Jessica Sibley BSc (Hons) MSc
Consultant Ecologist
Email: jessicasibley@arbtech.co.uk
Arbtech Consulting Ltd
arbtech.co.uk

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Survey site:

St Bedes Catholic School, Collum Avenue, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN16 2TF

Client:

Make Consulting

Survey date:

29th April 2025

The survey results and recommendations contained within this report are valid for 18 months. An updated site visit may be required if the report is to be used any longer than 18 months after completion.

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the North Lincolnshire Council. The proposal is described as:

"The erection of a new building within the school grounds."

[Unsubmitted]

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: **PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024.**

Site Location and Context

The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference: SE 89786 08948 and has an area of approximately ~0.069ha for the red line boundary and ~2.615ha for the full survey area. The site comprises modified grassland, paving, scattered trees and boundary fencing in Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire.

The underlying geology of the site is Ironstone (Frodingham Ironstone Member) overlain by freely draining slightly acid but base-rich soils of high fertility. Typical habitats of this soil type include base-rich pastures and deciduous woodlands.

Adjacent to the north is grassland, adjacent to the east are school buildings and hardstanding, adjacent to the south is a small access drive, and adjacent to the west is a small drive with a primary school with associated grounds beyond.

MAGIC habitat designations within 2km include patches of: 'Priority Deciduous Woodland' (closest ~0.99km northeast), 'Open Mosaic Habitat' (closest ~1.26km northeast), and 'Ancient Woodland' (~1.91km northwest).

The site is situated in an urban area in Scunthorpe, surrounded by dwellings and gardens, with moderate-sized pockets of urban greenspace including playing fields, treelines, scattered trees, with small pockets of woodland further afield. The closest watercourse to the site is the Bottesford Beck located ~1.75km southeast. Further northeast lies commercial and industrial areas.

Survey Details

The site survey was undertaken by Jessica Sibley BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant Ecologist and accredited agent on Class 2 Natural England bat licence: 2024-12491-CL18-BAT, to undertake level 1 activities.

Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)	Rain
29/04/2025	20	43	<5	8	None

Executive Summary

Habitats:

- A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment will be required for the site.
- Retained trees should be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations" (BS 5837) (2012).
- Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution affecting adjacent habitats must be implemented during construction. A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) may be required for this.

Bats:

- A low-impact lighting strategy should be adopted for foraging and commuting bats.

Other European Protected Species (EPS):

- Other recommendations within this report include precautionary working methods for nesting birds, reptiles, common amphibians, badgers, and hedgehogs (please refer to the relevant sections).

Full report follows.

Survey limitations

It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the searches of historical biological records.

A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.

Ecological Survey Factor **Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations**	**Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.**
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, proposal plan in appendix 3, and photos in appendix 4). **Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant, F = Frequent, O = Occasional, R = Rare).**	
Summary of Survey Findings **(***UKHab codes used)* **Primary codes:** • Modified grassland [g4] • Other developed land [u1b6] • Built linear features [u1e] **Secondary codes:** • Scattered trees [32] • Fence [612]	The site does not contain any habitats listed as a habitat of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006). However, the site contains grassland and trees which are of good quality and could be of value to local wildlife populations (as detailed in subsequent sections of this table). Other habitats within the site are common and widespread and have low ecological value. **<u>On-site habitats:</u>** **Modified grassland [g4]** The majority of the site is grassland which best represents 'modified grassland'. Species richness among the sward is low at <6 species per m^2. Grass cover is >75%. Sward height is homogenously short at ~5cm. Species include: **D**: Annual meadow grass *Poa annua*. **F:** Perennial rye grass *Lolium perenne*, and white clover *Trifolium repens*. **O:** Red fescue *Festuca rubra*, daisy *Bellis perennis*, dandelion *Taraxacum officinale agg.*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, greater plantain *Plantago major*, and prickly lettuce *Lactuca serriola*. **R:** Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, cock's foot *Dactylis glomerata*, and *Asteraceae sp*. Grassland – condition indication:

