Whitcher Wildlife Ltd.
Ecological Consultants.

FOSTERS BAKERY, MAPPLEWELL.

OS REF: SE 32792 10000.

PRELIMINARY ECOLOGICAL APPRAISAL.

Ref No: **260414.**

Date: **14th May 2026.**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

1. INTRODUCTION.

1.1. A planning application is being prepared for the construction of a new warehouse in the grounds of Fosters Bakery in Mapplewell.

1.2. Whitcher Wildlife Ltd has been commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site to establish whether there are any ecological issues that may affect the proposed development and determine the baseline biodiversity value of the site.

1.3. That survey was carried out on 17th April 2026. This report outlines the findings of that survey and makes appropriate recommendations. This report also includes the baseline biodiversity calculations that will eventually inform a full biodiversity net gain (BNG) assessment.

1.4. Appendix I of this report provide additional information on specific species and are designed to assist the reader in understanding the contents of this report.

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2. SURVEY METHODOLOGY.

2.1. Prior to visiting the site, the survey area was cross referenced to maps and aerial photographs to give a general idea of the habitats and potential issues within the area and to identify potential access and walking routes.

2.2. The survey area was walked where access was agreed and public rights of way were used where no access was agreed. All habitats within and immediately around the survey area were documented and the dominant species within that habitat listed in line with the UK Habitat Classification methodology to identify the primary habitat types throughout the survey area. All primary habitats are accompanied by secondary codes which are used to add further specific details where necessary. Each primary habitat and unique set off secondary codes will be shown individually in the appended annotated map.

2.3. The survey area and immediate surrounding area was thoroughly searched for evidence of badger (*Meles meles*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with Harris S, Cresswell P and Jefferies D (1989). *Surveying Badgers*. Mammal Society: -

* Badger setts.
* Badger latrines or dung pits.
* Badger snuffle holes and evidence of foraging.
* Badger paths.
* Badger prints in areas of soft mud.
* Badger hairs caught on fencing.

2.4. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 100m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) activity by looking for the following signs, in line with Dean M, Strachen R, Gow D and Andres R (2016). *The Water Vole Mitigation Handbook (The Mammal Society Mitigation Guidance Series).* Eds Fiona Mathews and Paul Chanin. The mammal Society, London: -

* Water vole burrows.
* Water vole faeces and latrines.
* Water vole feeding stations.
* Water vole runs.
* Water vole prints in areas of soft mud.
* Water vole lawns.
* Predator field signs.

2.5. The survey area was searched for watercourses and where found all watercourses within the survey area and for approximately 50m in each direction were thoroughly searched for evidence of otter (*Lutra lutra*) activity by looking for the following signs in line with the P Chanin (2003). *Monitoring the Otter* and *Conserving Natura 2000 Rivers: Monitoring Series No10 Guidelines: -*

* Otter prints in soft mud.
* Otter spraints.
* Otter Holts.

2.6. The survey area was searched for watercourses and waterbodies. Where found, and where safe to enter the water, all were thoroughly searched for the presence of crayfish, for approximately 50m in each direction of the site, by searching under rocks and logs. Where stated, crayfish traps were also deployed into the watercourse. All survey work was carried out in accordance with the *Conserving Natural 2000 Rivers Monitoring Series No 1, Protocol for Monitoring the White Clawed Crayfish*.

2.7. The survey area was searched for trees and structures and where found these were checked for potential bat roosting sites in line with Collins, J. (ed.) (2023) *Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (4th edition)* by looking for the following signs: -

* Holes, cracks or crevices.
* Bat Droppings.

2.8. The land immediately adjacent to the survey area was assessed for bat roosting potential and bat foraging potential. Connective routes and flight lines were also assessed whilst on site and using maps of the area.

2.9. The area within 500m of the survey site was cross referenced to maps to highlight all ponds close to the site. Where possible, all ponds identified were accessed using agreed access or public rights of way to assess the potential for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) to be present.

2.10. The survey area was assessed for the potential for reptiles and suitable reptile habitats. Where applicable the area was also searched for the presence of reptiles.

2.11. Where appropriate, the habitat within and surrounding the survey area was searched for species such as hazel, oak, honeysuckle, bramble and other species which may provide potential habitat for hazel dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*). Field signs such as feeding remains and nests were also searched for where possible, in line

with P Bright, P Morris and T Mitchell-Jones *The Dormouse Conservation Handbook 2nd Edition*.

2.12. Where appropriate, the area within and surrounding the survey area was assessed for its potential to house habitat for red squirrels. Field signs of red squirrels were searched for at least every 50m, looking for any dreys, feeding signs or sightings of red squirrels.

