

# Proposed Bungalows at Land off Castle Lane, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 6AH

## Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

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**A report to:**

Progress Housing Group and Barnsley MBC.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

	Feature	Results	Recommendations	Further Surveys
<b>Designated Sites</b>	<b>International, nationally and locally designated sites</b>	There are no internationally or nationally designated sites within 2km of the survey area, therefore the proposals will not have a detrimental impact on these sites.	None	None
	<b>Habitats</b>			
	<b>UKHab habitats</b>	The site is comprised of a modified grassland field with individual trees and a small area of scrub present.	It appears feasible to retain all the individual trees present on site. It is recommended that these be retained and protected throughout the construction phase of the development.	None
	<b>Invasive species</b>	A cotoneaster species shrub was identified on site during the walk-over survey (Target Note 1). This could not be identifiable to species level (due to the time of year of the survey and the difficulty in identifying cotoneaster to species level).	It is considered prudent to assume the cotoneaster present on site may be one listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). As such, it is recommended that this shrub is removed from the site prior to works occurring.	None
	<b>Biodiversity net gain</b>	The site prior to development has a baseline of 1.95 Habitat Units. Post works there will be 2.14 Habitat Units, resulting in a gain of 0.20 Units (10.11%). Trading Rules are currently satisfied.	It is anticipated that mandatory BNG can be achieved for the proposals, provided the recommendations provided in Section 6 are incorporated into the scheme (grassland creation, scrub creation and tree planting).	None
<b>Faunal Species</b>	<b>Amphibians (including great crested newts)</b>	The habitats within and surrounding the survey area are considered mostly sub-optimal for amphibians, in particular great crested newts. There are a lack of previous records (from publicly available data) and suitable ponds within 500m of the survey area, therefore the presence of great crested newts within the area of works is considered unlikely.	None	None
	<b>Badgers</b>	No evidence of badgers was recorded within the survey area. The survey area is considered mostly suboptimal for sett building; however, the grassland present likely offers some foraging habitat. Overall, it is considered likely that badgers are present in the wider environment and may occasionally forage within the survey area.	It is recommended that best practice working measures with respect to badgers are followed.	None
	<b>Bats</b>	No trees with bat roosting potential were identified within the survey area. The trees were generally immature or lacked suitable roosting features. As such, it is considered that no further survey work will be required and an EPS Licence for bats from Natural England will not be required before works begin.	It is recommended that no works are carried out to mature trees, as is currently proposed.  It is recommended that four bat boxes are incorporated into the scheme onto the new buildings.	None

Feature	Results	Recommendations	Further Surveys
	It is considered likely that the wooded habitat present on site (trees and scrub) provide some foraging and commuting habitat.		
<b>Birds</b>	No evidence of nesting bird material was identified during the survey; however, the trees and scrub present provided nesting bird habitat.	It is recommended that any vegetation clearance takes place outside of the bird breeding season i.e., March to September inclusive.  It is recommended that four swift boxes are installed within the scheme onto the new buildings.	None
<b>Reptiles</b>	Much of the site offered only minimal habitat to reptiles (species poor, short grassland). It is possible that the wooded habitat on site (trees, scrub) provided some commuting and sheltering habitat for reptiles, however, the site is located within a predominately agricultural / residential landscape, therefore, it is considered unlikely that reptiles are present on site.	None	None
<b>Other species</b>	The scrub habitat on site provided potential sheltering and commuting habitat for hedgehogs.	Scrub clearance should avoid the hibernation period (November to March) to avoid impacting any hibernating hedgehogs. The scrub should be cleared slowly from one side to the other using handheld tools. This should be initially cut to 20cm and the material removed from site. The scrub should be left a day, followed by a second cut to ground level, following the same procedure of clearing slowly from one side to the other.  As hedgehogs may be present within the area, it is recommended that within the development, small hedgehog passes are incorporated within the fencing to avoid fragmenting the habitats hedgehogs use. It is also recommended that a hedgehog nest box is installed beneath undisturbed plant cover, facing the entrance away from the north or north-east.	None

## **1. SURVEY AREA AND PROPOSALS**

### **1.1 Site Location**

The site consists of a modified grassland field, located on land off Castle Lane, S36 6AH (approximate grid reference SE 25205 02691). The location of the site is shown on Figure 1 in Appendix 1.

### **1.2 Proposals**

The proposals include the erection of three one-bed bungalows, staff welfare & communal facilities with associated access, parking and landscaping.

### **1.3 Survey Brief**

This report has been prepared by Morph Ecological Consultants for Progress Housing Group and Barnsley MBC. It is understood that a planning application will be made to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, and as the application is not considered to be exempt from mandatory BNG, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and BNG assessment is required.

Morph Ecological Consultants brief was to ascertain whether the works would have an impact on protected species and habitats. Morph Ecological Consultants was also commissioned to provide recommendations for mitigation, compensation and enhancement measures and further surveys, as appropriate. To meet the requirements of the brief, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, consisting of a desk study, UKHab survey and a Protected Species Survey, of the site was carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist. The approach undertaken pays due regard to The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) 'Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal' (CIEEM 2017). A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment of the site was also carried out.

Legislation relating to protected species is included within Appendix 3.

