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# PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL REPORT FINAL

## ST ILLTYDS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, CARDIFF

### MACE GROUP

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## VERSIONING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

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The evidence which we have prepared and provided is true and has been prepared and provided in accordance with the guidance of The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct. We confirm that the opinions expressed are our true and professional bona fide opinions.

## SUMMARY

Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wildwood Ecology was commissioned by Mace Group (the client) to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of St Illtyds Catholic High School, Cardiff.</li> <li>The site is the subject of a planning application for the construction of a 3G sports pitch.</li> </ul>
Work undertaken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A PEA was undertaken consisting of a field survey undertaken in January 2023 and a desk study in December 2022 following the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (2017) guidelines and standard Phase 1 Habitat Survey protocol (JNCC, 2010).</li> </ul>
Key issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development may result in impacts on wildlife and habitats affecting the following protected species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bats.</li> <li>West European hedgehog.</li> <li>Nesting birds.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Recommendations	<p><u>Bats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The plans show that no trees are to be removed as part of the development. However, if trees within the woodland habitat need to be cut back to facilitate the development, they will need to have a ground level assessment to assess their suitability to support roosting bats. If assessed as either moderate or high, they may require further surveys. If no trees are affected by the development, no further surveys will be required.</li> <li>It is assumed that lighting will be required for the proposed sports pitch. A sensitive lighting plan with input from an ecologist will be required, demonstrating consideration for bats. The lighting plan should focus on minimising light spill onto the adjacent woodland habitat. The lighting plan should consider illuminance limits, luminaire specifications, column heights, directional luminaires and use of baffles, hoods, and louvres in line with BCT guidance '<a href="#">Bats and artificial lighting in the UK</a>'.</li> <li>Bat boxes should be incorporated into the woodland (see biodiversity enhancement section).</li> </ul> <p><u>Nesting birds</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If habitats suitable for nesting birds are to be removed (scrub), then any vegetation clearance will take place outside of the bird nesting season. In the event that clearance work has to be undertaken during the nesting season (generally from 1<sup>st</sup> March until 31<sup>st</sup> August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a nesting bird check will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified person. Any active nests identified should be protected until the young have fledged. Where a Schedule 1 species (as defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act - <a href="http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3614">http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3614</a> is involved, compensation for impacts, e.g., loss of nesting sites, should be devised and implemented.</li> <li>Bird boxes should be incorporated into the woodland (see biodiversity enhancement section).</li> </ul> <p><u>West European hedgehog</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all excavations are covered overnight to ensure no animals get trapped. If this is not possible place a ramp type structure in the excavation to allow them to escape.</li> <li>If the scrub habitat at the boundaries of the metal fencing needs to be removed to facilitate the development, this will need to be done in a two-staged cut.</li> </ul>
Conclusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing that the recommendations outlined within this report are successfully implemented, it should be possible for the proposed development to proceed and for there to be no long-term impacts upon the key protected species present at the site.</li> <li>This ecological report will remain valid for a period of 18 months from the date of the last survey – i.e., until July 2024.</li> </ul>

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Wildwood Ecology was commissioned by Mace Group (the client) to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of St Illtyds Catholic High School, Cardiff (the site) centred at grid reference ST 22612 80462.

### Site description

- 1.2 The site is situated in Rumney, a community in the East of Cardiff.
- 1.3 The aerial image of the site (Figure 1, left) shows the site to consist of amenity grassland, tree lines, areas of hardstanding and buildings.
- 1.4 The distant aerial image of the site (Figure 1, right) shows the habitat surrounding the site to consist of woodland - adjacent to the east of site, urban housing to the south, west, north, tree lines are present in all directions. An area of bare ground (building site) is present to the south-west of site.



**Figure 1 – Aerial image of the site (red line shows the boundary of the school and the orange line shows the survey boundary). Image used under licence (©2022 Google). Imagery date 20/07/2021.**

### Proposed development

- 1.5 The site is the subject of a planning application for the construction of a 3G sports pitch.

### Purpose of this report

- 1.6 The purpose of this report is to provide sufficient information for the local planning authority to fully assess the potential ecological impacts of the proposed development, or to identify what further information is required before a full assessment can be made.
- 1.7 The result of the PEA has been used to inform whether further surveys are required, or to establish the need for, and extent of, any mitigation or compensation measures required as part of the proposed development.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

### Desk study

2.1 A biodiversity desk study was undertaken in relation to the site in December 2022. The sources consulted and the type of information obtained are summarised in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Sources of biodiversity and ecological records.**

Source	Information requested (search buffer from site centre/boundary)
South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protected and priority species (2km)</li> <li>Sites of local importance/designation (1km)</li> </ul>
Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) <sup>1</sup>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>International statutory designations (5km)</li> <li>National statutory designations (2km)</li> </ul>

2.2 The search buffers are considered to be sufficient to cover the potential zone of influence (Zol<sup>2</sup>) of the proposed development.

2.3 The impact of the proposed development on the biological integrity of any nearby designated protected sites has been fully considered.

2.4 No previous survey information was available for the site itself.

### Field survey

2.5 A field survey was undertaken on 11 January 2023.

2.6 All habitats present within the site with the potential to support rare, protected, or otherwise notable species of flora or fauna (together with any direct signs) were noted.

2.7 In the context of this report, rare, protected, or otherwise notable species of flora or fauna were those considered to meet any of the following criteria:

- Species protected by legislation (see Appendix V);
- UK Post 2010 UK Biodiversity Framework priority species or Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) species;
- Nationally rare or nationally scarce species;
- Species of Conservation Concern (e.g. JNCC Red List, RSPB/BTO Red or Amber Lists).

2.8 A PEA habitat map was drawn up incorporating target notes used to highlight features of particular ecological interest (see Appendix I).

<sup>1</sup> <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> Zol definition – 'the areas/resources that may be affected by the biophysical changes caused by activities associated with a project' (CIEEM, 2018).

2.9 The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) as amended, makes it an offence to release or allow to escape into the wild any animal, plant or micro-organism not ordinarily resident in the UK (as listed in Schedule 9 of the Act). Plant species listed in Schedule 9 were searched for during the survey. Examples include species such as Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) and Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*).