2.13. All surveys were carried out in line with the Chartered Institute of Ecological and Environmental Management (CIEEM) survey standards and advice.

2.14. This document is prepared in line with The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This sets out the government policy on biodiversity and nature conservation and places a duty on Planning Authorities to give material consideration to the effect of a development on legally protected species when considering planning applications. The NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance on "Natural Environment" also promote sustainable development by ensuring that developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity and that it is conserved and enhanced within the development.

2.15. This report is prepared in line with the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act that came into force on 1st Oct 2006. Section 41 (S41) of the Act requires the Secretary of State to publish a list of habitats and species which are of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity in England.

2.16. This survey was carried out by Ruth Georgiou BSc MCIEEM. Since 2004 Ruth has had experience in a professional capacity as a Wildlife Consultant carrying out a variety of surveys including ecology surveys, phase I habitat surveys, preliminary ecological appraisals and species-specific surveys. She also holds a degree in Environmental Science (BSc) and has successfully completed a number of courses run by CIEEM, BCT and FSC in the relative protected species and other aspects of ecology. Ruth is also experienced and trained in Biodiversity Net Gain and is accredited to undertake river condition assessments utilising the MoRPh methodology. Ruth holds Natural England survey licences in respect of bats, great crested newts and white clawed crayfish and has held her own or has been named ecologist on site specific mitigation licences for badgers, great crested newts and bats. As a full member of CIEEM Ruth is subject to peer review on an annual basis.

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3. SURVEY RESULTS.

3.1. Data Search Results.

3.1.1. A data search request was submitted to Barnsley Biological Records Centre (BBRC) for records of protected species and designated sites within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. MAGIC website was also consulted for records of any statutory designated sites and records of any European Protected Species (EPS) licences or great crested newt survey data within 2km.

3.1.2. There are records of badger, but none anywhere near the site. Due to the sensitivity of these records no further information will be provided.

3.1.3. There are records of great crested newts approximately 1.3km south of the survey area at the old Barnsley Canal. There are also additional amphibian records in the area, including smooth newt, common toad and common frog but none are close to the survey area.

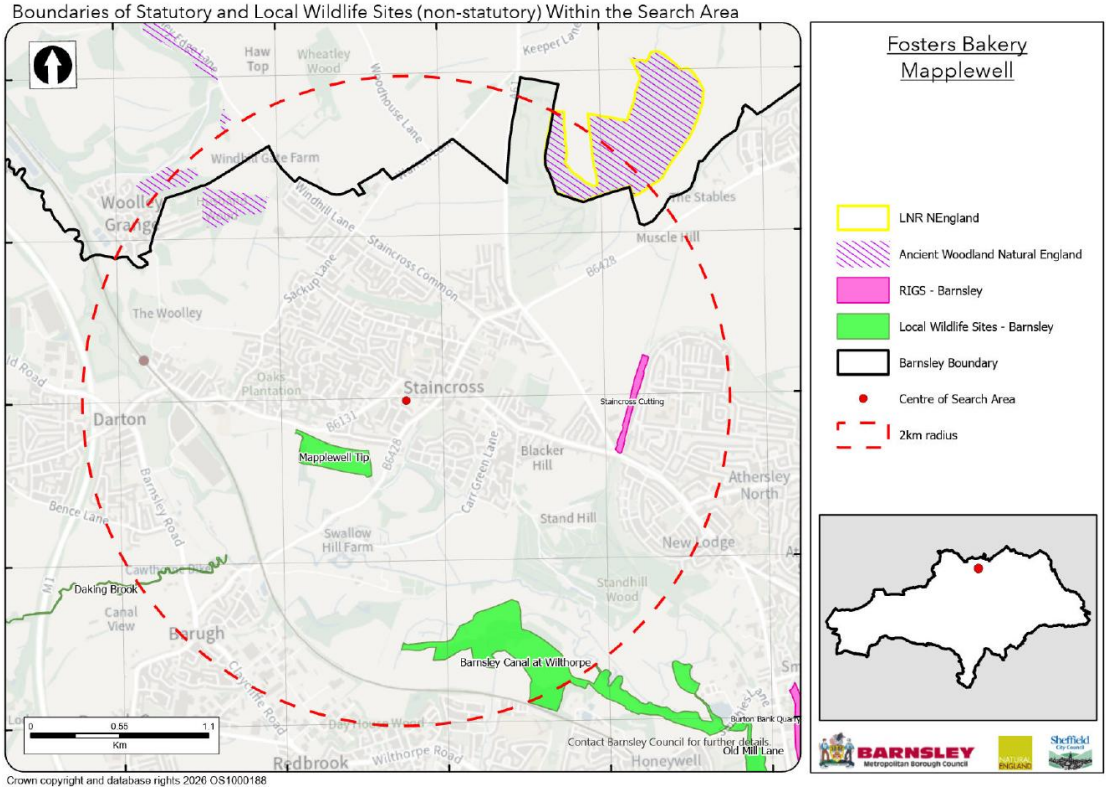
3.1.3. There are various records of bats, the majority are for pipistrelle species, with the closest being a field record of a pipistrelle bat approximately 300m from the survey area. There is one Leisler record and one daubentons record, both of which lie well in excess of 1km from the survey area.

