



Ecological Impact Assessment - DRAFT

39 Sunderland Road, East Boldon

December 2025

V1.0

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 TrueNorth Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Phil Hartley to undertake an Ecological Impact Assessment (hereon referred to as 'EclA') in support of the planning application for one residential unit on land adjacent to 39 Sunderland Road, East Boldon NE36 0NA (hereafter referred to as the 'Site'), centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference NZ 37016 61089, an indicative site boundary is shown in Figure 1 below, where the red line depicts the site boundary.

1.1.2 This report was produced in line with Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM) best practice guidelines^{1,2}. This EclA details the methods employed, any limitations of surveys undertaken and results, together with an evaluation of the ecological features within the Site, an assessment of the potential impacts associated with the Development and requirements for mitigation and enhancement.



Figure 1: Site Boundary

¹ CIEEM (2017), *Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing, 2nd Edition*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management

² CIEEM (2018), *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland: Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine (version 1.2)*. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

1.2 Site Description

- 1.2.1 The Site was located on the edge of the village of East Boldon, in South Tyneside, north of Sunderland. The Development will cover ~0.083 hectares (ha) and result in the loss of modified grassland and scrub.
- 1.2.2 The Site comprised of grassland, scrub, a line of semi-mature sycamore trees and a hawthorn hedgerow.

1.3 Proposed Development

- 1.3.1 The proposal is for one residential unit with associated soft and hard landscaping.

1.4 Legislation

- 1.4.1 UK Legislation (specifically related to England) relating to habitats, plants, herptiles, birds and mammals are fully documented in Appendix D – Environmental Legislation & Conventions.

2 Methods

2.1 Desk Study

- 2.1.1 A desktop review of available sources was undertaken to obtain relevant baseline data to the Development. Natural England's Multi Agency Geographic Information (MAGIC) for the Countryside³ was checked to determine information regarding any local or national statutory designated sites within 1 km of the Site, as well as priority habitats and registered European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licenses. This was considered an appropriate Zone of Influence (ZOI) for the Site, which is depicted in Figure 2 overleaf, due to size of development and connected features.
- 2.1.2 National Site Networks (NSN) sites, inclusive of Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA), associated potential sites for SPA and SAC, and Ramsar⁴ sites were also searched for within 5 km of the Site.

³ Multi Agency Geographic Information for Countryside (MAGIC). Available at [MAGIC \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://magic.defra.gov.uk) (Accessed December 2025)

⁴ Please note that Ramsar sites are not covered by the same legislation as NSN sites; however, the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) requires that Ramsar sites be treated with the same level of protection as the NSN sites, so for the purposes of this assessment they are grouped.

2.1.3 The local environmental records centre, Northeast Environmental Records Information Centre (ERIC NE) was contacted for biological records, as well as information of statutory and non-statutory designated sites, within 1 km of the Site.

2.1.4 A review of historic aerial satellite imagery⁵ was undertaken for the Site to gain an understanding of past land-use and change in conditions.



Figure 2: Search Area

2.2 Habitats

2.2.1 An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and UKHab Survey was undertaken by Megan Errington⁶, an experienced botanist, from TrueNorth Ecology Ltd on the 27th November 2025 during good weather conditions.

2.2.2 The survey covered the entirety of the Survey Area (shown on Figure 1) and a 30 m buffer where access was available. The aim of this survey was to identify potential ecological constraints to inform the design and planning process. The survey was carried out following the methodology described in CIEEM's Guidelines for Preliminary

⁵ Google LLC (2020) *Google Earth* [Online] Available from: earth.google.com/static/multi-threaded/versions/10.38.0.0/index.html? (Accessed December 2025)

⁶ Qualifying member of CIEEM

Ecological Appraisal⁷, with an assessment of habitat suitability for protected species, including but not limited to mammals, nesting birds and herptiles (amphibians and reptiles). The Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey followed the methods described in the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) handbook (2010)⁸. Upon completion of the survey habitats condition was assessed using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Condition Assessment Sheets⁹ which will be provided in a separate Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) report.

2.2.3 For all species recorded during the survey, common names are used in the first instance with scientific names provided in brackets on first instance only.

2.2.4 Target notes were used to record further information regarding features of interest or specific habitats and species identified during the survey or to describe other habitats.

2.3 Bats

Preliminary Roost and Habitat Assessment

2.3.1 During the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey an assessment was undertaken on the suitability of the Site and adjacent habitat to support roosting and foraging bats. The survey followed the guidance as set out within the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Guidelines¹⁰.

2.3.2 A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) comprised inspections of any man-made structures or trees onsite or within boundary habitats to identify and assess any Potential Roosting Features (PRFs) suitable for roosting bats. PRFs were inspected for evidence of use by bats such as scratching, staining, droppings and audible noise.

2.3.3 Based on the PRA the man-made structures and/or trees were assigned a level of roosting suitability in accordance with BCT guidelines¹⁰. Suitability levels for structures are shown in Table 1, with tree suitability levels provided in Table 2.

⁷ CIEEM (2017), Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal [Online] Available at: CIEEM (Accessed December 2025)

⁸ JNCC (2010) Handbook for Phase 1 habitat survey: a technique for environmental audit, Peterborough, JNCC, Peterborough

⁹ Defra (2024) Statutory Biodiversity Metric [Online] Available at: [Statutory biodiversity metric tools and guides - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guides/statutory-biodiversity-metric) (Accessed December 2025)

¹⁰ Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition). The Bat Conservation Trust, London

Table 1: Guidelines for assessing potential roost features - structures.

Suitability	Roosting Habitat in Structures
None	No habitat features onsite likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of year (i.e., a complete absence of crevices/suitable shelter at all ground/underground levels).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features onsite likely to be used by roosting bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains as bats can use small and apparently unsuitable features on occasion.
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically at any time of the year. However, these potential roost sites do not provide enough space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats (i.e. unlikely to be suitable for maternity or hibernation).
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation status (with respect to roost type only, such as maternity and hibernation – the categorisation described in this table is made irrespective of species conservation status, which is established after presence is confirmed).
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions, and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts, e.g., maternity, or classic cool/stable hibernation site.