#### Surveyor information

2.10 The PEA was undertaken by Maddie Anderson. See Table 2 for further information.

**Table 2 – Surveyor information.**

Surveyor	Licences	Ecological experience
<b>Maddie Anderson</b> M.Sc., B.Sc. (Hons) Assistant Ecologist	-	Holds a 2:1 honours degree in Biology and a Masters in Environmental Biology: Conservation & Resource Management. Experience in undertaking bat surveys and assisting in other protected species surveys gained through working with Wildwood Ecology.

#### Limitations and assumptions

2.11 The desk study and field survey will not produce a comprehensive list of plants and animals as this will be limited by factors that influence their presence (e.g., activity and dormancy periods). An assessment can however be made of the habitats within the survey area, their nature conservation value and potential to support protected or priority species.

2.12 The woodland at the site boundaries of the school was not accessed due to fencing.

2.13 No other limitations were encountered, or assumptions made during either the desk study or the field survey and it is considered that with the access gained and recording undertaken an accurate assessment of the site's ecological value has been made.



### 3 RESULTS

#### Desk study

##### *Designated sites (statutory)*

- 3.1 There were no international statutory designations within 5km of the site and one national statutory designation within 2km (see Table 3).
- 3.2 There was one site designated for its bat population within 10km of the site. This is Ruperra Castle and Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located approximately 5.9km north of the proposed development site.

##### *Designated sites (non-statutory)*

- 3.3 There were five local non-statutory designations within 1km of the site (see Table 3).

**Table 3 – Summary of designated sites in range of the site.**

Site name	Designation	Description / key reason for designation	Distance & direction
Gwent Levels – Rumney and Peterstone	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	The Gwent Levels constitute the lowlands between Cardiff and Chepstow and are drained by an ordered network of drainage ditches. Many nationally rare or notable species are present: <i>Haliplus mucronatus</i> , <i>Hydrophilus piceus</i> , <i>Physa heterostropha</i> , <i>Brachytron pratense</i> , <i>Pipunculus fonscai</i> , <i>Tomosvaryella minima</i> , <i>Ranunculus baudotii</i> , <i>Potamogeton obtusifolius</i> and <i>Potamogeton berchtoldii</i> , <i>Pherbellia brunnipes</i> and <i>Lamprochromus elegans</i> , <i>Plateumaris braccata</i> and <i>Coenagrion pulchellum</i> .	861m south-east
Ruperra Castle and Woodlands	SSSI	This site is designated for its population of greater horseshoe bats. The old generator block provides a nursery roost, whilst the old castle cellars provide a hibernation site during the winter for both greater and lesser horseshoe bat (as well as being used as a day and night	5.9km north

		time roost at other times of the year).	
Fishpond Wood	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)	Designated due to woodland habitat	747m north-west
Cath Cobb Wood	SINC	Designated due to woodland habitat	775m north-east
Hendre Road	SINC	Composed of scrub, grassland and swamp habitat.	835m south-east
Lower Rookery Wood	SINC	Designated due to woodland habitat	904m north-west
B-Lines	Local non-statutory	A series of networks designated as an important insect pathway for pollinators.	1000m south

#### Natural Resources Wales Priority Areas

- 3.4 There are areas in the wider landscape that are designated as ancient semi natural woodland. These are broadleaf woodlands comprising mainly native tree and shrub species which are believed to have been in existence for over 400 years. The ground vegetation will reflect the naturalness of these woodlands and will frequently feature species which provide clear indication of long and continued woodland cover. They will have been woodland for centuries and contribute substantially to our natural and cultural heritage.
- 3.5 The areas designated as ancient semi natural woodland are isolated from the proposed development site due to built up areas and housing surrounding the site.
- 3.6 The closest area designated as ancient semi natural woodland NRW priority area is approximately 600m west of the proposed development site.
- 3.7 NRW priority area (lowland wetland) is located approximately 550m east and south of the south of the proposed development site. Part of this is Gwent Levels – Rumney and Peterstone SSSI.

*Priority and protected species*

3.8 Table 4 summarises the priority and protected species records found within the local area.

**Table 4 – Priority and protected species records found in the vicinity of the site.**

Protected & priority		# of records (# species)			Further information (from site)	
Groups	Species	Onsite	<500m	>500m		
Bats	Common pipistrelle	-	0	23	Closest record: 659m from site (2014). Closest roost: 896m from site (2011).	
	Nathusius' pipistrelle	-	0	1	Closest record: 871m from site (2014).	
	Soprano pipistrelle	-	0	12	Closest record: 659m from site (2014). Closest roost: N/A.	
	Whiskered bat	-	0	2	Closest record and roost: 1.084m from site (2013).	
	Brown long-eared bat	-	0	4	Closest record: 873m from site (two records, both from 2010). Closest roost: N/A.	
	Unidentified long-eared bat			0	1	Record is 1.3km from site 1996.
	Noctule	-	2	11	Closest record: 189m from site (2010). Closest roost: N/A.	
	Serotine	-	0	2	Closest record: 873m from site (2010). Closest roost: N/A.	
	Leisler's bat	-	0	1	Record is 873m from site (2010).	
	Daubenton's Bat	-	0	4	Closest record: 513m from site (2014). Closest roost: N/A.	
Unidentified <i>Myotis</i>	-	0	2	Closest record: 1.68km from site (two		

Protected & priority		# of records (# species)			Further information (from site)
Groups	Species	Onsite	<500m	>500m	
					records, both from 2013). Closest roost: N/A.
	Unidentified pipistrelle	-	9	30	Closest record: 136m from site (two records, both from 2010). Closest roost: 896m from site (2011).
	<i>TOTALS</i>	-	<i>11(2)</i>	<i>93(10+)</i>	
Mammals (excluding bats)	European otter	-	0	6	Closest record: spraints 1.16km from site (2003).
	European badger	-	0	5	Closest record: sett 585m from site (2021).
	European water vole	-	0	2	Closest record: 1.92km from site (2010).
	Hazel dormouse	-	0	17	Closest record: nest 1.4km from site (2008).
	West European hedgehog	-	7	52	Closest record 133m from site (2021).
	Other species	-	0	24(8)	Other species include American mink, brown hare, Eastern grey squirrel, Eurasian common shrew, Eurasian water shrew, harvest mouse, stoat, and weasel.
	<i>TOTALS</i>	-	<i>7(1)</i>	<i>106(13)</i>	
Amphibians	Common frog	-	5	17	Closest record: 264m from site (2008).
	Common toad	-	1	11	Closest record: 435m from site (2008).