## 2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Desk Study

A desk study was carried out on the 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025 utilising data from the Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC website). Records from a 2km radius of the site boundary (herby referred to as 'study area') was searched for, including:

- Statutory sites such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*) survey licence returns
- Great crested newt pond survey data (from 2017-2019)
- Granted European Protected Species Mitigation Licences

### 2.2 Habitat Survey and Protected Species Survey

The survey involved a site walkover and a preliminary assessment of the habitats using the standard UK Habitat Classification System methodology (UKHab 2023) which involves visiting each parcel of land and on the basis of vegetation the habitats were classified to Level 5 where appropriate. Secondary codes were also used. Notes were made on species present, defining the UKHab types.

Target notes were used to record any habitats or features of particular interest. Also, the suitability of habitats to support protected species was recorded and any sightings or signs of protected species were noted. Further details are provided below:

- All evidence of badgers (*Meles meles*) including setts, dung pits, badger hairs, mammal paths, bedding, footprints and scratching trees was recorded. The suitability of the habitats to support badger sett digging, and badger foraging was also noted.
- Trees with features suitable for roosting bats were recorded. Features such as woodpecker holes, cracks and cavities within trunks and branches, gaps behind loose bark and dense ivy growth on trunks were all noted.
- An assessment of the site's potential to support amphibians, including the specially protected great crested newts was made.
- The site's potential to support reptiles was assessed.
- The habitats within the site were assessed for their potential to support nesting birds, including for barn owl (*Tyto alba*).

A UKHab map was produced, and target notes were labelled on the map (Figure 2 in Appendix 1).

### 2.3 Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

The Statutory Biodiversity Metric was used for the Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment.

In order to use the Biodiversity Metric Calculator, habitat information from the walk-over survey was used to form the baseline value in biodiversity units. To determine the quality of the habitats' present four assessments of the habitat types are made:

- **Distinctiveness:** Distinctiveness is a pre-assigned category for each habitat type. The habitat type is assigned through botanical species recorded during the walk-over survey.
- **Condition:** Habitat condition is calculated using the Statutory Biodiversity Metric Technical Supplement Condition Assessment Sheets are provided whereby positive indicators for each habitat types are listed and the number of these positive indicators met in a particular habitat type determine the condition.
- **Strategic Significance:** The appropriate description is selected from the drop-down list in the calculator. This category is based on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, but in the absence of this document for the area, Biodiversity Action Plans were searched for.

The calculations are repeated for post-intervention, but risk components are also included:

- Difficulty of creating or enhancing a habitat: Automatically assigned within the calculator.
- Temporal risk: can select habitat created in advance or delay in starting habitat creation. Time to final target condition is then automatically assigned within the calculator.
- Spatial risk (if proposing off-site habitats): The appropriate description is selected from the drop-down list in the calculator depending on the distance away from the site.

The Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment was carried out in accordance with the Statutory Biodiversity Metric User Guide (DEFRA, 2024).

It should be noted that the Biodiversity Metric Calculator does not take into account the presence of protected species and is only used as a tool in addition to best ecological practices. Professional judgement is used throughout and justified within this report, and the exact biodiversity units gained or lost should not be used independently.

## 2.4 Criteria for Determining Ecological Importance

The importance of an ecological features was considered within a geological context as per the CIEEM Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland (CIEEM 2019). As such the evaluation of ecological features were defined as the following:

- International (internationally designated sites or sites supporting internationally important species)
- National (nationally designated sites e.g. SSSI or sites supporting populations of nationally important species)
- Regional (sites exceeding county-level designations or supporting features identified in a regional BAP)
- County (county sites or sites meeting the criteria for these sites e.g. Local Wildlife Sites and species/habitats identified within the county BAP)
- District (features identified within a Local BAP or enrich a districts habitat resource)
- Local (areas of habitat considered to enrich the habitat resource within the local area)
- Site (common or low value habitats)

For this survey area, the following was also considered:

- Wildlife Legislation
  - The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981 (as amended)
  - The Countryside and Right of Way (CRoW) Act 2000
  - The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)
- Biodiversity Action Plans
  - Barnsley Biodiversity Action Plan
- Habitats and species of principal importance in England listen in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.
- Barnsley Local Plan – Adopted January 2019

## 2.5 Survey Details

The survey was carried out by Helen Chambers MSc ACIEEM on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2025.

## 2.6 Surveyor Experience

Helen Chambers has over three years' experience of ecological surveying, including numerous Preliminary Ecological Appraisals, using both UKHab and JNCC classification systems. Helen has undertaken numerous Biodiversity Net Gain training courses and is an accredited River Condition

Assessment surveyor. Helen holds the following licence: bats Level 1 CL17 (licence number 2025-85514-CL17-BAT). Helen is also working towards her Level 1 Class Licence for great crested newt.

## **2.7 Survey Area**

The area surveyed is shown on the UKHab map (Figure 2, Appendix 1).

## **2.8 Survey Constraints**

### **2.8.1 Access**

No access limitations were present.

### **2.8.2 Survey Limitations**

Surveying in winter is not an ideal time to carry out ecological surveys, as many faunal species are less active or are dormant and it is outside of the plant growing season therefore some plants may not be visible. However, an experienced surveyor can make reliable judgements about the condition and composition of habitats and their potential to support protected species.

Only a brief assessment of the site was made and no systematic surveys to establish the presence or presumed absence of protected species were undertaken. As such, a lack of evidence of a protected species does not necessarily indicate an absence of the species.

