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Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Survey site:

Welfare Park, Church Street, Armthorpe, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN3 3AG

Client:

Armthorpe Parish Council

Survey date:

16th December 2025

Project:

This report is prepared to inform a planning application with the City of Doncaster Council. The proposal is described as:

The construction of a playground.

[Unsubmitted]

PEA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PEA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

PRA survey methodology and legislation can be found in the Arbtech Supplement: [PRA Methodology and Legislation - 2024](#).

Site Location and Context				
The survey site is centred on National Grid Reference SE 62777 04565 and has an area of approximately 0.052ha.				
The site comprises an area of hardstanding currently designated as a playing area. This is surrounded by modified grassland, part of which forms a mown football pitch, and scattered trees. Aerial imagery shows the local landscape to have an urban character, though trees are present within adjacent habitats including within residential gardens. Such features likely enhance the area for a variety of species, including bats, and birds.				
Survey Details				
The site survey was undertaken by Anneke Greenman BSc (Hons) MSc, Consultant, an ecologist with three years of experience, accredited on a level 2 bat license to undertake level 1 activities. Details available upon request.				
Date of survey	Temperature (°C)	Humidity (%)	Cloud Cover (%)	Wind (km/h)
16/12/2025	7	84	90	5
Executive Summary				
• Precautionary working measures needed for Badger, Hedgehogs, Common amphibians and Reptiles. • BNG needed to support planning application.				
Survey limitations				
It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to describe the baseline conditions within the survey area, and evaluate these features, this report does not provide a complete characterisation of the site. This assessment provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species being present. This is based on suitability of the habitats on the site and in the wider landscape, the ecology and biology of species as currently understood, and the known distribution of species as recovered during the searches of historical biological records.				
A biological records data search has not been undertaken. However, given the location of the site, the nature of the habitats present and the assessed suitability of the site for protected or notable species, it is not anticipated that the purchase of biological records data will add any significant weight or alter the conclusions and recommendations outlined in this report.				
This survey was conducted outside of the optimal vegetation growing season. This was not considered to be a significant limitation on this site due to the simple nature of the habitats present.				

Ecological Survey Factor	Detailed using desk study and site survey (carried out under good weather conditions). Any specific limitations noted within relevant section. This table may include further work you will need to commission (if any) to obtain planning permission or comply with legislation for other consent. All clients are expected to read and understand this section, or to contact the lead surveyor for advice.
Conclusion, Impact or Recommendations	
Habitats and plants (see habitat map in appendix 1, location plan in appendix 2, proposal plan in appendix 3 and photos in appendix 4). Botanical species are described with reference to the DAFOR scale (D = Dominant; A = Abundant; F = Frequent; O = Occasional; R = Rare). <i>Summary of Survey Findings</i> <i>(UKHab codes used)</i>	The site does not contain any habitats listed as a habitat of principal importance under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006). Habitats within the site are common and widespread and have low ecological value. Notable habitats are present within 2km. On-site habitat descriptions u1b – Developed land/sealed surface Hardstanding was present at the centre of the site currently forming a sports court. This habitat forms the main area subject to be changed in proposal plans. g4 – Modified grassland Modified grassland formed the largest habitat parcel on site. This was relatively managed, though a shorter sward height was maintained to the north of the site to form a football pitch. Species within this parcel consisted of perennial rye (D), creeping buttercup (F), ribwort plantain (F), white clover (O), dead nettle (O), wild mustard (R), poison hemlock (O), fringed willowherb (O), vipers bugloss (R), and oxtail daisy (R). This habitat was subject to a condition assessment using the grassland habitat type: low distinctiveness habitat condition sheet. The results are detailed below: A. There were 6-8 vascular plant species present B. Sward height was varied C. Scrub accounts for less than 20% of area D. Physical damage less than 5% E. Cover of bare ground between 5 -10% F. Cover of bracken less than 20% G. Absence of invasive plant species. It is considered that the grassland is classified as good condition. h3d – Bramble scrub

