

PURE ECOLOGY

Land East of Offa's Dyke Retreat

Longtown, Herefordshire,

HR2 0NA


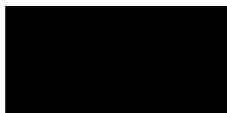
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal



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Executive Summary

A planning application is being prepared for the 'Land East of Offa's Dyke Retreat' (the 'Site') for the extension of the existing glamping site to include seven cabins with associated access and parking. The Site is a field located c. 0.8km to the east of Longtown at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SO 32893 28781.

An ecological assessment consisting of a desk study and a Phase 1 habitat survey has been undertaken to evaluate the nature conservation interest of the site and assess the potential impacts of the scheme on wildlife. The onsite hedgerow was assessed against Hedgerow Regulations 1997 ecological criteria.

There are no statutory designated Sites within 2km of the Site, and the three internationally important Special Areas of Conservation are all sufficiently distant that no impacts on their special interest features are likely to occur because of the proposed development. The desk study also identified eight non-statutory designated sites within 2km of the Site. Most are outside of the zone of influence of the Site but the Escley Brook SWS, River Monnow SWS, and Olchon Brook SWS are all hydrologically connected to a small watercourse that runs within 10m of the Site, so it will be important to ensure that water quality is not affected during the construction of the development. This could be achieved by means of a CEMP.

The Site consists of agriculturally semi-improved grassland of low ecological value, bounded by fences and a single species-rich hedgerow. The development will result in the loss of much of the grassland, but the hedgerow will be retained. Ecological impacts resulting from habitat loss are considered to be negligible.

There are no opportunities for bat roosting on the Site, but bats are likely to use the onsite hedgerow and the offsite watercourse for commuting and foraging. A wildlife-friendly lighting plan is recommended to avoid impacts on these species. No other protected species will be affected by the development.

Biodiversity enhancement is proposed in the form of wildlife-friendly landscaping, and the provision of nest boxes for sparrows and hedgehogs.

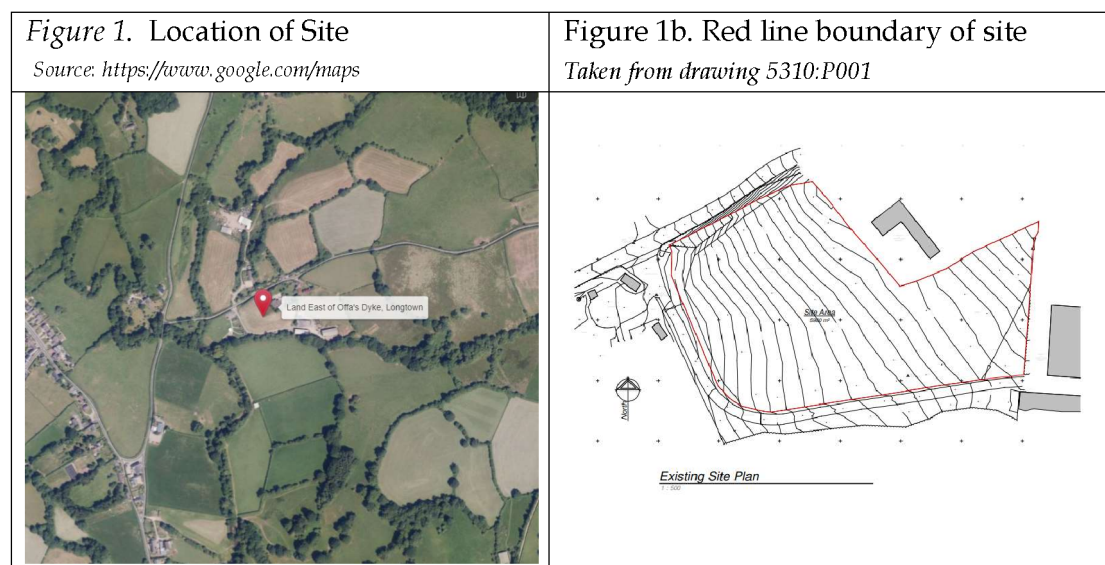
No further surveys are considered necessary.