### **2.8.3 Length of Data Validity**

To ensure that survey data remains current and as many protected species move sites frequently, if works have not commenced within a year from the survey date, an update may be required to fully assess the impacts of the proposals on protected species and their habitats.

### 3. SURVEY RESULTS AND EVALUATION

#### 3.1 Desk Study

##### 3.1.1 Designated Sites

Designation	Description
<b>Internationally and National Designated Sites within 2km</b>	There are no internationally or nationally designated sites within 2km of the survey area, therefore the proposals will not have a detrimental impact on these sites. As such internationally and nationally designated sites are not considered further within this report.
<b>Other Sites</b> Ancient Woodland	<p><u>Spring Vale Wood</u>  Distance from survey area: 900m northeast  Description: Ancient &amp; Semi-Natural Woodland</p> <p><u>Unnamed Wood</u>  Distance from survey area: 900m southwest  Description: Ancient Replanted Woodland</p> <p><u>Shrogg Wood</u>  Distance from survey area: 1km north  Description: Ancient &amp; Semi-Natural Woodland</p> <p><u>Unnamed Wood</u>  Distance from survey area: 1.5km east  Description: Ancient &amp; Semi-Natural Woodland</p> <p><u>Coates Great Wood</u>  Distance from survey area: 1.8km northeast  Description: Ancient Replanted Woodland</p> <p>Given the distance between the site and the ancient woodland parcels, it is considered unlikely that the proposals would have any impact on the parcels. As such, ancient woodlands are not considered further within this report.</p>


##### 3.1.2 Priority and Protected Species




Species	Description
<b>Amphibians</b>	<p>From satellite imagery, there are no ponds within close proximity of the site. There is one pond located approximately 430m southeast, however, this is located across Castle Lane / Long Lane. Castle Dam is located approximately 450m southeast.</p> <p><u>Great crested newt</u>  There are no records of great crested newt class survey licence returns within the study area. No ponds were surveyed within the study area between 2017 and 2019 as part of the surveys for District Level Licencing.</p>
<b>Bats</b>	There are five records of bat EPS licences within the study area. These were mostly relating to common pipistrelle ( <i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i> ) roosts, including breeding sites and resting sites. The closest licence is approximately 1.5km northwest. Two licences also had brown long-eared bat ( <i>Plecotus auritus</i> ) listed.



### 3.2 UKHab Survey and Condition Assessments


#### 3.2.1 Baseline Habitats

The UKHab habitat types and their descriptions, which were recorded within the survey area are shown in the table below. A map showing the locations of these habitats is shown in Figure 2, Appendix 1. Plant species listed within the text are referred to using their English names. A full list of plant species with their scientific names is provided in Appendix 2. Photographs of the survey area are provided within the table below. A summary of the habitat condition assessment is also detailed in the table below.

Parcel Ref	UKHab Habitat	Description and Value	Condition Assessment	Photographs
1	<b>Modified grassland (g4)</b>	<p>Most of the site was comprised of a modified grassland field.</p> <p>This was dominated by perennial rye grass, but creeping bent, cock’s foot and smooth meadow grass were also noted. Forbs were limited but included dandelion, creeping buttercup, yarrow, white clover, cuckoo flower, common sorrel, cow parsley, common daisy, germander speedwell, ribwort plantain and common mouse ear. Dog rose and bramble were noted.</p> <p>A cotoneaster species shrub was noted within the grassland (Target Note 1).</p> <p>Along the edges of the field, the sward height was tall, and more ruderal species were noted including nettle, dock, cleavers, creeping thistle, hogweed and bramble. Barley was also noted.</p> <p>This grassland habitat has been classified as modified grassland due to the dominance of the perennial rye grass and the species composition (being mostly species poor). It is considered likely that this habitat parcel is important at a Site level only.</p>	<p><u>Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (low distinctiveness)</u></p> <p>A – failed this criterion as the sward was species poor.</p> <p>B – failed this criterion as the sward height was predominately uniform across the parcel (short).</p> <p>C – passed this criterion as scrub accounted for less than 20%.</p> <p>D – passed this criterion as physical damage accounted for less than 5%.</p> <p>E – passed this criterion as bare ground was less than 10%.</p> <p>F – passed this criterion as cover of bracken is less than 20%.</p> <p>G – passed this criterion as no invasive non-native species were noted.</p> <p>As such this habitat was assessed as being in Poor condition (as it fails criterion A).</p>	

Parcel Ref	UKHab Habitat	Description and Value	Condition Assessment	Photographs
				
2	<b>Mixed scrub (h3h)</b>	A small area of mixed scrub, comprised of elder, dog rose, bramble and ash. The ground flora was of a similar composition to the surrounding grassland.	<p><u>Condition Sheet: SCRUB Habitat Type</u>            A – Failed, the scrub was not a good representation            B – Failed, as the scrub did not have the specified age ranges            C – Passed, as there was no INNS present            D – Failed, as there was not a well-developed edge            E – Failed, as there are no clearings glades or rides</p> <p>This area passes 1 of the 5 criteria and is therefore assessed as Poor condition.</p>	
3	<b>Individual trees</b>	8 individual trees located within the site (and close proximity).	See below table for individual tree condition assessments.	