	A small expanse of bramble scrub is present along the current fence that separates the hardstanding sports court with the unsealed track. Species here consisted only of bramble. <u>Scattered trees 32</u> There are a total of 6 scattered trees onsite, detailed below: <table><tr><th>Tree ID</th><th>Species</th><th>Size</th></tr><tr><td>T1</td><td>Grey willow</td><td>7cm DBH, 3.5m</td></tr><tr><td>T2 & T3</td><td>Ash</td><td>15cm DBH, 7m</td></tr><tr><td>T4</td><td>Black poplar</td><td>20cm DBH, 6m</td></tr><tr><td>T5</td><td>Ash</td><td>30cm DBH, 7m</td></tr><tr><td>T6</td><td>Hawthorn</td><td>20cm DBH, 6m</td></tr></table> This habitat was subject to a condition assessment using the Individual trees habitat type condition sheet. The results are detailed below: A. 70% of tree species are native B. Tree canopy predominantly continuous C. More than 50% of trees are mature D. Little or no evidence of an adverse impact on tree health by human activity E. Natural ecological niches are present F. Less than 20% of the tree canopy oversails vegetation beneath It is considered that the individual scattered trees are classified as good condition. g1c— Bracken A small section of bracken was present along the eastern boundary of the site. Local notable habitats Patches of priority designated deciduous woodland are present within 2km of the site, with the closest parcel located 570m west. Further patches of deciduous woodland are also located within 2km. Further priority habitats are present within 2km of the site, including lowland fens (1.1km southwest).	Tree ID	Species	Size	T1	Grey willow	7cm DBH, 3.5m	T2 & T3	Ash	15cm DBH, 7m	T4	Black poplar	20cm DBH, 6m	T5	Ash	30cm DBH, 7m	T6	Hawthorn	20cm DBH, 6m
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<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	On-site habitats The proposed development will result in the loss of hardstanding and modified grassland. This is likely to have a minimal impact on biodiversity due to the low ecological value of these habitats. Notable habitats No impacts to any notable habitats are anticipated due to the small scale and distance of the proposed development from such habitats as well as the urban location of the site with surrounding physical barriers. On-site habitats Retained trees should be protected in line with the measures outlined in the British Standard "Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction to Construction - Recommendations" (BS 5837) (2012). Notable habitats None required. Biodiversity net gain The Environment Act (2021) requires all developments (excluding exemptions) to deliver a 10% net gain in biodiversity. Therefore, the planning application must be accompanied by a landscaping/habitat creation and enhancement strategy, biodiversity net gain calculations and a habitat management and monitoring plan to ensure the proposed development delivers a 10% net gain.
<i>Recommendations</i>	
Locality and Designated Sites	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	On-site designations The site is not subject to any designation. Statutory designated sites (within 2km) There are two statutory sites within 2km of the site, as detailed below: Sandall Beat SSSI, approximately 1.4km southwest. Designated for nationally rare and important insect populations. Sandall Beat LNR, approximately 1.4km southwest. Designated for nationally rare and important insect populations The site lies within the impact risk zone for Sandall Beat SSSI. Non-statutory designated sites The presence of non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the site cannot be established without data from Doncaster Local Records Centre (DLRC).
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	On-site designations

	No impacts foreseen. Statutory and non-statutory designated sites The site lies within the impact risk zone for Sandall Beat. The proposed development type is not listed as a possible high risk for this designation.
<i>Recommendations</i>	On-site designations None required. Statutory and non-statutory designated sites None required.
Invasive / Non-native species	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	No problematic invasive and non-native species recorded on site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys but remain vigilant.
Invertebrates	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The habitats present on-site, including modified grassland and scattered trees, likely provide common invertebrates with opportunities to forage and shelter. The site contains no further notable habitats which may provide niches for specialised or protected invertebrates.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	None foreseen. and the presence of more extensive habitat locally.
<i>Recommendations</i>	No further surveys.
Bats	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	EPSL data A search of the magic.gov.uk database for granted EPSLs within a 2km radius of the site has been completed. Displaced bats from licensed sites <2km away from the survey site will find alternative habitat either within the mitigation measures implemented as part of the licence

