Client – Simon Worsnop

Site – Higher Hall Farm

Reference – 20250109

Location – Bowling Bank, Wrexham

Central Grid Reference – SJ 41275 49725

Date – 14th January 2026

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA)

Confidential

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Revision: 1

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Disclaimer

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In line with Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM) recommendations the findings of this survey are deemed valid for 18 months from the date of the survey.

1. Summary

Purpose	Planning permission is being sought for the construction of a wood chip store at Higher Hall Farm. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the site was commissioned to support the application for planning permission.
Results	The habitats within the site comprise a range of habitats, including Section 7 Priority Habitats. The habitats within the development footprint are disturbed modified grassland and three scattered trees. The ecological receptors on and around the site include: ○ Records of amphibians, including great crested newts, in the area and areas of aquatic and terrestrial habitat on and around the site, ○ [redacted], ○ Potential roosting opportunities for bats in the surrounding area but none within the development footprint, ○ A moderate value foraging and commuting habitat for bats on and around the site, ○ Habitats suitable to support a range of bird species for nesting and foraging, ○ Habitats suitable to support hedgehogs on site, ○ Suitable habitats for invertebrates within the wider site, ○ A watercourse potentially suitable to support otters and water voles along the site boundary.
Recommendations	○ Mitigate the loss of the trees by planting at least three trees for each lost tree, in line with local policy, ○ Implement precautionary working measures for amphibians, ○ Implement precautionary working measures for badgers and other mammals, ○ Implement a sensitive lighting scheme during all phases of the development, ○ Fell the trees outside the nesting season or carry out survey immediately prior to the felling commencing.

2. Introduction

2.1. Confidentiality

2.1.1. [redacted]

2.2. Purpose

2.2.1. Planning permission is being sought for the construction of a wood chip store at Higher Hall Farm.

2.2.2. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) of the site was commissioned to support the application for planning permission.

2.3. Site Description and Location

2.3.1. The site comprises an area of land at Higher Hall Farm which includes a series of chicken sheds and associated landscaping. The area of land, as shown in Figure 1, extends to 3.26 hectares (ha).



Figure 1: Showing the area covered by this survey.

2.3.2. The land immediately surrounding the site comprises further areas of land associated with Higher Hall Farm to the north with a mixture of arable land and grazing pasture on the other sides.

2.3.3. The wider surrounding area comprises open countryside dominated by farmland with the River Dee running along the England/Wales border 650m to the east.



Figure 2: Showing the site in context with the wider surrounding area.

2.4. Proposals

2.4.1. The proposals are to construct a new woodchip store on an area of grassland adjacent to an existing storage building along the northern boundary of the site.

2.4.2. Plans showing the existing and proposed site layout are included in Appendix IV of this report.

3. Methodology

3.1. Desk Study

3.1.1. A desk study was carried out in order to identify existing records of protected or notable species or habitats within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.2. Records of locally designated sites and existing records of protected species were requested from Cofnod.

3.1.3. The MAGIC website was searched for records of statutory or non-statutory sites within 2km of the survey area.

3.1.4. The area within 500m of the site was searched for waterbodies using publicly accessible mapping including Ordnance Survey, Google Earth and the MAGIC website.

3.2. Field Study

3.2.1. A field survey of the site was undertaken on by Steven Whitcher (MCIEEM) on the 12th January 2026. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was carried out in accordance with the industry standard and mapped using UKHab 2.0 Classifications (*2023*).

3.2.2. The weather at the time of the survey was cloudy but fine with a light breeze (BWS-1/2) and a temperature of 8-10°C.

3.2.3. During the survey all habitats were noted, including dominant species, mapped and notable ecological features were target noted.

3.2.4. The survey also looked for evidence of protected or notable fauna species or invasive non-native plant species and followed specific survey guidelines, where applicable, including:

- Checking all buildings, trees and structures for bat roosting potential in line with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition (*Collins 2023*), BTHK Bat Roosts in Trees (*BTHK 2018*) and BRHK Bat Roosts in Rock (*BRHK 2021*).
- Assessing all accessible ponds within 500m of the surveyed area using the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment criteria (*Oldham et al. 2000*).
- Assessing the habitats on site for their suitability to support protected or notable species, including but not limited to, badgers (*Harris et al 1989*), water voles (*Strachan et al 2011*), otters (*Channin, 2003*), crayfish, nesting birds (*BBS,BTO*), reptiles (*Froglife 1999*), hedgehogs and hazel dormice.

3.3. Net Benefit for Biodiversity

3.3.1. The Net Benefit for Biodiversity (NBB) was evaluated using Natural Resources Wales's (NRW) DECCA framework. The framework aims to evaluate the ecosystem resilience based on five attributes and properties specified in the Environment (Wales) Act.

- *Diversity*: maintaining and enhancing diversity at every scale, including genetic, structural, habitat and between-habitat levels. This supports the complexity of ecosystem functions and interactions that deliver services and benefits,

- *Extent*: incorporating measures which maintain and increase the area of semi-natural habitat/features and linkages between habitats. In general, smaller ecosystems have reduced capacity to adapt, recover or resist disturbance,
- *Condition*: The condition of an ecosystem is affected by multiple and complex pressures acting both as short term and longer term types of disturbance. Both direct and wider impacts should be considered, for example avoiding or mitigating pressures such as climate change, pollution, invasive species, land management, neglect etc,
- *Connectivity*: This refers to the links between and within habitats, which may take the form of physical corridors, stepping stones in the landscape, or patches of the same or related vegetation types that together create a network that enables the flow or movement of genes, species and natural resources. Developments should take opportunities to develop functional habitat and ecological networks within and between ecosystems, building on existing connectivity,
- *Aspects of ecosystem resilience (adaptability, recovery and resistance)*: ecosystem resilience is a product of the above four attributes. Adaptability, recovery and resistance to/from a disturbance are defining features of ecosystem resilience.

3.3.2. The site plans were assessed against this framework to provide an assessment of the overall impact of the proposals on the biodiversity of the site and the connection of the site into the wider ecological networks.

3.4. Limitations/Constraints

3.4.1. This survey was carried out to CIEEM methodologies and therefore provides an overview of the habitats present on the site with dominant, notable or indicator species within those habitats noted. As such the species lists included are intended to be sufficient to confidently assess habitat condition but are not intended to provide an exhaustive list of all species present.

3.4.2. The survey was carried out following a wet period with heavy rain and snow. Therefore, the land to the east of the site, along an unnamed watercourse that flows on the site boundary, was submerged in water, preventing direct access to that area of the site. Due to the proposals having no impact on the eastern boundary of the site the presence of high levels of water was not considered a significant constraint to the findings of the survey.

3.4.3. The land to the northeast, east and southeast of the site comprises areas of dense scrub on a steep bank along the site boundary. Direct access could not be gained to these areas during the survey due to the presence of the dense vegetation. Due to the proposals having no impact on the areas of scrub the lack of access was not considered a significant constraint to the findings of the survey.

4. Results and Interpretation

4.1. Designated Sites

4.1.1. Cofnod returned records of two statutory designated sites within the 2km search area.

Table 1: Statutory sites within 2km

Site Name	Designation	Reason for Designation	Location
Afon Dyfrdwy	Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Habitats: Various Species: Various	150m northeast and 350m east
River Dee and Dala Lake	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Habitats: River Species: Atlantic Salmon and floating water plantain	600m east

4.1.2. Cofnod returned records of one non-statutory designated site within the 2km search area.

Table 2: Non-statutory sites within 2km.