3.1.4. There are a high number of bird records within 2km, some close to the site, although those close to the site relate to common bird species. The concentrations of bird records are in the more rural areas around Mapplewell, in particular to the south around Barnsley Canal, and to the west where records are presumably from surveys that have been carried out in support of planning applications between Darton and Woolley Grange.

3.1.5. There are additional species records within 2km, but none of these are assessed as relevant to the survey area due to their distance, date or habitat.

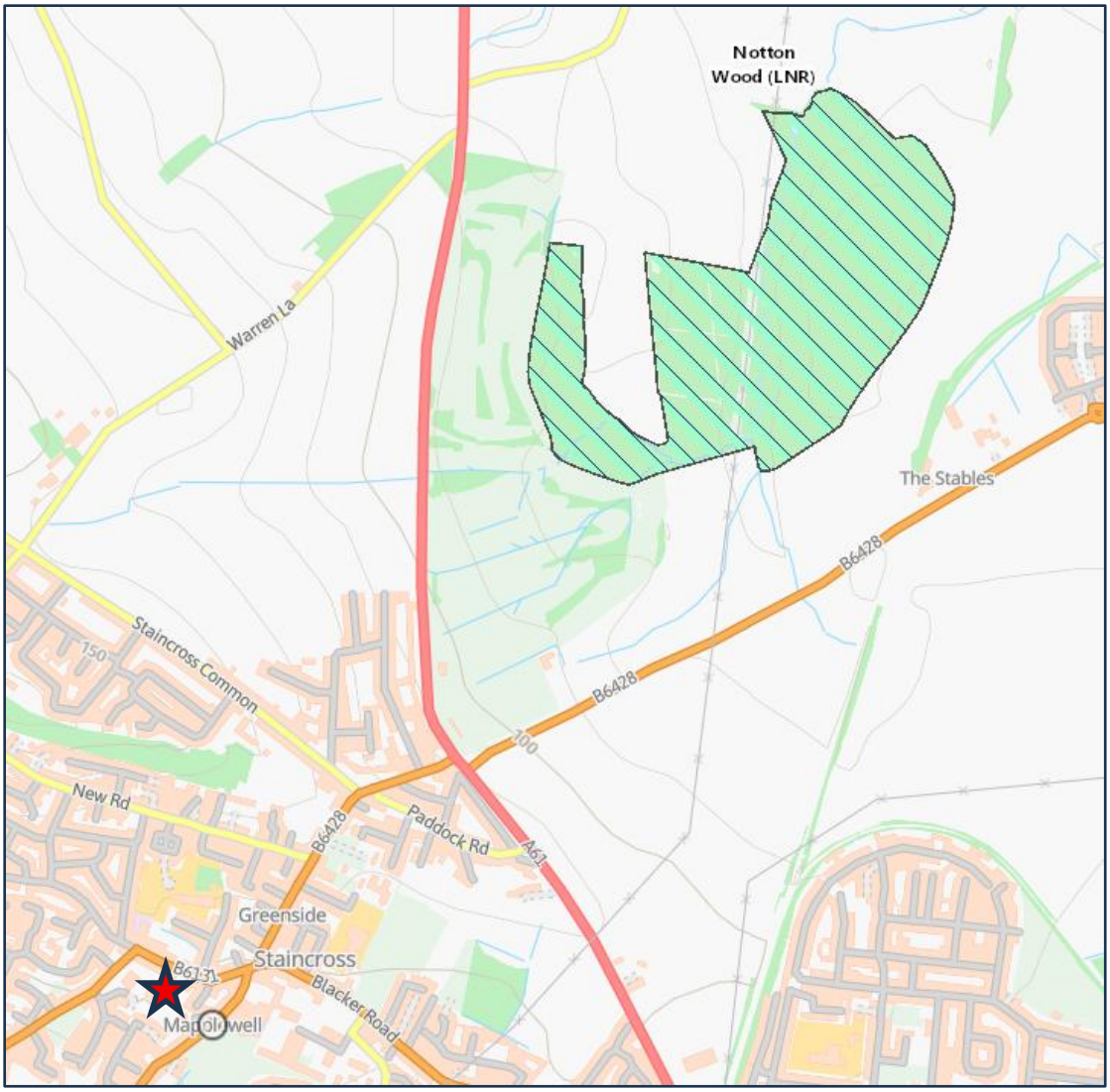
3.1.6. The data search results show that there are two Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within 2km. The closest of these is Mapplewell Tip LWS 370m south of the survey area. The other is Barnsley Canal at Wilthorpe LWS 1.3km away. There is also a Regionally