	or will relocate to other known roosts sites in close proximity to the licensed site. There is one EPSL within a 2km radius of site as detailed below:			
	EPSL reference	Bat species affected	Distance from site	Impacts allowed by licence
	EPSM2011-2744	Common Pipistrelle	Within 2km	Destruction of a resting place
There are no Special Areas of Conservation designated for bats within 10km of the site.				
Foraging and commuting habitat				
Habitats recorded on site are assessed to provide foraging and commuting opportunities for bats in the form of modified grassland and scattered trees. These habitats are likely to provide micro-climatic conditions that support invertebrates that will in turn provide foraging opportunities for local bat populations.				
Roosting habitat				
No habitat suitable for roosting bats was identified on site.				
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Roosting habitat [Buildings]			
	No buildings present on site.			
	Roosting habitat [Trees]			
	No trees on site were assessed to have features suitable for roosting bats.			
	Foraging and commuting habitat			
<i>Recommendations</i>	The proposed development will not result in the removal of any habitats which could be used by foraging or commuting bats. However, the proposed development will include the use of lighting which could spill on to bat roosting, foraging or commuting habitat and deter bats from using these areas.			
	Artificial lighting			
	The proposed development may lead to an increase in the amount of current lighting of surrounding habitats or the retained building without mitigation. This may disturb commuting bats.			
	Roosting habitat [Buildings]			

	None required. Roosting habitat [Trees] In the unlikely event that a bat or evidence of bats is discovered during the development all work must stop and a bat licensed ecologist contacted for further advice. Foraging and commuting habitat No further surveys are required. Artificial lighting A low impact lighting strategy will be adopted for the site during post-development which outlines the areas of the site that will be retained as dark corridors. Parameters can be found on the Bat Conservation Trust website: https://www.bats.org.uk/our-work/buildings-planning-and-development/lighting-2 Suggested biodiversity enhancements None suggested.
Birds	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	Buildings No buildings present on site. Trees and vegetation No active bird nests were identified within the scattered trees on-site, however they all offer nesting opportunities and nest-building resources for birds. Barn owls The site does not appear to provide any suitable nesting sites for barn owls. Overwintering birds Due to the small size of the site and the extent and type of the habitats recorded, the site not considered suitable to support a significant assemblage of protected and/or notable birds.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Buildings/trees The proposed development could result in the destruction or the disturbance and subsequent abandonment of active bird nests. Barn owls None foreseen.

	Overwintering birds None foreseen.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Buildings/trees Precautions should be taken with machinery and noise levels when working close to any retained nests so as not to disturb any nearby nesting birds during construction works. At least a 3-5m buffer should be created between any machinery and active nests until the young have fledged. Barn owls None required. Overwintering birds None required. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The installation of a minimum of two bird boxes on mature trees around the site boundaries or on retained buildings will provide additional nesting habitat for birds e.g. Schwegler 1B Nest Boxes (trees) Schwegler 2H Robin Boxes (trees) Woodstone Nest Box (buildings or trees) Or a similar alternative brand. Tree boxes should be positioned approximately 3m above ground level where they will be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Small-hole boxes are best placed approximately 1-3m above ground on an area of the tree trunk where foliage will not obscure the entrance hole.
Reptiles	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	EPSL data A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for protected reptiles within 2km of the site. Habitat suitability There is no suitable habitat present on site for reptiles due to a lack of habitats such as scrub and rank grassland which would offer refuge for these species. Further, the site is surrounded by urban development (i.e. roads and buildings) which is considered sub-optimal for reptile migration and therefore reptiles are considered unlikely to migrate from any nearby suitable habitats to the development site. As such it is likely that reptiles are absent from the development site. Wider landscape

	The adjacent vegetated gardens may provide some resources for local reptile populations. These adjacent habitats provide some foraging, commuting, and refuge opportunities for reptiles. The presence of reptiles utilising these adjacent habitats cannot be discounted.	
Foreseen Impacts	Hardstanding and modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local reptile populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, site clearance could result in the death or injury of reptiles, if present.	
Recommendations	A precautionary working method will be implemented for widespread reptiles during construction, including the following measures: • Vegetation will be maintained at a short sward (5cm) to discourage reptiles. • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby habitats. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. • If any reptiles are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. • In the unlikely event that a reptile is identified, works must cease and advise must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist.	
Amphibians		
Summary of Survey Findings	EPSL and survey data	A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for great crested newts within 2km of the site. Further, no positive class survey licence return or DLL historic survey data (2017 – 2019) were present within 2km of the site. Aquatic habitat suitability (including ponds within 500m) Great crested newts (GCN) exist in metapopulations and are known to utilise ponds and their connecting terrestrial habitat during their life cycle; great crested newts are typically found within terrestrial habitats up to 500m from breeding ponds (Langton et al. 2001). No ponds are present on site or within 500m of the site. Terrestrial habitat suitability Areas of shrubbery may provide foraging and sheltering opportunities for amphibians. No hibernation opportunities were identified on-site.
Foreseen Impacts	Given the lack of suitably connected breeding ponds within 500m of the site, the presence of GCN on-site is considered unlikely and therefore impacts to amphibians as a result of the proposed development are deemed to be acceptably low.	