1 Introduction

1.1 Site Description

Offa's Dyke Retreat is a glamping site c. 0.8km to the east of Longtown, Herefordshire. The project area (the 'Site') and focus of this report is a field immediately to the east of the glamping field at OS grid reference SO 32893 28781.

The location of the Site is shown in **Figure 1a** and red line boundary in **Figure 1b**.



1.2 Proposed Scheme

A planning application is being prepared for the expansion of Offa's Dyke Retreat glamping site to encompass the Site. Seven new cabins are proposed along with associated internal tracks and parking. The existing access to the Site will be utilized: a track runs off the public highway and runs between the current glamping area and the proposed new site. The design proposals are provided in **Appendix 1**.

1.3 Scope of the Study

This report provides a preliminary ecological appraisal of the development proposals at Offas Dyke Retreat. Details are given of the survey methodologies used to gather baseline information and the relevant legislation and policies that have guided the assessment. The objectives of the study are to:

- Provide an appropriate ecological baseline to evaluate the nature conservation interest of the Site and identify features of ecological importance.
- Assess the impacts of development against the ecological baseline and any effects on important ecological features (including habitats, species and ecosystem functions and processes).
- Incorporate mitigation and compensation measures within the scheme to avoid, reduce and counter negative ecological impacts and their effects on wildlife, and ecological enhancement to deliver biodiversity gain through the planning system.

2 Methodology

2.1 Desk Study

A data search was commissioned from Herefordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC) in June 2021 to obtain details of non-statutory designated sites for nature conservation, and records of protected species within a 2km radius of Offas Dyke Retreat. The Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (www.magic.gov.uk) was used to obtain information regarding:

- Internationally important Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar sites within 10km of the Site.
- Nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within 2km of the Site.
- Other relevant data e.g. Ancient Woodland Inventory.

Online mapping and aerial photograph resources such as GoogleEarth and Bing Maps (www.bingmaps.com) were also consulted for contextual information, and to search for ponds within 250m of the Site (with consideration to great crested newts).

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal report produced by Pure Ecology in 2017 to inform the original development at Offas Dyke Retreat has been reviewed to provide contextual information.

2.2 Field Survey

2.2.1 Phase 1 Habitat Survey

A Phase 1 habitat survey was carried out of the Site on 18th June 2021 by Dominic Hill (Stu CIEEM). The survey followed standard methodology (JNCC 2010), which

involved a walkover of the Site to record the habitats present using standard habitat classification. The Phase 1 habitat survey was extended to include an examination of the Site for evidence of, and potential for protected and otherwise notable species. A Phase 1 Plan with associated Target Notes showing features of interest was produced and is provided in **Appendix 2**. Illustrative photographs can be found in **Appendix 3**.

2.2.2 Hedgerow Assessment

The hedgerows that bound the Site were assessed to determine whether they meet the ecological criteria for 'Important Hedgerows' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. A 30m sample length of each of the boundary hedgerows was paced out and the following information was gathered for each hedge:

- A list of woody species in the shrub layer in the 30m-sample section;
- A list of additional woody species found in the total length of hedge;
- Mature/ standard hedgerow trees;
- Record of the ground flora present;
- Details of associated features such as ditches, fences or banks.

Further information on the legislation is provided in **Appendix 4**.

3 Results

3.1 Designated Sites

3.1.1 Statutory Designated Sites

There are no statutory designated Sites within 2km of the Site, but there are three internationally important Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) within 10km of the Site.

- **Usk Bat Sites SAC** lies c.7.5km to the south-west of the Site. It is designated as one of the largest maternity roosts for lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros* as well as a number of important hibernacula in caves in the area.
- **The River Usk SAC** lies c.6.8km to the west of the Site. It is notified for the seven Annex II species it supports.
- **Coed y Cerrig SAC** lies c.8.3km to the south-west of the Site. It is designated because it supports the Annex I habitat '91E0 Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*)'

3.1.2 Non-statutory Designated Sites

There are eight non-statutory locally designated Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) within 2km of the site. The details of these Sites are provided in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Non-statutory sites within 2km of Offas Dyke Retreat