Protected & priority		# of records (# species)			Further information (from site)
Groups	Species	Onsite	<500m	>500m	
	Palmate newt	-	0	5	Closest record: 703m from site (2009).
	Smooth newt	-	0	5	Closest record: 631m from site (2009).
	Unidentified newt	-	0	2	Closest record: 1.013km from site (1998).
	<i>TOTALS</i>	-	<i>6(2)</i>	<i>40(4)</i>	
Reptile	Common lizard	-	1	3	Closest record: 368m from site (2008).
	Slow worm	-	5	9	Closest record: 435m from site (2008).
	Grass snake	-	0	5	Closest record: 782m from site (2009).
	Adder	-	0	1	Record is 1.016km from site (2007).
	<i>TOTALS</i>	-	<i>6(2)</i>	<i>18(4)</i>	
Birds	Schedule 1	-	<i>2(2)</i>	<i>129(34)</i>	Schedule 1 species <500m from site include Mediterranean gull and red kite. Schedule 1 species >500m from site include barn owl, bittern, black redstart, black tern, black tailed godwit, brambling, cetti's warbler, crossbill, fieldfare, firecrest, garganey, green sandpiper, greenshank, hen harrier, hobby, hoopoe, kingfisher, little gull, little ringed plover, little tern, marsh harrier, Mediterranean gull, merlin, peregrine,

Protected & priority		# of records (# species)			Further information (from site)
Groups	Species	Onsite	<500m	>500m	
					quail, red kite, red throated diver, redwing, ruff, scaup, velvet scoter, whimbrel, woodlark, wryneck.
	Non-schedule 1	-	24(10)	499(59)	Non-schedule 1 species <500m from site include black headed gull, bullfinch, common gull, dunnock, house sparrow, long tailed tit, ring necked parakeet, song thrush, starling, swift. Non-schedule category 1 species >500m from site include aquatic warbler, avocet, bar tailed godwit, bearded tit, bewick's swan, black headed gull, bullfinch, common scoter, corn bunting, cuckoo, curlew, dark bellied brent goose, dotterel, dunnock, golden plover, goldeneye, goshawk, grasshopper warbler, grey partridge, hawfinch, herring gull, honey buzzard, house sparrow, kestrel, Lapland bunting, lapwing, <i>Larus argentatus argentatus</i> , leach's storm petrel, lesser redpoll, lesser spotted woodpecker,

Protected & priority		# of records (# species)			Further information (from site)
Groups	Species	Onsite	<500m	>500m	
					linnet, long tailed duck, marsh tit, nightjar, osprey, pied flycatcher, pintail, purple sandpiper, reed bunting, ring ouzel, ringed plover, skylark, Slavonian grebe, snow bunting, song thrush, spoonbill, spotted flycatcher, starling, stone curlew, tree pipit, tree sparrow, turtle dove, twite, white fronted goose, whooper swan, willow tit, wood sandpiper, wood warbler, yellow wagtail, yellowhammer.
Invertebrates	Totals:	-	1(1)	140(41)	Category 1 species <500m from site include small blue. Category 1 species >500m from site include beaded chestnut, blood vein, broom moth, brown banded carder bee, buff ermine, cinnabar, dark brocade, dark barred twin spot carpet, dingy skipper, dot moth, double dart, dusky brocade, feathered gothic, garden dart, garden tiger, ghost moth, green brindled crescent, grey dagger, knot grass,

Protected & priority		# of records (# species)			Further information (from site)
Groups	Species	Onsite	<500m	>500m	
					lackey, large wainscot, latticed heath, moss carder bee, mottled rustic, mouse moth, powdered quaker, rosy rustic, rustic, sallow, shoulder striped wainscot, shrill carder bee, small blue, small heath, small pearl bordered fritillary, small square spot, spinach, wall, white ermine, white spotted pinion.
Plants	see further info	-	0	32(7)	Category 1 species <500m from site include bluebell, cornflower, marsh stitchwort, red hemp nettle, sea barley, slender hare's ear, tubular water dropwort.

Field survey

*Timing and conditions*

3.9 Prevailing weather conditions during the field survey are summarised within Table 5.

**Table 5 – Summary of weather conditions during the PEA.**

Date	Weather conditions			
	Temp [°C]	Cloud cover [Oktas]	Wind speed [Beaufort scale]	Rain
11/01/2023	8	8	3	yes

3.10 The distribution and extent of habitats observed within the site is illustrated in the PEA plan (see Appendix I). An accompanying species list (including scientific names) can be found in Appendix IV.



- 3.11 The habitats present onsite are described in detail in Table 6 using the standard Phase 1 survey habitat classification hierarchical alphanumeric reference codes (JNCC, 2010).
- 3.12 The site was classified according to the following habitat types: mixed woodland, semi-natural, scrub, amenity grassland, buildings, hardstanding, and fence.

**Table 6 – Habitats and linear features present onsite.**

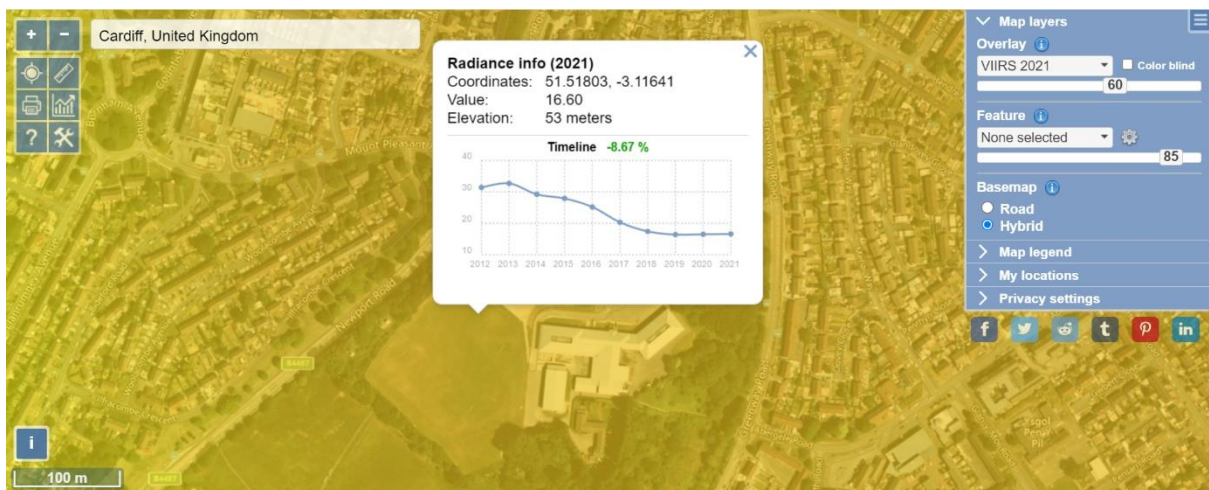
Habitat type / Linear feature	Species present	Other observations
<p><i>A1.3.1 Semi-natural, mixed woodland</i></p> <p>Woodland corridors were located at the south, south-west and north-western boundaries of the school grounds.</p>	<p>Beech, oak, conifer sp., sycamore, willow sp., blackthorn, ash, Scots pine.</p>	
<p><i>A2.1 Scrub (dense/continuous)</i></p> <p>Patches of scrub had encroached from the woodland through the fence, and onto the amenity grassland.</p>	<p>Holly, nettle, bramble.</p>	
<p><i>J1.2 Amenity grassland</i></p> <p>The majority of the school grounds consisted of amenity grassland.</p>	<p>Dandelion, daisy, white clover, creeping buttercup, Yorkshire fog.</p>	
<p><i>J3.6 Buildings</i></p> <p>The school building was located to the east of the school grounds.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>	
<p><i>J5 Other habitat</i></p> <p>Hardstanding areas and fencing associated with the school grounds.</p>	<p>N/A.</p>	

