

Oak Grove Farm
Portskewett
Monmouthshire
NP26 5UT

A **Preliminary Ecological**
Appraisal By:




Just
MAMMALS
Limited
Ecological Consultancy

On **Behalf Of:**



January **2024**

File Reference: **JM18723**

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Valid until	12 th January 2026		

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1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 A suitability assessment of various sites in Monmouthshire is being carried out by Monmouthshire County Council for the possible creation of Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) Sites, to be included within the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). A small area of land at Oak Grove Farm, Portskewett, forms part of the suitability assessment. To support the proposals, a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the two fields that make up the site, was conducted in January 2024, by an ecologist and an assistant.
- 1.2 The land subject to survey makes up part of Oak Grove Farm and comprises two fields, an eastern field and a western field, separated by post and wire fencing. Boundary features include trees, hedgerow and fencing. The north-western end of the western field has no obvious boundary feature, and is a continuation of the wider field that is outside the survey area. To the south of the site stretches the B4245. The surrounding landscape is typically rural and primarily characterised by pastoral farmland, a solar farm is located to the west of the site, adjacent to which stretches Ballan Wood.
- 1.3 Protected species and their potential presence on site were considered as part of the assessment. No further survey is required at the site at this time. It is recommended that all trees on site are retained and safeguarded as part of the proposals, this will help in retaining some ecological value on site. If any trees are proposed to be removed, further survey will be required, by way of assessment to determine their suitability for roosting bats.
- 1.4 Enhancements for biodiversity are required to meet the planning policy as indicated by Planning Policy Wales 11, and Future Wales, policy documents. This report makes recommendations to provide enhancements for biodiversity on site, including the installation of bird and bat boxes, as well as planting of hedgerows and woodland.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Just Mammals Limited was commissioned by Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) to complete a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of an area of land within Oak Grove Farm, Portskewett, approximately 2km north-east of Caldicot. The site subject to survey comprises two agricultural fields, centred on National Grid Reference ST 49956 90040, standing at an altitude of 46m Above Ordnance Datum.
- 2.2 MCC are currently considering the suitability of various sites in Monmouthshire for the creation of Gypsy Roma Traveller (GRT) Sites, for inclusion within the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP). Due to the early stage of the assessment, no design plans are available at the time of writing this report. To support the plans, Just Mammals Limited were commissioned to carry out a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal of the land within Oak Grove Farm. An initial assessment of the wider site of Oak Grove Farm was undertaken in 2020 (Just Mammals LLP 2020). Most recent survey is detailed in this report, and includes an assessment of the smaller area proposed for possible development only. This assessment was undertaken on the 12th of January 2024.
- 2.3 This report makes recommendations concerning the ecological value of the site, as well as the need for further survey work as appropriate. The different types of habitat were assessed, and the potential presence of protected species, such as badger (*Meles meles*), otter (*Lutra lutra*), dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*), reptiles and amphibians, as well as bats and nesting birds were considered. Section 7 species such as hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) were also considered.

3 Survey Team Experience

- 3.1 Undertaking the assessment, and author of this report is Phoebe Williams. A Geography graduate from the University of Exeter, and a former trainee at Gwent Wildlife Trust she has completed a Natural Talent trainee programme, studying Hemiptera at the National Museum of Wales. Practical experience includes survey work for dormice, botany, newts, reptiles, and invertebrates. Phoebe has undertaken an MSc in Wildlife and Conservation Management at the University of South Wales. She is an ecologist with Just Mammals Limited. Phoebe holds a Great crested newt (NRW) S092295/1 (Expiry 26th February 2025), and is an accredited agent on NRW bat licence S091842/2 (expiry 10th November 2024).

- 3.2 Assisting with the survey effort was Catherine Povey. After graduating from Swansea University and University College London, Catherine worked in medical research and as a practitioner. Since the first year of her degree when she studied Zoology and Botany, she has retained a keen interest in the natural world and has worked with Bannau Brycheiniog National Park on a number of projects, including peat conservation. She is employed by Just Mammals Limited as a Trainee Ecologist and has conducted a variety of surveys with the company including dusk bat emergence surveys for commercial projects.