Parcel Ref	UKHab Habitat	Description and Value	Condition Assessment	Photographs
				
4	<b>Buildings (u1b5)</b>	An electrical substation.	This habitat is automatically assigned as 'N/A - Other'.	

Parcel Ref	UKHab Habitat	Description and Value	Condition Assessment	Photographs
5	Other developed land (u1b6)	A small area of hardstanding associated with the substation.	This habitat is automatically assigned as 'N/A - Other'.	

### 3.2.2 Individual Trees

The Condition Assessment for Individual Trees is as follows:

- A. The tree is a native species (or at least 70% within the block are native species).
- B. The tree canopy is predominantly continuous, with gaps in canopy cover making up <10% of total area and no individual gap being >5 m wide (individual trees automatically pass this criterion).
- C. The tree is mature (or more than 50% within the block are mature).
- D. There is little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activities (such as vandalism, herbicide or detrimental agricultural activity). And there is no current regular pruning regime, so the trees retain >75% of expected canopy for their age range and height.
- E. Natural ecological niches for vertebrates and invertebrates are present, such as presence of deadwood, cavities, ivy or loose bark.
- F. More than 20% of the tree canopy area is oversailing vegetation beneath.

Tree Number (taken from the Tree Survey Report)	Species & Size Class (based on the BNG User Guide)	Criteria Failed	Condition Achieved
T1	Sycamore, Medium	A (non-native) C (not mature) E (no ecological niches noted)	Moderate
T2	Sycamore, Large	A (non-native) E (no ecological niches noted)	Moderate
T3	Sycamore, Large	A (non-native) E (no ecological niches noted)	Moderate

Tree Number (taken from the Tree Survey Report)	Species & Size Class (based on the BNG User Guide)	Criteria Failed	Condition Achieved
<b>T4</b>	Sycamore, Medium	A (non-native) C (not mature) E (no ecological niches noted)	Moderate
<b>T5</b>	Sycamore, Medium	A (non-native) C (not mature) E (no ecological niches noted)	Moderate
<b>T6 (located off-site)</b>	Sycamore, Medium	A (non-native) C (not mature) E (no ecological niches noted)	Moderate
<b>T7 (located off-site)</b>	Sycamore, Medium	C (not mature) C (not mature) E (no ecological niches noted)	Moderate
<b>T8</b>	Small, Ash	C (not mature) E (no ecological niches noted)	Moderate

### 3.3 Protected and Notable Species

Species	Description
Amphibians	The habitats within and surrounding the survey area are considered mostly sub-optimal for amphibians, in particular great crested newts. There are a lack of previous records (from publicly available data) and suitable ponds within 500m of the survey area, therefore the presence of great crested newts within the area of works is considered unlikely. As such, no further survey work is considered necessary. As the site has negligible value for amphibian species, they are not considered any further within the report.
Badgers	No evidence of badgers was recorded within the survey area. The survey area is considered mostly suboptimal for sett building due to a lack of suitable habitat; however, the grassland present likely offers some foraging habitat. Overall, it is considered likely that badgers are present in the wider environment and may occasionally forage within the survey area.  As such, it is considered unlikely that the proposed works would have an adverse impact on badgers. However, as a precaution, it is recommended that best practice working measures with respect to badgers are followed.
Bats	No trees with bat roosting potential were identified within the survey area. The trees were generally immature or lacked suitable roosting features. As such, it is considered that no further survey work will be required and an EPS Licence for bats from Natural England will not be required before works begin.  It is considered likely that the wooded habitat present on site (trees and scrub) provide some foraging and commuting habitat. However, this is limited by the surrounding landscape being predominately agricultural / residential.
Nesting Birds	No evidence of nesting bird material was identified during the survey; however, the trees and scrub present provided nesting bird habitat. The grassland was not considered suitable for ground nesting birds due to the management (short mown), or due to the tall sward (ruderal areas).
Reptiles	Much of the site offered only minimal habitat to reptiles (species poor, short grassland). It is possible that the wooded habitat on site (trees, scrub) provided some commuting and sheltering habitat for reptiles, however, the site is located within a predominately agricultural / residential landscape, therefore, the small areas of suitable habitat on site are somewhat isolated from better-quality habitat present within the wider landscape, therefore, it is considered unlikely that reptiles are present on site. As such, reptiles are not considered any further within the report.
Invasive Species	A cotoneaster species shrub was identified on site during the walk-over survey (Target Note 1). This could not be identifiable to species level (due to the time of year of the survey and the difficulty in identifying cotoneaster to species level), but it is considered prudent to assume this may be listed under Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).
Other Species	The scrub habitat on site provided potential sheltering and commuting habitat for hedgehogs ( <i>Erinaceus europaeus</i> ).

## 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are applicable for the current proposals on site. Should plans change on site, and further surveys are considered necessary, the outcome of these further surveys may require additional mitigation, compensation or protected species licences above what is outlined below. The recommendations apply the mitigation hierarchy (CIEEM 2019) whereby in first instance avoidance of impacts should be sought. If avoidance is not possible negative effects should be minimised through mitigation measures. As a last resort, impacts should be offset by appropriate compensatory measures. Enhancements should also be implemented to provide net benefits for biodiversity over and above the requirements.