Site Code*	Name	Description	Proximity
SO33/04	Escley Brook	Riparian habitat	c. 0.08km W
SO23/17	River Monnow	Riparian habitat	c. 0.10km SW
SO23/16	Olchon Brook	Riparian habitat	c. 0.53km SW
SO32/01	Meadow near Longtown Police Station	Hay meadow	c. 0.9 km NW
SO32/03	Clodock Church	Bat Roost	c. 1.3km S
SO32/05	Maes-y-fedw Wood	Ancient Woodland	c. 1.75km NE
SO32/02	Clodock Meadows	Hay meadows	c. 1.8 km S
SO32/04	Woodland near Lower Hunthouse Farm	Mixed deciduous woodland with streams	c. 1.9km S
*Reference given on the HBRC map in Appendix 5 .			

3.2 Habitats

The following description of habitats should be read with reference to the Phase 1 Habitat Plan and Target Notes (TN) in **Appendix 2** and photographs in **Appendix 3**.

3.2.1 Site Description and Setting

The Site consists of a single 'L'-shaped field of c. 0.5 ha of agriculturally semi-improved neutral grassland. An access track to the glamping site (to the west) and a farm (to the east) runs outside the eastern and southern boundaries of the field (the external bend of the 'L'), from which it is separated by a stock fence. There is also a fence along the eastern boundary. The northern boundary is defined by a roadside hedgerow, which continues around the internal bend of the 'L'

Off-site to the south, beyond the access track, runs a small watercourse that is a tributary of the River Monnow. This forms a wooded corridor c. 10m away from and parallel with the Site boundary. The wider setting of the Site is pastoral, with a network of fields, wooded watercourses, and dense hedgerows in the landscape.

3.2.2 Semi-improved Neutral Grassland

The semi-improved neutral grassland (TN2, **Photo 1**) is species-poor and grass-dominated (c. 80%). The most apparent grass at the time of the survey was crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristata*, with common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, soft brome *Bromus*

hordeaceus, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne* and occasional sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* are present throughout. Small clumps of soft rush *Juncus effusus* and creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera* are present on wetter areas. Forb cover consists of ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*, meadow buttercup *ranunculus acris*, creeping buttercup *ranunculus repens*, self-heal *prunella vulgaris*, dandelion *taraxacum* sp., common mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum* and some ox-eye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*. The field is managed by grazing and mowing and currently has a sward height of approximately 60 cm.

3.2.3 Hedgerows

The hedgerow on the northern edge of the Site (**TN3 Photo 2**) is machine cut, c.2.5m tall by c.2m wide. It is species-rich, with woody species including hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, wild rose *Rosa* sp., hazel *Corylus avellana*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, field maple *Acer campestre*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, yew *Taxus baccata*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, and an ornamental conifer.

Although species rich, this hedgerow does not qualify as 'Important' under the Hedgerow Regulations 1997 because it has less than seven species in a sample 30m section, and is without the requisite number of associated features.

Along the western boundary of the Site, between two post and wire fences, there is a newly planted hedgerow (**TN1, Photo 3**) of a mix of native species such as oak *Quercus* sp., hawthorn and spindle *Euonymus europaeus*.

3.2.4 Scrub

There is a small patch of scrub and tall ruderal vegetation at the eastern edge of the Site (**TN4**). This consists mostly of bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. and hawthorn mixed with nettles *Urtica dioica*.

3.3 Protected Species

3.3.1 Bats

HBRC provided 118 records of bats from within the 2km search area. The species recorded are:

Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*

Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*

Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii*

Natterer's *M. nattereri*

Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*

Long eared bat *Plecotus sp.*

Lesser horseshoe *Rhinolophus hipposideros*

The majority of the records are of small numbers of foraging or commuting bats. The closest record to the Site (dated 2017) is located c. 0.33km to the west and is of a common pipistrelle bat. The two most significant records are from the same location, c. 1.4km to the south of the Site. These are of roosts of over 130 common pipistrelle bats and eight lesser horseshoe bats, dating from 2002 and 2001 respectively.

There are no structures on the Site that could support a bat roost.