<i>Recommendations</i>	Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to great crested newts, further surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented for common amphibians during construction, including the following measures: • A staged approach will be adopted for vegetation clearance, whereby the vegetation will be strimmed to 15cm and left overnight to allow any amphibians to disperse. The vegetation can then be cleared to ground level and must be maintained at this level for the duration of construction to deter amphibians from the working area. • Any rubble piles will be dismantled by hand and debris and brash will be stored on pallets or removed from the site to prevent amphibians from utilising these areas. • Best practice pollution prevention measures will be implemented to minimise impacts to nearby aquatic habitats that amphibians could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. • If any common amphibians are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. • In the unlikely event that a great crested newt is identified, works must cease and advise must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The site could be enhanced for amphibians post-development through creation of amphibian hibernacula using rubble and logs from site clearance. Information on how to construct a hibernaculum can be found here: https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/hibernaculum	
Badger		
<i>Summary of Findings</i>	<i>Survey</i>	No badger setts were noted on site or within a 30m radius of the site. Further, no evidence of foraging badgers was noted within the development area. However, the site was considered suitable for badger foraging habitat.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>		No works will be undertaken within 30m of a badger sett. Hardstanding and modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local badger populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of badgers, if present.

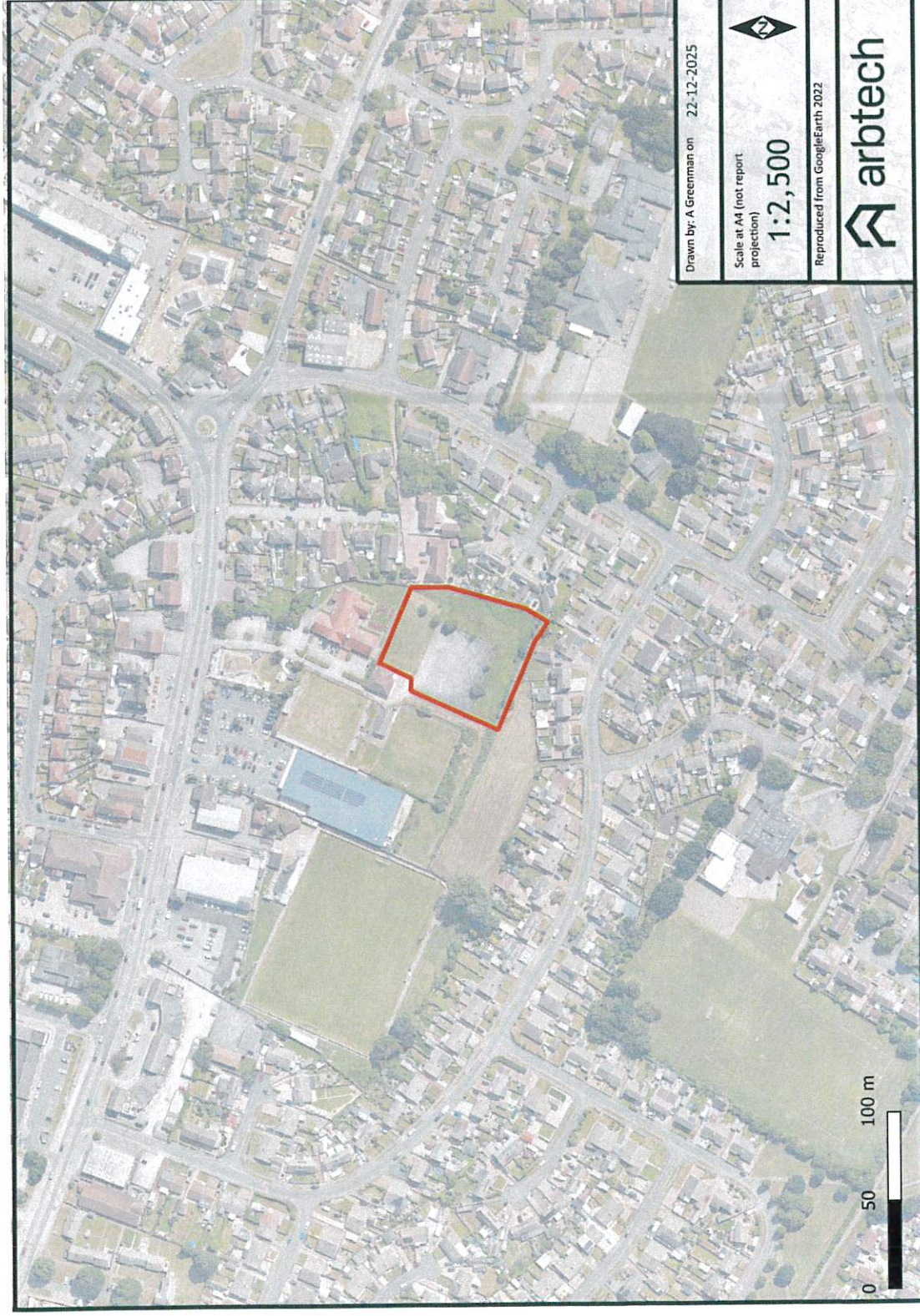
<i>Recommendations</i>	Owing to the nature of the proposed development and the low potential for impacts to badgers, further badger surveys are considered to be disproportionate. A precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: • Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. • The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which badgers could use. • Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. In the unlikely event that a badger sett is identified, works must cease and advise must be sought from a suitably qualified ecologist. Suggested biodiversity enhancements Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities for badgers.
Riparian animals	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for otters or water voles within 2km of the site. There are no water courses on or connected to the site. There are also no riparian habitats present on site or within an influencing distance.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on riparian animals as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None required.