The National Planning Policy Framework (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2024) outlines the need to minimise impacts and provide measurable net gains for biodiversity. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021), whereby a development must deliver a BNG of 10%. As such the following recommendations have included enhancement suggestions to achieve this:

### 4.1 Habitats

Under current proposals, it is anticipated that the majority of the habitats on site will be lost to facilitate the development, including the modified grassland field and the area of mixed scrub. It appears feasible to retain all of the individual trees present on site, with these to be situated within the BNG buffer area and as such can be considered retained. The loss of the mixed scrub parcel will also need to be compensated for within the proposals; however, this is feasible within the BNG buffer area proposed. It is also recommended that areas of wildflower meadow are incorporated into the scheme.

#### 4.1.1 Individual Trees

It appears feasible to retain all the individual trees present on site. It is recommended that these be retained and protected throughout the construction phase of the development.

Under current proposals, 18 new trees are proposed (excluding those to be situated within the mixed scrub habitat). Smaller tree species have been proposed in the aim of reducing the overall impacts on the grassland creation measures proposed. Recommended species could include the following:

#### **Trees**

Silver birch (*Betula pendula*)  
Field maple (*Acer campestre*)  
Wild cherry (*Prunus avium*)  
Bird cherry (*Prunus padus*)  
Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*)  
Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)

The following condition assessment for the individual trees is proposed:

#### Condition Sheet: INDIVIDUAL TREES Habitat Type

Criteria A – Passed, the trees will be native  
Criteria B – Passed, automatically passed  
Criteria C – Failed, as trees not likely to mature in 30 years,  
Criteria D – Failed, due to regular pruning regime  
Criteria E – Failed, no ecological niches present,  
Criteria F – Passed, planted over grassland

As such, the trees are anticipated to achieve Moderate condition.

#### 4.1.2 *Mixed Scrub*

It is considered likely that the mixed scrub parcel present will be lost to facilitate the development. However, this can be compensated for by the creation of a new area of mixed scrub habitat within the proposals. It is recommended that native scrub planting is incorporated into the proposals, possibly within the 'communal garden' areas proposed across the site.

It is recommended that a good mix of native shrub species are planted in clumps, which tends to be more beneficial to wildlife as it creates more structure within the habitat. Recommend species could include the following:

##### ***Shrubs***

Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*)  
Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)  
Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)  
Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)  
Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*)  
Dog-rose (*Rosa canina*)  
Guelder rose (*Viburnum opulus*)

#### 4.1.3 *Modified Grassland*

The proposals will result in the loss of modified grassland. The loss of this habitat is not considered significant as the grassland is species-poor and generally of low ecological value. The 'communal garden' areas within the proposals will likely result in the creation of new areas of amenity grassland (classified as modified grassland). It is recommended that a flowering lawn seed mixture is used in these areas (such as Naturescape's N14 Flowering Lawn Mixture), which tolerates more frequent mowing but mowing can cease certain months to allow flowering.

To offset the overall loss of grassland, it is recommended that areas of wildflower meadow could be included within the proposals, which would result in the creation of a grassland habitat of a higher distinctiveness.

Naturescape's N1 General Purpose Meadow Mix is the recommended seed mix. The wildflower species in this mixture are fairly strong growing and therefore is a good choice on soils of high fertility where other wildflowers would not survive. This mix also represents a well-balanced and inexpensive choice for a larger meadow project and the mix can be enhanced in future years through additional plug planting, if required.

Grassland areas should only be mown once per year (in late summer / early autumn). All cuttings should be collected from these areas, and either removed from site, or used to create compost heaps within discrete locations on the site boundary (compost heaps can provide habitat for faunal species).

The following condition assessment for the other neutral grassland is proposed:

##### Condition Sheet: GRASSLAND Habitat Type (medium, high and very high distinctiveness)

Criteria A – Passed, parcels represent the habitat other neutral grassland,  
Criteria B – Passed, the sward height will be varied (relaxed mowing),  
Criteria C – Failed, there were areas of bare ground,  
Criteria D – Passed, bramble scrub will be under 5% (scrub will need to be managed),  
Criteria E – Passed, no invasives present,  
Criteria F – Failed, there will not be 10 species per m<sup>2</sup>.

As such, the parcel is anticipated as achieving Moderate condition.

## 4.2 Protected Species

### 4.2.1 Badgers

General good working practices should be adhered to, such as the trenches dug during works are left open over night, they should be left with a sloping end or ramp to allow any badgers or other animal that may fall in to escape. Also, any pipes over 200mm in diameter should be capped off at night to prevent animals entering. Materials such as netting should not be left on site.

Should additional construction work be required in the future, an updated walkover survey should be carried out to survey for badgers.

### 4.2.2 Bats

It is recommended that no works are carried out to mature trees; no works to the trees are currently proposed.

To enhance the site for roosting bats, a range of boxes should be installed on to, or ideally built into the fabric of the new buildings. It is recommended that four bat boxes are incorporated into the scheme. Whilst the buildings proposed are bungalows (and potentially less suitable for roosting bats), it is considered likely that these would still be used by roosting bats and would work as a site enhancement. Bat boxes should be positioned where sunlight will warm up the box throughout the day, and should be positioned at least 3m above ground. The bat boxes should not be lit by security lighting and there should be a clear access to the bat box entrance.