The northern boundary hedgerow continues off-site west down the road to link with the wooded corridors of the River Monnow and Escley Brook, and as such has value as a navigational route for bats. The field itself may offer some foraging opportunities but is unlikely to support a particularly high insect biomass given its species-poor status. The off-site watercourse, which runs into the River Monnow c. 80m to the west forms part of a strong wooded corridor, likely to be well-used by bats. It is concluded that bats in the locality are likely to be present along the margins of the Site, but are unlikely to rely on the interior of the Site as a foraging resource.

3.3.2 *Great crested newts*

HBRC provided one record of great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* from within the 2km search area. This was recorded c. 1.5km to the north-east of the Site in 2003.

There are no ponds on Site, and no ponds are evident on aerial photographs or OS maps within 250m of the Site. Given the lack of nearby breeding habitat, it is concluded that great crested newts are unlikely to be present on the Site.

3.3.3 *Dormice*

HBRC provided one record of a dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* from within the 2km search area. The record dates from 2002, and is of a dead animal found c.1km to the north-east of the Site.

The onsite hedgerow, whilst species-rich, is a disconnected length that does not join directly to the wider hedgerow network or to significant areas of semi-natural woodland. There is a large (c. 15m) gap to the west at the entrance to Offas Dyke Retreat Glamping (the access track immediately adjacent to the Site), and the hedgerow ends where it meets the fence along the eastern boundary of the Site.

This length of hedgerow (c.160m) is not sufficient to support a colony of dormice and is too disconnected to be part of a population in the wider landscape. Dormice are therefore considered likely to be absent from the Site.

3.3.4 Otter

HBRC provided one record of otter *Lutra lutra* droppings from c.50m south west of the Site in 2010. It is likely that otters are regularly present along the water courses that run near to the Site to the south and west. However, there appears to be little incentive for them to venture up the banks onto the open ground of the Site itself.

3.3.5 Reptiles

HBRC provided two records of reptiles from within the 2km search area. These are one juvenile adder *Vipera berus* and one record of two adult slow worms *Anguis fragilis*. Both records are from a field c. 1.25km to the South of the site and date from 2010.

The agriculturally managed field that comprises the Site is likely to be too disturbed and its structure too uniform to support a population of reptiles. The hedgerow also offers a sub-optimal habitat, as the field is grazed/mown right to the base offering little opportunity for concealment and shelter. Reptiles are considered likely to be absent from the Site.

3.3.6 Badger

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] No signs of badgers, such as latrines, setts or tracks were found within the Site boundary, and there are no extensive areas of scrub or woodland in which a sett could be concealed. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

3.3.7 Breeding Birds

The northern boundary hedgerow offers nesting opportunities for a range of common birds of gardens and farmland, but the regularly grazed uniform grassland is not suitable for ground-nesting birds.

4 Assessment

4.1 Study Limitations

There were no constraints to the study. The survey was carried out at an optimal time of year and access to all parts of the Site was possible.

4.2 Legislation and Policy

Appendix 4 details the legislation relevant to this study. The protection afforded to key habitats and species by the legislation identified above has informed the scope of the ecological studies undertaken to determine baseline conditions and guided measures that will protect and benefit valued ecological resources associated with the Site.

4.3 Assessment of Potential Ecological Impacts

4.3.1 *Statutory Designated Sites*

The River Usk SAC is fed by a different catchment to that which the Site lies. Impacts on this SAC resulting from the proposed development therefore are not anticipated.

Coed y Cerrig SAC is notified for its habitat interest, which at c. 8.3km from the Site is unlikely to be affected by the proposed development.

Offa's Dyke Retreat lies c. 7.5km from Foxwood SSSI, a component of Usk Bat Sites SAC. At this distance the Site is unlikely to form part of a key foraging area for lesser horseshoe bat. The species-poor semi-improved habitat of the Site has very limited foraging value for bats. The boundary hedgerow makes a small contribution to the hedge-lined public highway running east from the wooded corridor of the River Monnow, and as such has some limited value for long-distance commuting bats. This hedgerow will be retained unmodified, so provided it remains unlit by then new development, impacts on commuting bats and on the Usk Bat Sites SAC are unlikely.