Invasive species

3.13 No invasive species were identified onsite.

### Links to surrounding habitat

- 3.14 Connectivity to the wider landscape is limited due to the proposed development site being in an urban, built-up area of Cardiff. The woodland habitat immediately surrounding the school grounds, and partially within the school grounds provides habitat for wildlife, however the woodland is isolated and not connected to further habitats.
- 3.15 The site is within an area with a radiance of  $16.60 \times 10^{-9} \text{ W/cm}^2 \times \text{sr}$  ([www.lightpollutionmap.info](https://www.lightpollutionmap.info)) indicating the area has high levels of light pollution and spill (see Figure 2).



**Figure 2 – Radiance levels modelled at the site (VIIRS 2021 data, <https://www.lightpollutionmap.info/> - accessed January 2023.**

## 4 INTERPRETATION AND ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The proposed development will require displacement of onsite habitats and disturbance to their associated features. This section concerns an assessment of ecological impacts resulting from the proposed development.
- 4.2 The following interpretation and assessment is provided to ensure full compliance with legislation and both local and national planning policy (see Appendix V).

### Designated sites

- 4.3 There were both statutory and non-statutory designated sites identified within the vicinity of the site (see Table 4). The closest statutory site was Gwent Levels – Rumney and Peterstone SSSI, approximately 861m south-east of the proposed development site. The closest non-statutory site was Fishpond Wood SINC, approximately 747m north-west of the proposed development site.
- 4.4 There was one site designated for its bat population within 10km of the proposed development site. This is Ruperra Castle and Woodlands SSSI, located approximately 5.9km north.
- 4.5 Given the scale and nature of the proposed development, and the lack of likely impacts beyond the site boundary, the nearby designated sites are considered sufficiently well separated that no impacts on their designated features are anticipated as a result of the works.

### Habitat assessment

#### *Mixed woodland, semi-natural*

- 4.6 The semi-natural mixed woodland consisted of mature trees and provides a good foraging, commuting, and sheltering habitat for wildlife. If removed, the habitat will not be easily replaced within a short/medium term, so they are considered to be of **local ecological importance**.

#### *Scrub*

- 4.7 The scrub habitat is un-managed, and the species present are common for this habitat type. The scrub habitat onsite may provide suitable foraging and shelter opportunities for wildlife and is considered to be of **site ecological importance**.

#### *Amenity grassland*

- 4.8 The amenity grassland onsite was managed, and the vegetation kept short. The forb (flowering plant) species are common for this habitat type, and the habitat is well represented within the surrounding area. Therefore, the amenity grassland is considered to be of **site ecological importance**.

### *Building, hardstanding, and fence*

- 4.9 The school building was not subject to an assessment of its suitability for bats because it will not be affected by the proposals. Therefore, an assessment of the buildings ecological importance is not known and not considered necessary for the proposed works at the time of writing this report.
- 4.10 The hardstanding and fence do not have any features that could support any protected and notable species. Therefore, they are of **negligible ecological importance**.

### Priority and protected habitats

- 4.11 The following priority habitats (as listed in Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016) were present onsite: Mixed woodland, semi-natural.
- 4.12 Priority habitats must be retained where possible and impact avoidance must be undertaken to ensure there are no negative impacts on these habitats. Plans for vegetation clearance are currently unknown. However, the proposed development plan indicates that no woodland or scrub habitat will be affected/removed, and a metal fence with gaps was surrounding the woodland areas at the time of the survey. It is therefore considered unlikely that the woodland will be affected due to the pitch being built, but the floodlights associated with the pitch may cause light to spill onto the woodland at the site boundaries.

### Priority and protected species

- 4.13 The following priority species (as listed in Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016) were present or likely to be present onsite: bats, West European hedgehog and nesting birds.

### *Bats*

- 4.14 The local records search returned 104 records of bat species in the vicinity of the site (see Table 5). Of the records, 11 were located less than 500m from the site. Species included in the data search were common pipistrelle, nathusius' pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, whiskered bat, brown long-eared, noctule, serotine, leisler's bat, Daubenton's bat, myotis species.
- 4.15 Although the school is located in an urban, built-up area, the woodland habitat along the south, south-west and north-west of the school provides suitable foraging and commuting habitat for bats.

### **Lighting effects in relation to commuting and foraging bats**

- 4.16 The woodland boundaries are suitable for foraging and commuting bats. However, the woodland is not well connected to further areas of woodland in the wider area, but it is likely a good source of a foraging and commuting habitat for bats within the urban area. The woodland area was not accessed due to fencing but could be observed from the other side of the fence. The

woodland habitat at the boundaries of the school site is isolated from other habitats that are suitable for foraging/commuting bats. The woodland was therefore assessed as having low suitability for commuting and foraging bats.

