

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL UPDATE

Albrighton South

August 2026

For and on behalf of
Boningale Developments Limited



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Disclaimer

This report has been prepared by Beamsley Ecology Ltd, with all reasonable skill, care and diligence within the terms of the Contract with the client, incorporation of our General Terms and Conditions of Business and taking account of the resources devoted to us by agreement with the client.

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This document does not constitute legal advice.

0.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 0.1 This updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been prepared in support of the planning appeal relating to land south of Albrighton. The update has been undertaken because of the time elapsed since the original appraisal and incorporates the findings of subsequent habitat verification, an updating walkover and species-specific surveys.
- 0.2 The updating PEA survey has identified no significant changes in habitat extent or condition, or in the value of the Site's habitats for protected or notable species.
- 0.3 The Proposals comprise an outline application, including access, for a mixed-use development of up to 800 dwellings, a care home of up to 80 units, a secondary school and local centre, together with associated infrastructure, landscaping and drainage.
- 0.4 No statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designation lies within or adjacent to the Site. No credible pathway for an adverse effect upon statutory or non-statutory designated sites has been identified.
- 0.5 The Site is dominated by intensively managed arable land of comparatively limited intrinsic ecological value. Features of higher value include the hedgerow network, ponds, mature trees, woodland parcels and watercourses.
- 0.6 Great crested newts are confirmed to be present within both an on-site and an off-site pond. The Proposals have entered into Natural England's District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme, through which impacts upon the species will be mitigated through strategic habitat creation.
- 0.7 Targeted surveys have been undertaken for bats, breeding birds, wintering birds, reptiles and white-clawed crayfish. Detailed methodologies, results, impact assessments and mitigation requirements are presented within the respective standalone reports and are not repeated within this updated appraisal. The species-specific reports should therefore be read alongside this report.
- 0.8 Detailed habitat creation and management measures will be developed through the reserved matters process and secured through the Biodiversity Gain Plan and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (HMMP).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Beamsley Ecology Ltd was commissioned by Boningale Developments Limited (the 'Client') to prepare an updated Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) relating to land south of Albrighton, Shropshire (hereafter referred to as the 'Site').
- 1.2 The Site is approximately 63 hectares (ha) in area and is centred on Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SJ 80814 03343. It lies close to the south of Albrighton and predominantly comprises arable fields divided by hedgerows, with scattered mature trees, ponds and small areas of woodland. Two minor roads cross the Site, and the A464 (Holyhead Road) adjoins much of its southern boundary.
- 1.3 The Site location is shown in **Figure 1**.

Proposals

- 1.4 Outline planning permission is sought, including access, for a mixed-use development comprising up to 800 dwellings, a care home of up to 80 units, a secondary school and local centre, together with associated access, infrastructure, landscaping and drainage (the 'Proposals').

Report Background

- 1.5 A PEA for the Site was originally prepared by Cass Design Consultants Ltd in 2024. This was informed by habitat surveys undertaken on the 24th, 25th and 26th February and 26th April 2024 and identified the requirement for further surveys in relation to a number of protected and notable species.
- 1.6 During determination of the planning application, PJA undertook a review of the habitat baseline as part of an updated Biodiversity Net Gain assessment. This included comparison of the habitat data with the topographical and arboricultural information and targeted habitat-verification surveys undertaken in July 2025. The review resulted in amendments to certain habitat classifications and mapped extents.
- 1.7 A programme of protected-species surveys was also progressed during determination and following submission of the appeal. The surveys recommended by the original PEA have therefore either been completed or are ongoing at the time of writing. The current status and findings of this work are summarised within this report, with reference made to the relevant standalone survey reports where appropriate.

Aims & Objectives

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

- 1.8 This report reviews and updates the ecological baseline presented within the original PEA, taking account of:
 - the habitat information and targeted verification work subsequently undertaken by PJA;
 - protected-species surveys completed since the original PEA was issued;
 - protected-species surveys that remain ongoing at the time of writing;
 - the current development proposals; and
 - the time elapsed since the original ecological appraisal.

1.9 The objectives of the updated appraisal are to:

- Confirm the current ecological constraints and opportunities associated with the Site;
- confirm the status of the further surveys recommended by the original PEA;
- summarise the findings of completed ecological surveys and direct the reader to the relevant standalone reports;
- provide an up-to-date ecological evidence base to support the planning appeal.

1.10 This report provides a confirmatory update to the original Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and should be read alongside that report and the subsequent species-specific reports. It is not intended to reproduce the original assessment in full, including its detailed habitat descriptions, target notes, pond numbering or other feature references. Instead, it identifies any material changes in the ecological baseline and considers whether the original conclusions and recommendations remain valid in light of the updated survey and subsequent ecological work. Earlier feature references are therefore repeated only where necessary to explain an updated finding.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Details of the methodologies relevant to this assessment can be found in **Appendix 1**.