	There are <6 vascular plant species per m^2 present. The sward height across the grassland parcels is homogenously short, without microclimates for vertebrates and invertebrates. Physical damage is >5% via footfall. No scattered scrub or bracken *Pteridium aquilinum were* recorded across the grassland parcels. Cover of bare ground is <10%. No invasive non-native species (as listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981), were recorded across the grassland parcels. **Other developed land [u1b6]** Small sections of the site are hardstanding and paving. **Built linear features [u1e] – fencing [612]** Boundaries of the site include ~2.5m tall wire mesh and metal fencing. **Scattered trees [32]** There are ten small trees, six medium trees, and there is one large tree within the site boundary. Tree species include frequent sour cherry *Prunus cerasus*, and occasional beech *Fagus sylvatica*, field maple *Acer campestre*, and willow *Salix sp*. Individual trees – condition indication: <70% of the trees within the block are native species. <50% of trees within the block are mature. There is no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities. No natural ecological niches were recorded (i.e., cavities), associated with the trees. The trees over sail grassland vegetation beneath (i.e., >20%).
Foreseen Impacts	**<u>On-site habitats:</u>** The proposed development will result in the loss of ~0.069ha of modified grassland. This could result in a net loss in biodiversity at the site.

	Notable habitats: No impacts to any notable habitats are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such habitats as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers.
Recommendations	**Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG):** The Environment Act (2021) requires all developments (excluding exemptions) to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity. This is mandatory for larger developments and came into force for smaller developments on 2nd April 2024. **Therefore, the planning application must be accompanied by a landscaping/habitat creation and enhancement strategy, biodiversity net gain calculations, and a habitat management and monitoring plan to ensure the proposed development delivers a 10% net gain.** Retained trees should be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations" (BS 5837) (2012). Best practice measures to minimise the possibility of pollution affecting adjacent habitats must be implemented during construction. **A Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) may be required for this.**
Locality and Designated Sites	
Summary of Survey Findings	**On-site designations:** The site is not subject to any statutory designation. **Statutory designated sites (within 2km):** There is one statutory site within 2km of the site, as detailed below: • Brumby Wood Local Nature Reserve (LNR) – ~1.92km northwest – (semi-natural woodland).

	The site lies within the 'impact risk zones' for local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). **Non-statutory designated sites:** The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from Lincolnshire Environmental Records Centre (LERC).
Foreseen Impacts	**On-site designations:** No impacts foreseen. **Statutory and non-statutory designated sites:** No impacts to designated sites are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such sites (where known) as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers. The site lies within the impact risk zone for local SSSIs. However, the proposed development is not listed as a possible high risk for these designations therefore consultation with Natural England (NE) is not required.
Recommendations	**On-site designations:** None required. **Statutory and non-statutory designated sites:** None required.
Invasive / Non-native species	

Summary of Survey Findings	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.
Foreseen Impacts	N/A
Recommendations	No further surveys but remain vigilant.
Invertebrates	
Summary of Survey Findings	The habitats present on-site, including grassland and trees, likely provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for specialised or protected invertebrates.
Foreseen Impacts	None foreseen.
Recommendations	No further surveys. **Suggested biodiversity enhancements:** The site could be further enhanced via the provision of native wildflowers or wildflower turf, which would provide foraging opportunities for invertebrates.
Bats	
Summary of Survey Findings	**European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) data:** A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence or will relocate to other known roost sites in close proximity to the licensed site. No EPSLs are present within a 2km radius of the site. There are no Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated for bats within 10km of the site.

	Foraging and commuting habitat: Habitats recorded on-site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of species-poor grassland and scattered trees. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations, of low value. Dwellings with gardens surround the site, of moderate value for foraging and commuting bats. **Roosting habitat:** The on-site trees were not subject to a roost inspection, as they will be retained as part of the proposed works.
Foreseen Impacts	**Roosting habitat:** The proposed development will not affect any trees that could be used by roosting bats and therefore, no impacts to bat roosts are anticipated. **Foraging and commuting habitat:** The proposed development will result in the loss of small areas of ~0.069ha of grassland but given the presence of more extensive areas of foraging and commuting habitat in the locality, this is likely to be inconsequential for bats. The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats and without mitigation, this may disturb foraging and commuting bats.
Recommendations	**Roosting habitat:** In the event of any felling/pruning of any on-site trees, a separate Ground Level Tree Assessment (GLTA) should be undertaken to assess impacts, after an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) which details definitive tree loss and retention.

	<u>Foraging and commuting habitat:</u> No further surveys are required. **A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during and post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors.** Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2 **<u>Suggested biodiversity enhancements:</u>** The installation of two bat boxes at the site will provide additional roosting habitat for bats. The bat boxes will be incorporated into the fabric of the new building. They will be suitable for pipistrelles. Suitable bat boxes include Habibat Bat Box, Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box, or similar alternative brand. Bat boxes should be positioned 3-5m above ground level facing in a south or south-westerly direction with a clear flight path to and from the entrance, away from artificial light.
Birds	
Summary of Survey Findings	**<u>Nesting birds:</u>** No evidence of nesting birds was identified on-site, however, the trees offering potential nesting sites, with vegetation offering nest building resources for birds. No habitat for Schedule 1 birds was recorded on-site. **<u>Barn owls:</u>** The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls.