### **Lighting effects in relation to roosting bats**

- 4.17 Illuminating a bat roost can cause disturbance and may result in bats deserting a roost. Illumination of hibernation sites should be avoided during the hibernation period. However, it is unlikely that if roosting bats are present within trees in the woodland at the boundaries of the school, they will not be light averse species (such as horseshoe bats) because it is located in a built-up urban area with high levels of light.
- 4.18 However, it should be noted that the existing amenity grassland area is not currently lit. Therefore, any proposed lighting at the site would increase the amount of light reaching the woodland.
- 4.1 Access was prohibited into the woodland areas due to metal fencing, so a full assessment of the suitability of the trees to support roosting bats was not made. However, no potential roosting features were noted on trees that could be seen from the other side of the metal fence. Additionally, the plan does not show that any trees will be removed/affected due to the proposed development, with all works taking place within the amenity grassland habitat. Should plans change however, this will need to be reassessed.

### **Summary of effects on bats**

- 4.2 There may be a negative impact on bat species and woodland habitat as a result of the proposed development due to increased light spill if flood lights are installed to light the sports pitch. Artificial lighting has negative effects on commuting and foraging bats and has been shown to be particularly harmful along woodland edges.

#### *Hazel dormouse*

- 4.3 The local records search returned 17 records of hazel dormouse in the vicinity of the site (see Table 5). Of the records, all of them were greater than 500m from the site. The closest record was for a nest 1.4km from the site in 2008. This record is isolated from the proposed development site via roads and housing.
- 4.4 The woodland habitat at the boundaries of the school site is isolated from the wider landscape, and it is located within an urban area with high levels of light.
- 4.5 The plans do not show that the woodland is to be directly impacted by the proposed development plan and any light increases are likely to affect the very edge of the woodland.

4.6 Considering the above, it is unlikely that dormouse would be present onsite within the area of the proposed works.

4.7 There will not be a negative impact on hazel dormouse as a result of the proposed development.

*European otter*

4.8 The local records search returned six records of European otter in the vicinity of the site (see Table 5). Of these records, all of them were greater than 500m from the site. The closest record was for spraints 1.16km from the site in 2003.

4.9 There are no waterbodies within the vicinity of the site that could support otters.

4.10 The site is unsuitable for otters and is isolated from habitats that otters would use due to housing and roads.

4.11 There will not be a negative impact on European otter as a result of the proposed development.

*Great crested newt and other amphibians*

4.12 The local records search returned no records of great crested newt in the vicinity of the site (see Table 5).

4.13 The local records search returned records for common frog, common toad, palmate newt and smooth newt.

4.14 The amenity grassland onsite is disturbed, managed to a very short sward height and generally of low suitability for amphibians.

4.15 One pond and associated ditch approximately 415m north-east (see Figure 3). This pond is isolated from the site due to housing and roads.

4.16 Consequently, there is unlikely to be a negative impact on great crested newt as a result of the proposed development.



**Figure 3 – Red circle indicates a 500m buffer around the proposed development site. The yellow pin indicates the location of the pond located within 500m of the proposed development site. Image used under licence (©2022 Google). Imagery date 20/07/2021.**

### *Reptiles*

- 4.17 The local records search returned 24 records of reptile species in the vicinity of the site (see Table 5). Reptile species returned in the data search included common lizard, slow worm, grass snake, and adder. The closest record is for a common lizard located 368m from the site (2008). The record is isolated from the proposed development site by Greenway Road to the east. This record is most likely within a garden of a residential house.
- 4.18 The woodland edges and scrub at the boundaries of the school grounds have suitability for reptiles. However, the plans show that the installation of the sports pitch will be confined to amenity grassland and hardstanding areas which are unsuitable for reptiles.
- 4.19 There is unlikely to be a negative impact on reptile species as a result of the proposed development.

### *Nesting birds*

- 4.20 The local records search returned 654 records of bird species in the vicinity of the site, including some Schedule 1 designated species (see Table 5). In addition, several bird species were encountered onsite during the PEA.
- 4.21 The plans show that no suitable habitats for nesting birds (woodland) will be affected by the installation of the sports pitch.



4.22 The scrub habitat that has encroached from the woodland onto the amenity grassland may support nesting birds.

4.23 There is unlikely to be a negative impact on nesting bird species as a result of the proposed development.

#### *European badger*

4.24 The local records search returned five records of European badger in the vicinity of the site (see Table 5). All of the records were greater than 500m from the site. The closest record was for a sett 585m from the site in 2021. This record is isolated from the proposed development site via housing and roads.

4.25 The woodland habitat at the boundaries of the site and amenity grassland provides suitable foraging and potentially sett building habitat for badgers. However, the woodland is isolated from other woodland areas in the wider landscape.

4.26 Newport road runs directly adjacent to the woodland at the north-west, and the woodland is bounded by amenity grassland used for recreational purposes. Therefore, the woodland within the school grounds is already subject to noise, light and disturbance.

4.27 Considering all of the above, there is unlikely to be a negative impact on European badger as a result of the proposed development.

#### *West European hedgehog*

4.28 The local records search returned 59 records of west European hedgehog in the vicinity of the site (see Table 5). Of these records, seven were less than 500m from the site. The closest record was 133m from the site in 2021.

4.29 There are habitats onsite to support hedgehogs (woodland, amenity grassland, and scrub).

4.30 Hedgehogs are likely to forage and nest in the woodland and the school boundaries and may occasionally venture on to the amenity grassland.

4.31 Hedgehogs may avoid foraging in lit areas, although the woodland will have some screening effect and there will likely be dark areas remaining that hedgehog can utilise.

4.32 Due to the close records for hedgehog, and suitable habitats onsite, there may be a negative impact on west European hedgehog as a result of the proposed development if precautionary working methods are not followed during construction of the sports pitch.

#### *Invertebrates*

4.33 The local records search returned 141 records of category 1 invertebrate species in the vicinity of the site (see Table 5).

4.34 The proposals show that the sports pitch will be sited within amenity grassland and hardstanding areas of the site and will have a negligible effect on foraging resources for invertebrates.

4.35 There will not be a negative impact on invertebrate species as a result of the proposed development.

*Invasive species*

4.36 There were no invasive species found onsite.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Wildwood Ecology was commissioned to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of St Illtyds Catholic High School, Cardiff.
- 5.2 The site is the subject of a planning application for the construction of a 3G sports pitch.

### Designated sites

- 5.1 There were no international statutory designations within 5km of the site and one national statutory designation within 2km (see Table 3).
- 5.2 There was one site designated for its bat population within 10km of the site. This is Ruperra Castle and Woodlands Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located approximately 5.9km north of the proposed development site.
- 5.3 There were five local non-statutory designations within 1km of the site (see Table 3).
- 5.4 The designated sites in the vicinity of the site (see Table 4) are sufficiently well separated so that no impacts on their designated features are anticipated as a result of the proposed development.