3.0 LIMITATIONS & ASSUMPTIONS

3.1 This updated appraisal has been informed by the original Preliminary Ecological Appraisal prepared by Cass Design Consultants Ltd, the subsequent habitat review and targeted verification undertaken by PJA, and the protected-species surveys completed or progressed during determination and the appeal period.

3.2 Information prepared by third parties has been reviewed by Beamsley Ecology and is considered appropriate for the purposes of this assessment. However, Beamsley Ecology did not undertake the original habitat survey or PJA's subsequent verification work and has not independently repeated all survey observations or spatial measurements. The information presented within the relevant third-party reports and datasets has therefore been assumed to be accurate unless otherwise identified within this report.

3.3 PJA's targeted habitat-verification surveys were not intended to establish a wholly new habitat baseline. They were undertaken to confirm the continuing appropriateness of the existing habitat classifications and condition assessments, with particular consideration given to ditches, other neutral grassland and mixed scrub. PJA also reviewed the habitat mapping against the topographical and arboricultural information. The amended habitat information and mapping produced through that process have been taken to represent the most current habitat baseline for this assessment.

3.4 Ecological surveys provide a snapshot of the conditions present at the time of survey. Habitats and the distribution of protected and notable species may change over time, and the absence of records or field evidence does not necessarily confirm the absence of a species. Information obtained during subsequent ecological survey visits has been considered where relevant to identifying any material changes in site conditions.

3.5 Biodiversity Net Gain has been considered separately through a standalone BNG assessment. This report does not reproduce biodiversity-unit calculations and should be read alongside the latest BNG report, Statutory Biodiversity Metric and supporting habitat plans.

4.0 RESULTS

Desk Study

- 4.1 The original PEA included a search for records of protected and notable species and non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the Site. Information was obtained from Staffordshire Ecological Record and Telford & Wrekin Council's Ecological Data Service.

Site Context

- 4.2 The Site is located to the south of the village of Albrighton and forms part of the agricultural landscape surrounding the settlement. It predominantly comprises intensively managed arable fields divided by a network of hedgerows, with scattered mature trees, ponds and three small areas of woodland.
- 4.3 Two minor roads cross the Site, while the A464 (Holyhead Road) adjoins its southern boundary. The existing settlement of Albrighton lies to the north. Land to the east, south and west predominantly comprises agricultural fields divided by hedgerows, with scattered trees, ponds and small woodland blocks.
- 4.4 The wider landscape is similarly dominated by agricultural land, although the hedgerow network, scattered mature trees, ponds and woodland blocks provide localised areas of higher ecological value and connectivity through the surrounding countryside.

Potential Wildlife Corridors

- 4.5 The network of hedgerows, mature trees and small woodland blocks within the Site provides ecological connectivity across an otherwise predominantly arable landscape. These features connect with similar habitats within the surrounding agricultural land, with the strongest continuity extending east and west from the Site.
- 4.6 The hedgerows and associated tree lines provide potential commuting and dispersal routes for a range of fauna and connect areas of woodland, ponds and other semi-natural habitats within and beyond the Site. Although the arable fields are generally of lower ecological value, they do not wholly prevent movement between these features.
- 4.7 Connectivity to the north is constrained by the existing settlement of Albrighton, while the A464 (Holyhead Road) represents a degree of separation from habitats to the south. The two minor roads crossing the Site also result in some localised fragmentation. Notwithstanding these constraints, the retained linear and wooded features form an interconnected habitat network of local ecological importance.

Statutory Designations

- 4.8 A search has been made, through MAGiC, to identify any nationally designated sites within 2km or internationally designated sites within 10km:

Table 1: *Statutory Designated Sites*

Site Name	Designation	Distance from Site	Summary Interest
Donington and Albrighton	Local Nature Reserve (LNR)	Approximately 0.8km north	A 5.4ha nature reserve comprising grassland, pools, streams and wet woodland, including willow carr. The reserve also contains St Cuthbert's Well and

			supports a range of birds, plants and invertebrates.
Mottey Meadows	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Approximately 9.4km north	Designated principally for its Annex I lowland hay meadows. The SAC supports approximately 40ha of lowland meadow with well-conserved structure and function, including transitions between dry and wet grassland communities and a range of uncommon meadow species.

- 4.9 Donington and Albrighton LNR is physically separated from the Site by the existing settlement of Albrighton, and no direct effects on its habitats are anticipated. The reserve is publicly accessible and the Proposals could result in some additional recreational use; however, given the intervening distance and the provision of substantial green infrastructure and public open space within the development, a significant adverse effect on the LNR is not anticipated.
- 4.10 Mottey Meadows SAC is approximately 9.4km from the Site. The Proposals will not result in any direct habitat loss, fragmentation or disturbance within the SAC. There is no hydrological connection between the Site and the SAC through which changes in water quality or hydrological conditions could arise. The qualifying feature comprises lowland hay meadow habitat and is not functionally dependent upon habitats within the Site. Given the distance and absence of any credible impact pathway, the Proposals are not considered capable of giving rise to a likely significant effect on Mottey Meadows SAC.