Important Geological Site (RIGS) located 1.3 km east. The map below shows all locally designated sites within a radius of 2km of the survey area.



3.1.7. There is one Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Notton Wood, located approximately 1.5km northeast of the survey area. This is also mapped as an ancient woodland. The map overleaf shows the survey area, indicated by the red star, in relation to the LNR.

3.1.8. The survey area lies in at least one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zone (IRZ), however, the development does not fall under the criteria that needs any further consultation with Natural England.

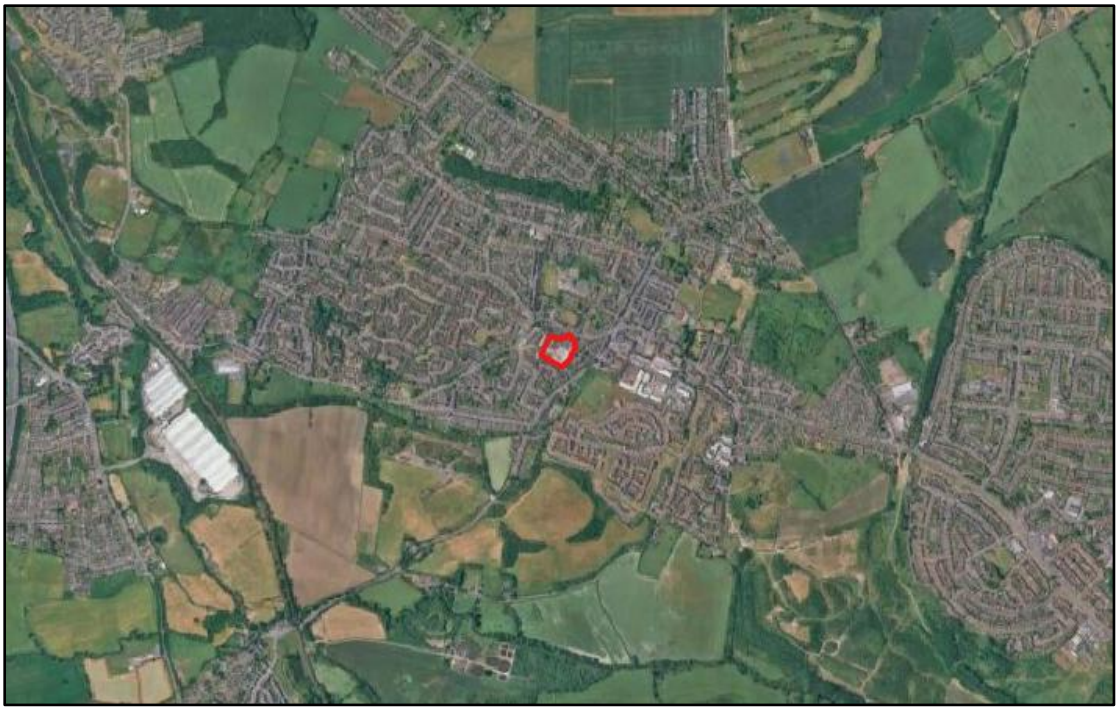


3.1.9. The data search results can be provided to the client on request but should not be placed in the public domain.

3.2. The Surveyed Area.

3.2.1. The survey area is located in the heart of the village of Mapplewell, surrounded by residential housing and small commercial units. In the wider surrounding area beyond the built up parts of Mapplewell, there are re-established former colliery tip sites, grazing fields and arable fields with tree line and hedgerow boundaries, all leading down towards the River Dearne and the old Barnsley Canal to the south. To the north there are large expanses of arable land, with woodland pockets, hedgerows and a golf course.

3.2.2. The aerial map below shows the location of the survey area, outlined in red, and the surrounding area.



3.2.3. The survey area comprised the entirety of the Fosters Bakery site in Mapplewell, although the proposals will only impact on a small area at the southern end.

3.2.4. The limits of the survey area are outlined in red in the aerial map below.

3.3. Survey Limitations.

There were no significant limitations that impacted on this survey.