Table 2: Guidelines for assessing potential roost features - trees.

Suitability	Roosting Habitat in Trees
None	No PRFs in the tree or highly unlikely to be any.
Far	Further assessment required to establish if PRFs are present in the tree.
PRF	A tree with at least one PRF present.
PRF-I	PRF is only suitable for individual bats or very small numbers of bats either due to size or lack of suitable surrounding habitats.
PRF-M	PRF is suitable for multiple bats and may therefore be used by a maternity colony.

2.3.4 An assessment of habitats onsite and linked to the Site was undertaken to determine their potential to support commuting, foraging or swarming bats, such as good connectivity and linear features. Based on these observations, these habitats were assigned a level of suitability which was based on the extract from the BCT guidelines¹⁰ detailed in Table 3.

Table 3: Suitability of onsite habitats for commuting, foraging or swarming.

Suitability	Potential Flight-Paths and Foraging Habitats
None	No habitat features onsite likely to be used by any commuting or foraging bats at any time of the year (i.e., no habitats that provide continuous lines of shade/protection for flight-lines or generate/shelter insect populations available to foraging bats).
Negligible	No obvious habitat features onsite likely to be used as flightpaths or by foraging bats; however, a small element of uncertainty remains to account for non-standard bat behaviour.
Low	Habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats as flightpaths such as a gappy hedgerow or unvegetated stream, but isolate, i.e. not very well connected to the surrounding landscape by another habitat. Suitable, but isolated habitat that could be used by small number of foraging bats such as a lone tree (not in a parkland situation) or patch of scrub.
Moderate	Continuous habitat connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for flightpaths such as lines of trees and scrub or linked back gardens. Habitat that is connected to the wider landscape that could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland, or water.
High	Continuous, high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by bats for flightpaths such as river valleys, streams, hedgerows, lines of trees and woodland edge. High-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape that is likely to be used regularly by foraging bats such as broadleaved woodland, treelined watercourses and grazed parkland. Site is close to and connected to known roosts.

2.4 Amphibians

2.4.1 An assessment of ponds, watercourses and terrestrial habitats was undertaken which may have the potential to support great crested newts (GCN) (*Triturus cristatus*). A Habitat Suitability Index (HSI)¹¹ assessment was undertaken on ponds within 250 m of the Site where present and where access was available. Considering the minimal scale of the Development a 250 m search buffer was considered sufficient. Although GCN

¹¹ Oldham R.S, et al. (2000) *Evaluating the suitability of habitat for the Great Crested Newt (Triturus cristatus)*. Herpetological Journal 10 (4), 143-155

are known to travel up to 500 m from a breeding pond, without barriers to inhibit dispersal, it is considered that 250 m is sufficient¹².

2.4.2 The HSI assessment considers a range of features that affect the suitability of waterbodies to support a breeding population of GCN e.g., size of pond, extent of shading, abundance of aquatic plants, presence of fish and quality of surrounding habitat. The assessment produces a score that represents the likelihood of the waterbody supporting a breeding population of GCN, where the higher the HSI score, the more chance GCN would use the waterbody to breed if present in the landscape. The HSI score informs the need for further, more detailed surveys. HSI scores are classified according to thresholds as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Categorisation of HSI Scores

HSI Score	Pond Suitability
< 0.5	Poor
0.5 – 0.59	Below average
0.6 – 0.69	Average
0.7 – 0.79	Good
> 0.8	Excellent

2.5 Badger

2.5.1 The Site and a 30 m buffer (where access was available), was investigated for evidence of badger activity, which included setts, latrines, snuffle holes and runs. Particular attention was paid to areas of dense vegetation to check for signs of badger setts. Presence of badger activity can include prints, fur, guard hairs, bedding, dung pits, latrines, well-used paths and snuffle holes.

2.6 Birds

2.6.1 During the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey a walkover of the Site and surrounding habitats (where accessible) was undertaken to determine their potential to support large numbers of nesting/breeding or wintering birds of conservation concern (e.g., birds listed on Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)²⁰, on

¹² Gov.uk (2024), *Great crested newts advice for making planning decisions* [Online] Available: [Great crested newts: advice for making planning decisions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/great-crested-newts-advice-for-making-planning-decisions) (Accessed December 2025)

Amber or Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern¹³ (BoCC) and Annex I of the EC Birds Directive¹⁴).

2.7 Reptiles

2.7.1 During the Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey a thorough inspection of the Site and surrounding habitats (where accessible) was undertaken to identify potential suitable habitat for reptiles, including brash piles for shelter and hibernation, or long sward grassland with limited disturbance for commuting and foraging.

2.8 Terrestrial and Aquatic Invertebrates

2.8.1 The survey was undertaken out of the flying season for most terrestrial invertebrates. The assessment of the habitats within the Site was undertaken for potential to support terrestrial invertebrates. An assessment of any watercourses associated with the Site was undertaken for potential to support aquatic invertebrates.

2.9 Other Notable Species

2.9.1 Signs of the presence of other notable species was recorded during the survey, including a search for evidence of invasive non-native species (INNS) such as, but not limited to, Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

2.10 Ecological Assessment Process

2.10.1 This EclA follows the published guidelines² and accepted best practice approach¹⁵ of the mitigation hierarchy whereby impacts are first avoided, or if not possible, reduced or mitigated, with last option being compensation.