4 Survey Methodology

- 4.1 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) was conducted on the 12th of January 2024. Details of the survey and weather conditions are provided in Table 1. Prior to the site visit, a desktop study was undertaken, which involved a standard search area of a 2km radius from the site (using a central grid reference), using the MAGIC website. Details of statutory sites designated for nature conservation were obtained. A record search was also commissioned from South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRc).
- 4.2 The assessment comprised a survey employing the Phase 1 habitat survey methodology. This is a standardised technique for classifying and mapping British habitats. All areas within the site were inspected and assessed for indicators of ecological value, including the presence and/or field signs of any protected or rare habitats and species. The site was walked over, recording all plant species and features onto a custom-made recording sheet. Habitats and notes were drawn onto a map of the survey site and photographs were taken. A coloured Phase 1 habitat map was produced (Appendix III).
- 4.3 Assessment for the presence or potential absence of other protected species, including hazel dormouse, badger, reptiles and amphibians, was undertaken by considering the features of the site. Such features include grassland and dense vegetation. The potential suitability of the site for nesting birds was also considered.

5 Site Description

- 5.1 Situated to the north-east of Caldicot, approximately 1.3km north of Portskewett, the site subject to survey makes up part of Oak Grove Farm. The site covers 7.5ha, and comprises two fields, an eastern field and a western field, separated by post and wire fencing. Boundary features include trees, hedgerow and fencing. The north-western end of the western field has no obvious boundary feature, and is part of a larger field that is outside of the survey area. To the south of the site runs the B4245. The surrounding landscape is typically rural and primarily characterised by pastoral farmland. A solar farm is located to the west of the site, adjacent to which stretches Ballan Wood.

6 Desktop Study

- 6.1 A record search was commissioned from South East Wales Biological Records Centre (SEWBRc) (unique reference 0234-679) to ascertain whether protected species have been recorded at or close to the site. The search revealed no records of priority species at the site.
- 6.2 The data set revealed protected species records within 1km of the site. The record search is summarised below:
- Mammals accounted for 72 records, species include; hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*), polecat (*Mustela putorius*), and badger (*Meles meles*) all recorded over 500m from the site, field signs for dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) have been noted within Ballan Wood over 600m from the site. Bat records include noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*), brown long-eared (*Plecotus auritus*), natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*), common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*), soprano pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) all over 800m from the site, and lesser horseshoe (*Rhinolophus hipposideros*) bat has been recorded over 1.4km from the site;
 - Birds accounted for 322 records, species include kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) over 290m from the site, red kite (*Milvus milvus*), herring gull (*Larus argentatus*), hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*), lesser spotted woodpecker (*Dryobates minor*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) and cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) all over 500m from the site;
 - A single reptile record was returned of grass snake (*Natrix helvetica*) over 600m from the site, no amphibian records were returned;
 - Invertebrate records include 13 records, grayling (*Hipparchia semele*) is the closest recorded over 500m from the site, over 700m from the site brown-banded carder bee (*Bombus humilis*), and shrill carder bee (*Bombus sylvarum*) have been recorded;