	Overwintering birds: Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site is not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.
Foreseen Impacts	**Nesting birds:** No impacts are anticipated on nesting birds as a result of the proposed development, as the trees will be retained as part of the proposed works. **Barn owls:** None foreseen. **Overwintering birds:** None foreseen.
Recommendations	**Nesting birds:** Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged. **Barn owls:** None required. **Overwintering birds:**

	None required. **<u>Suggested biodiversity enhancements:</u>** The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes at the site will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. ▪ Vivara Pro WoodStone Swift Nest Box (buildings) ▪ House Sparrow Terrace FSC Nest Box (buildings) ▪ Swallow Nest Bowl (buildings) ▪ Vivara Pro Seville 32mm WoodStone Nest Box (trees) ▪ Vivara Pro Barcelona WoodStone Open Nest Box (trees) (Or a similar alternative brand). Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole. Swift and sparrow boxes should be positioned at the eaves of a building and can be incorporated into the fabric of the building during construction.
Reptiles	
Summary of Survey Findings	**<u>EPSL data:</u>** A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site. **<u>Habitat suitability:</u>**

	There are limited suitable habitats present on-site for reptiles due to a lack of habitats such as scrub and rank grassland which would offer refuge for these species. Furthermore, the site is surrounded by urban development (i.e. roads and buildings) which is considered suboptimal for reptile migration and therefore reptiles are considered unlikely to migrate from any nearby suitable habitats to the development site. As such it is unlikely that reptiles are present at the development site.
Foreseen Impacts	Although a small area of suitable habitat is being removed as part of the development, there is a low risk that a low number of reptiles could be present in the vicinity of the works. These could be injured or killed without mitigation. The site does not form a connective pathway or stepping stone between areas of suitable reptile habitat in the wider landscape and the development is unlikely to lead to reptile habitat fragmentation.
Recommendations	**A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction**, including the following measures: • Grassland vegetation will be maintained at a short sward (5cm) to discourage reptiles from the working area. • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. **In the unlikely event that a reptile is identified, works must cease, and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.**
Amphibians	
Summary of Survey Findings	**EPSL data:**