Non-statutory Designations

- 4.11 Four non-statutory sites designated for their nature conservation interest were identified within 2km of the Site, as summarised below.

Table 2: *Non-statutory Designated Sites*

Site Name	Designation	Distance from Site	Summary Interest
Whiston Water Meadows	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	Approximately 1.5km west	Former water meadows comprising wetland habitats, including sedge beds, together with relatively drier ridges.
Patshull Golf Course and Hall	Local Wildlife Site (LWS)	Approximately 1.8km south	Ornamental parkland containing mature trees and a lake, with interest associated with woodland, wood-pasture and water birds.
Scott's Bank Plantation	Retained Biodiversity Alert Site (BAS)	Approximately 1.7km south-east	Mixed woodland containing sycamore, oak and sweet chestnut, with locally abundant Lawson's cypress and areas of Norway spruce.

Kingswood Common	Biodiversity Alert Site (BAS)	Approximately 1.8km east	Maturing woodland predominantly comprising pedunculate oak.
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- 4.12 The Proposals will not result in any direct habitat loss or fragmentation within the designated sites. Given their separation from the Site, the intervening land uses and the absence of any identified pathway through which significant indirect effects could arise, the Proposals are considered highly unlikely to adversely affect any of the identified non-statutory designated sites.

SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs)

- 4.13 The Site lies within a Natural England Site of Special Scientific Interest Impact Risk Zone (SSSI IRZ). The IRZ categories applicable at this location relate to aviation proposals, large livestock or poultry units and associated slurry lagoons, and general combustion processes exceeding 50MW energy input.
- 4.14 The Proposals do not fall within any of the development categories identified by the IRZ. The current Natural England IRZ screening tool therefore does not indicate a requirement for the Local Planning Authority to consult Natural England in relation to potential effects on a SSSI.

Granted EPSM Licences

- 4.15 A search for granted European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) licences was made through MAGIC within 1km of the Site. Three granted EPSM licences relating to bats were identified within 1km of the Site, as summarised below;

Table 3: *Granted EPSM Licences within 1km*

Case reference	Species	Licence period	Licensed impact
2014-3625-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat	2 October 2014 - 1 October 2017	Destruction of a resting place
EPSM2013-6853	Common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat	9 January 2014 - 1 October 2017	Destruction of a resting place
2020-49860-EPS-MIT	Common pipistrelle	31 October 2020 - 31 March 2027	Destruction of a resting place

- 4.16 The licence records demonstrate the historical presence of roosts used by common pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats within the surrounding area. They do not confirm that the licensed roosts remain present or establish a functional relationship between those roosts and the Site.

Mapped Ancient Woodland

- 4.17 No ancient woodland is mapped within the Site or within 15m of its boundary. The closest mapped parcel is an area of ancient and semi-natural woodland located approximately 1km southeast of the Site.

Waterbodies and Watercourses

- 4.18 Six ponds were identified within the Site during the original habitat survey. A further 23 ponds were identified within 500m of the Site boundary through the desk study.
- 4.19 Numerous field drainage ditches are associated with the hedgerows and field boundaries across the Site. The original habitat survey found that most were likely to remain dry for much of the year. One ditch, associated with Hedge 11 and Line of Trees 2, was flowing at the time of survey and was considered likely to retain water for more than four months of the year.
- 4.20 PJA subsequently reviewed the mapping of ponds, ditches, culverts and other watercourse features against the topographical information. Targeted verification undertaken in July 2025 included an assessment of the condition of ditches on and adjacent to the Site and completion of a River Condition Assessment. The amended mapping and classifications produced through that work have been adopted as the current baseline.

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey

- 4.21 The original habitat survey was undertaken on 24th, 25th and 26th of February 2024 and was supplemented by a further visit on 26th of April 2024. The survey followed the principles of Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey methodology (JNCC, 2010), with habitats classified in accordance with the UK Habitat Classification system (UKHab Ltd, 2023) and secondary codes applied where appropriate.
- 4.22 The surveys were undertaken by Alasdair Grubb BSc (Hons) ACIEEM on behalf of Cass Design Consultants Ltd. Alasdair is an experienced botanist and ecologist with over 14 years of professional experience and holds a Level 5 Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) awarded by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland. He is considered competent to undertake botanical and habitat surveys, including National Vegetation Classification surveys.
- 4.23 The original habitat survey and assessment were coordinated and reviewed by Daniel Ross BSc (Hons) ACIEEM while employed by Cass Design Consultants Ltd. Daniel has subsequently prepared this updated appraisal on behalf of Beamsley Ecology Ltd and is familiar with the original survey, assessment and mapping process.
- 4.24 Although the initial survey visits were undertaken partly outside the optimal botanical survey period, sufficient information was available to classify the habitats present and establish an appropriate ecological baseline. The April 2024 visit provided additional seasonal information, and the surveys were not materially constrained by poor weather or access.
- 4.25 PJA subsequently reviewed the original habitat classifications, condition assessments and mapped extents. Targeted verification surveys undertaken in July 2025 followed the UKHab methodology and focused particularly on ditches and watercourses, other neutral grassland and mixed scrub. PJA also reconciled the habitat mapping with the topographical and arboricultural information and amended the baseline where appropriate.
- 4.26 An updating walkover survey was undertaken by Alasdair Grubb in May 2026 as part of the current assessment. The purpose of the walkover was to review current Site conditions, identify any material changes since the previous surveys and confirm whether the adopted habitat baseline remained appropriate. The findings of the walkover have been incorporated into the habitat descriptions and conclusions presented below.
- 4.27 Unless otherwise stated, the habitat classifications and extents reflect the verified baseline prepared by PJA and reviewed during the updating walkover, while the supporting descriptive information is derived from the original field surveys and subsequent verification work.