3.4. Description of Habitats.

3.4.1. Appendix V of this report contains an annotated map marked up with the varying habitats across the site. The primary habitats on the site are listed below, followed by descriptions of each habitat.

- u1b5 Buildings
- u1b6 Other developed land
- g4 Modified grassland
- u1f Sparsely vegetated urban land

3.4.2. u1b5 Buildings.

Within the survey area there are various buildings, including the main bakery and administration buildings. The proposed new warehouse will have a link that ties into one of the existing buildings, shown in the photograph below.

3.4.3. u1b6 Other developed land.

The majority of the site is hard standing that is well used by vehicles and for storage. The photograph below shows the area of hard standing adjacent to the proposed new warehouse.

3.4.4. g4 Modified grassland.

3.4.4.1. The new warehouse will be built on a raised area where topsoil from previous work on the site has been stored and grassland has become established that is occasionally mown to keep the area somewhat ‘tidy’ (T1).

3.4.4.2. This has become established with Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*), meadowgrass (*Poa* sp.) and fescue (*Festuca* sp.) with flowering species including dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and common field speedwell (*Veronica agrestis*). A full species list can be found appended to this report.

3.4.4.3. There is another small patch of modified grassland located to the north of the site (T2). Similar grass species were identified, along with dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*), red dead nettle (*Lamium purpuream*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus*

repens), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), common ragwort (*Vulgaris jacobaea*), common field speedwell (*Veronica agrestis*) and white clover (*Trifolium repens*).

3.4.5. u1f Sparsely vegetated urban land.

3.4.5.1. At the southern end of the site where the new warehouse is proposed, there are some areas that have been categorised as sparsely vegetated urban land as the vegetation cover does not exceed 50%. Similarly, there is a small area of sparsely vegetated land in the northern part of the site.

3.4.5.2. Various species were recorded in this habitat, which was consistent across all parcels of this habitat on the site. The species growing were predominantly shepherds purse (*Capsella bursa-pastoris*), annual meadowgrass (*Poa annua*), nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*), dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and American willowherb (*Epilobium ciliatum*). A full species list for these habitats is appended at the end of this report.

3.5. Description of Fauna.

3.5.1. No badger setts or badger field signs were identified within the survey area.

3.5.2. There are no watercourses within the survey area, therefore no suitable habitat for water voles, otters or white clawed crayfish.

3.5.3. There are no ponds shown on maps within a 500m radius of the survey area, therefore great crested newts are assessed as absent from the survey area.

3.5.4. There are various buildings within the survey area although the development will only impact on one face of the main bakery, as shown in the photograph below. This building is constructed from profiled metal sheeting, which is completely unsuitable for roosting bats.

3.5.5. No other buildings or sections of building within the survey area will be impacted by the proposed development, therefore were not subject to a Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA).

3.5.6. There are no trees within the survey area to provide potential for roosting bats.

3.5.7. The survey area is assessed as low value habitat for foraging and commuting bats. Bats may utilise adjacent tree lines, hedgerows and garden, but these are all off site. The habitats within the survey area offer very little opportunity for foraging and commuting bats.

3.5.8. There is very little potential for nesting birds within the survey area, although some birds have been known to nest in the most unlikely of locations.

3.5.9. The survey area is assessed to be completely unsuitable for reptiles as there are no refuges and connectivity to the site is poor. In addition, the area is subject to regular disturbance by people and vehicles.

3.5.10. The survey area lies outside the natural and known range of hazel dormouse and red squirrel and therefore these species are considered absent from the survey area.

3.5.11. The site provides limited suitability for hedgehogs, although it is possible that hedgehogs may commute across the site.

3.5.12. No invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) were identified within the survey area.

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4. BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG) BASELINE.

4.1. Biodiversity calculations have been carried out using the Statutory Metric tool, the current metric at the time of writing this report. The calculations have been completed for area habitat units only.

4.2. These calculations are based on all habitats on the site assigned as low strategic significance as there is no local strategy in place.

4.3. Condition assessments for each of these habitats are provided on a separate spreadsheet.

4.4. Area Habitat Units.

The area habitat calculations include all area habitats that lie within the red line boundary of the site. The habitats baseline on the site was calculated at 0.34 biodiversity units as demonstrated in the table below.