2.10.2 This EclA includes a description of baseline features and identification and description of important ecological features and how the Development may impact them. Potential impacts will be identified, evaluated and characterised, with measures

¹³ Stanbury, A. et al. (2021) *The status of our bird populations: the fifth Birds of Conservation Concern in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man and second IUCN Red List assessment of extinction risk for Great Britain*. British Birds 114: 723-747 [Online] Available [The status of our bird populations | British Birds](#) (Accessed December 2025)

¹⁴ Access to European Law *Birds Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds* [Online] Available at: [EUR-Lex - 32009L0147 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#) (Accessed December 2025)

¹⁵ British Standards Institution (2013), *BS 42020: 2013: Biodiversity – Code of Practice for planning and development*. BSI Standards Limited, London

recommended to mitigate such impacts. Should residual ecological effects be considered significant after application of mitigation measures then appropriate compensation measures will be identified to offset such impacts. Opportunities for ecological enhancement will also be identified.

2.10.3A 'significant effect' is an effect that either supports or undermines biodiversity conservation objectives for 'important ecological features' or for biodiversity in general.

2.10.4The CIEEM EclA guidelines² state that effects should be referenced against a geographical frame. Effects can be considered significant at a wide range of scales, and these include International, European, national, regional, county or local authority area, local or site (Examples of both habitat and species importance in geographic context are provided in Appendix E – Geographic Context).

2.10.5BS42020: 2013 sets out an approach to determining significance of an ecological effect in relation to decision making in legal and policy terms as follows:

- Will the effect on biodiversity influence the balance of planning considerations and therefore the decision as to whether planning permission is likely to be refused or granted; and
- If planning permission is granted, is the effect important enough to warrant the use of planning conditions and/or obligations to guarantee proposed measures or to impose restrictions, or to seek further requirements (for example mitigation).

2.10.6Therefore, significance is assessed on a case specific basis within this report according to the importance of the ecological feature within the conservation hierarchy and the effect upon it.

2.11 Limitations

2.11.1The survey was undertaken near the end of the year for vegetation growth found within the site. However, a robust assessment was undertaken, and a detailed species list was recorded.

2.11.2A number of trees onsite had been pollarded prior to survey work being undertaken by TrueNorth Ecology Ltd, which creates a limitation to the assessment for bats. Measures have been proposed mitigate the limitation.

3 Results

3.1 Desk Study

Statutory and Non-Statutory Sites

- 3.1.1 Three NSN sites were located within 5 km of the Site; Northumbria Coast Ramsar & SPA, and Durham Coast SAC were all located ~3.73 km east of Site.
- 3.1.2 Tiledsheds Local Nature Reserve (LNR) was the only statutory protected site within the search area, located ~0.98 km north of the Site. Tiledsheds LNR used to be a clay tileworks and is now a pond and wetland. Boldon Pastures SSSI was just outside the search area to the east of the Site and is designated for lowland pasture.
- 3.1.3 The Site was located within a SSSI risk zone; however, as stated by Natural England, proposals for residential developments of fewer than 10 units in this location are unlikely to have a significant effect on the qualifying features of the European Site(s) (habitats site(s)) through increased recreational pressure. As such there is no requirement to consult with Natural England for this development.
- 3.1.4 The Site was not located within a nutrient neutrality catchment.
- 3.1.5 There were five non-statutory, South Tyneside Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) within 1 km of the Site. Tiledsheds Burn LWS, located ~0.66 km north of the Site, features priority habitats, including lowland meadows, pasture, and lowland fen habitats. Boldon Flats West LWS, located ~0.41 km northeast of the Site, is connected to Boldon Flats North LWS and Boldon Flats South LWS. These Sites are protected due to presence of damp pasture, flooded from October to March for wintering birds. Low House Copse LWS, located ~0.57 km east of the Site, was designated for the conservation of broadleaved woodland, a pond and connectivity to Boldon Flats LWSs.

Priority Habitats

- 3.1.6 Priority habitats within 1 km included lowland fens and no main habitat but additional habitats within the Boldon Flats LWSs. There were no other priority habitats within the search area. No priority habitats are located within 500 m of the Site according to ERIC NE.

Satellite Imagery

- 3.1.7 The Survey Area remained in a similar condition from 2000 to 2024⁵. Tree removal has occurred onsite in 2025.

European Protected Species Licensing

- 3.1.8 No European Protected Species licences were shown within the search area according to MAGIC and ERIC NE. It cannot be known how many low impact class licences are present in the area.

3.2 Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

Overview

- 3.2.1 The Site comprised modified grassland with some encroaching scrub, common ivy (*Hedera helix*) and a hedgerow, with a line of trees along half of the southern boundary.
- 3.2.2 Baseline habitats are shown on Figure 3, Appendix B and target notes in Table 7, Appendix C.
- 3.2.3 None of the habitats recorded onsite were priority habitat under Section 41 Habitat under the NERC act¹⁶.

Built linear features – u1e

- 3.2.4 The northern boundary was formed by a brick wall with common ivy on top. The eastern boundary was formed by a metal fence, also covered with ivy. The metal fence and ivy continued along the southern boundary, then terminated halfway, leaving a gap between the fence and the hedgerow behind. The western boundary was a collapsing, closed-board fence, with cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*) an invasive non-native species behind, offsite.

Line of trees w1g6

- 3.2.5 A line of semi-mature sycamore trees (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) ran halfway along the southern boundary between the metal fence and the hedgerow. The trees were covered with ivy and were in poor condition.

Native Hedgerow with trees - h2a~276~373

- 3.2.6 One native hedgerow with trees was present onsite along the southern boundary, though the trees had recently been felled, with the brash and some logs left in the scrub (TN 3 and 4 on Figure 3).

¹⁶ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 [Online] Available at: [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/15/section/41) (Accessed December 2025)

3.2.7 H1 – The hedgerow was predominantly common hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) with ivy and felled, semi-mature, sycamore trees. The understory and surrounding ground flora were mostly ivy, cleavers (*Galium aparine*), with leaf litter and scrub species also present. There was clear human disturbance from rubbish, regular gaps in the hedge line and gaps between the ground and canopy.