Habitats

4.28 The following habitat types and linear features form the verified habitat baseline and are described in further detail below:

- Arable field margins;
- Cereal crops;
- Non-cereal crops;
- Other neutral grassland;
- Mixed scrub;
- Standing open water;
- Other broadleaved woodland;
- Other developed land;
- Hedgerows and lines of trees;
- Other rivers and streams; and
- Individual trees.

4.29 The habitat descriptions should be read alongside the baseline mapping presented on Figures 2–7.

Arable field margins – c1a

4.30 Tussocky arable field margins are present around the cultivated fields, generally forming narrow strips between the cropped land and adjoining hedgerows, ditches and other boundary features. They support rank grasses including cock's-foot *Dactylis glomerata*, false oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, Yorkshire-fog *Holcus lanatus*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris* and red fescue *Festuca rubra*, together with tall ruderal species such as common nettle *Urtica dioica*, broad-leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, cow parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris* and hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*. The field margins are incorporated into the baseline using a precautionary uniform buffer around the arable fields.

Cereal crops – c1c

4.31 The western part of the Site is dominated by large arable fields which supported recently sown cereal crops during the original surveys. Ephemeral and ruderal plants occur occasionally within the crop, although the cultivated areas are otherwise of limited botanical diversity. The distinction between cereal and non-cereal crops reflects the crop present when the baseline surveys were undertaken and may vary through normal agricultural rotation.

Non-cereal crops – c1d

4.32 Large arable fields within the eastern part of the Site supported a harvested Brassica crop and winter stubble during the original surveys. As with the cereal fields, these areas are subject to regular cultivation and support

limited semi-natural vegetation.

Other neutral grassland – g3c

- 4.33 Small parcels of other neutral grassland are present within uncultivated field corners. These generally support an unmanaged, relatively varied and tussocky sward dominated by common grasses including cock's-foot, false oat-grass and Yorkshire-fog.
- 4.34 The grassland supports a range of predominantly common and nutrient-tolerant forbs, including broad-leaved dock, rosebay willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, red campion *Silene dioica*, red and white dead-nettle *Lamium purpureum* and *L. album*, common nettle, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, common mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum*, germander speedwell *Veronica chamaedrys*, cleavers *Galium aparine*, cow parsley, hogweed, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* and common ragwort *Jacobaea vulgaris*. Occasional hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and elder *Sambucus nigra* saplings are also present.

Mixed scrub – h3h

- 4.35 A small parcel of dense scrub is present within an uncultivated field corner in the central part of the Site. This was originally recorded as bramble scrub but was subsequently classified as mixed scrub. Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. remains prominent, with tall ruderal vegetation including rosebay willowherb, greater willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, common nettle, broad-leaved dock and cleavers.

Standing open water – r1

- 4.36 Six ponds are present within the Site. The ponds are generally associated with small woodland parcels, mature trees or scrub and vary in their degree of shading and scrub encroachment. Several support only limited aquatic or marginal vegetation, reflecting the shading and surrounding agricultural land use.
- 4.37 Recorded aquatic and marginal species include soft rush *Juncus effusus*, greater willowherb, hemlock water-dropwort *Oenanthe crocata*, water-starwort *Callitriche* sp. and creeping buttercup. Willow scrub is established around several ponds, while others are surrounded by mature broadleaved trees.

Other broadleaved woodland – w1g

- 4.38 Several small parcels of broadleaved woodland are present across the Site, generally associated with ponds, field boundaries or the adjoining road network. Canopy species include pedunculate oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, crack willow *Salix fragilis* and other willow species.
- 4.39 The understorey includes hawthorn, hazel *Corylus avellana*, goat willow *Salix caprea*, grey willow *S. cinerea*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, elder, elm *Ulmus* sp., blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, spindle *Euonymus europaeus* and wild cherry *Prunus avium*. The ground flora is generally limited and shows evidence of nutrient enrichment, with common nettle, broad-leaved dock and hogweed prominent in several parcels.