### Habitats

#### *Mixed, semi-natural broad-leaved woodland*

- 5.5 The onsite woodland to the south, south-west, and north-west boundaries of the school will not be directly impacted by the proposals. However, the woodland and associated wildlife may be indirectly impacted by light spill from floodlighting of the sports pitch.
- 5.6 A lighting plan with input from an ecologist should be compiled to ensure that the woodland and associated wildlife will not be impacted by the proposed development (see recommendations).

### Protected species

- 5.7 Recommendations regarding protected species are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7 – Recommendations.**

Species	Recommendations
Bats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plans show that no trees are to be removed as part of the development. However, if trees within the woodland habitat need to be cut back to facilitate the development, they will need to have a ground level assessment to assess their suitability to support roosting bats. If assessed as either moderate or high, they may require further surveys. If no trees are affected by the development, no further surveys will be required.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is assumed that lighting will be required for the proposed sports pitch. A sensitive lighting plan with input from an ecologist will be required, demonstrating consideration for bats. The lighting plan should focus on minimising light spill onto the adjacent woodland habitat. The lighting plan should consider illuminance limits, luminaire specifications, column heights, directional luminaires and use of baffles, hoods and louvres in line with BCT guidance '<a href="#">Bats and artificial lighting in the UK</a>'.</li> <li>• Bat boxes should be incorporated into the woodland (see biodiversity enhancement below).</li> </ul>
<p>Nesting birds</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If habitats suitable for nesting birds are to be removed (scrub), then any vegetation clearance will take place outside of the bird nesting season. In the event that clearance work has to be undertaken during the nesting season (generally from 1<sup>st</sup> March until 31<sup>st</sup> August, although birds are known to nest outside of these dates in suitable conditions), a nesting bird check will be required and must be carried out by a suitably qualified person. Any active nests identified should be protected until the young have fledged. Where a Schedule 1 species (as defined in the Wildlife and Countryside Act - <a href="http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3614">http://www.jncc.gov.uk/page-3614</a> is involved, compensation for impacts, e.g., loss of nesting sites, should be devised and implemented.</li> <li>• Bird boxes should be incorporated into the woodland (see biodiversity enhancement section below).</li> </ul>
<p>West European hedgehog</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure all excavations are covered overnight to ensure no animals get trapped. If this is not possible place a ramp type structure in the excavation to allow them to escape.</li> <li>• If the scrub habitat at the boundaries of the metal fencing needs to be removed to facilitate the development, this will need to be done in a two-staged cut. The first cut will be taken down to 30cm to allow full sight of the ground and litter layer. Once it has been checked, the vegetation can then be taken to ground level.</li> </ul>

### Biodiversity enhancement

- 5.8 Local Authorities have a duty (known as the 'Biodiversity and resilience of ecosystems duty') under the [Environment \(Wales\) Act 2016](#) to seek to maintain and *enhance* biodiversity in the exercise of their functions.
- 5.9 Where possible the existing onsite habitat will be retained and enhanced to ensure that species are not adversely affected by the development and that the habitat is improved for species such as pollinators. Native species of local provenance including wildflower planting will be used for any new planting on the site to support The Action Plan for Pollinators in Wales, 2013 (<http://gov.wales/docs/desh/publications/130723pollinator-action-plan-en.pdf>).
- 5.10 Bird nesting boxes and bat roosting boxes will be incorporated within the woodland at the school boundaries. A range of types should be used in order to cover a variety of species. Many designs are available, and we would initially recommend the following for this site:
- Bats - <https://www.nhbs.com/large-multi-chamber-woodstone-bat-box>
  - Birds - <https://www.nhbs.com/vivara-pro-seville-32mm-woodstone-nest-box>

### Overall conclusion

- 5.11 Providing that the recommendations outlined within this report are successfully implemented, it should be possible for the proposed development to proceed and for there to be no long-term impacts upon the key protected species present at the site.

This ecological report will remain valid for a period of 18 months from the date of the last survey - i.e., until July 2024. Further surveys may be required to update the site information if planning is not obtained, or works do not commence within this time period.

## **6 REFERENCES**

Bat Conservation Trust and the Institution of Lighting Professionals (2018) Bats and artificial lighting in the UK; *Bats and the Built Environment* series (Guidance Note 08/18), The Bat Conservation Trust, London.

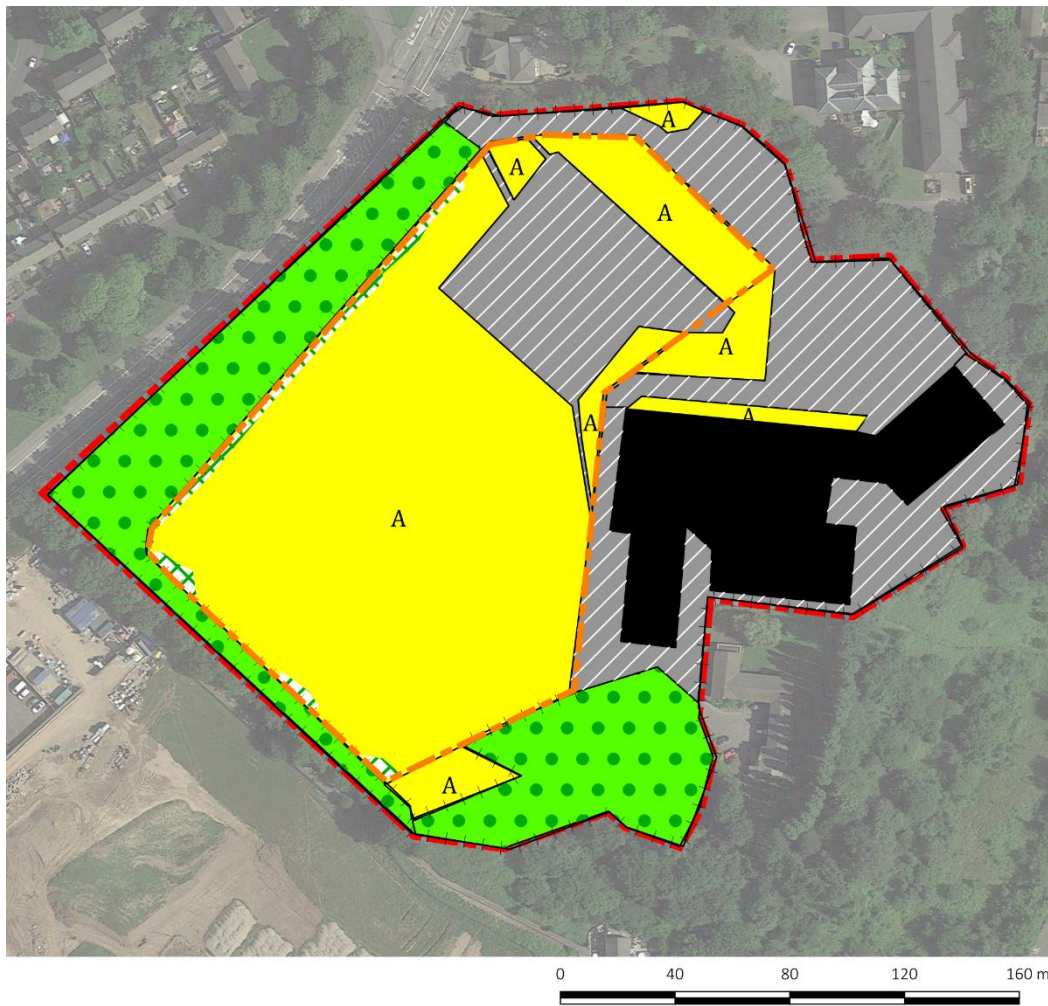
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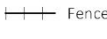