Modified grassland – g4

3.2.8 Modified grassland occupied the eastern half of the Site, with encroachment of ivy from the boundaries, and scrub from the western half of the Site. The grassland was quite damp due to shading and was beginning to form a tussocky structure. Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*) was dominant, with other species including perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), water avens (*Geum rivale*), cleavers, cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), dandelion (*Taraxacum* agg.), broad-leaved dock (*Rumex obtusifolius*) and sphagnum moss (*Sphagnum* L.). There was no variation in sward height or density within the grassland. An ivy-covered mound was present in southeast corner of modified grassland (TN1 on Figure 3).

3.2.9 In addition to the grassland species above, species such as field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), common hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*), common butterbur (*Petasites hybridus*), garlic mustard (*Alliaria petiolate*) and white deadnettle (*Lamium album*) were also found where the grassland began to transition to scrub in the centre of the Site.

Bramble scrub – h3d~459

3.2.10 The western half of the Site was likely previously modified grassland but was transitioning to bramble scrub as the Site had not been cut recently, potentially due to piles of brash being left onsite from felling the trees. Yorkshire fog, bramble and common nettle were dominant, though the scrub was not dense. There was no defined edge or variance in age, with all the scrub being immature. Grey willow saplings (*Salix cinerea*), cleavers, field bindweed, ivy, broad-leaved dock and common hogweed were also present.

3.2.11 Variegated yellow archangel (*Lamium galeobdolon* subsp. *argentatum*), an invasive non-native species, was present in a patch where the grassland transitioned to scrub (TN1 on Figure 3).

3.3 Bats

Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.3.1 There were no buildings onsite or near the Site boundaries. The semi-mature sycamore trees on the southern boundary had negligible suitability for bats. T1, the mature black poplar (*Populus nigra*) on the northern boundary, near the entrance to the Site, was classed as a PRF-I due to the presence of a knothole with staining around the sides (see Table 5 for details). However, this tree had been cut halfway down the trunk, potentially leaving this PRF too exposed. The location of T1 is shown in Figure 3, Appendix B.

Table 5: Suitability of Trees for Bats

Reference	Description	Suitability	Location
T1	Knothole on southern side of trunk leaning into Site from northern boundary.	PRF-I	Northern boundary

3.3.2 No mitigation licences were found within 1 km of the Site on MAGIC. There were twenty-two records of bats found within 1 km of the Site, according to ERIC NE. Fifteen of these records were for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), the rest were unspecified. The closest records were for Natley Avenue, ~65 m northeast of the Site, where an unspecified number of common pipistrelle were recorded in flight by an ecologist on two occasions in 2024.

3.3.3 The Site was on the edge of urban development, with farmland to the south and Sunderland Road to the east. Therefore, the Site was subject to moderate levels of night-time disturbance from streetlights. The nearest woodland was Low House Copse LWS, ~0.57 km east of the Site. In comparison to the offsite woodland and the farmland to the south, the Site provided limited foraging value with limited to no PRFs.

3.4 Amphibians

3.4.1 No waterbodies were located within 250 m of the Site and no waterbodies were present onsite.

3.4.2 Thirty-six records for protected and notable amphibian species were returned by ERIC NE within 1 km of the Site. Species included common toad (*Bufo bufo*), common frog (*Rana temporaria*), palmate newt (*Lissotriton helveticus*), smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*), alpine newt (*Mesotriton alpestris*) and great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*). Over half of these records were over thirty years old. Thirteen records were returned between 2008 and 2023, with no amphibian records for the past couple of years. Species included common toad, common frog, palmate newt, smooth newt and

one record from 2011 for an alpine newt in a garden pond. The closest record was for a common frog, ~0.50 km away from the Site, in 2008.

3.4.3 No GCN Class Survey Licenses were returned by MAGIC within 1 km of the Site.

3.4.4 The likelihood of species being present is extremely unlikely and they are not considered further in this report. Precautionary measures for other species provided in Section 4 will safeguard common amphibians in the unlikely chance any are present during the works.

3.5 Badger

3.5.1 No evidence of badger was recorded onsite or within the surrounding area during the survey. The Site was limited in size and was checked thoroughly with no evidence of badger recorded, the grassland did not provide suitable sett building habitat for badgers, with value limited to foraging only.

3.5.2 Four records of badgers were returned by ERIC NE within 1 km of the Site, two of which were from 1965 and one from 1980. The remaining record was for one badger in 2020, ~0.58 km away from the Site.

3.5.3 Precautionary measures for other species provided in Section 4 will safeguard badgers should they utilise the Site intermittently for foraging.

3.6 Birds

3.6.1 One wren (*Troglodytes troglodytes*) was observed flying from the Site into the ivy on the brick wall of the northern boundary. No other bird species was observed in or near the Site during the survey.

3.6.2 No nesting activity was recorded onsite, although there was potential for nests to be created in some of the trees and hedge present onsite. No pellets from owls or other species were recorded at the base of any of the trees.

3.6.3 The habitats onsite were limited, although the scrub and ivy may provide suitable foraging habitat for insectivorous birds.

3.6.4 There were 7761 protected and notable bird species records returned within 1 km of the Site, according to ERIC NE, 2728 of which are Schedule 1 protected bird species records. Of the Schedule 1 protected birds species records, 2488 were from either Boldon Flats LWSs or Tiledsheds LNR. Of the remaining 240 records, species included, but were not limited to sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*), widgeon (*Anas penelope*), greylag goose (*Anser anser*), grey heron (*Ardea cinerea*), buzzard (*Buteo buteo*), dunlin

(*Calidris alpina*), purple sandpiper (*Calidris maritima*), little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*), brambling (*Fringilla montifringilla*), black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa*), golden plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*), avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*), redwing (*Turdus iliacus*), fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) and barn owl (*Tyto alba*). These species prefer wetland and open farmland habitats which do not match the habitats present onsite.

- 3.6.5 The majority of the onsite trees will be retained so nesting opportunities will be unaffected by the works, the loss of restricted areas of scrub will result in a minimal loss of foraging habitat.