Other developed land – u1b6

- 4.40 Other developed land comprises the existing roads and access tracks crossing the Site or serving adjoining residential properties. These features are predominantly unvegetated and of negligible intrinsic ecological value.

Hedgerows and lines of trees

- 4.41 An extensive network of native and ornamental hedgerows divides the arable fields and defines much of the Site boundary. The network includes species-rich native hedgerows, other native hedgerows, hedgerows with trees and occasional non-native ornamental hedgerows.

- 4.42 Native hedgerows are generally dominated by hawthorn and hazel, with varying occurrences of blackthorn, holly, elm, elder, field maple *Acer campestre*, dog-rose *Rosa canina*, field-rose *R. arvensis* and willow. Mature pedunculate oak, ash, lime *Tilia sp.*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and other trees occur within several hedgerows. The hedgerows vary in structure and management, from regularly trimmed field boundaries to taller, unmanaged features associated with mature trees, banks and ditches. Ecologically valuable lines of trees are also present, principally comprising mature pedunculate oak, ash and willow over or adjoining ponds and watercourses.

Other rivers and streams – r2b

- 4.43 A number of agricultural drainage ditches and watercourses are present along some field boundaries, frequently in association with hedgerows and lines of trees. Many of the smaller drainage features are shallow and likely to remain dry for substantial parts of the year.
- 4.44 The more substantial watercourse associated with the central hedgerow and line of trees was flowing during the original survey. It comprised an approximately 1m-wide channel with steep, well-vegetated banks and a predominantly silty substrate. Recorded marginal vegetation included soft rush, water-starwort, greater willowherb, fool's-watercress *Helosciadium nodiflorum*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* and pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*.

Individual trees

- 4.45 Individual and hedgerow trees occur throughout the Site, including mature pedunculate oak, ash, crack willow and sycamore.

Faunal Appraisal

- 4.46 The following section considers the potential for the Site and adjoining habitats to support protected and notable fauna, informed by the desk study, habitat surveys, and updating walkover.
- 4.47 Only species or groups for which the Site could provide potentially suitable habitat, or which otherwise require consideration in relation to the Proposals, are discussed further. Species and groups for which no realistic impact pathway has been identified are screened out where appropriate.
- 4.48 Species-specific surveys have been undertaken for bats, great crested newts, breeding birds, wintering birds, reptiles and white-clawed crayfish. The relevant accounts below provide a summary of the current survey position and direct the reader to the associated standalone reports. Detailed methodologies, results, impact assessments and mitigation requirements are not repeated within this appraisal and should be taken from the respective species-specific reports.
- 4.49 Where species-specific surveys remain ongoing, the conclusions of this appraisal are necessarily subject to the findings of those surveys.

Amphibians

- 4.50 The desk study returned records of common toad *Bufo bufo*, common frog *Rana temporaria*, smooth newt *Lissotriton vulgaris* and great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* within 2km of the Site. The closest previously recorded great crested newt record was located approximately 1.6km from the Site and dated from 2013.
- 4.51 Six ponds are present within the Site. These provide potential breeding habitat for amphibians, while the adjoining woodland, scrub, hedgerows, watercourses and tussocky field margins provide terrestrial habitat and

connectivity. The intensively cultivated arable fields are of comparatively limited value, although great crested newts could cross or shelter within these areas.

- 4.52 Great crested newt eDNA surveys were undertaken on 26th April 2024. Nine accessible ponds within the Site and surrounding area were sampled. Pond 1 was not sampled because great crested newt eggs were identified during the survey, confirming the presence of the species within an on-site pond.
- 4.53 Pond 14, located approximately 110m south of the Site and separated from it by the A464 (Holyhead Road), returned a positive eDNA result in three of the 12 laboratory replicates. The remaining eight sampled ponds returned negative results. Full methodologies and results are presented within the *Great Crested Newt eDNA Survey – Technical Note* (Cass Design Consultants Ltd, June 2024).

Bats

- 4.54 The desk study returned records of common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*, soprano pipistrelle *P. pygmaeus*, noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, Leisler's bat *N. leisleri*, whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus* and brown long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*. Two records of common pipistrelle were located immediately adjacent to the Site.
- 4.55 The Site contains no buildings. Mature trees occur within the hedgerows, woodland parcels, lines of trees and arable fields, several of which contain potential roosting features. Ground-level assessment and subsequent aerial inspection and emergence survey work have been undertaken to investigate their use by roosting bats. No bat roosts have been confirmed through the survey work completed to date. Full methodologies and results are presented within a stand alone bat survey report.
- 4.56 The woodland, ponds, hedgerows, field margins and mature trees provide potential foraging and commuting habitat. In particular, the hedgerow and tree network provides connectivity across the Site and with habitats in the surrounding landscape. The intensively cultivated arable fields provide a comparatively limited foraging resource.