- Vascular plants include 135 records, species include; charlock (*Sinapis arvensis*), greater pond-sedge (*Carex riparia*), Spurge-laurel (*Daphne laureola*), and wood spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides*) have been recorded over 500m from the site;
 - Bryophytes includes 14 records, the closest record is of common pocket-moss (*Fissidens taxifolius*), over 900m from the site.
- 6.3 By consulting Magic Map, it was determined that no part of the site contains, or is within, any statutory sites of nature conservation interest, such as an Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Concern (SAC), National Nature Reserve (NNR) or Local Nature Reserves (LNR) etc. No sites of conservation interest form part of the site. The desktop study confirmed three sites of interest within 2km of the site. These include Bush Close SSSI 1.4km south-west of the site, Dinham Meadows SSSI 1.5km to the north-west of the site, and Nedern Brook Wetlands, Caldicot SSSI 1.3km south-west of the site.
- 6.4 The record search also revealed Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) within 1km of the area of land subject to survey. These are listed below with significance of the sites also included, where information is available:
- Ballan Wood: just over 415m to the west of the site, a combination of Ancient Semi-natural Woodland (ASNW) and a Restored Ancient Woodland Site (RAWS);
 - Sunny Bank: just under 400m to the north-west of the site;
 - Farthing Hill: over 900m to the south-west of the site.
- 6.5 The site subject to survey does not form part of any of the above designated sites. Given the scale of the development and the distance of sites of conservation interest from the site subject to assessment, it is considered unlikely that proposals will impact designated sites within the surrounding area at this time.

7 Survey Constraints

- 7.1 The comprehensiveness of any ecological assessment may be limited by the nature of the site visit, it being a single snapshot of the site at any point in time. This report cannot therefore be considered to provide a fully comprehensive analysis of the ecological interest of the site. However, it does provide an ecological assessment of the site for supporting habitats and species on the day of the visit and highlights areas where further survey work may be required.

8 Survey Results

- 8.1 Details of the conditions under which survey was conducted is given in Table 1. Wind speeds given employ the Beaufort scale.

Table 1: Summary of Survey Activity and Weather Conditions

Survey Type and Location	Dates	Timing	Weather Conditions
Day time visual inspection, botanical survey and habitat assessment, including protected species assessment	12/01/2024	13.30 – 14.30 hours Greenwich Mean Time	Air temperature: 5°C Cloud cover: 8/8 oktas Wind speed: F3, gentle breeze Conditions: Dry
Surveyors	Phoebe Williams and Catherine Povey		

- 8.2 The site was divided into seven different types of habitat for recording purposes. Table 2 below provides details of the various habitats and the dominant species for each of them.

Table 2: Summary of Phase 1 Habitat Notes

Habitat	Phase 1 Classification	Description of Area and Typical Species
Type 1	B4 Improved grassland	The eastern field is made up of this habitat, and comprises a low diversity of forb species. Grassland sward is short and grazed by sheep. Species present include perennial rye grass (<i>Lolium perenne</i>), broad-leaved dock (<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>), creeping buttercup (<i>Ranunculus repens</i>) and common chickweed (<i>Stellaria media</i>).
Type 2	B6 Semi-improved grassland	The western field is slightly less improved, with a few more forb species, although still considered to be species poor. Grassland sward is short. Species present include perennial rye grass, Yorkshire fog (<i>Holcus lanatus</i>), dandelion (<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>), clover (<i>Trifolium</i> sp.), meadow buttercup (<i>Ranunculus acris</i>) and cocks foot (<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>).

Type 3	A3.1 Scattered trees	A small number of trees stand at the site boundaries. Specimen are mature. Species present include pedunculate oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>) and hawthorn (<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>). Target Note 1: Pedunculate oak with potential roost feature Target Note 2: Pedunculate oak with potential roost feature Target Note 3: Hawthorn with old bird nest
Type 4	J2.1.2 Intact hedgerow, species poor	This habitat stretches along the eastern field edge and to the south. There are less than five woody species along a typical 30m stretch. Generally, the hedgerow is >2m wide and >2m tall. Hedgerow is dominated by blackthorn (<i>Prunus spinosa</i>) and hawthorn. Other species present include ivy (<i>Hedera helix</i>), cleavers (<i>Galium aparine</i>), elder (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), and holly (<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>).
Type 5	J2.2.2 Defunct hedgerow	A short section of hedgerow present at the south-east end of the site is defunct. Species include bracken (<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>), bramble (<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>) and hawthorn.
Type 6	J2.3.2 Hedge with trees, species poor	At the southern end of the site, trees align the hedgerow. Generally, specimen are less mature, although three mature pedunculate oak trees are present. Species include hazel (<i>Corylus avellana</i>), ivy, cleavers, blackthorn, and holly.
Type 7	J2.4 Fence	A post and wire fence aligns most of the site boundaries, apart from the north-western end of the site.