*Ibstock Enclosed Bat Box 'C'*



*Vivara Pro Build-in  
WoodStone Bat Box*



*Greenwood's Ecohabitats  
Two Crevice Bat Box*

### 4.2.3 Birds

As nesting bird potential was recorded during the survey, any tree / scrub clearance works should avoid the bird nesting season, which runs from March-September (inclusive). If works are to be carried out during the bird nesting season, further surveys would be required to determine if nesting birds would be impacted by the works.

As bird nesting opportunities will be lost, compensation will be required to ensure there is no net loss of bird nesting habitat on site. It is recommended that four swift (*Apus apus*) boxes (such as the designs shown below) are installed within the scheme onto the new buildings. It is noted that the buildings proposed are bungalows which are less suitable for swifts, however, it is anticipated that other species would use the boxes if incorporated into the scheme. Bird boxes should be installed at least 3m high and on a north or shaded elevation. Durable materials such as Woodcrete are recommended to provide longevity of the potential nesting habitat. A range of bird boxes can be purchased from [www.nhbs.com](http://www.nhbs.com), examples are listed below but other equivalent brands are available.



*WoodStone Build-in Swift Nest  
Box Deep*



*Swift Brick Bird Boxes from  
Bird Brick Houses*

#### 4.2.4 *Hedgehogs*

Scrub clearance should avoid the hibernation period (November to March) to avoid impacting any hibernating hedgehogs. The scrub should be cleared slowly from one side to the other using handheld tools. This should be initially cut to 20cm and the material removed from site. The scrub should be left a day, followed by a second cut to ground level, following the same procedure of clearing slowly from one side to the other.

As hedgehogs may be present within the area, it is recommended that within the development, small hedgehog passes are incorporated within the fencing to avoid fragmenting the habitats hedgehogs use. It is also recommended that a hedgehog nest box is installed beneath undisturbed plant cover, facing the entrance away from the north or north-east.



*Eco Hedgehog Hole Fence Plate*



*Hedgehog Nest Box*

#### 4.2.5 *Invasive Species*

It is recommended that the cotoneaster species shrub present on site is treated as if it is a Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (in the absence of any further evidence to the contrary). As such, this should be removed from the site prior to the works occurring.

It is recommended that a specialist contractor be commissioned to treat and remove the cotoneaster present prior to any works commencing on site. It can take several years of repeated treatment until the treatment completely eradicates the plants, therefore the area should be monitored annually post treatment.

Any arisings from vegetation clearance or soil removal will need to be treated as contaminated waste. Good biosecurity procedures should be followed when entering and leaving the site. Careful methods of cleaning of any machinery used, as well as contractors work boots, before they leave the area is undertaken. All mud and soil should be removed, and the tracks of the machinery or vehicles used in the area be jet washed clean.

#### 4.2.6 *Other*

It is possible that small mammals are present within the survey area and in the vicinity. Although no specific legal protection for these mammals, care should be taken to avoid impacts to these species.

## **5. FURTHER SURVEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

Currently no further survey works are considered necessary; however, if the proposals change, further surveys may become necessary.

## 6. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN ASSESSMENT

### 6.1 Assumptions

#### 6.1.1 *Baseline Survey*

Only 'area' habitats were present within the site, therefore the 'habitat' calculations were used. The 'site' is defined as the area within the red line boundary.

#### 6.1.2 *Proposed Development*

The proposed plans involve the construction of three, one-bed bungalows, staff welfare & communal facilities with associated access, parking and landscaping (see Figure 3 in Appendix 1).

As there no method of knowing what management the future owners will undertake within their garden, the areas marked up as '*private plots*' are all mapped as 'Vegetated Garden' as per the BNG user guidance. All other areas, including the staff facilities, be maintained by the council / management group and as such can be secured. As such, areas of amenity grassland and individual trees proposed within these areas have been included within the BNG proposals (totalling 18 trees). Other areas of introduced shrub have also been included.

In relation to the BNG enhancements proposed the following assumptions have been made:

- Approximately 0.042 ha of other neutral grassland / wildflower meadow is created, able to achieve Moderate condition,
- Approximately 0.052 ha of mixed scrub is created, able to achieve Poor condition only. This is required in order to offset the loss of the mixed scrub parcel present on site and satisfy trading rules.

The proposed plans include hedgerow planting (see Figure 5 in Appendix 1). However, as the site had no hedgerows present at the baseline, there is no requirement to achieve mandatory BNG for Hedgerow Units. As such, these have not been mapped or included within the BNG proposals but will likely provide ecological value (outside of BNG).

#### 6.1.3 *Habitat Degradation*

From looking at historical aerial imagery, there does not appear to have been any habitat degradation since 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020.

#### 6.1.4 *Irreplaceable Habitat*

There are no irreplaceable habitats within the area of works.

#### 6.1.5 *Strategic Significance*

Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council have no specific guidance on the use of strategic significance prior to a Local Nature Recovery Strategy being adopted for the region. However, in the 'Supplementary Planning Documents Biodiversity and Geodiversity Consultation Statement' which was Adopted March 2024, the Dearne Valley Green Heart NIA is highlighted as an area of strategic importance.

As such, the habitats on site have been assigned as low strategic significance 'area/compensation not in local strategy/no local strategy' as it is not identified within the documents, nor is it located within close proximity to any notable habitats or sites.