3.7 Reptiles

- 3.7.1 The grassland was tussocky, potentially providing a suitable habitat for reptiles. However, there was no evidence of reptiles recorded on the Site or in the wider survey area. Furthermore, ERIC NE returned no recent records of reptiles within 1 km of the Site. One record of a grass snake (*Natrix natrix*) was returned from 1956 in Boldon Flats LWS and six records for adders (*Vipera berus*) in 1980. There was a log pile, a brash pile and a pile of wooden planks (TN3-5 on Figure 3) which could provide potential refuge for reptiles. However, the well-maintained nature of the surrounding gardens and farmland means colonisation by reptiles is highly unlikely.
- 3.7.2 No suitable habitat for reptiles will be impacted by the Development and reptile presence is unlikely therefore they are not considered further in this report.

3.8 Terrestrial and Aquatic Invertebrates

- 3.8.1 Seventeen records of protected and notable terrestrial and aquatic invertebrates were returned within 1 km of the Site, from 2000 to 2018, according to ERIC NE. Species included *Agabus uliginosus* (a species of diving beetle), *Polydrusus formosus* (a species of broad-nosed weevil), *Stenus pallitarsis* (a species of rove beetle), small heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*), dingy skipper (*Erynnis tages*), wall (*Lasiommata megera*) and common darter (*Sympetrum striolatum*). All these records were from either Boldon Flats LWS or Tilesheds LNR. The closest record was ~0.58 km away from the Site, of *A. uliginosus* at Boldon Flats LWS. This is a notable, near threatened species, primarily found in seasonal pools in fens, unimproved grasslands and heathlands and therefore unlikely to inhabit the Site.
- 3.8.2 The scrub and ivy provided suitable foraging habitat for terrestrial invertebrates, though the scrub was immature and limited in size and condition.

3.8.3 The Development will result in the loss of a food resource for invertebrates, but the southern hedgerow, H1, will be retained in its entirety.

3.9 Other Notable Species

3.9.1 Variegated yellow archangel was present onsite, in a patch amongst the scrub (TN2 on Figure 3, Appendix B). This plant is classed as an invasive species under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act²⁰ due to their rapid growth and ability to outcompete and displace native plant species. Cherry laurel was also present offsite, west of the western boundary, beyond the collapsing wooden fence. Although cherry laurel is not listed as invasive under Schedule 9 this species also spreads prolifically and outcompetes native species. Common butterbur (*Petasites hybridus*) was found at regular intervals throughout the scrub onsite. This species is native but can become rampant in damp grassland.

3.9.2 Due to the undisturbed nature of the grassland and scrub, the Site may support low numbers of foraging European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) and fox (*Vulpes vulpes*), though no supplementary evidence was found during the survey. Hedgehogs may also use the Site for hibernation due to the brash piles left by felling the trees.

3.9.3 Twenty-seven records of hedgehogs were returned by ERIC NE, within 1 km of the Site, from 2006 to 2020. The closest hedgehog record was ~100 m northwest of the Site in 2018. No fox records were returned by ERIC NE within 1 km of the Site.

3.9.4 There will be a minimal negative impact on hedgehog due to the permanent loss of foraging habitat and hibernacula.

4 Discussion and Recommendations

4.1.1 The proposal is for a residential development with associated soft and hard landscaping.

4.1.2 The potential impacts of the Development on each feature that has been identified within Section 3, those that are considered either potentially present within the Site or ZOI are discussed below. All other protected/notable species are excluded from assessment given the unlikelihood to occur on the Site or be present so infrequently that they are extremely unlikely to be impacted by the Development.

4.1.3 There are no designated sites of international, national, county or local importance that will be directly or indirectly impacted by the proposed Development. Ecological receptors with potential to be impacted by the Development and discussed further within this report comprise:

- Designated Sites
- Habitats
- Bats
- Birds
- Invertebrates
- Other Mammals
- Invasive Species

4.1.4 To increase the Development's biodiversity value, a range of recommended enhancement measures are also provided.

4.2 Designated Sites

4.2.1 Northumbria Coast Ramsar & SPA, and Durham Coast SAC were located ~3.73 km east of Site. Tiledsheds LNR was located ~0.98 km north of the Site. Tiledsheds Burn LWS, Boldon Flats LWSs and Low House Copse LWS were also within 1 km of the Site.

4.2.2 The proposed construction of one dwelling on the Site is unlikely to result in significant levels of recreational pressure. The LWS nearby support wintering wetland and farmland birds, which would be unlikely to use the Site. It is not considered that a Habitat Regulations Assessment for impact on the NSN sites is required.

4.2.3 To further reduce impacts mitigation is provided below.

Mitigation and Enhancement

4.2.4 Provisions will be implemented to prevent and control pollution under the Pollution and Prevention and Controls Act¹⁷, such as preventing chemical spills and air pollution (i.e., dust coverage on vegetation, pollutants leak into sewers).

4.3 Habitats

4.3.1 There were no priority habitats within the Site. The trees onsite were either semi-mature or cut down, and the hedgerow and scrub were in poor condition, limiting the ecological value of the Site. However, due to the proximity of the Site to semi-rural farmland to the south, potential impacts from the Development without mitigation

¹⁷ Legislation.gov.uk Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 [Online] Available at [Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1999/42/section/1) (Accessed December 2025)

may include direct damage, light pollution, water pollution, litter and noise pollution, which would have **an adverse** impact in the absence of mitigation.

Mitigation and Enhancement

- 4.3.2 Provisions will be implemented to prevent and control pollution under the Pollution and Prevention and Controls Act¹⁷, such as preventing chemical spills and air pollution (i.e., dust coverage on vegetation, pollutants leak into sewers).
- 4.3.3 The mature onsite trees will be retained and not further impacted. An exclusion distance will be calculated by an arboriculturist to reflect the Root Protection Zone (RPZ) of these trees, where heavy machinery movement (in excess of baseline levels) or ground works are not permitted to avoid impact to the roots, and therefore the health of the tree.
- 4.3.4 Construction works, including vehicle movement and storage of materials, will not encroach on habitats outside of the Site boundary. If there is a risk of encroachment, seek advice from the ecologist prior to the commencement.