4.3.2 *Non-statutory Designated Sites*

The Escley Brook SWS and River Monnow SWS both lie within 0.1km of the Site, and Olchon Brook SWS c. 0.53km away. This is sufficiently distant that direct disturbance of these water courses is unlikely to occur either during the construction or operation of the new glamping Site. However, there is a tributary of the River Monnow located c. 10m from the southern Site boundary, so it will be important to ensure that the water quality of this water course (and by extension, the three SWS into which it flows) is unaffected by the development. The implementation of a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) will ensure that protection of the watercourse is observed during construction of the new cabins. The foul drainage for the new cabins will be dealt with via a new treatment plant within the Site, which will run into a field drain soakaway.

4.3.3 Habitats

The development will entail the loss of a good proportion of the semi-improved grassland within the Site to cabins, and access tracks and parking areas. This habitat is of low ecological value and is common and widespread across much of lowland Britain. Ecological impacts resulting from its loss are considered likely to be low.

The onsite hedgerow will be retained unmodified, so no impacts on this resource are anticipated.

4.3.4 Bats

Bats are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) and under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. All species of bat are present on Schedule 2 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 and are subject to the provisions of Regulation 41 of those Regulations. Taken together, these protect bats from disturbance, injury or killing and make it an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct a breeding site or resting place they use.

There are no roost habitats on the Site and the grassland only offers minimal foraging opportunities for bats. The hedgerow that bounds the northern edge of the Site and the tree-lined watercourse that lies c. 10m to the south of the Site are likely to provide foraging and commuting corridors for bats.

The onsite hedgerow (and the off-site water course) will be undisturbed by the proposed development. So, provided that a wildlife-sensitive external lighting strategy is in place, bat usage of these features will be unaffected by the proposed development.

4.3.5 Breeding Birds

It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built.

No trees or hedgerows will be removed to make way for the new development so impacts on breeding birds are not anticipated.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Further Survey Work

No further ecological survey is required to support the proposed planning application.

A single visit provides sufficient information to assess the ecological value of habitats within the Site and their suitability for protected species.

5.2 Mitigation

5.2.1 *Construction Environmental Management Plan*

The implementation of an appropriately devised CEMP will ensure that the water quality of the nearby offsite water course (and by extension the three SWS into which it joins) is maintained.

5.2.2 *Maintain Dark Corridors of Movement for Bats and Other Wildlife*

External illumination of the new cabins and parking areas is likely to be required. A lighting strategy/ design for the scheme should allow provision for dark corridors for movement by bats and other nocturnal animals around the periphery of the Site, allowing animals to continue to use the northern boundary hedgerow, and the off-site water course to the south as navigational routes.

Where lighting is required, such as at the entrances to the cabins, appropriate light types (i.e. lamps with narrow spectrum and no UV output), low level lighting bollards and hoods on lamps should be used to control light spill. The lighting proposal should be designed to illuminate only those areas where lighting is required for safety and security close, but control illumination on the surrounding vegetation.

As a guide, controlling lighting within the proposed development to 0.5 lux at a position 3m from the Site boundary will help prevent light spill on the boundaries.

The key principals for choosing a suitable type of lamp are:

- Avoid blue-white short wavelength lights: these have a significant negative impact on the insect prey of bats. Use alternatives such as warm-white (long wavelength) lights as this will reduce the impact on insects and therefore bats.
- Avoid lights with high UV content: (e.g. metal halide or mercury light sources), or reduce/completely remove the UV content of the light. Use UV filters or glass housings on lamps which filter out a lot of the UV content.

Selecting an appropriate lamp unit that is designed to be environmentally friendly will minimize light spill, but further controls can be imposed by installing directional accessories such as baffles, hoods and louvres on lamps to direct light away from ecologically sensitive areas.

LED (Light Emitting Diode) units are an effective way to direct the light into small target areas. Composite LEDs can be switched off to reduce/direct the light beam to specific areas.

5.3 Enhancement

5.3.1 Tree Planting

More than 50 new trees will be planted as indicated in the design plan in **Appendix 1**. These trees will consist of a good variety of native species as well as a mix of fruit trees to provide nectar in spring and berries and fruit in summer for a variety of invertebrate, bird and mammal species.