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Institute for Environmental Assessment (1995). Guidelines for Baseline Ecological Assessment. E & FN Spon, Hong Kong.

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**APPENDIX I: PEA PLAN**



<b>Key</b>		
	Boundary of school	
	Survey boundary	
<b>Habitat codes</b>		<b>Linear Features</b>
	A.1.3 Mixed woodland, semi-natural	 Fence
	A.2.1 Scrub, dense/continuous	
	J.1.2 Amenity grassland	
	J.3.6 Buildings	
	Hard standing	

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**APPENDIX II: PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN**





**APPENDIX III: SURVEY IMAGES**



**Figure 4 – Area of amenity grassland.**



**Figure 5 – amenity grassland and hardstanding area, looking north-east.**



**Figure 6 – Area of amenity grassland, looking south.**



**Figure 7 – Hardstanding area, looking south.**



**Figure 8 – Fence line to the**



**Figure 9 – Fence line to the south, with woodland behind and scrub encroachment onto the amenity grassland.**



**Figure 10 – Fence line to the south of the site, with woodland habitat behind.**



**Figure 11 – Fence line to the south-west, with woodland behind and scrub encroachment onto the amenity grassland.**



**Figure 12 – Fence line to the south-west, with woodland behind.**



**Figure 13 – Area of amenity grassland, looking north-west towards woodland boundary.**

## APPENDIX IV: SPECIES LIST

To be submitted to the appropriate Local Records Centre.

<b>Site Name:</b>	St Illtyds Catholic High School, Cardiff	<b>Provided by:</b>	Wildwood Ecology Ltd
<b>Grid ref:</b>	ST 22612 80462	<b>Verified by:</b>	Maddie Anderson

Common name	Scientific Name (if known)
<b>FLORA</b>	
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Oak	<i>Quercus sp.</i>
Conifer sp.	<i>Pinophyta</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Willow sp.	<i>Salix</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Scots pine	<i>Pinus sylvestris</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>
<b>FAUNA</b>	
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>

## **APPENDIX V: PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION**

The following local and national planning policy and legislation relating to nature conservation and biodiversity status are considered of relevance to the current proposal.

### Planning and biodiversity

Local Authorities have a requirement to consider biodiversity and geological conservation issues when determining planning applications under the following planning policies.

#### *Planning Policy Wales (2021) and Technical Advice Note 5 (2009)*

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11, February 2021) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government, integrating with the Environment (Wales) Act (2016). The advice contained within Planning Policy Wales (PPW) is supplemented for some subjects by Technical Advice Notes (TANs).

TAN 5 (Welsh Government, 2009) specifically provides advice about how the land use planning system should contribute to protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation. The TAN provides advice for local planning authorities on the key principles of positive planning for nature conservation; nature conservation and Local Development Plans; nature conservation in development management procedures; development affecting protected internationally and nationally designated sites and habitats; and development affecting protected and priority habitats and species.

Under Section 2.4 within the TAN 5, 'when deciding planning applications that may affect nature conservation local planning authorities should':

- Pay particular attention to the principles of sustainable development, including respect for environmental limits, applying the precautionary principle, using scientific knowledge to aid decision making and taking account of the full range of costs and benefits in a long term perspective;
- Contribute to the protection and improvement of the environment, so as to improve the quality of life and protect local and global ecosystems, seeking to avoid irreversible harmful effects on the natural environment;
- Promote the conservation and enhancement of statutorily designated areas and undeveloped coast;
- Ensure that appropriate weight is attached to designated sites of international, national and local importance;
- Protect wildlife and natural features in the wider environment, with appropriate weight attached to priority habitats and species in Biodiversity Action Plans;
- Ensure that all material considerations are taken into account and decisions are informed by adequate information about the potential effects of development on nature conservation;

- Ensure that the range and population of protected species is sustained;
- Adopt a step-wise approach to avoid harm to nature conservation, minimise unavoidable harm by mitigation measures, offset residual harm by compensation measures and look for new opportunities to enhance nature conservation; where there may be significant harmful effects local planning authorities will need to be satisfied that any reasonable alternative sites that would result in less or no harm have been fully considered;

### Legislation and biodiversity

Certain species of animals and plants found in the wild in the UK are legally protected from being harmed or disturbed. These species are listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) or are named as European Protected Species (EPS) in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). These two main pieces of legislation have been consulted when writing this report and are therefore described in detail within this section.

Other relevant legislation and policy documents that have been consulted include – The Environment (Wales) Act 2016; The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000; The Hedgerow Regulations 1997; Biodiversity Action Plans, both UK-wide (UKBAP) and Local plans (LBAPs), and The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). There is also legislation that legally protects certain animals - for example, the Protection of Badgers Act (1992) protects badgers and their setts, and the Deer Act (1991) places restrictions on actions that can be taken against deer species.