Habitat Type	Extent (ha)	Distinctiveness	Condition Assessment	Biodiversity units
Modified grassland (T1)	0.062	Low	Moderate	0.25
Modified grassland (T2)	0.004	Low	Poor	0.01
Ruderal/Ephemeral (T3)	0.009	Low	Poor	0.02
Ruderal/Ephemeral (T4)	0.015	Low	Poor	0.03
Ruderal/Ephemeral (T5)	0.011	Low	Poor	0.02
Ruderal/Ephemeral (T6)	0.008	Low	Poor	0.02
Developed land; sealed surface	0.407	V.Low	N/A - Other	0.00
Total	**0.52**			**0.34**

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5. EVALUATION OF FINDINGS.

5.1. The desktop data search shows that there is one statutory designated site within 2km of the survey area, Notton Wood LNR, located 1.5km away. Due to the distance of this site and the lack of ecological connectivity to it, it is assessed that the proposed development of the site will have no negative impact on the LNR.

5.2. The survey area lies within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of at least one SSSI, but according to the MAGIC website the nature of the development means that it is highly unlikely that any further consultation with Natural England will be required.

5.3. There are three non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the survey area, however, due to the distance of these, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development will have any negative impact on those sites.

5.4. No badger setts or badger field signs were identified within the survey area therefore the proposed development will have no impact on badgers.

5.5. There are no habitats on the site suitable for water vole, otter or white clawed crayfish. Therefore, the development of the site will have no impact on these species.

5.6. There are no ponds shown on Ordnance Survey maps within 500m of the survey area, therefore, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development will impact on great crested newts.

5.7. The proposals will impact on one elevation of the main bakery building. This was assessed to have negligible potential for roosting bats and there are no trees within the survey area to provide potential features for bats to roost in. Therefore, the proposed works will have no impact on roosting bats.

5.8. The site is assessed as low value habitat for foraging and commuting bats. The proposals will not result in any loss or fragmentation of bat foraging or commuting habitats.

5.9. There is very little opportunity for nesting birds within the survey area, although birds have been known to nest in the most unlikely of locations. It is assessed as highly unlikely that nesting birds will be impacted by the works, but a precautionary approach is still recommended.

5.10. The site is assessed as being completely unsuitable for reptiles, therefore reptiles will not be impact by the proposed development.

5.11. The survey area lies outside the natural and known range of hazel dormouse and red squirrels and therefore the works will have no impact on these species.

5.12. The site provides very little refuge for hedgehogs, although they may commute across the site. Hedgehogs are nocturnal animals and therefore it is highly unlikely that hedgehogs will be impacted by the development, as long as general precautions are put in place to ensure that hedgehogs do not come to any harm when moving across the site.

5.13. No invasive non-native plant species listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) were found within the survey area, therefore the proposed works will not cause such plants to spread into the wild.

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6. RECOMMENDATIONS.

6.1. This report is designed to advise the client of the initial survey results and BNG baseline assessment so that they may be considered within the site layout and landscaping scheme.

6.2. Once all recommendations of the PEA have been considered, any necessary further surveys have been completed and the development plans have been finalised, there is a requirement for the report to be converted into an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) where details of further survey results, mitigation and ecological enhancements are included, to arrive at an assessment of the residual impact of the proposed development. This will also need to include a full BNG assessment of the site.

6.3. It is recommended that immediately prior to any works commencing, a careful check is carried out for the presence of any birds nests or bird activity in the area, and in the event that any are found further advice should be sought from an ecologist as to how to proceed. Based on the very low likelihood of birds nesting in the area, this check can be carried out by the site manager, or it can be delegated to someone who is competent at identifying a nest.

6.4. It is recommended that no excavations are left open overnight, they should either be infilled or covered over to prevent animals from falling into them. If it is necessary to leave any excavations open overnight, ramps should be left to allow any animals that happen to fall into them a chance to escape by their own means.

6.5. If any piles of materials are left on site overnight, due care should be taken when moving them to ensure that any animals that may take refuge in or under them remain unharmed.

6.6. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be an expectation to provide some biodiversity enhancements for fauna species on the site. It is recommended that one bat box and one swift box is provided on the site. If the construction materials allow, these should be integrated into the walls of the building. If not, then stand alone boxes should be provided in the least disturbed part of the site where feasible.

6.7. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

6.7.1. There is a requirement to provide an overall biodiversity net gain on the site. There will be a statutory requirement to deliver a net gain of at least 10% biodiversity units. There will also be a requirement to meet the trading rules of the Statutory Metric. The following recommendations in regard to BNG are in line with the BNG mitigation hierarchy.

6.7.2. It is recommended as much of the existing grassland or sparsely vegetated land is retained as possible and where is feasible. This will reduce the impacts on biodiversity and will make it easier to achieve the required number of biodiversity units. Any retained habitats will need to be fenced and protected during the works to ensure that the works do not cause their conditions to deteriorate.