Site Name	Designation	Reason for Designation	Location
Oatlands Meadow	Wildlife Site for Wrexham	Habitats: Grassland	725m north

4.1.3. Due to the nature of the proposals, which are small scale changes to an existing poultry farm, and the location of the site it is considered unlikely that the proposals will change the existing level of disturbance on the designated sites located in close proximity to the site.

4.2. Habitats

4.2.1. Cofnod returned records of several Habitats of Principal Importance within the 2km search area, although no records within the site. The records refer to the presence of extensive areas of coastal floodplain and grazing marsh immediately to the east of the site along the River Dee, several areas of traditional orchard with the closest located 250m to the north and a single area of ancient woodland located 1km to the south.

4.2.2. Cofnod also returned records of several veteran trees on the Ancient Tree Inventory (ATI) within the 2km search area, including one tree located immediately to the west of the site on the opposite side of Lower Road.

4.2.3. The habitats present within the surveyed area are outlined below and shown on the plan in Appendix I of this report. Appendix III includes species lists for each habitat.

4.2.4. g4-32 – Modified grassland – scattered trees (0.146ha)

4.2.4.1. Two areas of modified grassland are present within the surveyed site, a strip of grassland and trees along the northern site boundary and a small area of grassland to the northeast of the site.

4.2.4.2. The grassland to the north comprises a strip of land that separates the poultry sheds from Higher Hall Farm to the north.

4.2.4.3. The area of grassland displays a short lush green sward that is dominated by common grass and forb species, including perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*), cocks foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), daisy (*Bellis perennis*) and ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*). The sward shows signs of regular disturbance, including management and the storage of materials on the eastern section of the grassland.



Figure 3: Looking east along the grassland.



Figure 4: Looking west along the area of grassland.

4.2.4.4. Twenty-nine small trees are present along the grassland, screening the poultry sheds from Higher Hall Farm. The trees comprise a mixture of alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), oak (*Quercus sp.*), silver birch (*Betula pendula*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and cherry (*Prunus sp.*).

4.2.4.5. The grassland to the northeast of the site comprises a small area of grassland adjacent to the concrete access area and incinerator. The species present are consistent with the grassland to the north of the site although the area displays less signs of management.



Figure 5: The area of grassland to the northeast.

4.2.4.6. The areas of grassland provide foraging opportunities for some species and areas of shelter, predominantly in the grassland to the northeast, due to the presence of stored materials and logs in the area. Overall, the areas of grassland was considered to display a low

ecological value due to nature of the grassland and the levels of management and disturbance the areas are subject to.

4.2.4.7. The trees provide a suitable habitat for a variety of species, provide structure and screening along the site boundary and benefit a range of ecosystem services. Therefore, the trees were considered to display a high ecological value.

4.2.4.8. The proposed works will cause the loss of 0.015ha of the grassland to the north, including three oak trees. Therefore, the proposals will have an impact on the ecological value of the site, although the impact is considered to be minimal and could be offset through the planting of additional trees.

4.2.5. h3h Mixed scrub (0.65ha)

4.2.5.1. Areas of scrub extend along the northern, eastern and southern boundaries of the site. To the north and east the scrub comprises banks leading down from the site to the adjacent land with the scrub to the south comprising a screening bund along the site boundary.

4.2.5.2. The scrub to the north and east of the site is dominated by willow (*Salix sp.*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) and pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*), among other species. The scrub is unmanaged and dense, extending down to the banks from the site to the watercourse that flows along the eastern site boundary.



Figure 6: Looking along the eastern site boundary.



Figure 7: The dense scrub on the top of the bank.

4.2.5.3. To the south the scrub comprises an area of young woodland planted as screening along the site boundary. The woodland canopy is currently below 5m in height and therefore the area, that includes abundant hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and elder (*Sambucus nigra*), was considered to be more applicable as scrub, although with time the area will develop into woodland.

4.2.5.4. The areas of scrub provide shelter and foraging opportunities for a range of species and were therefore considered to display a high ecological value.

4.2.5.5. The proposals will not have an impact on the areas of scrub present on the site.



Figure 8: The scrub along the southern site boundary.



Figure 9: Within the area of scrub.

4.2.6. u1b5 Buildings (1.172ha)

4.2.6.1. Eight buildings are present on the site, comprising five large poultry sheds and associated services and three small storage and services buildings.



Figure 10: The large poultry sheds.



Figure 11: A storage building to the northeast.

4.2.6.2. The buildings provide little or no ecological value and will remain unaffected by the proposed works.

4.2.7. u1b6 Other developed land (0.391ha)

4.2.7.1. The land to the north of the poultry sheds comprises areas of concrete providing access and parking for the site.

4.2.7.2. The areas of other developed land provide little or no ecological value and will remain unaffected by the proposed works.



Figure 12: Concrete areas adjacent to the poultry sheds.



Figure 13: Areas of concrete providing access and parking.

4.2.8. u1c Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface (0.455ha)

4.2.8.1. Abundant stoned areas are present around the poultry sheds, providing access around the buildings. The areas include a stoned track around and between the buildings, a stoned access to the site and stoned areas around the storage buildings to the north that are used for materials storage.



Figure 14: Stoned areas between the poultry sheds.



Figure 15: Stoned storage areas to the north.

4.2.8.2. The area of artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface provide little or no ecological value and will remain unaffected by the proposed works.

4.2.9. w1g Other broadleaved woodland (0.45ha)

4.2.9.1. To the west a strip of woodland screens the site from Lower Road, which runs along the site boundary.

4.2.9.2. The woodland comprises young woodland planted as screening for the site approximately 25 years ago. The woodland includes a variety of native tree species, including oak, cherry, silver birch and pine (*Pinus sp.*).

4.2.9.3. The understory of the woodland comprises occasional grassland and scrub species with high levels of leaf litter.



Figure 16: The woodland along the western site boundary.



Figure 17: The understory of the woodland.

4.2.9.4. The woodland provides opportunities for a range of species to forage and seek shelter and also provides benefits for a range of ecosystem services. Therefore, the woodland was considered to display a high ecological value.

4.2.9.5. The proposals will not have an impact on the area of woodland present on the site.

4.2.10. h2a Native hedgerow (131m)

4.2.10.1. A native hedgerow extends along Lower Road on the western site boundary.

4.2.10.2. The hedgerow is dominated by hawthorn and ivy (*Hedera helix*) with signs of regular hedgerow management along the highway.



Figure 18: Looking south along the hedgerow.



Figure 19: Looking north along the hedgerow.

4.2.10.3. The hedgerow provides areas of shelter and foraging opportunities for a range of species. Native hedgerow are also a Section 7 Priority Habitat. Therefore, the hedgerow was considered to provide a high ecological value.

4.2.10.4. The proposals will not have an impact on the native hedgerows present along the site boundaries.

4.2.11. h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow (122m)

4.2.11.1. Several short sections of ornamental hedgerow extend along the northern site boundary and along the southern side of the site entrance. The hedgerows all comprise Leyland cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*) and show signs of regular management.



Figure 20: Ornamental hedgerow to the north.



Figure 21: Ornamental hedgerow at the site entrance.