5.3.2 Native Hedgerow Planting

Native hedgerows will be planted within the development to provide screens to neighbouring cabins. They will be composed of mix of native species, and have been designed to link in with the existing boundary hedgerows to maximise connectivity.

5.3.3 Bird Boxes

Four terraces are provided for house sparrows *Passer domesticus*. These communal-nesting birds are under threat nationally, and the development offers the opportunity to provide some nesting habitat for the species. The 'sparrow terraces' will be erected on the walls of the cabins as shown in Appendix 1. A suitable example is the Schwegler 1SP sparrow terrace, as shown in **Figure 2** below. The boxes should be installed at least 2m above the ground.

Figure 2: Schwegler 1SP Sparrow Terrace



5.3.4 Hedgehog Boxes

Four hedgehog boxes will be installed at the bases of hedgerow in sheltered locations. These will provide valuable shelter, particularly as the new hedgerows are developing.

5.3.5 Wildlife-friendly Landscaping

The Site is situated in a rural location, and it will be important to ensure that any ornamental shrub and herbaceous landscape planting is appropriate to the setting and is designed to maximise its value to wildlife. Ideally native species should be used throughout: woody species such as rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, elder, crab apple *Malus sylvestris* and bird cherry *Prunus avium* can provide attractive cover whilst providing fruit and nectar for wildlife. Landscape planting should aim to provide both nectar and seed resources, as well as structural variety to allow cover for species such as hedgehog and amphibians. The following link to the Royal Horticultural Society website provides a list of native plants that are good for pollinators grouped by size and habitat type. <https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/conservation-and-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators-wildflowers.pdf>