6.7.3. Any habitats that are lost or degraded in value, must be offset through the planting of new habitat on the site, ideally within the red line boundary of the application. This could incorporate grassland creation and tree planting. There is also the option of enhancing the small parcel of grassland to the north of the site and planting up the area of sparsely vegetated land next to it. This alone will not achieve the 10% net gain required but will help to contribute to the final score on site.

6.7.4. It is recommended that any habitats created as part of the proposed landscaping on site include species rich amenity grasslands, native scrub mixes as opposed to ornamental shrubs, and native tree planting.

6.7.5. It is recommended that a map of the site is provided, marked up with any areas that can be given up to deliver biodiversity units, so that further advice can be given on how to maximise the number of biodiversity units delivered in those areas. These areas will need to be managed and monitored for a 30 year period under the requirements of statutory BNG.

6.7.6. Once all site options for BNG on site have been maximised, it is recommended that a copy of the landscape proposals are provided to allow final BNG calculations to be completed. Any outstanding units required to meet the 10% net gain and meet the trading rules will need to be purchased from an off site provider. There is also the option that the developer can create units off site themselves, however, this would require further baseline surveys of any land to be used, there would be a requirement for a legal

agreement to be in place and the developer would be committed to managing and monitoring that land for the next 30 years.

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Checked by:	
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Appendix I. NESTING BIRD INFORMATION.

Ecology

The nesting season will vary according to the weather each year but generally commences in March, peaks during May and June and continues until September. It is also worth remembering that some birds nest in trees and scrub, but others are ground nesting or prefer man- made structures or buildings.

Surveys

Nesting bird surveys search for potential nest sites in vegetation, buildings etc. Potential nesting sites are observed over a suitable period of time for bird movements or calling male birds that would indicate the presence of a nest. The presence of a nest can be identified from the field signs without the necessity to see the nest itself, thereby avoiding any disturbance of the nests. The best way to avoid this issue is to plan for vegetation clearance to be carried out outside the bird-nesting season.

Legislation

Nesting birds are protected under The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Part 1. -(1) Of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - kills, injures or takes any wild bird; takes, damages or destroys the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use or being built; or takes or destroys an egg of any wild bird, he shall be guilty of an offence.

Part 1. -(5) of the Act states that: - If any person intentionally: - disturbs any wild bird included in Schedule 1 while it is building a nest or is in, on, or near a nest containing eggs or young; or disturbs young of such a bird, he shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a special penalty.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 amends the above by inserting after “intentionally” the words “or recklessly”.

Appendix II. SPECIES LISTS.

Modified Grassland T1:

Common Name	Scientific (Latin) Name
Red dead nettle	*Lamium purpureum*
Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale* agg.
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
Common field speedwell	*Veronica persica*
Shepherd's purse	*Capsella bursa-pastoris*
White clover	*Trifolium repens*
Mouse-ear chickweed	*Cerastium fontanum*
Common ragwort	*Jacobaea vulgaris*
Spear thistle	*Cirsium vulgare*
Meadow grass	*Poa* spp.
Fescue	*Festuca* spp.
Common daisy	*Bellis perennis*
Yorkshire fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Hawkbit	*Leontodon* spp.
Catsear	*Hypochaeris radicata*
Broad-leaved plantain	*Plantago major*
Cut-leaved geranium	*Geranium dissectum*
Corn poppy	*Papaver rhoeas*