4.2.11.2. Although the hedgerows comprise an ornamental species and are regularly managed the hedgerows do provide opportunities for a range of species and were therefore considered to provide a moderate ecological value.

4.2.11.3. The proposals will not have an impact on the ornamental hedgerows present along the site boundaries.

4.2.12. r2b Other rivers and streams (126m)

4.2.12.1. An unnamed watercourse flows along the eastern boundary of the site. The survey was carried out following a period of high rainfall and snow and therefore the watercourse was in flood during the survey.



Figure 22: The watercourse along the site boundary.



Figure 23: Looking north along the watercourse.

4.2.12.2. Due to the high water levels the watercourse could not be accurately assessed, although watercourses provide opportunities for a range of species and therefore it is considered likely that the watercourse, in normal flow, will provide a high ecological value.

4.2.12.3. The proposals will not have an impact on the watercourse present to the east of the site and are considered unlikely to have a significant impact on runoff or drainage from the site.

4.2.13. u1e Built linear feature (639m)

4.2.13.1. Several areas of stock fencing and brick walls extend along the site boundaries.

4.2.13.2. Fences and walls provide no ecological value and can prevent the movement of species across the wider landscape.

4.2.13.3. The proposals will not have an impact on the existing site boundaries or require the construction of additional boundaries, due to the small scale of the works.

4.3. Fauna

4.3.1. Amphibians

4.3.1.1. Cofnod returned abundant records of amphibians within the 2km search area, including records of great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*), although no records specific to the surveyed site or the immediate surrounding area. The closest records refer to the presence of great crested newts, palmate newts (*Lissotriton helveticus*) and smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*) at Wrexham Industrial Estate, located 1.25km to the west.

4.3.1.2. Eight ponds were identified within 500m of the site on maps of the area, as shown in Figure 24.



Figure 24: Ponds in the area of the site, including 250m and 500m buffers.

4.3.1.3. A further pond is shown maps along the watercourse immediately to the northeast of the site. An area of standing water was present during the survey (T4), although due to the high levels of water at the time of the survey it was not possible to accurately assess the presence or absence of a pond in that area, or to carry out an assessment of the ponds potential suitability to support amphibians.



Figure 25: The potential pond area.



Figure 26: Aerial view of the potential pond.

4.3.1.4. Two ponds were identified within the core habitat (250m) of the site. Pond P1 is located 75m to the east of the site, 175m from the proposed works, and pond P7 is located 120m southwest of the site and 325m from the proposed works.

4.3.1.5. Both ponds are located in grazing pasture with minimal submerged or emergent vegetation and signs of trampling or disturbance around the perimeter of the ponds.



Figure 27: Pond P1.



Figure 28: Pond P7.

4.3.1.6. Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessments of the ponds, as shown in Table 3, identified both ponds to provide an average potential to support great crested newts.

4.3.1.7. The site provides terrestrial opportunities for amphibians due to the presence of dense vegetation and stored materials on the site (T3), although no terrestrial amphibians were encountered during the site survey.

4.3.1.8. The proposed works will only impact a small area of disturbed grassland located immediately adjacent to the existing sealed surface access and parking areas of the site. Therefore, if precautionary measures are implemented during the works it is considered unlikely that the proposals will have an impact on amphibians, if they are present on the site and in the surrounding area.

Table 3: Habitat Suitability Index assessment results.

Pond	P1	P2
Location	1	1
Pond area	0.8	0.4
Pond drying	1	1
Water quality	0.33	0.33
Shade	1	1
Fowl	0.67	0.67
Fish	0.67	0.67
Ponds	1	1
Terrestrial habitat	0.33	0.33
Macrophytes	0.5	0.3
HSI	0.67	0.60
Suitability	Average	Average

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted].

4.3.3. Bats

4.3.3.1. Cofnod returned occasional records of bats within the 2km search area, although no records specific to the surveyed site or the immediate surrounding area. The closest records refer to the presence of an unidentified bat species at Sutton Green, 1km to the southwest.

4.3.3.2. Eight buildings are present on site, comprising five large poultry sheds and three small storage and services buildings to the northeast. The buildings will remain completely unaffected by the proposals and therefore a thorough Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) of the buildings was not carried out as part of this survey.

4.3.3.3. The trees located within the footprint of the proposed new building were inspected from the ground and no Potential Roost Features (PRF) were identified. Therefore, the trees were assessed to provide negligible opportunities for roosting bats. Further trees that may support roosting bats are present in the surrounding area, including along the eastern site boundary and along Lower Road to the west, although the trees will remain unaffected. Therefore, it was assessed that there would be no impact on roosting bats during the proposed works.

4.3.3.4. The site was assessed to provide a moderate value foraging and commuting habitat for bats due to the presence of tree lines, watercourses and hedgerows on site, providing connectivity into the wider surrounding area. A thorough assessment of the foraging and commuting activity on and around the site was not carried out as part of this survey.

4.3.3.5. The proposals will remove three trees, which will not cause the fragmentation of the surrounding habitats. The works will also leave the general disturbance on the site unchanged. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will have an impact on foraging or commuting bats.

4.3.4. Birds

4.3.4.1. Cofnod returned abundant records of birds within the 2km search area, although no records specific to the surveyed site or the immediate surrounding area. The closest records refer to the presence of moorhen (*Gallinula chloropus*) and lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*), a red listed species on the UK Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) list, within grid square SJ4149, which includes the site. The records also include a record of curlew (*Numenius arquata*), a further BoCC red listed species, heard 200m to the southwest of the site.

4.3.4.2. The site provides opportunities for a range of bird species, with the woodland, scrub and hedgerows providing nesting opportunities and the grassland and scrub providing opportunities for foraging. Bird activity on the site was limited at the time of the survey with occasional common bird species, including blackbird (*Turdus merula*) identified flitting around the woodland and scrub.

4.3.4.3. The proposed works require the removal of three trees, which may provide suitable nesting opportunities for birds. If the tree removal is carried out during the nesting season, which extends from March to September each year, the works may have a direct impact on nesting birds, if they are present in the trees.

4.3.5. Hedgehogs

4.3.5.1. Cofnod did not return any existing records of hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within the 2km search area.

4.3.5.2. The site provides opportunities for hedgehogs to forage, in the areas of grassland and woodland, and to seek shelter, in the areas of dense scrub. No hedgehog field signs were identified during the site survey.

4.3.5.3. The proposed works will not impact on areas of habitat suitable for hedgehogs to seek shelter and therefore, if precautionary working measures are implemented during the proposals, the impact on hedgehogs is considered likely to be negligible.

4.3.6. Invertebrates

4.3.6.1. Cofnod returned occasional records of invertebrate species within the 2km search area, although no records specific to the surveyed site or the immediate surrounding area. The closest records refer to the presence of several species along the River Dee, 600m to the east. Cofnod also identified that the site lies within an area designated as an important invertebrate site.

4.3.6.2. The site provides opportunities for invertebrate species, notably along the watercourse to the east, although a thorough invertebrate survey was not carried out as part of the site survey.

4.3.6.3. The proposals only impact areas of low value habitat for invertebrates and therefore it is considered unlikely that the proposals will have an impact on invertebrate communities in the surrounding area.

4.3.7. Otters

4.3.7.1. Cofnod returned occasional records of otter (*Lutra lutra*) within the 2km search area, although no records specific to the surveyed site or the immediate surrounding area. The closest records refer to the presence of the species along the River Dee.