4.4 Bats

- 4.4.1 The onsite habitats were considered to support a low number of bats commuting from the wider landscape, due to the presence of streetlights along Sunderland Road and the low value of habitats in comparison to woodland and aquatic habitats located offsite to the east.
- 4.4.2 One tree onsite, in the northern boundary, was classed as PRF-I and had evidence of staining around the knothole on the southern aspect of the trunk. However, this tree had already been cut halfway down the trunk. Any further work affecting this tree should be done under Bat Conservation Trust guidelines¹⁰ for PRF-I trees with supervision to ensure no harm to bats.
- 4.4.3 With the mitigation and enhancement measures proposed it is considered that the impacts of the Development are a **minor negative at Site Level** only, as the works are entirely within modified grassland, which was limited in size. Most of the trees will be retained to provide continued foraging area. Planting post-development should include night-scented flowers to attract moths as a foraging resource.

Further Survey Requirements

- 4.4.4 Further surveys are considered disproportionate to the impact of the proposed Development, which is limited to modified grassland and immature scrub. The existing site conditions can only support low numbers of common bat species.

4.4.5 The recently felled trees and the mature black poplar will be left to regrow, which provided the highest value habitat for bats, and subject to appropriate mitigation measures will not be impacted by the works. The native hedgerow will also be retained.

Mitigation and Enhancement

4.4.6 Pollution Prevention and Controls will be implemented to minimise the noise, light and air pollution on bats within the wider landscape.

4.4.7 Works will take place during daylight hours, meaning no light spill will occur on surrounding buildings or vegetation after dusk and therefore there will be no disturbance to roosting, foraging and commuting bats during construction. No lighting will be required once the Development is operational.

4.4.8 Supplementary planting of night scented flowers¹⁸ will encourage a higher diversity of moths and other invertebrates and compensate for the loss of foraging habitat within the Site.

4.4.9 Removal of ivy from the hedgerow and planting of hawthorn saplings will thicken and enhance the hedge as a linear feature and foraging habitat for bats.

4.4.10 Lighting will be designed in line with good practice¹⁹. The following lighting prescriptions will be implemented:

- Limit extent and duration, with no prolonged night-time working.
- Motion-sensitive security lighting and avoidance of floodlighting.
- Avoidance of lighting with ultra-violet (UV) components in areas where lighting is required for safety purposes.
- Use of flat-glass protectors on luminaires to help reduce light spill above angles greater than 70 degrees from the vertical plane.
- Avoiding light spill on to surrounding habitats by using accessories such as shields, louvres, hoods and cowls.

4.4.11 Provision of boxes for bats will be provided in line with 1:1 number of units, to reflect the baseline ecological value of the Site, with integrated boxes provided. Boxes will

¹⁸ [How to attract moths and bats to your garden | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

¹⁹ Bat Conservation Trust and the Institution of Lighting Professionals (2023) *Bats and artificial Lighting at Night* [Online] Available at: '[Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night](#)' ILP Guidance Note update released - News - Bat Conservation Trust (Accessed December 2025)

target a range of species with different designs and access holes to allow a wide range of species to utilise them.

4.5 Nesting Birds

4.5.1 The Site was not considered to support significant numbers of breeding or nesting birds; nevertheless, nesting birds throughout the Site may be indirectly impacted by disturbance and light spill.

4.5.2 Foraging habitat for birds was present within the Site, as the scrub and ivy provided an invertebrate food source.

Further Survey Requirements

4.5.3 The habitats onsite do not warrant further specific bird surveys as they are considered to support low numbers of common species only.

Mitigation and Enhancement

4.5.4 Vegetation clearance works should take place outside of the typical bird nesting season (March to September inclusive); however, if works are required in season then the following mitigation measures are required:

- Undertake nesting bird checks within 48 hours before prior to pruning/works, by a suitably experienced ecologist; and
- If any nesting birds are found, an appropriate buffer zone will be implemented, within which works are excluded, for the duration of the breeding attempt. Any active nests will need to be left in situ until the ecologist confirms that the nesting attempt has reached a natural conclusion.

4.5.5 Although the main bird nesting season is considered to occur between March and September, some species can nest all year. Therefore, in the event of a bird's nest (active or not) is encountered during the construction phase, works should be ceased and an ecologist contacted for advice.

4.5.6 Pollution prevention measures and lighting requirements as detailed in previous sections will also limit disturbance.

4.5.7 Provision of boxes for birds will be provided in line with a 1:1 ratio of the number of units, to reflect the baseline ecological value of the Site, with either integrated or free-hanging box provided. Boxes will target a range of species with different designs and access holes to allow a wide range of species to utilise them.

- 4.5.8 Removal of ivy and hawthorn sapling planting in the gaps of the hedgerow will provide an increase in nesting and foraging habitat onsite.

4.6 Invertebrate

- 4.6.1 No notable invertebrates were recorded during the survey; however, the areas of scrub and ivy provided suitable foraging and sheltering habitat for invertebrates, as did the southern hedgerow. The Site lacks the sufficient larval food plants required to support protected species of invertebrates.
- 4.6.2 With the mitigation and enhancement measures proposed it is considered that the impacts of the Development are **negligible**. During construction, foraging and sheltering habitat will be lost.

Mitigation and Enhancement

- 4.6.3 Supplementary planting of night scented flowers¹⁸ will encourage a higher diversity of moths and other invertebrates and compensate for the loss of foraging habitat within the Site.
- 4.6.4 Key boundary hedgerows, such as the southern boundary hedgerow will be retained and protected during the works.

