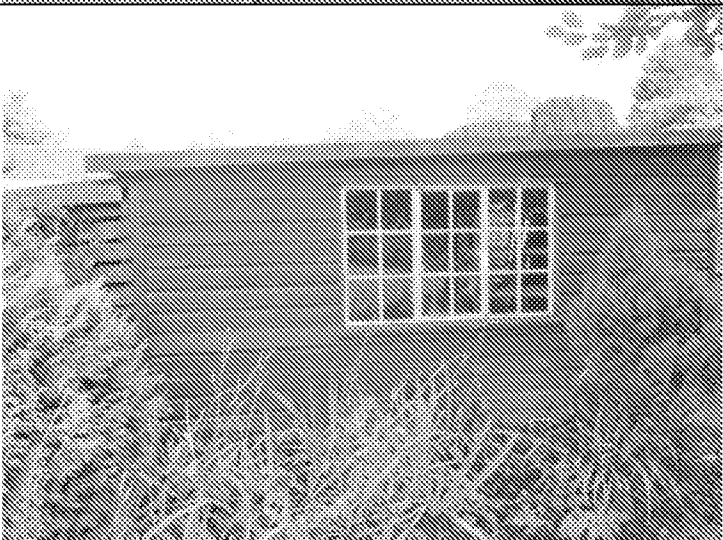
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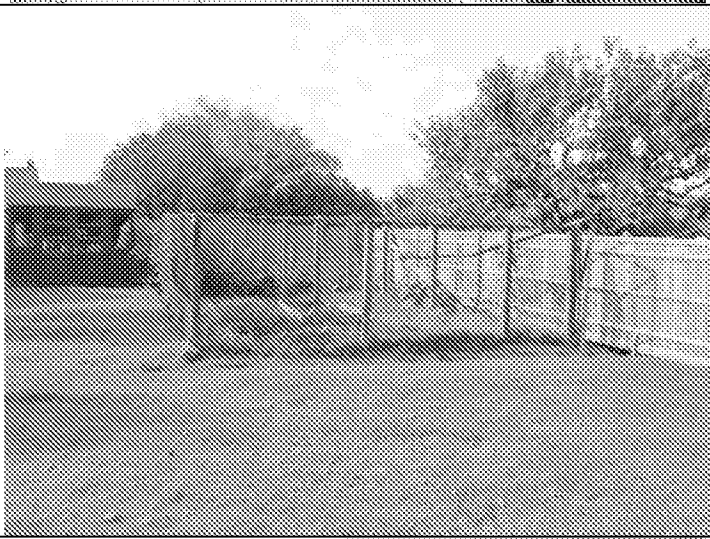
Internet resources:

Google Maps: [www.maps.google.co.uk](http://www.maps.google.co.uk)