4.3.7.2. The watercourse to the east of the site may provide a connective route for otters present in the wider surrounding area although no otters fields signs were identified during the site survey.

4.3.7.3. The proposals will not have an impact on the watercourse and will only impact small areas of disturbed habitat. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that otters will utilise the habitats within the footprint of the works or be impacted by the proposals.

4.3.8. Reptiles

4.3.8.1. Cofnod did not return any existing records of reptiles within the 2km search area.

4.3.8.2. The site provides occasional opportunities for reptiles due to the presence of areas of suitable refugia but lacks connectivity to areas of suitable reptile habitat in the surrounding area. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that reptiles will be present on site or impacted by the proposals.

4.3.9. Water Voles

4.3.9.1. Cofnod returned a single record of water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) within the 2km search area, located along Worthenbury Brook 2km to the southeast.

4.3.9.2. The watercourse to the east of the site may provide a suitable habitat for water voles although a thorough survey of the watercourse was not possible at the time of the survey due to the high water levels.

4.3.7.3. The proposals will not have an impact on the watercourse and will only impact small areas of disturbed habitat. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that water voles will utilise the habitats within the footprint of the works or be impacted by the proposals.

4.4. Invasive Non-Native Plant Species

4.4.1. No invasive non-native plant species were identified within the surveyed site at the time of the survey and no signs were identified to imply the presence of species that die back during the winter. Therefore, it is considered unlikely that the proposals will cause the spread of invasive non-native plant species.

5. Recommendations

5.1. Designated Sites

5.1.1. There will be no impact on designated sites during the proposed works and therefore there are no recommendations relating to designated sites.

5.2. Habitats

5.2.1. The proposals will cause the loss of a small area of modified grassland that already displays regular disturbance. Therefore, the loss of this area of grassland is not considered significant.

5.2.2. Three oak trees will need to be removed to allow space for the new building. In line with Welsh planning policy, it is recommended that the trees are replaced elsewhere on site at a ratio of at least three trees for every tree removed.

5.2.3. The remaining habitats present on site, including the Section 7 Priority Habitats, will remain undisturbed by the proposals and therefore there are no further recommendations relating to the habitats present on site.

5.3. Fauna

5.3.1. Amphibians

5.3.1.1. Due to the scale of the works and the nature of the habitats within the development footprint, which already show regular disturbance, it is considered that amphibian surveys of the ponds surrounding the site are disproportionate to the works.

5.3.1.2. It is therefore recommended that precautionary working methods for amphibians are implemented during the construction phase of the development. The measures should include the following, as a minimum:

- All personnel working on site should be briefed on the potential presence of amphibians, how to identify the species and what to do if amphibians are encountered,
- Prior to the works commencing the development footprint should be carefully cleared of debris and materials, by hand, with the area underneath inspected for amphibians,
- Materials storage, parking and access should utilise the existing sealed surface habitats located immediately adjacent to the development footprint,
- Materials should be stored on pallets or batons to deter amphibians from seeking refuge under the materials.

5.3.1.3. In the event that individual common amphibians are encountered during the development they should be carefully moved to areas of suitable terrestrial refugia outside the development footprint. In the event that large numbers of common amphibians (5+) or any great crested newts are identified, works should cease immediately and further advice should be sought.

5.3.1.4. It is recommended that consideration is given to utilising the felled trees to create formalised habitat piles on the site, to provide additional terrestrial habitat for amphibian species.

5.3.2. Badgers and other mammals

5.3.2.1. It is recommended that any excavations created during the works have at least one sloping side, to allow badgers or other mammals to escape. Any exposed pipe ends should be capped between shifts to prevent inquisitive animals entering the pipes and becoming trapped.

5.3.3. Bats

5.3.3.1. It is recommended that a sensitive lighting scheme, in line with Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance (*2023*) is implemented during all phases of the development.

5.3.4. Birds

5.3.4.1. It is recommended that the tree removal is carried out outside the nesting season, which extends from March to September each year.

5.3.4.2. In the event that the trees are due to be removed within the nesting season the works should be immediately preceded by a thorough nesting bird survey, carried out by a suitably experienced surveyor. Any nests identified must remain undisturbed until the young have fledged from the nest.

6. Net Benefit for Biodiversity

6.1. The proposals for the site have been assessed against each attribute/property of the DECCA framework.

6.2. Diversity

6.2.1. The proposals will have an impact on a small area of disturbed modified grassland (0.015ha) and will cause the loss of three oak trees. This will have a minor impact on the diversity of the habitats present on site but will leave the more diverse habitats and Section 7 Priority Habitats unaffected.

6.2.2. If the loss of the three oak trees is mitigated, in line with local policy, the impact on the diversity of the site due to the proposals is considered negligible.

6.3. Extent

6.3.1. The proposals will cause a minor loss in habitats through the loss of the 0.015ha of modified grassland and three trees.

6.3.2. If the trees are mitigated, in line with local policy and the recommendations in this report, the impact of the development are considered likely to be a minor positive impact.

6.4. Condition

6.4.1. The habitats within the development footprint are regularly disturbed by the day to day running of the poultry sheds. Therefore, if the trees planted for mitigation are planted in a less disturbed area of the site, the overall condition of the habitats is likely to increase, with the remaining habitats on the site remaining unaffected.

6.5. Connectivity

6.5.1. The disturbed habitats are located along the northern site boundary, which includes areas of hedgerow and scrub that will remain unaffected. Therefore, the loss of the grassland and trees will not have an impact on the connectivity across the site.

6.5.2. If the trees planted to mitigate the loss of the three trees are placed strategically, in the more open areas to the east of the site, the overall impact on connectivity across the site will be positive.

6.6. Aspects of Ecosystem Resilience

6.6.1. The proposal will retain the habitats on site that display a high ecological value and will leave the majority of the ecological receptors unaffected. The works will also have no impact on the current day to day operations of the site.