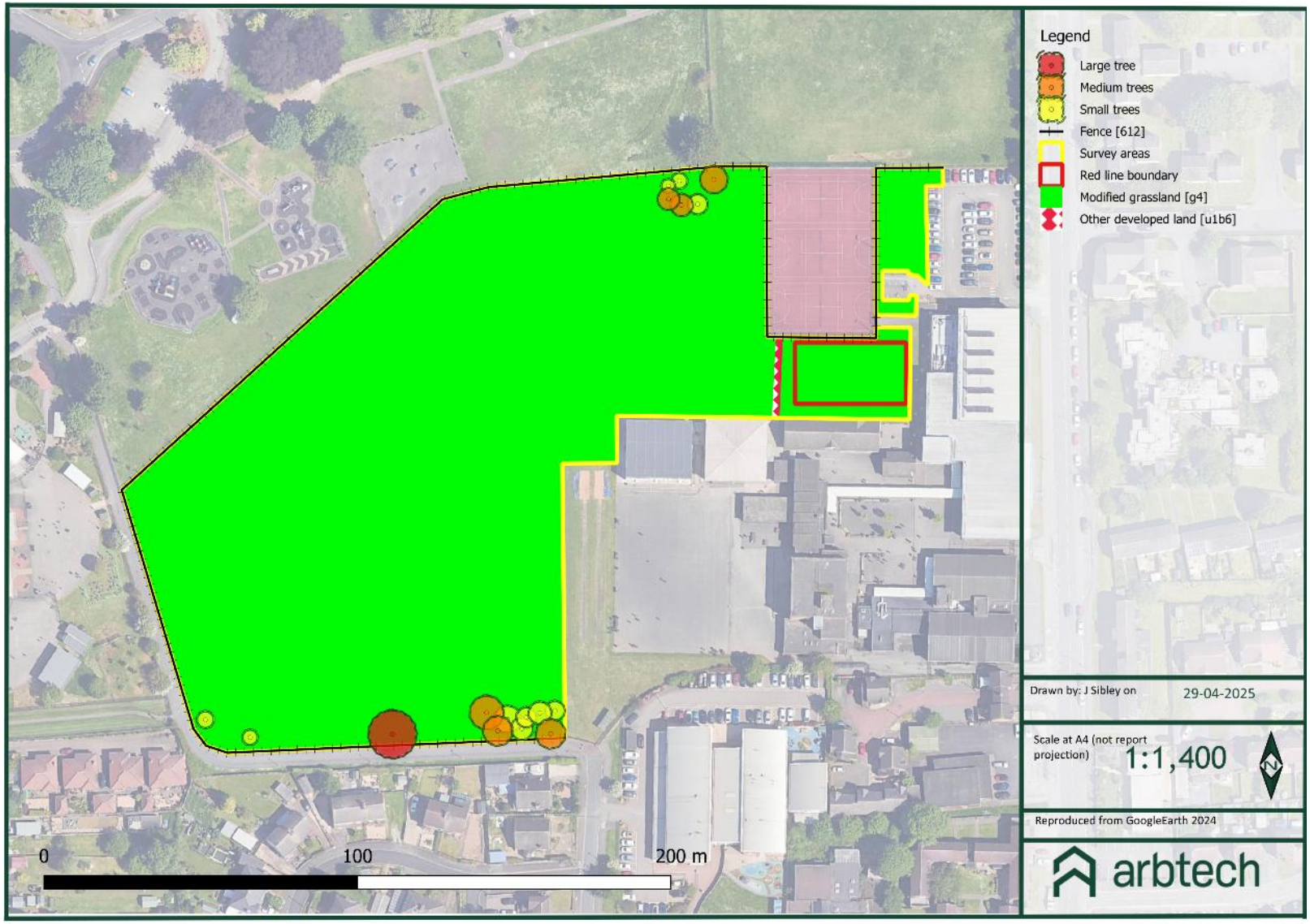
	A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for Great Crested Newts (GCN) within 2km of the site. However, one positive class survey licence return is present ~194m northeast. No District Level Licencing (DLL) historic survey data (2017 – 2019) were present within 2km of the site. **Aquatic habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m):** GCN exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; GCN are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001). There are no ponds on-site, and a review of the MAGIC.gov.uk database indicates the presence of no ponds within 500m. **Terrestrial habitat suitability:** The site provides limited suitable terrestrial habitat for amphibians given the lack of optimal habitat (i.e. scrub, rank grassland). Furthermore, given that GCN exist in metapopulations that utilise multiple terrestrially connected ponds within 500m, an absence of connecting ponds is likely to indicate an absence of GCN from the site, which significantly reduces the likelihood of GCN occurrence on-site during their terrestrial phase. There is a higher likelihood of common amphibian occurrence, as amphibians such as common toads have better mobility compared to newts and can travel further distances (including over suboptimal habitat).
Foreseen Impacts	Given the lack of suitably connected breeding ponds within 500m of the site, the presence of GCN on-site is considered unlikely and therefore impacts to amphibians as a result of the proposed development are deemed to be acceptably low.
Recommendations	No further surveys are required. **However, the precautionary working method adopted for reptiles, will also benefit common amphibians.**

	In the unlikely event that a GCN is identified, works must cease, and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. **<u>Suggested biodiversity enhancements:</u>** The site could be enhanced for amphibians post-development through creation of amphibian hibernacula using rubble and logs. Information on how to construct a hibernaculum can be found here: https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/hibernaculum
Badger	
Summary of Survey Findings	No badger setts were recorded on-site or suspected within a 30m radius of the site.
Foreseen Impacts	None foreseen.
Recommendations	**Basic precautionary mitigation during works is recommended**: • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill onto habitats which badgers could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. **In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified within 30m of the works area, works must cease, and advice must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.** **<u>Suggested biodiversity enhancements:</u>** The site could be enhanced for badgers by planting bramble and damson *Prunus domestica subsp. insititia*, as well as planting fruit-bearing trees to increase foraging opportunities for badgers.