Birds

- 4.57 The desk study returned records of a range of common and widespread bird species, including several species of conservation concern.
- 4.58 The hedgerows, scrub, woodland, mature trees and ponds provide potential nesting and foraging habitat for a range of generalist and woodland-edge species. The arable fields and associated margins also provide potential nesting and foraging opportunities for farmland birds, including ground-nesting species.
- 4.59 Birds recorded during the original habitat surveys included skylark *Alauda arvensis*, mistle thrush *Turdus viscivorus*, goldcrest *Regulus regulus*, dunnoek *Prunella modularis*, song thrush *Turdus philomelos*, blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, green woodpecker *Picus viridis*, great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*, goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis* and blackbird *Turdus merula*.
- 4.60 Targeted breeding bird surveys have subsequently been undertaken. The survey methodology, results, assessment of effects and associated mitigation requirements are presented within the standalone *Breeding Bird Survey Report* and are not repeated within this appraisal.
- 4.61 The arable fields, field margins, hedgerows, woodland and ponds have potential value as foraging and sheltering habitat for wintering birds. Wintering bird survey has been completed, and the results are presented in a separate survey report (Beamsley Ecology Ltd, Ref: BE0010.R.02.3, 04/06/2025).

Badger

- 4.62 No evidence of badger activity was identified during the updating walkover survey. The Site was also visited on numerous occasions throughout the subsequent survey season in connection with other species-specific surveys. No setts or other definitive evidence of badger activity were recorded during any of these visits.
- 4.63 Habitats on the Site, including hedgerows and woodland parcels, are suitable for the establishment of setts, and badgers are likely to be active in the local landscape.

Otter

- 4.64 A single record of otter *Lutra lutra* was returned from approximately 2km south of the Site and dated from 2000.
- 4.65 The watercourses within the Site comprise generally narrow and shallow agricultural drainage channels, several of which are likely to remain dry for substantial periods. The more substantial channel is culverted where it enters and leaves the Site and is unlikely to support a fish population of value to otters. The on-site ponds are isolated from the wider watercourse network and are similarly unlikely to support a substantial fish population. No evidence of otter activity was identified during the original surveys.
- 4.66 Based on the above the likely absence of otter from the Site can be reasonably concluded.

Water Vole

- 4.67 A single record of water vole *Arvicola amphibius* was returned from approximately 1.1km north of the Site and dated from 2006.
- 4.68 The on-site watercourses are generally shallow, seasonally dry and support limited aquatic and marginal vegetation. The more substantial channel is culverted where it enters and leaves the Site, reducing its connectivity with potentially suitable habitat in the wider landscape.
- 4.69 Based on the above the likely absence of water vole from the Site can be reasonably concluded.

Reptiles

- 4.70 No records of reptiles were returned from within 2km of the Site. The field margins, grassland, scrub and woodland edges provide potentially suitable habitat, although the intensively cultivated arable fields are of limited value.
- 4.71 Targeted reptile presence / likely absence surveys were undertaken by PJA between 6th July and 3rd September 2025. The surveys used 100 artificial refugia distributed across suitable habitats, together with visual encounter surveys, over 20 survey visits.
- 4.72 No reptiles were recorded during any of the artificial refugia checks or visual encounter surveys. Common lizard *Zootoca vivipara*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, grass snake *Natrix helvetica* and adder *Vipera berus* are therefore considered likely absent from the Site. Full methodologies and results are presented within the standalone *Reptile Survey Report* (PJA, September 2025).

Hedgehog

- 4.73 Five records of hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus* were returned from within 2km, including a record from within

the Site boundary.

- 4.74 The hedgerows, scrub, woodland and field margins provide potential foraging, sheltering and hibernation habitat for hedgehogs and maintain connectivity across the Site and with the surrounding landscape. The cultivated arable fields are of comparatively limited value, although hedgehogs may cross them when moving between suitable habitats.

White-clawed crayfish

- 4.75 In response to consultation with Shropshire Council's Planning Ecologist, a habitat assessment and targeted eDNA survey for white-clawed crayfish were undertaken in June 2025 across accessible watercourses within the Site and within 250m. No white-clawed crayfish eDNA was detected, and the surveyed watercourses were assessed as having low suitability for the species. White-clawed crayfish are therefore considered likely absent, and no further species-specific survey or mitigation is required. Full details are provided within the standalone White-clawed Crayfish Survey Report (PJA, October 2025).

Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS)

- 4.76 No species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act (1981 as amended) were found on Site¹.

¹ Whilst the survey included a search for invasive plant species listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), it was not exhaustive and only covered species that were visible and identifiable at the time of the survey. Should the Client wish to confirm the absence of invasive species, a dedicated and detailed survey should be carried out.

5.0 DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Designations

- 5.1 No statutory or non-statutory nature conservation designation lies within or adjacent to the Site. Although the Proposals could result in some additional recreational use of Donington and Albrighton LNR, no significant adverse effect is anticipated given the intervening distance, separation by the existing settlement and the proposed provision of substantial green infrastructure and public open space within the development.