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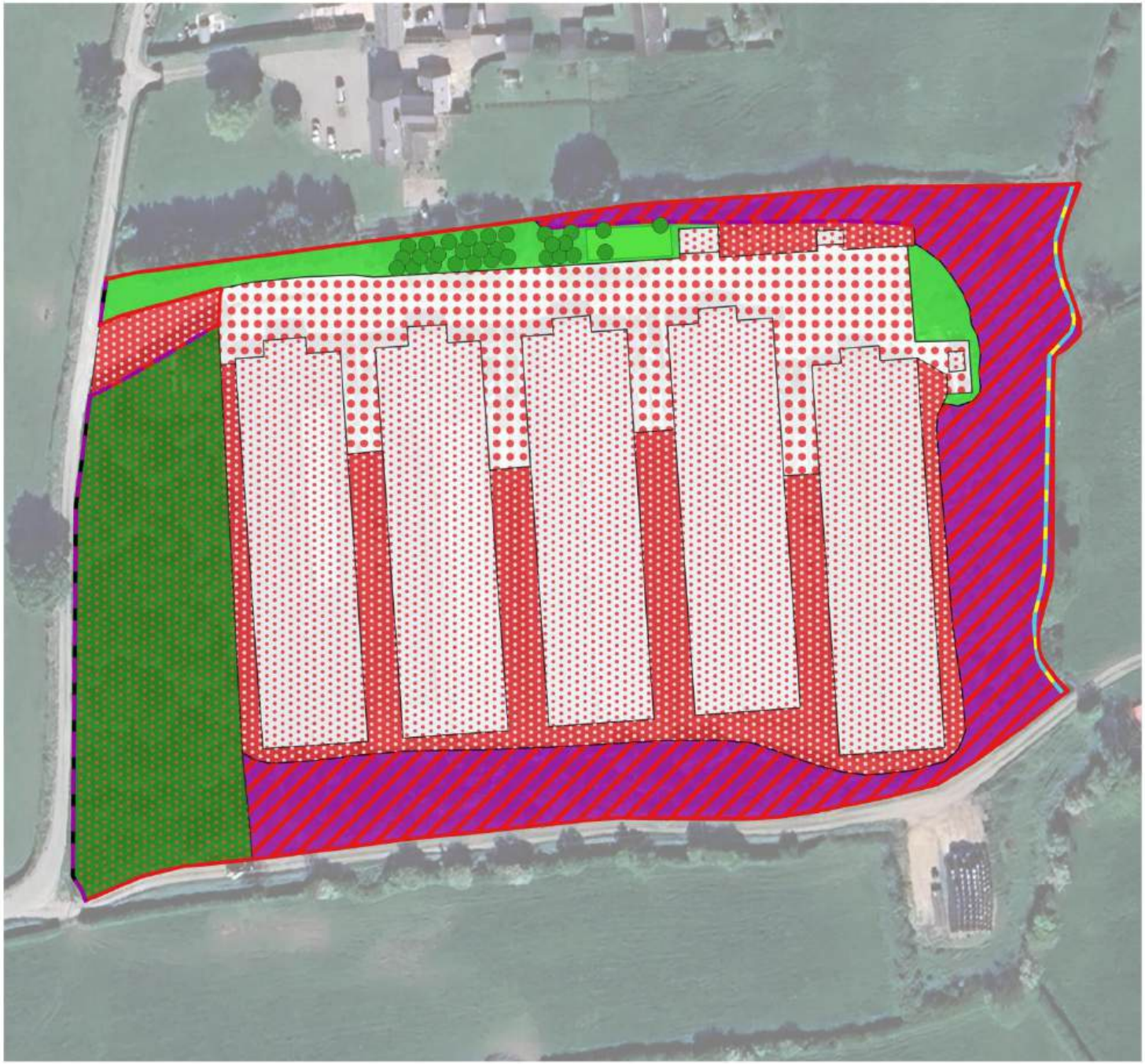
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Appendix I: Habitat Map

Site - Higher Hall Farm
Reference - 20250109

Habitats

- g4-32 Modified grassland - scattered trees
- h3h Mixed scrub
- u1b5 Buildings
- u1b6 Other developed land
- u1c Artificial unvegetated, unsealed surface
- w1g Other broadleaved woodland

Linear Habitats

- h2a Native hedgerow
- h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow
- r2b Other rivers and streams
- u1e Built linear features
- Scattered trees

0 30 60 m



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Appendix II: Target Notes

Site - Higher Hall Farm
Reference - 20250109

Site boundary

Target Notes

- T1 - An animal path under the hedgerow
- T2 - A wet area from the site drainage outfall
- T3 - Piled logs and other materials
- T4 - A pond area
- T5 - Mature trees along the site boundary
- T6 - A badger sett
- T7 - A badger sett
- T8 - A veteran tree (off site)

0 30 60 m

Appendix II: **Target Notes**

T1	An animal path leading under the hedgerow on the northern boundary.	
T2	A wet area associated with the site drainage outfall.	
T3	Piled logs, providing potential refugia.	
T4	A potential pond along the eastern site boundary.	
T5	Mature trees along the eastern site boundary.	

[redacted]

T8	A veteran tree located adjacent to the site.	

Appendix III: **Species Lists**

g4-32 Modified grassland – scattered trees	
Species Present	DAFOR Assessment
Cocks foot (*Dactylis glomerata*)	F
Common couch (*Elymus repens*)	O
Perennial rye grass (*Lolium perenne*)	F
Fescue (*Festuca sp.*)	F
Cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*)	O
Cleavers (*Galium aparine*)	O
Vetch (*Vicia sp.*)	R
Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*)	O
Daisy (*Bellis perennis*)	F
Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)	O
Ground ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*)	F
Wood avens (*Geum urbanum*)	O
Cinquefoil (*Potentilla sp.*)	O
Groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*)	O
Ivy (*Hedera helix*)	O
Dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*)	O
Cranesbill (*Geranium sp.*)	O
Scattered trees	
Oak (*Quercus sp.*)	F
Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*)	O
Silver birch (*Betula pendula*)	O
Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*)	O
Cherry (*Prunus sp.*)	O

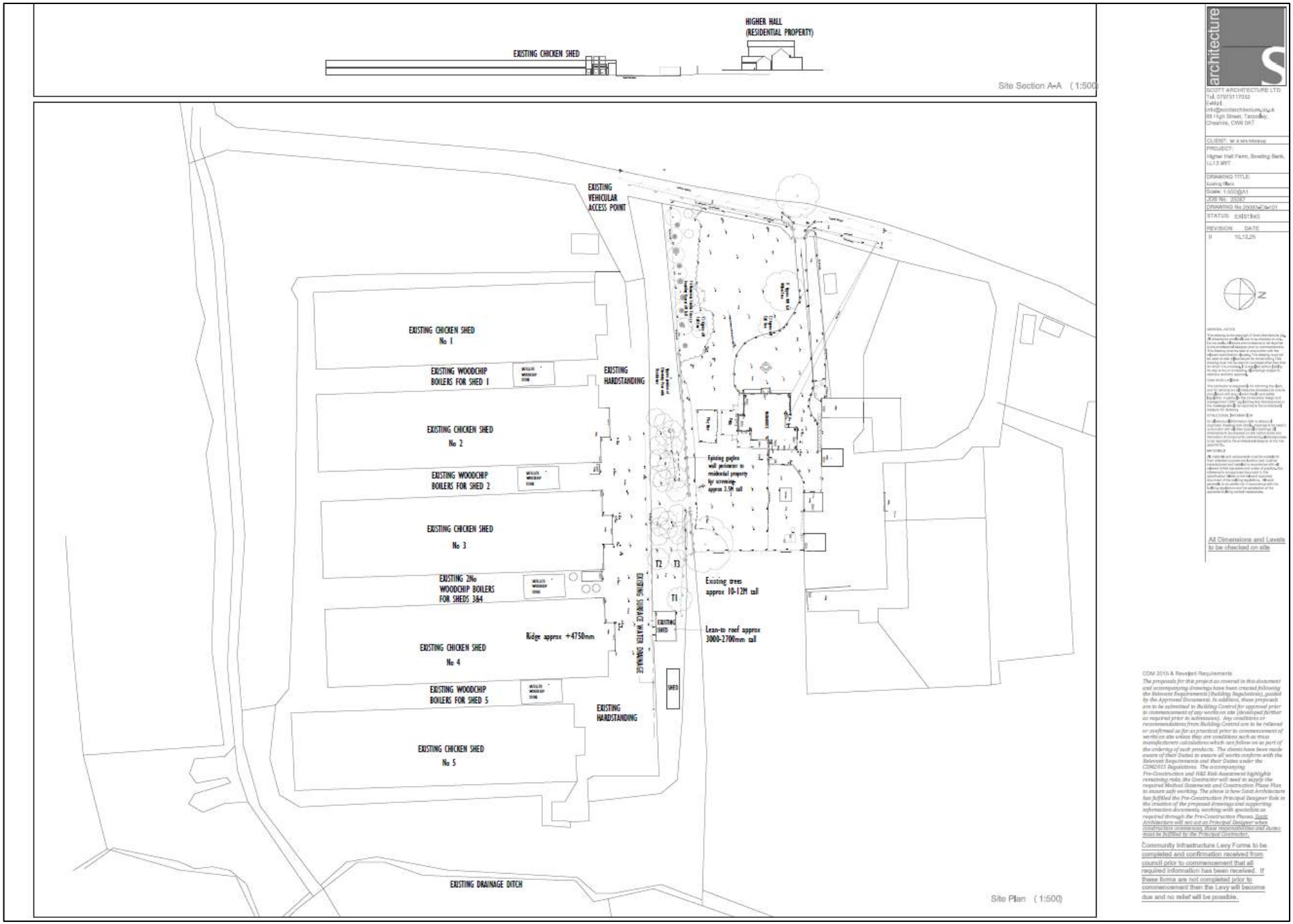
h3h Mixed scrub	
Species Present	DAFOR Assessment
Willow (*Salix sp.*)	O
Pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*)	F
Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*)	A
Dog rose (*Rosa canina*)	O
Buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*)	O
Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)	F
Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)	O
Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)	F
Oak (*Quercus sp.*)	O
Cherry (*Prunus sp.*)	O
Silver birch (*Betula pendula*)	O