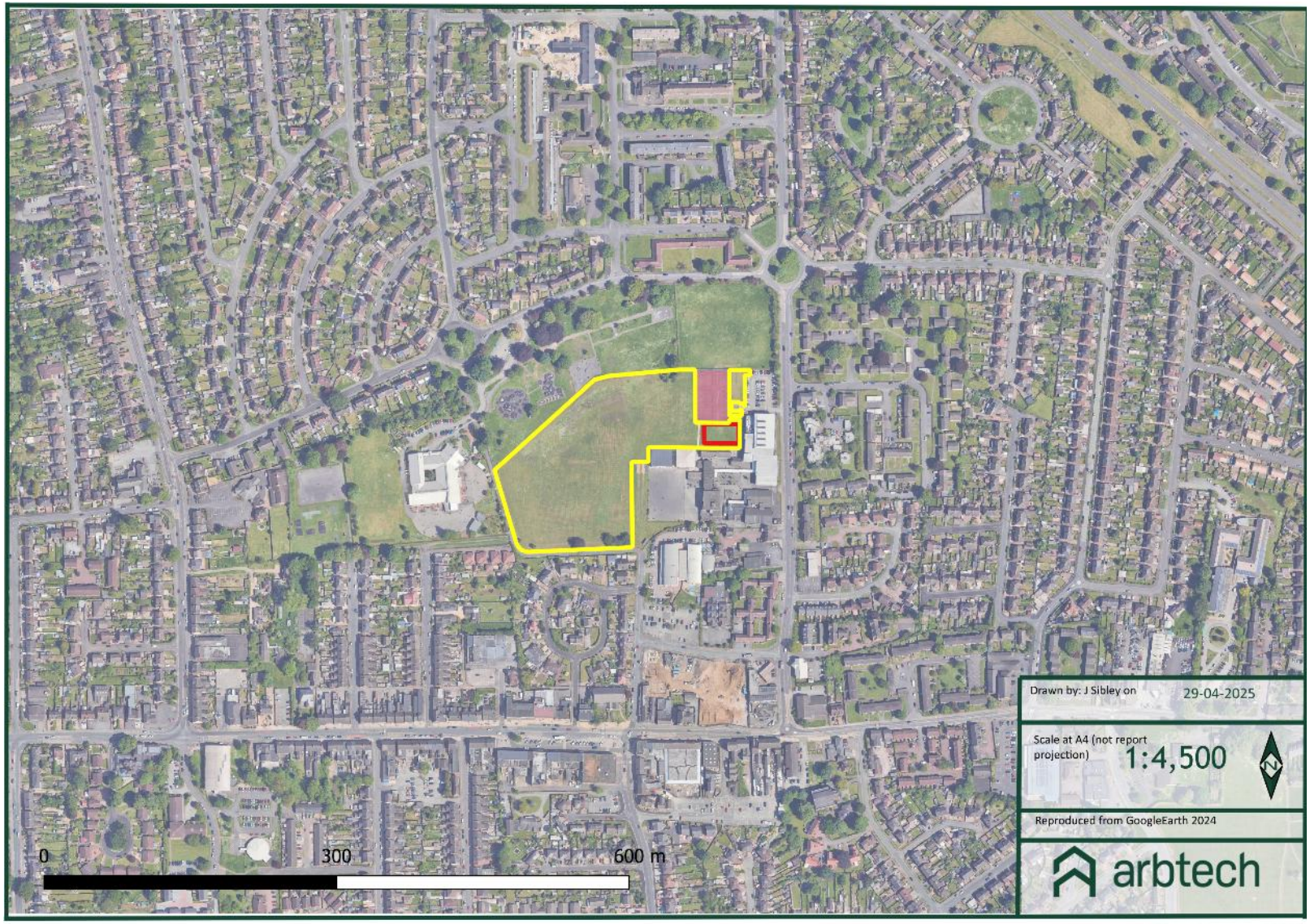
Riparian animals	
Summary of Survey Findings	**EPSL data:** A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for otters or water voles within 2km of the site. **Habitat suitability:** There are no watercourses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.
Foreseen Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None required.
Hazel dormouse	
Summary of Survey Findings	**EPSL data:** A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for hazel dormice within 2km of the site. **Habitat suitability:** The site lies outside of the known current range for hazel dormice and there are no suitable habitats within the development area. As such it is considered unlikely that hazel dormice are present at the site.
Foreseen Impacts	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
Recommendations	None required.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
Summary of Survey Findings	The grassland on-site provides limited foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs.

Foreseen Impacts	~0.069ha of grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to its low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
Recommendations	**Similar to the badgers, a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures:** • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. **If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance.** **<u>Suggested biodiversity enhancements:</u>** The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs: ▪ Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities. ▪ Creation of brash piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas. ▪ Installation of gaps under boundary fencing to enable hedgehogs to move freely through the site.