#### *Environment (Wales) Act 2016*

Section 6 of the Act places a duty on public authorities to 'seek to maintain and enhance biodiversity' so far as it is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions. In so doing, public authorities must also seek to 'promote the resilience of ecosystems'. The duty replaces the section 40 duty in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act 2006), in relation to Wales, and applies to those authorities that fell within the previous duty.

Public authorities will be required to report on the actions they are taking to improve biodiversity and promote ecosystem resilience.

Section 7 replaces the duty in section 42 of the NERC Act 2006. The Welsh Ministers will publish, review and revise lists of living organisms and types of habitat in Wales, which they consider are of key significance to sustain and improve biodiversity in relation to Wales.

The Welsh Ministers must also take all reasonable steps to maintain and enhance the living organisms and types of habitat included in any list published under this section, and encourage others to take such steps.

### *Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)*

The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [WCA] is the primary legislation for England and Wales for the protection of flora, fauna and the countryside. Part I within the Act deals with the protection of wildlife.

Most European Protected Species offences are now covered under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (as amended) (see below), but some 'intentional' acts are still covered under the WCA, such as obstructing access to a bat roost.

The WCA prohibits the release to the wild of non-native animal species listed on Schedule 9 (e.g. Signal Crayfish and American Mink). It also prohibits planting in the wild of plants listed in Schedule 9 (e.g. Japanese Knotweed and *Rhododendron ponticum*) or otherwise deliberately causing them to grow in the wild. This is to prevent the release of invasive non-native species that could threaten our native wildlife.

The provisions relating to animals in the Act only apply to 'wild animals'; these are defined as those that are living wild or were living wild before being captured or killed. It does not apply to captive bred animals being held in captivity.

There are 'defences' provided by the WCA. These are cases where acts that would otherwise be prohibited by the legislation are permitted, such as the incidental result of a lawful operation which could not be reasonably avoided, or actions within the living areas of a dwelling house.

Licensing: certain prohibited actions under the Wildlife and Countryside Act may be undertaken under licence by the proper authority. For example, scientific study that requires capturing or disturbing protected animals can be allowed by obtaining a licence – e.g. bat surveys.

### *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)*

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (which are the principal means by which the EC Habitats Directive is transposed in England and Wales) update the legislation and consolidate all the many amendments which have been made to the Regulations since they were first made in 1994.

These regulations provide for the:

- protection of European Protected Species [EPS] (animals and plants listed in Annex IV Habitats Directive which are resident in the wild in Great Britain) including bats, dormice, great crested newts, and otters;
- designation and protection of domestic and European Sites - e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest [SSSI] and Special Area of Conservation [SAC]; and
- adaptation of planning controls for the protection of such sites and species.

Public bodies (including the Local Planning Authority) have a duty to have regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive in exercising their function – i.e. when determining a planning application.

There is no defence that an act was the incidental and unavoidable result of a lawful activity.

Licensing: it is possible for actions which would otherwise be an offence under the Regulations to be undertaken under licence issued by the proper authority. For example, where a European Protected Species has been identified and the development risks deliberately affecting an EPS, then a 'development licence' may be required.

### Species protection

The following protected species information is relevant to this report. Legislation is only discussed in relation to planning and development; other offences may exist.

#### *Amphibians*

The common frog, common toad, common newt, and palmate newt receive limited protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), making it illegal to sell or trade them.

The Great Crested Newt and Natterjack Toad are fully protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) as European Protected Species. It is illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, injure, kill, or disturb either species,
- Intentionally or recklessly obstruct access to any structure/place used for shelter or protection, or
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place.

#### *Badger*

Badgers are protected in the UK under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992. Under the act it is an offence to:

- Wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat<sup>3</sup> a Badger, or attempt to do so;

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<sup>3</sup> The intentional elimination of sufficient foraging area to support a known social group of Badgers may, in certain circumstances, be construed as an offence by constituting "cruel ill treatment" of a Badger

- To intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett<sup>4</sup> (this includes disturbing Badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, as well as damaging or destroying a sett or obstructing access to it).

The legislation aims to protect the species from persecution, rather than being a response to an unfavourable conservation status, as the species is in fact common over most of Britain; it is not intended to prevent properly authorised development.

### *Bats*

All British bats are classed as European Protected Species and therefore receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), making it an offence inter alia to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat;
- Deliberately disturb bats;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.

In addition, all British bats are also listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

If proposed development work is likely to destroy or disturb bats or their roosts, then a licence will need to be obtained from Natural England, which would be subject to appropriate measures to safeguard bats.

### *Birds*

In the UK, the provisions of the Birds Directive are implemented through the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected it an offence to:

- kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- take, damage or destroy the nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or
- take or destroying an egg of any such wild bird.

The law covers all species of wild birds including common, pest or opportunistic species.

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<sup>4</sup> A sett is defined as “any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a Badger”. Advice issued by Natural England (June 2009) is that a sett is protected as long as such signs remain present, which in practice could potentially be for some time after the last actual occupation by Badger.



Special protection against disturbance during the breeding season is also afforded to those species listed on Schedule 1 of the Act.

### *Dormice*

The hazel dormouse is classed as a European Protected Species and therefore receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), making it an offence inter alia to:

- Deliberately capture, injure, or kill a dormouse;
- Deliberately disturb dormice;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a dormouse.

In addition, the dormouse is listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- Obstruct access to any structure or place which a dormouse uses for shelter or protection; or
- Disturb a dormouse while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that shelter or protection.

### *Otters*

The European Otter, *Lutra lutra* is a European Protected Species and therefore receive protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), making it an offence inter alia to:

- deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild otter;
- deliberately disturb wild otters;
- damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an otter.

In addition, the otter is listed under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which contains further provisions making it an offence to intentionally or recklessly:

- disturbs an otter while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or
- obstructs access to such a place.

If proposed development work is likely to destroy or disturb otters or their resting places, then a licence will need to be obtained from Natural Resource Wales, which would be subject to appropriate measures to safeguard otters.

### *Reptiles*

Adders, slow worms, grass snakes and common lizards are protected against killing and injuring under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it illegal to intentionally kill or injure a common reptile. As a result, reptiles must be removed from areas of development and relocated onto suitable release sites before any site works can commence.

Smooth snakes and sand lizards are European Protected Species under schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This makes it illegal to carry out the following activities:

- Deliberately or recklessly disturb, capture or kill these animals;
  - Deliberately or recklessly take or destroy eggs of these animals;
  - Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of such a wild animal; or
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange, any live or dead animal, or any part of, or anything derived from such a wild animal.