#### 6.1.6 *Mitigation Hierarchy/Biodiversity Net Gain Hierarchy*

Loss of habitats of Medium Distinctiveness habitats (mixed scrub, individual trees) should be avoided where feasible. It appears possible to retain all individual trees present on site; however, the loss of the mixed scrub parcel is anticipated. This loss of habitat should be appropriately compensated for.

All other habitats within the survey area are of Low or Very Low Distinctiveness. It is also recommended that the wooded features on site (the individual trees) be retained to allow continued ecological connectivity.

## **6.2 Calculations**

Full habitat condition assessments and justifications for categorisation are provided within the Statutory Biodiversity Metric (user comments) and are detailed in Section 3.2.

### **6.2.1 *Habitat Units***

The site prior to development has a baseline of 1.95 Habitat Units. Post works there will be 2.14 Habitat Units, resulting in a gain of 0.20 Units (10.11%).

### **6.2.2 *Trading Rules***

The trading rules are satisfied within the metric.

## **7. ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS SUMMARY**

It is considered that the impacts of works could be minimal given that the mitigation measures outlined within the report are followed. Particular focus should be given to retaining the individual trees present on site. It is also recommended that any scrub clearance works avoid nesting birds season. There are opportunities to enhance the site post development, by including areas of enhancement such as scrub and grassland creation, as well as incorporating faunal boxes within the scheme to enhance the site for roosting bats and nesting birds. It is anticipated that mandatory BNG can be achieved for the proposals, provided the recommendations provided in Section 6 are incorporated into the scheme.

## REFERENCES

**Bat Conservation Trust & Institution of Lighting Professionals 2023** *Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night*. Available Online: <https://theilp.org.uk/publication/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

**Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Biodiversity Action Plan 2019**  
<http://www.barnsleybiodiversity.org.uk/biodiversityplan.html>

**Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Local Plan Adopted January 2019**  
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/17249/local-plan-adopted.pdf>

**Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents Biodiversity and Geodiversity Consultation Statement** <https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/media/m5qokjgg/biodiversity-and-geodiversity-consultation-statement-2024.pdf>

**Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) 2019** *Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment* (Version 1.1). CIEEM, Peterborough.

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**Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) 2024** *The Statutory Biodiversity Metric: User Guide*. Available Online:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e45fba3c2a28abb50d426/The\\_Statutory\\_Biodiversity\\_Metric\\_-\\_User\\_Guide\\_\\_23.07.24\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/669e45fba3c2a28abb50d426/The_Statutory_Biodiversity_Metric_-_User_Guide__23.07.24_.pdf)

**MAGIC** Available Online: <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

**Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2024** *National Planning Policy Framework*. Available Online: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/675abd214cbda57cacd3476e/NPPF-December-2024.pdf>

**UKHab 2023** *The UK Habitat Classification User Manual Version 2.0* at [www.ukhab.org](http://www.ukhab.org)

**APPENDIX 1: FIGURES**

**Figure 1: Site Location Plan**



**Appendix 1, Figure 1**  
**Site Location**

**Key**  
 Site Boundary

**Project Name:** Proposed Bungalows at Land off Castle Lane, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 6AH  
**Project Number:** 1777/HC/24  
**Date Produced:** 15/12/25  
**Version Number:** 1

Figure 2: UKHab Baseline Map



**Appendix 1, Figure 2**  
**UKHab Map - Baseline**

**Key**

- Site Boundary
- Target Note
- Urban Tree
- g4 Modified grassland
- h3h Mixed scrub
- u1b5 Buildings
- u1b6 Other developed land

Target Notes  
 1 - Cotoneaster species

Project Name: Proposed Bungalows at Land off Castle Lane, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 6AH  
 Project Number: 1777/HC/24  
 Date Produced: 15/12/25  
 Version Number: 1

Figure 3: Assessment Areas



Figure 4: UKHab Proposed Map



**Appendix 1, Figure 4**  
**UKHab Map - Proposed**

**Key**

	Site Boundary
	g3c Other neutral grassland
	g4 Modified grassland
	h3h Mixed scrub
	u1 Built-up areas and gardens
	u1b5 Buildings
	u1b6 Other developed land

**Secondary Codes**

828	- Vegetated gardens
847	- Introduced shrubs

**morph** : ecological consultants

Project Name: Proposed Bungalows at Land off Castle Lane, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 6AH

Project Number: 1777/HC/24

Date Produced: 25/03/26

Version Number: 4

**Figure 5: Proposed Plans**



Scale 1:500  
 0 10 25 50  
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P12	31.04.26	Site plan updated to include a landscaped path providing access to and from the bins	AA
P11	24.03.26	Site Plan Landscape updated	AA
P10	24.03.26	Site Plan Landscape updated	AA
P09	09.03.26	Private road updated for review	AA
P08	29.01.26	PRELIMINARY TENDER ISSUE	AA
P07	15.12.25	PLANNING ISSUE	AA
P06	08.09.25	PLANNING PRE-APP	SG
P05	21.07.25	Revised to reflect comments/feedback	SG
P04	14.07.25	Revised to reflect client comments/feedback	SG
P03	23.06.25	Revised to reflect latest bungalow arrangement & comments/feedback	SG
P02	30.04.25	Revised following comments/feedback	EJ
P01	04.04.25	Issued Preliminary FOR COMMENT	SG
Rev.	Date	Description	Drwn.