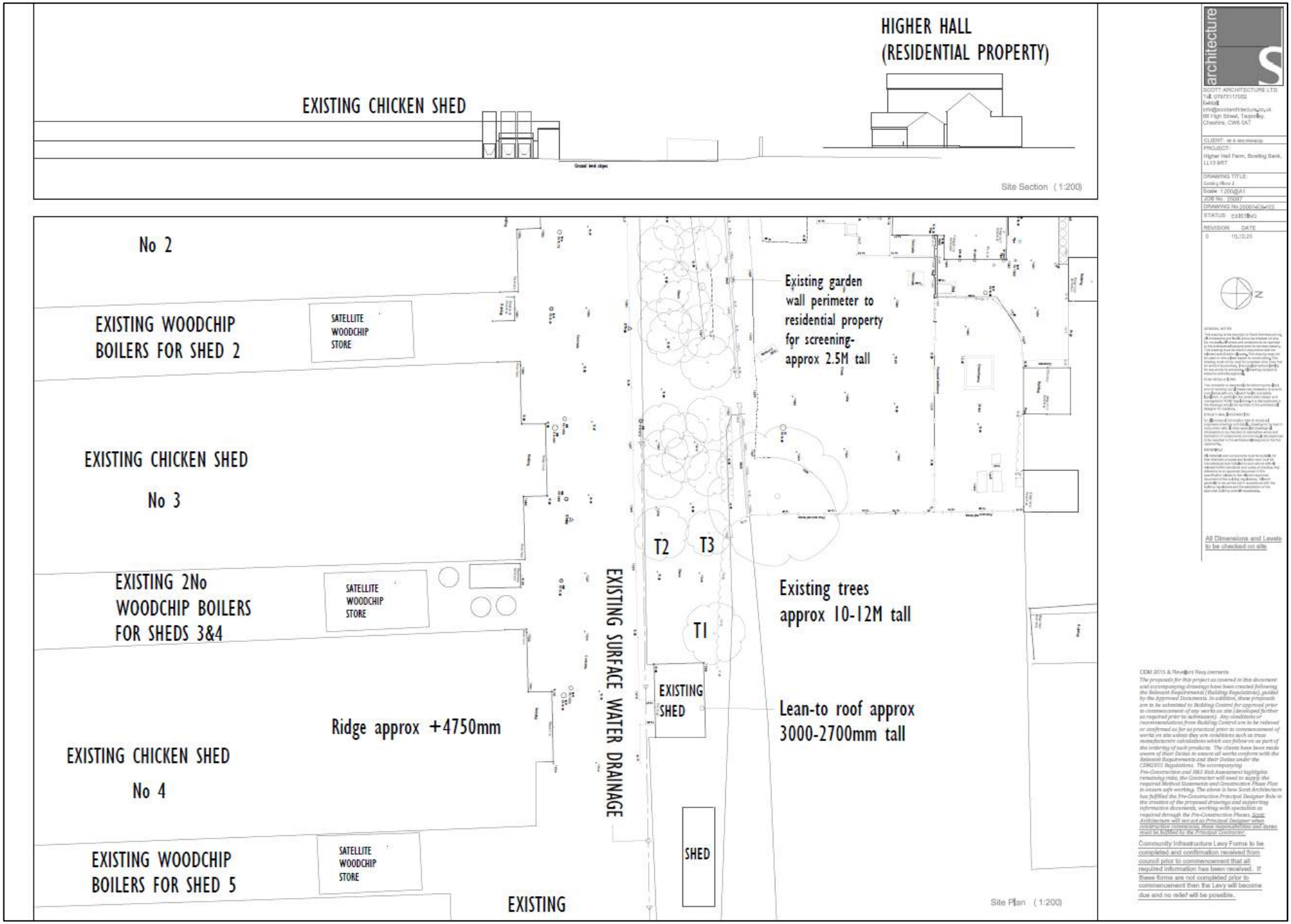
w1g Other broadleaved woodland	
Species Present	DAFOR Assessment
Hazel (*Corylus avellana*)	O
Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)	F
Oak (*Quercus sp.*)	F
Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)	O
Cherry (*Prunus sp.*)	O
Silver birch (*Betula pendula*)	O
Elder (*Sambucus nigra*)	O
Pine (*Pinus sp.*)	R
Wood avens (*Geum urbanum*)	O
Cleavers (*Galium aparine*)	O
Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*)	O
Dog rose (*Rosa canina*)	O
Nettle (*Urtica dioica*)	O