4.7 Other Mammals

- 4.7.1 The onsite habitats provide **local** value opportunities for foraging, commuting and sheltering for hedgehogs. If animals are found they should be relocated to areas outside of the construction zone.
- 4.7.2 In the absence of mitigation there is potential for hedgehogs to be negatively impacted during the construction phase and therefore mitigation measures are required.

Further Surveys

- 4.7.3 No further surveys are recommended.

Mitigation and Enhancement

- 4.7.4 As suitable foraging habitat is present within the Site and wider landscape, mitigation measures are required during the construction phase to safeguard the species.
- 4.7.5 Pollution Prevention and Controls will be implemented to minimise the noise, light and air pollution on mammals within the wider landscape.

- 4.7.6 Any excavations will be covered overnight and be checked daily for the presence of animals before recommencing work. Any deep excavations that cannot be covered nightly must include a means of escape for any animals that may fall in.
- 4.7.7 Construction works will be limited to the hours from dawn to one hour before sunset, and as described in section 4.4 operational lighting will be designed in accordance with good practice.
- 4.7.8 During vegetation clearance a pre-construction walkover by a suitably experienced ecologist is required, to check suitable vegetation and rubble prior to clearance and if suitable habitat at risk of encroachment by the works. If a hedgehog is found it will be safely moved off-site to a suitable habitat away from potential harm, by the ecologist. Contractors are to check for hedgehogs within the working area prior to commencement of works each morning, and if found allow them to move off on their own accord. If this is not possible, safely move the hedgehog off-site to a suitable habitat previously agreed by the ecologist. Gloves will be used when handling the animal.
- 4.7.9 Vegetation/rubble clearance during their hibernation period (November to March) should be avoided, however, if this is not possible suitable hibernacula will be checked by a suitably experienced ecologist. If a hibernating hedgehog is found it will be left in-situ and a suitable exclusion buffer implemented, where works will not occur in the area until they have moved off on their own accord. If this is not feasible, the hibernating hedgehog will be safely translocated by a suitably experienced ecologist, during suitable weather conditions, where new nesting material and supplementary food safe for consumption will be provided. Contractors are to check suitable hibernacula within the working area prior to commencement of works each morning, and if a hibernating hedgehog is found, the above measures of to be implemented.
- 4.7.10 The creation of large stockpiles of earth will be avoided as these may be attractive for hedgehogs and other animals. Any materials should be stored above ground on pallets.
- 4.7.11 Should any new mammal nests and or burrows be identified works in the area will stop and the ecologist contacted for advice.

4.8 Invasive Species

- 4.8.1 Variegated yellow archangel was located onsite, as was common butterbur. Cherry laurel was located offsite to the west.

4.8.2 Variegated yellow archangel has deep runners therefore pulling alone will not remove the plants unless considerable excavations are undertaken which does not work in the residential setting. Herbicide treatment should be applied until no new regrowth occurs. Effective herbicides for variegated yellow archangel typically contain active ingredients like triclopyr, imazapyr, or metsulfuron. An effective herbicide against common butterbur would typically be glyphosate.

4.8.3 Removal of these species will be a **minor enhancement** at **Site Level**.

5 Conclusion

5.1.1 An Ecological Impact Assessment has been undertaken to assess the impact of the Development with the identified potential impacts being loss of foraging and sheltering habitat for birds, mammals and invertebrates, human disturbance and lighting. Mitigation measures have been provided, including restrictions to working hours, following pollution prevention guidelines, safeguarding checks for nesting birds and terrestrial mammals to limit impacts on the onsite and adjacent habitats and species.

5.1.2 No further surveys are considered necessary to inform Development design and mitigation requirements. Measures have been put in place to ensure no harm occurs during construction and that during the operation phase impacts are limited.

5.1.3 In summary:

- Construction will ensure that vehicle movements and storage of materials will not encroach on habitats outside of the Site boundary.
- Lighting will be designed in accordance with good practice.
- Works must be undertaken during daylight hours to avoid impacts on bat foraging.
- During clearance if inside nesting bird season a check will be undertaken by an ecologist with suitable exclusion buffers put in place if a nest is recorded.
- A check will be undertaken by an ecologist for hedgehogs prior to clearance of vegetation.
- Bat and bird boxes will be installed.
- Supplementary planting of night-scented flowers will be undertaken in the wider grounds to improve foraging resource for a range of species.

Appendix A – Site Photos

Ref.	Description	Photo
1	Wooden access gate in eastern boundary.	 A photograph of a wooden access gate in an eastern boundary. The gate is made of dark wood with diagonal bracing and is set within a brick wall. It is slightly ajar, revealing a path leading through the gate.
2	Metal fence and ivy on eastern boundary.	 A photograph showing a metal fence and ivy on the eastern boundary. The fence is partially obscured by dense green ivy and other vegetation. The ground in the foreground is covered with dry, brown grass and some green plants.
3	Metal fence and ivy on southern boundary, with line of trees behind.	 A photograph showing a metal fence and ivy on the southern boundary, with a line of trees behind it. The fence is covered in dense green ivy. Behind the fence, there is a line of tall, thin trees, possibly cypresses, and some other vegetation. The ground in the foreground is covered with dry, brown grass and some green plants.

Ref.	Description	Photo
4	TN1 - Ivy mound in southeast corner	
5	Metal fence and ivy on southern boundary, with line of trees behind.	
6	Modified grassland with encroachment of ivy and scrub.	

Ref.	Description	Photo
7	TN2 – Variegated archangel (INNS)	
8	H1 – Hawthorn hedge with trees (semi-mature sycamore trees cut down to stumps), on southern boundary.	
9	Gap between metal fence and H1 at southern boundary, with line of trees between.	

Ref.	Description	Photo
10	Hedgerow (H1)	
11	Semi-mature sycamore tree cut down to height of hedge in H1.	
12	Scrub in western half of Site.	