Habitats

- 5.2 The Site is dominated by intensively managed arable fields of comparatively limited intrinsic ecological value. The features of greatest value are the extensive hedgerow network, ponds, mature trees, woodland parcels and associated watercourses. These features provide structural diversity, habitat connectivity and resources for a range of protected and notable species. The smaller areas of neutral grassland, scrub and tussocky field margin provide additional habitat diversity.
- 5.3 The design development process has applied the mitigation hierarchy. The higher-value habitat features have informed the layout and have, as far as practicable, been avoided and incorporated within the proposed green infrastructure network. The ponds, woodland parcels, mature trees, watercourses and semi-natural habitat parcels are retained by the Proposals.
- 5.4 Some localised hedgerow removal is required to facilitate access and connectivity through the Site. Hedgerow losses have been minimised through the design process, with retained sections incorporated into the green infrastructure network. Losses will be compensated through new species-rich native hedgerow planting and the enhancement of retained hedgerows.
- 5.5 The retention and protection of mature trees and woodland has been informed by the Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA). Tree protection fencing, root protection areas and any other precautionary measures specified within the AIA and associated arboricultural method statement should be implemented throughout construction.
- 5.6 Retained hedgerows, trees, woodland, ponds, watercourses and other semi-natural habitats should be protected during construction through an appropriately detailed Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP). This should include measures to prevent physical damage, pollution, sedimentation, dust deposition and inappropriate storage or access within retained habitat areas.
- 5.7 The quantitative assessment of habitat losses, retention, enhancement and creation under the statutory biodiversity net gain framework is presented within the standalone *Biodiversity Net Gain Report* and accompanying Statutory Biodiversity Metric. The detailed habitat creation and management requirements will be developed through the reserved matters process and secured through the Biodiversity Gain Plan and associated Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan.

Protected and Notable Fauna

Amphibians

- 5.8 Great crested newts are confirmed to be present within the Site and the surrounding area. Although the existing ponds are retained by the Proposals, the development would result in the loss and disturbance of terrestrial habitat potentially used by the species and would introduce risks during construction.
- 5.9 The Proposals have entered into Natural England's District Level Licensing (DLL) scheme. Impacts upon great crested newts will be addressed through the DLL process, including the delivery of strategic compensation. The detailed impact assessment and any required on-Site working measures will be set out within the DLL documentation and implemented as part of the Proposals.
- 5.10 Other widespread amphibian species may use the ponds and associated terrestrial habitats. Appropriate measures to avoid the incidental killing or injury of amphibians during vegetation clearance and construction should be incorporated into the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) or other appropriate ecological method statement.

Bats

- 5.11 The Bat activity surveys commenced in October 2025, with further walked transect and static detector surveys undertaken during 2026. The data collected to date indicate use by an assemblage of bat species, with common and soprano pipistrelle accounting for most recorded activity. Other species recorded include noctule, Leisler's bat, *Myotis* species, brown long-eared bat, barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* and horseshoe bats. Records of barbastelle and horseshoe bats were infrequent and occurred at very low levels.
- 5.12 The activity survey programme remains ongoing at the time of this appraisal. The complete survey results, assessment of the importance of the Site to bats and consideration of potential effects arising from the Proposals will be presented within the standalone bat survey report.

Birds

- 5.13 The habitats on Site have potential value for a range of nesting and foraging birds, including farmland species associated with the arable fields and generalist and woodland-edge species associated with the hedgerows, scrub, trees, woodland and ponds. Targeted breeding bird surveys have subsequently been undertaken. The survey methodology, results, assessment of effects and associated mitigation requirements are presented within the standalone Breeding Bird Survey Report and are not repeated within this appraisal.
- 5.14 Targeted wintering bird surveys have been undertaken. The survey methodology, results, assessment of effects and associated mitigation requirements are presented within the standalone Wintering Bird Survey Report and are not repeated within this appraisal.

Badger

- 5.15 Given the mobile nature of badgers and the likely phased delivery of the Proposals, an updated badger survey should be undertaken to inform each reserved matters application and repeated immediately prior to the commencement of works within the relevant phase. Any newly established sett or evidence of activity should be subject to further assessment and appropriate mitigation or licensing where required.

Hedgehog

- 5.16 Hedgehogs may use the Site for foraging / shelter. Although the loss of the habitats present is not likely to impact significantly on any local population, it is recommended that the Site design incorporates features which maintain the value of the Site connectivity across it. Maintenance of connectivity through residential gardens for hedgehog can be ensured via creation of 'hedgehog highways'².