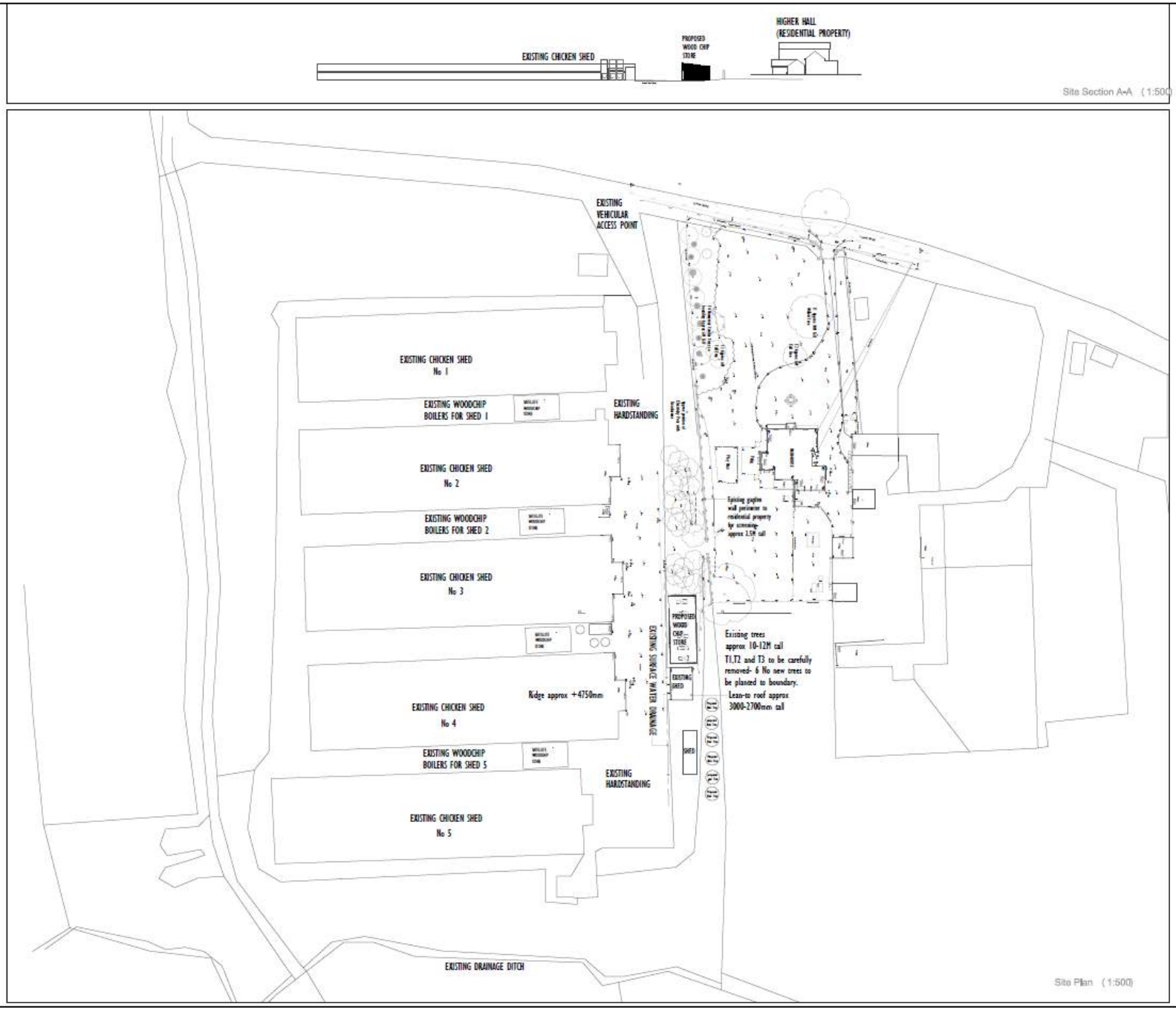
h2a Native hedgerow	
Species Present	DAFOR Assessment
Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*)	D
Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)	O
Ivy (*Hedera helix*)	F

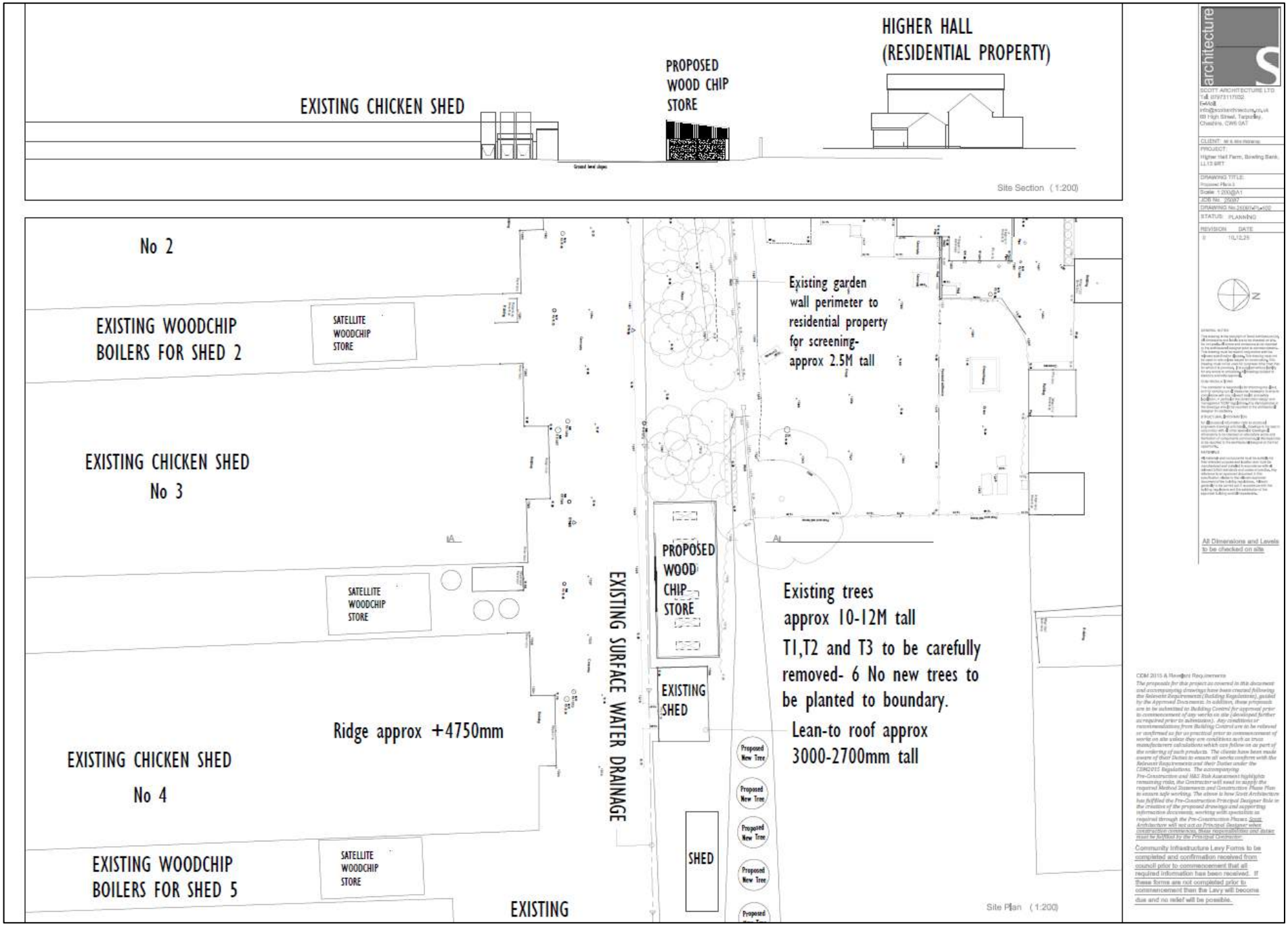
h2b Non-native and ornamental hedgerow	
Species Present	DAFOR Assessment
Leyland cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*)	D