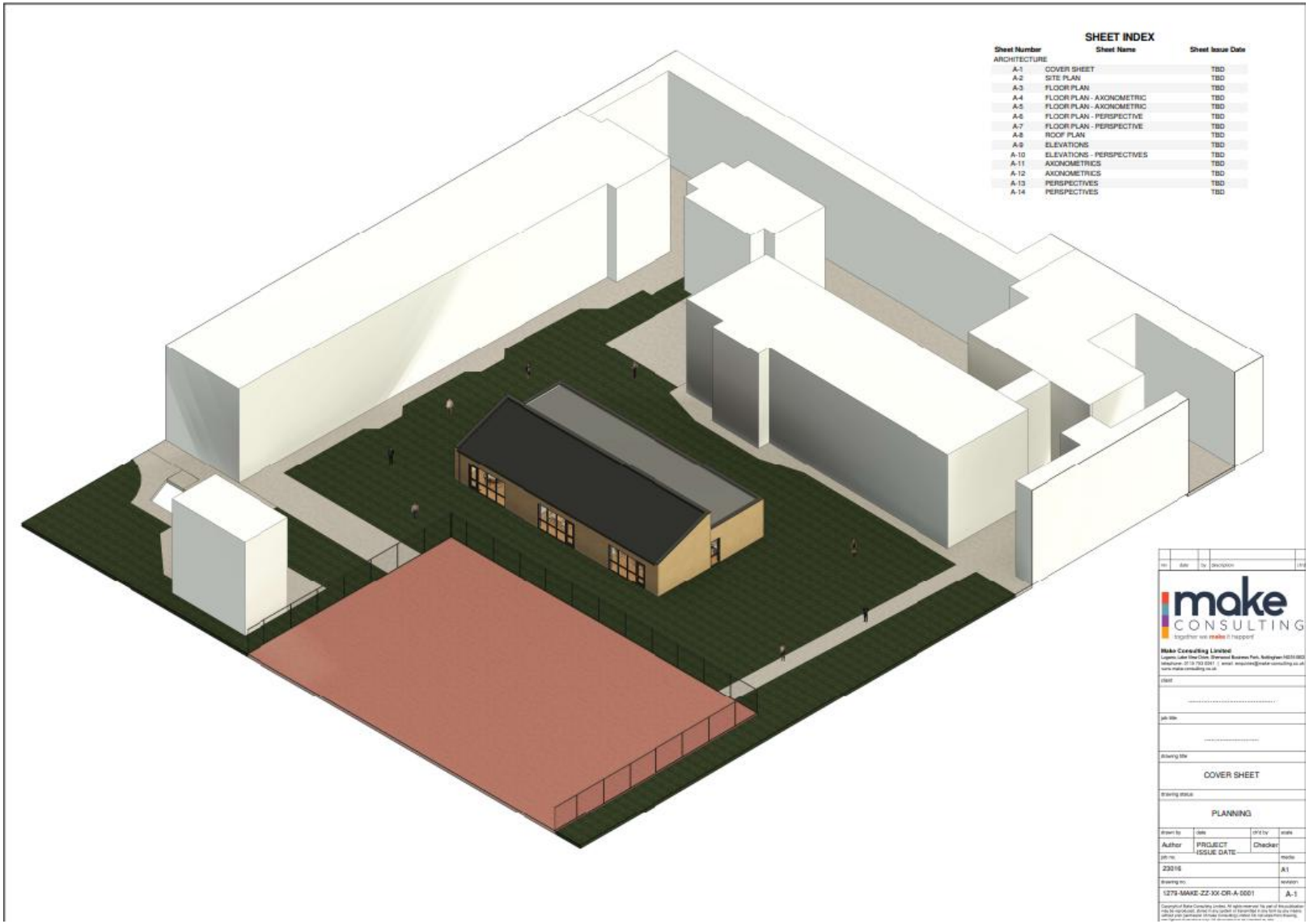
Appendix 1: Habitat map



Appendix 2: Location map



Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Appendix 4: Habitat Photos

Other developed land	
Photograph	**Description**
	**Figure 1:** On-site paving – facing northwest.
Modified grassland	
Photograph	**Description**
	**Figure 2:** On-site grassland – facing northwest.

Built linear features	
Photograph	**Description**
 	**Figures 3 and 4:** On-site boundary fencing – facing southwest and north, respectively.

Scattered trees	
Photograph	**Description**
 	**Figures 5 and 6:** Scattered trees present on-site (near the south boundary).

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Version control			
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