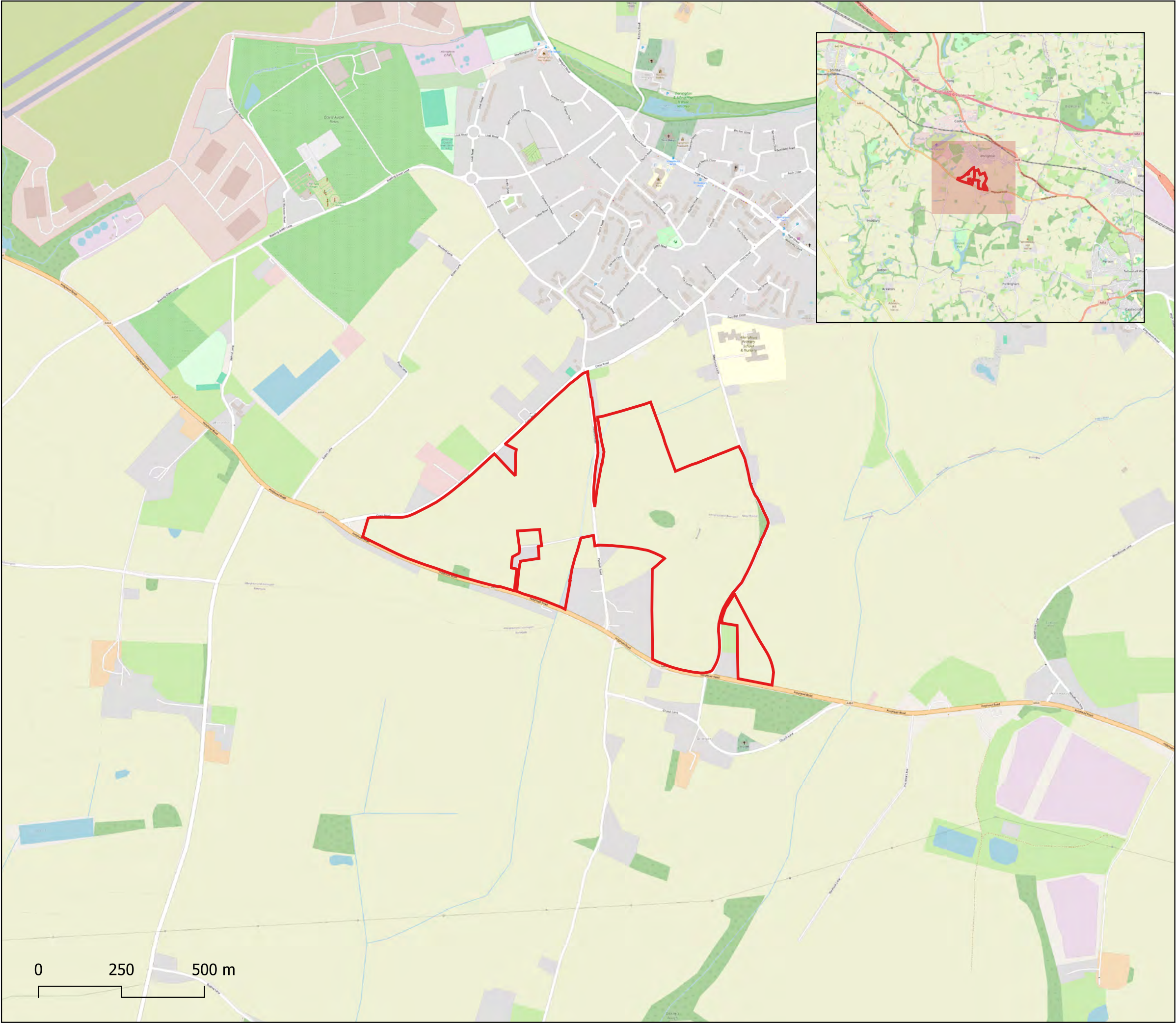
Opportunities

- 5.17 The Proposals represent an opportunity to provide species-specific enhancements. These could include –
- Incorporation of bat and bird boxes in the new buildings and scrub / hedgerow planting to provide nesting and foraging resource for birds.
 - Creation of aquatic features and associated habitats to provide habitats for amphibians.
 - Creation of species-rich grassland to provide foraging resource for birds and other wildlife.
- 5.18 Details of proposed enhancements can be detailed as part of the reserved matters applications or else detailed in a Biodiversity Enhancement and Management Plan (BEMP) or similar, delivered as a condition of planning for each phase.

² See hedgehogstreet.org

FIGURES

- Figure 1:** *Site Location*
Figure 2: *Baseline Habitat Features 1/6*
Figure 3: *Baseline Habitat Features 2/6*
Figure 4: *Baseline Habitat Features 3/6*
Figure 5: *Baseline Habitat Features 4/6*
Figure 6: *Baseline Habitat Features 5/6*
Figure 7: *Baseline Habitat Features 6/6*



 Red Line Boundary



CLIENT
Boningle Developments Limited

PROJECT
Albrighton South

DRAWING TITLE
Figure 1: Site Location

Date	06.08.2026	Ref: BE0010_D_03_01.1	Drawn By DR
Job No:	BE0010	Rev: 01	Checked By DR