Appendix IV: **Development Plans**




HIGHER HALL
(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED
Site Section (1:200)
No 2
EXISTING WOODCHIP
BOILERS FOR SHED 2
SATELLITE
WOODCHIP
STORE
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED
No 3
EXISTING 2No
WOODCHIP BOILERS
FOR SHEDS 3&4
SATELLITE
WOODCHIP
STORE
Ridge approx +4750mm
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED
No 4
EXISTING WOODCHIP
BOILERS FOR SHED 5
SATELLITE
WOODCHIP
STORE
EXISTING
EXISTING SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE
Existing garden
wall perimeter to
residential property
for screening-
approx 2.5M tall
T2
T3
T1
Existing trees
approx 10-12M tall
EXISTING
SHED
Lean-to roof approx
3000-2700mm tall
SHED
Site Plan (1:200)
architecture
SCOTT ARCHITECTURE LTD
Tel: 07973117032
Email:
info@scottarchitecture.co.uk
88 High Street, Tarporley,
Cheshire, CW6 0AT
CLIENT: as & are invoiced
PROJECT:
Higher Hall Farm, Bowling Bank,
LL13 9RT
DRAWING TITLE:
Existing Plans 2
Scale: 1:200@A1
JOB No: 22037
DRAWING No: 250917-C-Ex102
STATUS: EXISTING
REVISION DATE
0 10.12.25
All Dimensions and Levels
to be checked on site
CDM 2015 & Principal Designers
Community Infrastructure Levy Forms to be
completed and confirmation received from
council prior to commencement that all
required information has been received. If
these forms are not completed prior to
commencement then the Levy will become
due and no relief will be possible.


EXISTING CHICKEN SHED
PROPOSED WOOD CHIP STORE
HIGHER HALL (RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
Site Section A-A (1:500)
EXISTING VEHICULAR ACCESS POINT
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED No 1
EXISTING WOODCHIP BOILERS FOR SHED 1
EXISTING HARDSTANDING
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED No 2
EXISTING WOODCHIP BOILERS FOR SHED 2
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED No 3
Existing gable wall perimeter to residential property by screening approx 2.5M tall
PROPOSED WOOD CHIP STORE
EXISTING SHED
EXISTING SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE
Existing trees approx 10-12M tall T1,T2 and T3 to be carefully removed- 6 No new trees to be planted to boundary. Lean-to roof approx 3000-2700mm tall
Ridge approx +4750mm
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED No 4
EXISTING WOODCHIP BOILERS FOR SHED 3
SHED
EXISTING HARDSTANDING
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED No 5
EXISTING DRAINAGE DITCH
Site Plan (1:500)
architecture
SCOTT ARCHITECTURE LTD
Tel: 07973117052
Email:
info@scottarchitecture.co.uk
69 High Street, Tarporley,
Cheshire, CW6 0AT
CLIENT: Mr & Mrs Hanmer
PROJECT:
Higher Hall Farm, Bowling Bank, LL13 9RT
DRAWING TITLE:
Process Plans
Scale: 1:500@A1
JOB NO: 25007
DRAWING No:25007MPlan101
STATUS: PLANNING
REVISION DATE
0 10.12.25
N
All Dimensions and Levels to be checked on site
CDM 2015 & Principal Designer
Community Infrastructure Levy Forms to be completed and confirmation received from council prior to commencement that all required information has been received. If these forms are not completed prior to commencement then the Levy will become due and no relief will be possible.


HIGHER HALL
(RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY)
PROPOSED
WOOD CHIP
STORE
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED
Site Section (1:200)
No 2
EXISTING WOODCHIP
BOILERS FOR SHED 2
SATELLITE
WOODCHIP
STORE
Existing garden
wall perimeter to
residential property
for screening-
approx 2.5M tall
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED
No 3
PROPOSED
WOOD
CHIP
STORE
EXISTING SURFACE WATER DRAINAGE
Existing trees
approx 10-12M tall
T1,T2 and T3 to be carefully
removed- 6 No new trees to
be planted to boundary.
EXISTING
SHED
Lean-to roof approx
3000-2700mm tall
Ridge approx +4750mm
EXISTING CHICKEN SHED
No 4
Proposed
New Tree
SHED
EXISTING WOODCHIP
BOILERS FOR SHED 5
EXISTING
Site Plan (1:200)
architecture
All Dimensions and Levels
to be checked on site
Community Infrastructure Levy Forms to be
completed and confirmation received from
council prior to commencement that all
required information has been received. If
these forms are not completed prior to
commencement then the Levy will become
due and no relief will be possible.

Appendix V: **Planning Policy and Species Legislation Summary**

1. Planning Policy

1.1. Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. The primary objective of PPW is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. Section 6.4 relates to biodiversity and ecological networks.

1.2. Paragraph 6.4.3 states:

'The planning system has a key role to play in helping to reverse the decline in biodiversity and increase the resilience of ecosystems, at various scales, by ensuring appropriate mechanisms are in place to both protect against loss and secure enhancement.'

1.3. Paragraph 6.4.11 states:

'Planning authorities must follow a step-wise approach to maintain and enhance biodiversity, build resilient ecological networks and deliver net benefits for biodiversity by ensuring that any adverse environmental effects are firstly avoided, then minimised, mitigated, and as a last resort compensated for. Enhancement must be secured by delivering a biodiversity benefit primarily on site or immediately adjacent to the site, over and above that required to mitigate or compensate for any negative impact.'

2. Legislation Summary

Site	Legislation
Locally Designated Sites	Locally designated sites are not covered by any statutory legislation but are protected by local development plans.
Statutory Sites	Statutory sites are protected in different ways depending on the reason for the sites designated with sites being covered by legislation including the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the Habitats Directive.
Species and Habitats or Principal Importance	Species and habitats of principal importance are covered by the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006.

Species	Legislation	Offences include
Badgers	Protection of Badgers Act 1992	○ Wilfully kill, injure, take, possess or cruelly ill-treat a Badger, or attempt to do so; ○ To intentionally or recklessly interfere with a sett (this includes disturbing Badgers whilst they are occupying a sett, as well as damaging or destroying a sett or obstructing access to it).
Bats	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	○ Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat; ○ Deliberately disturb bats; ○ Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat. ○ Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or ○ Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.

Birds	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	o Intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird; o Intentionally take, damage or destroy a nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or o Intentionally take or destroy an egg of any such bird.
Crayfish	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	o Obstruct access to any structure or place which a crayfish uses for shelter or protection; or o Disturb a crayfish while occupying a place which it uses for that purpose.
Great Crested Newts	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	o Intentionally or deliberately capture, injure, kill, or disturb the species; o Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or disturb a GCN in a place of shelter or protection, or obstruct access to such a place; or o Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place.
Hazel Dormice	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	o Deliberately capture, injure or kill a dormouse; o Deliberately disturb dormice; o Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a dormouse o Obstruct access to any structure or place which a dormouse uses for shelter or protection; or o Disturb a dormouse while occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection
Otters	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	o Deliberately capture, injure or kill any wild otter; o Deliberately disturb wild otters; o Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of an otters. o Disturb an otters while it is occupying a structure or place which it uses for shelter or protection; or o Obstruct access to such a place.
Red Squirrels	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	o Kill, injure or take a red squirrel; o Damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place which a red squirrel uses for shelter or protection; or o Disturb a red squirrel while it is occupying a structure or place which is used for that purpose.
Reptiles (non EPS)	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	o Intentionally kill or injure a reptile.
Water Voles	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006	o Intentionally capture, kill or injure water voles; o Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or block access to their places of shelter or protection; or o Disturb water voles while occupying a place of shelter used for that purpose.

Local authorities therefore have a duty to consider protected species as a material consideration when assessing planning applications. The ODPM Government Circular 06/2005 states: *'It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.'*