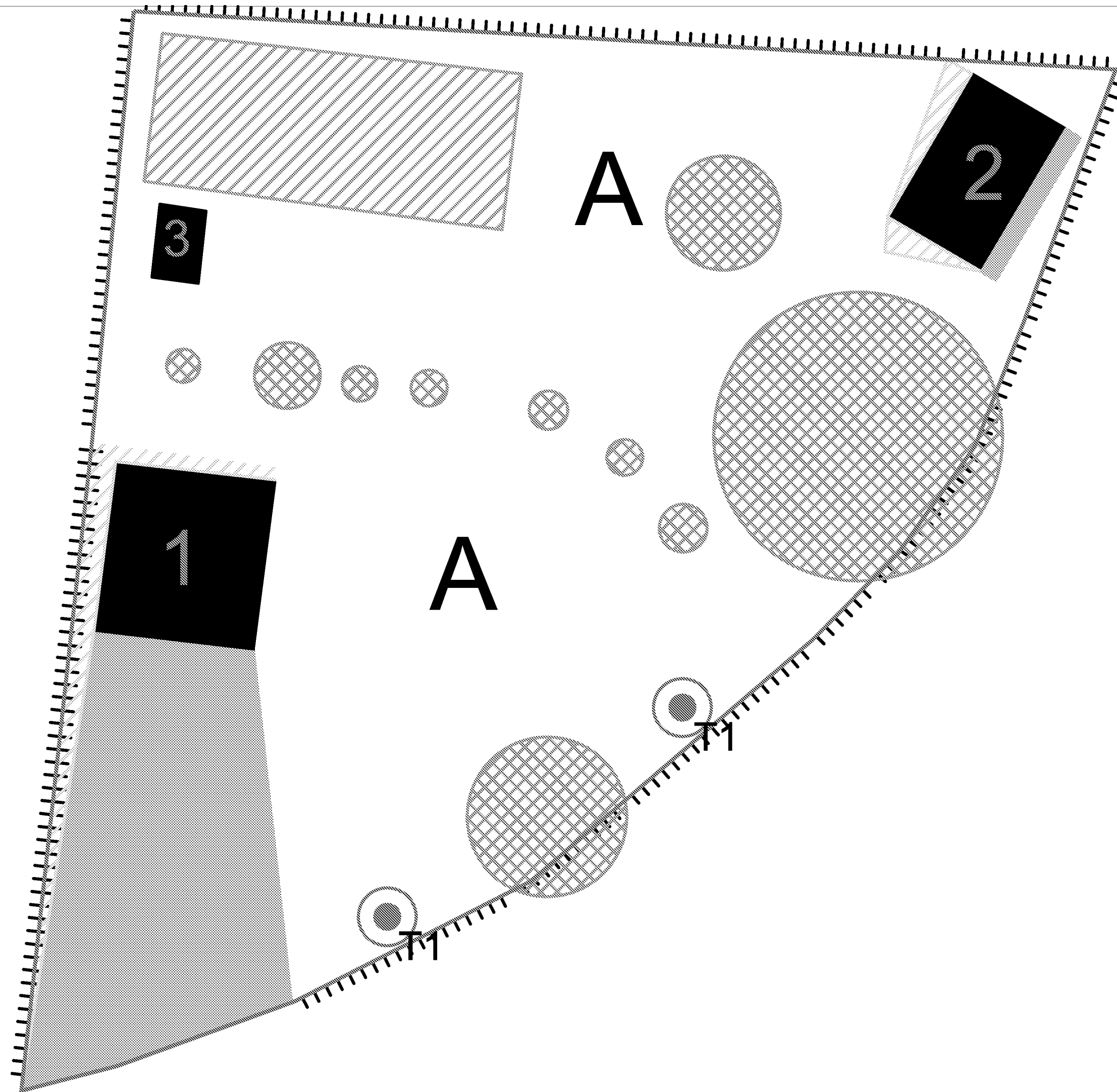
Magic Interactive Map: [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)

## **Appendix 1: Photographs**

|                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Photograph<br/>1: Building<br/>1</b></p>                                 |  A black and white photograph of a single-story building with a tiled roof. The building has a large window on the right side and a dark door. The roof is covered in tiles, and there is a small chimney or vent pipe on the left side of the roof. |
| <p><b>Photograph<br/>2: Overview<br/>of garden<br/>from south<br/>west</b></p> |  A black and white photograph showing a wide view of a garden. In the foreground, there is a grassy area. In the background, there are several trees and a fence. The garden appears to be well-maintained.                                         |
| <p><b>Photograph<br/>3: Building<br/>2</b></p>                                 |  A black and white photograph of a building, likely a shed or outbuilding, with a corrugated metal roof. The building has a large window with multiple panes. The building is surrounded by tall grass and some trees in the background.           |

|                                                   |                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Photograph 4:</b> Inside building 2            |    |
| <b>Photograph 5:</b> Old Veg patch and building 3 |   |
| <b>Photograph 6:</b> Site from north east corner  |  |

## **Appendix 2: Habitat map**



## Key

-  Building
-  Amenity Grassland
-  Scattered Trees
-  Ruderal
-  Ornamental Planting
-  Hardstanding
-  Fence
-  T1 Brash / Compost Pile
-  Site Boundary

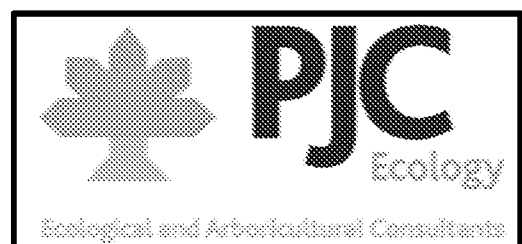
**Site:** Land adjacent to Tiled Barn

**Client:** Globe Estates

**Surveyor: CJ**

**Drawing Date:** November 2014

**Drawing Title:** Phase 1 Habitat Map



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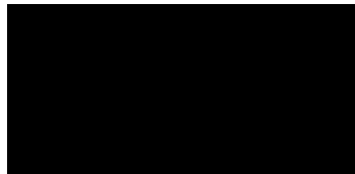
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