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**Proposed Site Plan**  
 Project: Bamsley  
 Client: \_\_\_\_\_ Drawing Suitability Code: S4  
 Progress Housing  
 Scales @ A3: 1:500  
 RIBA Stage: 3 PLANNING  
 Drawing Suitability Description: PLANNING  
 Project - Origin - Vol - Level - Type - Role - Drwg No - Revision - Author - Checked  
 1856 - HLP - 01 - XX - DR - A - 1011 - P12 - SG - MJ



Original drawing issue date: 04.04.26

## APPENDIX 2: BOTANICAL SPECIES LIST

Common Name	Scientific Name (Kent/Stace)
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.
Broad-leaved Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Cock's-foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
a common mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i> ssp. <i>vulgare</i>
Common Nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Common Sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
a cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster</i> sp.
Cow Parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Creeping Bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>
Creeping Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Creeping Thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Cuckoo-flower	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.
Dog Rose	<i>Rosa canina</i> agg.
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Germander Speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Perennial Rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>
Ribwort Plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>
Smooth Meadow-grass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
White Clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Barley	<i>Hordeum vulgare</i>

## APPENDIX 3: LEGISLATION

### Plants

All wild plants are protected against unauthorised, intentional uprooting under Section 13 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Plants listed in Schedule 8 of the Act are afforded additional protection against picking, uprooting, destruction and sale.

### Invasive and Non-Native Species

It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild a plant which is included in Part II of Schedule 9. Under this Act, it is also an offence to release or allow escape into the wild an animal which is not ordinarily a resident in Great Britain, or is included in Part I of Schedule 9.

### Biodiversity Net Gain

In England, BNG is mandatory under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021). Developers must deliver a BNG of a minimum of 10% unless exempt.

### Badgers

Badgers and their setts are protected by law. A badger sett is defined by law as 'any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger'.

Under the Protection of Badgers Act 1992 it is an offence to:

- Take, injure, or kill a badger (or attempt to do so);
- Cruelly ill-treat a badger;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a badger when it is occupying a badger sett.

### Bats

All bat species are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately take, kill or injure a bat;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to bat roosts; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb bats.

A bat roost is defined in the legislation as "any structure or place which a bat uses for shelter or protection". Roosts are protected whether or not bats are present at the time.

### Birds

All wild birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it illegal to intentionally:

- Kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- Take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is being built or in use;
- Take or destroy the eggs of any wild bird; and
- Possess or control any wild bird or egg unless obtained legally.

Birds listed under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) are afforded additional protection, which makes it an offence to disturb a bird while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

### Hazel Dormice

Hazel Dormice are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally take, kill or injure a dormouse;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a structure or place used for shelter or protection by a dormouse; and
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a dormouse while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

### **Great Crested Newts**

Great crested newts and their habitat are afforded full protection under UK and European legislation, including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, kill, disturb or injure a great crested newt;
- Disturb a great crested newt whilst it is occupying a structure or place for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to habitats used by great crested newts for protection or sheltering;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead great crested newts.

### **Reptiles**

Slow-worm, common lizard, adder and grass snake are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it an offence to:

- Deliberately kill, injure or take slow-worm, common lizard, adder or grass snake; and
- Sell, transport or advertise for sale.

Smooth snake and sand lizard are afforded additional protection as European Protected Species and therefore are also protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Together, this legislation makes it illegal to:

- Deliberately capture, kill, disturb or injure a smooth snake or sand lizard;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to habitats used by smooth snake or sand lizard for protection or sheltering;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb a smooth snake or sand lizard whilst it is occupying a structure or place for shelter or protection;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead smooth snake or sand lizard.

### **Water Voles**

The water vole is fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), which makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally kill, injure or take a water vole;
- Possess or control a live or dead water vole, or any part of a water vole;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place which water voles use for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb water voles while it is occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead water voles.

### **Otters**

Otters are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and are classified as a European protected species under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This makes it offence to:

- Deliberately capture, kill, disturb or injure an otter;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place otters use for shelter or protection;
- Intentionally or recklessly disturb otters while it is occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead otters.

### **White-clawed Crayfish**

White-clawed crayfish are partially protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This legislation makes it illegal to:

- Intentionally take white-clawed crayfish; and
- Sell, offer for sale, transport or advertise for live or dead white-clawed crayfish.

# Quality Assurance

## Quality Information

<b>Project</b>	Proposed Bungalows at Land off Castle Lane, Penistone, Sheffield, S36 6AH: Preliminary Ecological Appraisal and Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment
<b>Contract Number</b>	1777/HC/24
<b>Description</b>	Final Report
<b>Prepared by</b>	Helen Chambers MSc ACIEEM
<b>Checked by</b>	Steve Ralph MSc MCIEEM
<b>Date Sent</b>	19 <sup>th</sup> December 2025

## Revision History

<b>Version</b>	1	2	3
<b>Version Date</b>	19/12/25	24/03/26	31/03/26
<b>Details</b>	BNG calculations revised following client comments	Updated following consultee comments	Updated following landscape plans
<b>Prepared by</b>	Helen Chambers MSc ACIEEM	Helen Chambers MSc ACIEEM	Helen Chambers MSc ACIEEM

## Disclosure

The information, data, evidence, advice and opinions which have been prepared and provided are true, and have been prepared and provided in accordance with 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.

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