Ref.	Description	Photo
13	Semi-mature sycamore cut down to stump in H1.	
14	Collapsing closed-board, wooden fence on western boundary, with offsite cherry laurel behind (INNS).	
15	Northwest corner of Site, with scrub.	

Ref.	Description	Photo
16	View from western part of Site eastwards.	
17	TN3 – Log pile	
18	TN4 – Brash pile	

Ref.	Description	Photo
19	TN5 – Pile of wooden planks	
20	Brick wall with ivy on top, running along northern boundary.	
21	Brick wall with ivy on top, running along northern boundary.	

Ref.	Description	Photo
22	T1 Black poplar PRF-I	
23	T1 Black polar PRF-I	

Appendix B – Figures**Figure 3: Baseline Habitats Plan**

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Appendix C – Target Notes

Table 6: Target Notes

Target Note	Description
TN1	Ivy-covered mound
TN2	Variegated archangel (INNS)
TN3	Log pile
TN4	Brash pile
TN5	Pile of wooden planks

Appendix D – Environmental Legislation & Conventions

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended)

All three legislation^{20,21,22} confer various degrees of legal protection on species including bats, reptiles, great crested newts, otters, dormice, water voles, badgers, and birds. (A full list of protected species and their specific legal protection is provided within the schedules of the applicable legislation.) This legal protection overrides all planning decisions.

The level of protection afforded to protected species varies dependent on the associated legislation.

In general, European Protected Species (EPS) (e.g., bats, great crested newt, dormice, and otter) are afforded the highest level of protection. Any person who deliberately captures, injures, or kills an EPS, deliberately disturbs an EPS or who damages or destroys a breeding site or resting place is guilty of an offence. Furthermore, any person who intentionally or recklessly disturbs an animal whilst it is occupying a structure / place used for shelter / protection and who obstructs access to any structure or place that an animal uses for shelter or protection is also guilty of an offence.

The level of protection afforded to species listed on the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) varies considerably. Fully protected species, such as water vole, are afforded the highest level of protection. Any person who intentionally kills, injures, or takes fully protected species, or who intentionally or recklessly damages or destroys a structure or place used for shelter / protection, disturbs the animal whilst occupying a structure / place used for shelter and protection or obstructs access to any structure / place used for shelter or protection is likely to have committed an offence. Other species, such as common reptiles, are afforded less protection and for these species it may only be an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill or injure animals. All active bird nests, eggs and young are protected from destruction and Schedule 1 listed birds are also protected from disturbance whilst breeding.

Under certain circumstances licences can be granted by the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisation (Natural England in England) to permit actions that would otherwise be unlawful under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2019 (as amended) and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 (as amended).

Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996

In addition to the above legislation, the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996²³ provides protection for all wild mammals from certain cruel acts including crushing and asphyxiation, which can have relevance for methods employed during site clearance works.

²⁰ Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [Online] Available at: [Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk) (Accessed December 2025)

²¹ Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 [Online] Available at: [The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk) (Accessed December 2025)

²² Protection of Badgers Act 1992 [Online] Available at: [Protection of Badgers Act 1992 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk) (Accessed December 2025)

²³ Wild Mammals Act 1996 [Online] Available at: [Wild Mammals \(Protection\) Act 1996 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk) (Accessed December 2025)

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006

The NERC Act 2006²⁴ places a duty on local planning authorities to have due regard for biodiversity and nature conservation during the course of their operations, and thus ensures that biodiversity is a key consideration in the planning process. It is a requirement to consider Species and Habitats of Principal Importance listed under Section 41 when making planning decisions.

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)²⁵ 2024 sets out the Government's requirement for the planning system in England and in doing so establishes framework within which local planning authorities can develop their own planning policies. The NPPF explicitly addresses the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment, including biodiversity, through paragraphs 187–195.

Biodiversity Action Plans

The UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework forms the government response to the 2010 Convention on Biological Diversity and replaces the UK Biodiversity Action Plan with five internationally agreed strategic goals and targets, including reducing pressures on biodiversity and safeguarding ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity. The governments Biodiversity 2020 strategy aims to halt the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services by 2020, to include restoration where feasible. These are used as a guide for decision makers such as local authorities to fulfil their obligations under sections 40 and 41 of the NERC Act 2006²⁴ to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity in carrying out their duties.

²⁴ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 [Online] Available at: [Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/42/section/41) (Accessed December 2025)

²⁵ National Policy Planning Framework 2024 [Online] Available at: [National Planning Policy Framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/national-planning-policy-framework) (Accessed December 2025)

Appendix E – Geographic Context

Table 7: Geographic Context of Habitat and Species Importance

Geographic Context of Importance	Examples
International	Sites supporting populations of internationally important species or habitats. Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsars and Biosphere Reserves. Species listed on Annexes II IV and V of the Habitats Directive and Annex I of the Birds Directive.
National	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or non-designated sites meeting SSSI criteria, National Nature Reserves, Marine Nature Reserves. Habitats of Principal Importance under section 1 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.
Regional	Sites containing viable areas of threatened habitats listed in regional BAP, exceeding Site of Nature Concern (SINC) criteria but below criteria for SSSI. Regularly occurring, locally significant population of a species listed as being national scarce in the UK or listed in a Regional BAP or relevant Natural Area on account of its regional rarity.
County / Metropolitan	Sites meeting criteria for county or metropolitan designations, for example SINC or County Wildlife Sites. Local Nature Reserves, ancient semi-natural woodland or key habitats listed in county BAPs. Any regularly occurring, locally significant population of a species which is listed in a County or Metropolitan BAP on account of its county rarity or localisation.
District / Borough	Local wildlife sites or sites that enrich the habitats within the District or Borough. A regularly occurring, locally significant number of a District or Borough important species.
Local	Undesignated sites which provide value to an area, providing an important resource within the parish or neighbourhood. Species that are not nationally scarce but provide value to the local area and may be rare in the local area.
Negligible	Low grade and widespread habitats. Common or widespread species.