Hazel dormouse	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	EPSL data A review of the MAGIC database returned no granted EPSL records for hazel dormice within 2km of the site. Habitat suitability The site lies outside of the known current range for hazel dormice and there are no suitable habitats within the development area. As such it is considered likely that hazel dormice are absent from site.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	No impacts are anticipated on hazel dormice as a result of the proposed development.
<i>Recommendations</i>	None foreseen.
Other e.g. hedgehog	
<i>Summary of Survey Findings</i>	The modified grassland onsite provides limited foraging and commuting opportunities for hedgehogs.
<i>Foreseen Impacts</i>	Hardstanding and modified grassland will be removed during construction. The loss of such habitats is likely to be inconsequential to local hedgehog populations owing to their low value and the presence of more extensive habitat locally. However, construction activities could result in the death or injury of hedgehogs, if present.
<i>Recommendations</i>	Similar to the badgers, a precautionary working method will be implemented during construction, including the following measures: - Any excavations will be covered overnight, or a ramp will be installed to enable any trapped animals to escape. - The use of night-time lighting will be avoided, or sensitive lighting design will be implemented to avoid light spill on to retained habitats which hedgehogs could use. - Any chemicals or pollutants used or created by the development should be stored and disposed of correctly according to COSHH regulations. If any hedgehogs are found in the working area these should be allowed to disperse of their own accord or, if at immediate risk, should be moved by hand to a sheltered, vegetated area away from disturbance. Suggested biodiversity enhancements The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities could be incorporated into the proposed development which would be beneficial for hedgehogs: - Planting fruit bearing trees and species-rich grassland to increase foraging opportunities. - Creation of brush piles or installation of hedgehog houses in shady areas. - Installation of gaps under boundary fencing to enable hedgehogs to move freely through the site.

Appendix 1: Survey/Habitat map



Appendix 2: Location map



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Appendix 3: Proposed plan



Appendix 4: Habitat Photos

Modified grassland Photograph	Description
	Modified grassland formed the largest habitat parcel on site. This was relatively managed, though a shorter sward height was maintained to the north of the site to form a football pitch.
Hardstanding Photograph	Description
	Hardstanding was present at the centre of the site currently forming a sports court. This habitat forms the main area subject to be changed in proposal plans.
Scattered trees Photograph	Description



There are a total of 6 scattered trees onsite

	
Bracken Photograph	Description

		A small section of bracken was present along the eastern boundary of the site.
Bramble scrub Photograph		Description
		A small expanse of bramble scrub is present along the current fence that separates the hardstanding sports court with the unsealed track
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Version control			
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Draft	0.1	Anneke Greenman BSc (Hons) MSc, Ecological Consultant	16/12/2025
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