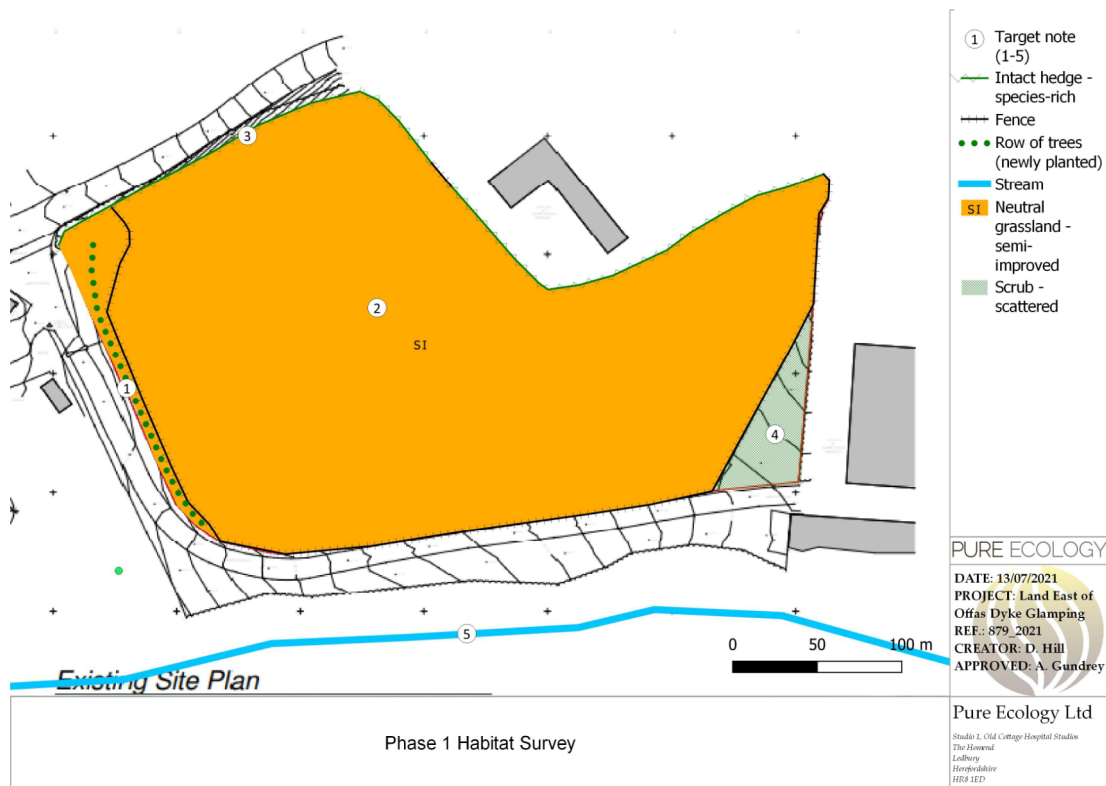
6 References

JNCC, 2010. Handbook for Phase 1 Habitat Survey - a technique for environmental audit. JNCC Revised reprint 2003, reprinted 2007 & 2010.

Appendix 1. Proposed Layout







Appendix 2. Phase 1 Habitat Plan



Target Notes

TN1	Between two post and wire fences there is a small row of newly planted trees that includes a mix of native species such as oak <i>Quercus</i> sp., hawthorn and spindle <i>euonymous europaeus</i> .
TN2	c.1.42 acres of neutral semi-improved grassland. Dominated by crested dog's-tail <i>Cynosurus cristata</i> with common bent <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> , soft brome <i>Bromus hordeaceus</i> , yorkshire fog <i>Holcus lanatus</i> and some sweet vernal grass <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i> throughout. Palatable grasses such as rye grasses <i>Lolium</i> spp. and white clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> are below 30% cover with some common forb species. Sward length is approximately c.60 cm and is managed by grazing and cutting for hay. Total grass cover is up to 80% with forbs up to 20% cover.
TN3	Machine cut hedge, c.160m in length, c.2.5m tall and c.2m wide. It is intact but for one large gap of around 8m where there is a gate leading to the dwelling to the north of the site. It is species-rich, consisting of hawthorn <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> , rose <i>rosa</i> sp., hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> , blackthorn <i>Prunus spinosa</i> , field maple <i>Acer campestre</i> , dogwood <i>Cornus sanguinea</i> , yew <i>Taxus baccata</i> , holly <i>Ilex aquifolium</i> and an ornamental conifer.
TN4	Small patch of scrub and tall ruderal vegetation
TN5	Tributary of the River Monnow and Escley Brook

Appendix 3. Photographs

<p>Photo 1 – Semi-improved grassland</p> 	<p>Photo 2 – Northern hedgerow</p> 
<p>Photo 3 – Southern boundary, newly planted hedgerow</p> 	<p>Photo 4 – Eastern boundary of site</p> 

Appendix 4. Legislation

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) (WCA) consolidated and amended existing national legislation to implement the Convention of the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (The Bern Convention) and the Birds Directive. There have been various amendments since the original enactment. Schedules 1 and 5 of the Act identify species of bird and other animal in relation to which the Act makes killing, injury, taking and disturbance an offence while Schedule 8 to the Act lists species of plant in relation to which the Act makes it an offence to intentionally pick, uproot or destroy.

Nesting Birds

It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird whilst it is in use or being built.

The Hedgerow Regulations 1997

These regulations, enforced under the Environment Act 1995, restrict the removal of hedgerows, or parts of hedgerows which are over 20m in length. In this case, removal includes digging up and replanting elsewhere, as well as removing from the land completely or destroying in the course of other actions.

This legislation only applies to country hedgerows, which includes hedge next to common land, Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) or land used for agriculture, forestry, or land used for the breeding/keeping of horses, ponies or donkeys. Domestic (e.g.garden) hedges are excluded from this legislation.

To be included in the regulation, a hedgerow must be over 20m long, but gaps of less than 20m do not count as gaps, therefore a 15m hedge plus 10m gap plus 15m hedge technically is classed as a 40m hedgerow.

To be defined as important, a hedgerow must be at least thirty years old, and must fulfil one of a number of criteria set out in the legislation. For example, one criterion is that the hedge is next to a public footpath, and contains a certain number of different species. Another is concerned with habitats of rare or protected birds and animals. Other criteria relate to the existence of a hedge as an ancient (pre 1850) border or boundary.

Appendix 5. Designated Sites