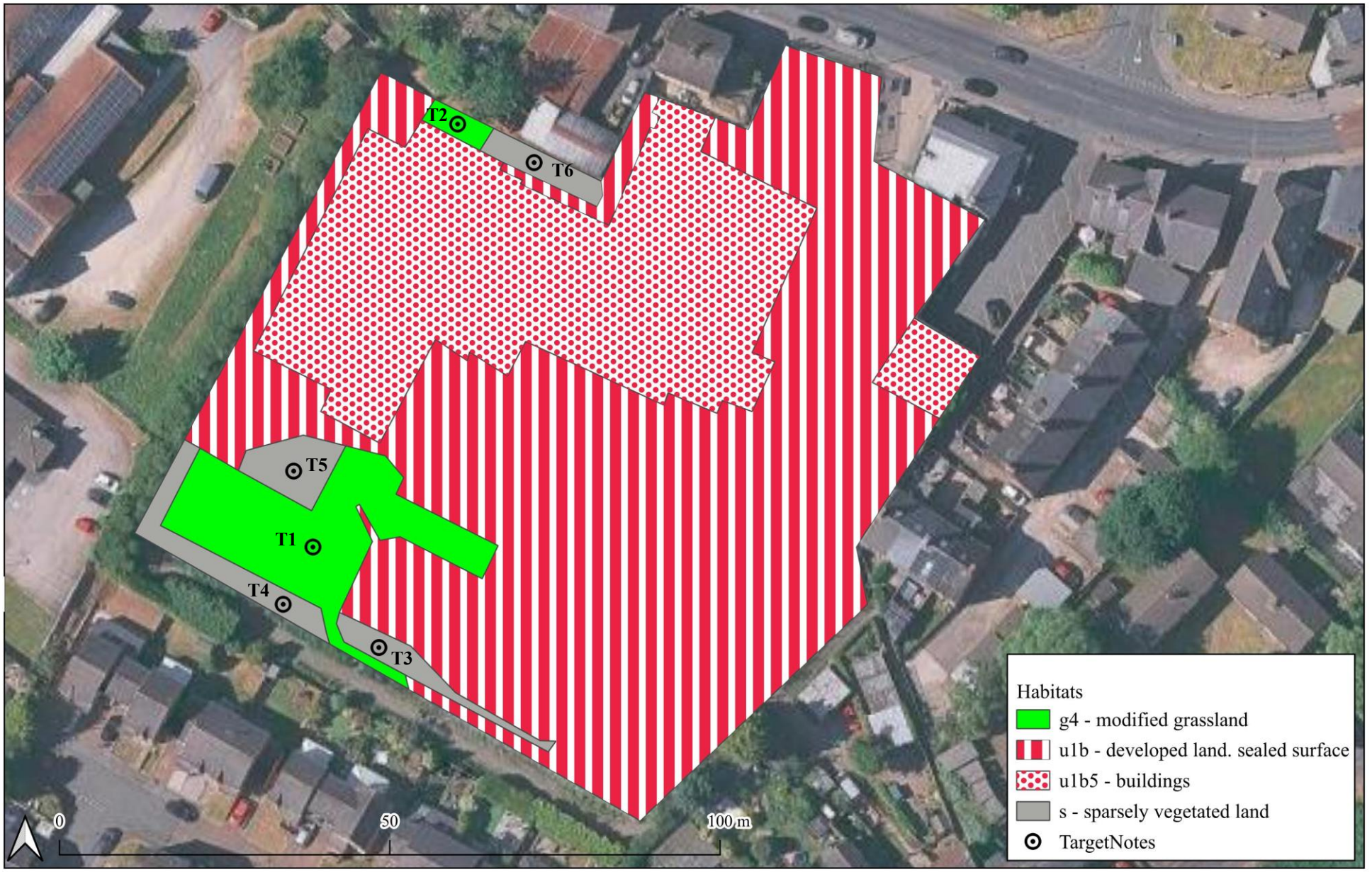
Modified Grassland T2:

Common Name	Scientific (Latin) Name
Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale* agg.
Red dead nettle	*Lamium purpureum*
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
Fescue	*Festuca* spp.
Common ragwort	*Jacobaea vulgaris*
Common field speedwell	*Veronica persica*
White clover	*Trifolium repens*

Sparsely Vegetated Urban Land:

Common Name	Scientific (Latin) Name
Shepherd's purse	*Capsella bursa-pastoris*
Red dead nettle	*Lamium purpureum*
Chickweed	*Stellaria media*
Pearlwort	*Sagina* spp.
Annual meadow grass	*Poa annua*
Nipplewort	*Lapsana communis*
Groundsel	*Senecio vulgaris*
Scentless mayweed	*Tripleurospermum inodorum*
Common field speedwell	*Veronica persica*
Dandelion	*Taraxacum officinale* agg.
White clover	*Trifolium repens*
Hairy bittercress	*Cardamine hirsuta*
American willowherb	*Epilobium ciliatum*
Common sowthistle	*Sonchus oleraceus*
Bramble	*Rubus fruticosus* agg.
Spiny sowthistle	*Sonchus asper*
Creeping buttercup	*Ranunculus repens*
Ribwort plantain	*Plantago lanceolata*
Black medic	*Medicago lupulina*
Corn poppy	*Papaver rhoeas*
Bitter dock	*Rumex obtusifolius*
Field mustard	*Sinapis arvensis*
Broad-leaved plantain	*Plantago major*
Prostrate knotweed	*Polygonum aviculare*
Common vetch	*Vicia sativa*
Catsear	*Hypochaeris radicata*
Wall barley	*Hordeum murinum*
Fescue	*Festuca* spp.

Appendix III. BASELINE HABITATS MAP.



Site: Fosters Bakery, Mapplewell

Reference: 260414

Date: 18.05.2026

Produced by: Ruth Georgiou