- 8.3 A coloured Phase 1 habitat map was produced (see Appendix III). A total of 54 species of plants were recorded during the survey, these are listed in Appendix IV.
- 8.4 Ecological assessment included identification of the potential for protected species to be present on site. Reptiles make use of open, rank habitats which provide a mixture of open areas and cover. Habitat on site comprises short sward grassland that is grazed by sheep. A single reptile record was returned from the data search, a grass snake over 600m away.
- 8.5 During the terrestrial part of their lifecycle, amphibians have similar habitat requirements to reptiles, with both species' groups favouring unmanaged, rank grassland, scrubby vegetation and variation in vegetative architecture. No amphibians were noted during the survey. No ponds are present, ruling out the possibility for them to breed on site. Since great crested newts are known to use terrestrial habitat up to 500m from their breeding ponds, the wider landscape must also be taken into consideration. Review of aerial maps show a single pond just under 300m to the south-east of the site. No other ponds are present within 500m of the site. No amphibian records were returned from the data search.
- 8.6 Bats use trees as well as buildings for roosting, where they will exploit gaps, cracks and crevices in the bark. An extensive survey of trees and their suitability for bats was not undertaken, as this is beyond the scope of the preliminary assessment. However, two trees (Target Note 1 and 2) were noted as having Potential Roost Features (PRF). Features include knot holes, and a possible internal cavity. Features were not inspected during the PEA.
- 8.7 Hazel dormice are associated with well-defined, connected hedgerows that link to further suitable habitat elsewhere in the landscape. No evidence of dormice was recorded during the survey. Hedgerows on site are isolated, with a lack of connectivity to suitable areas of habitat in the wider landscape. Evidence for the presence of dormouse has been found in Ballan Wood, around 600m to the west of the site.
- 8.8 No evidence of badger was noted during the survey, such as setts, footprints, hairs, latrines or other indicators of their presence. Badgers are highly mobile and can range great distances, favouring sloping ground in wooded areas where they can dig their setts and forage away from disturbance. No dense areas of woodland are present on site. An area of woodland is present to the south-west of the site, around 600m away. Badger has been recorded within Ballan Wood.
- 8.9 An historic bird nest was noted within a hawthorn tree to the west of the site (Target Note 3). Survey was undertaken outside of the bird nesting season, as such, no nesting activity was observed. Habitats on site, namely hedgerows and scattered trees are suitable for nesting birds.

- 8.10 Species such as otter, white-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) and water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) are highly reliant on water bodies. No water bodies are present on, or immediately adjacent to the site. The site is not considered suitable for either of these species.

9 Discussion and Conclusions

- 9.1 An area of land that makes up part of Oak Grove Farm is being considered to be developed as a GRT Site. Suitability surveys are currently being undertaken, consequently no design plans are available at the time of writing this report. The land subject to survey currently comprises improved and semi-improved, species poor grassland. Boundary features include species poor hedgerow, and few scattered trees. Overall, the site subject to survey is assessed as having a low level of ecological value, although boundary features and trees increase the value of the site.
- 9.2 Habitat on site is not considered suitable for reptiles or amphibians, given the lack of shelter provided by the short sward, grazed grassland. No amphibian records were returned from the data search. A single reptile record was returned from the data search, a grass snake over 600m away. There is a pond present 300m to the south-east, however this is not well connected to the site due to the presence of surrounding open, agricultural fields and lack of connecting features. Furthermore, the absence of suitable habitat to provide shelter makes the site unsuitable for amphibians.
- 9.3 Detailed assessment of the trees on site was not undertaken. Two trees were noted during the survey as having features that may be suitable for roosting bats, although depth and suitability of features were not thoroughly inspected. If any trees are earmarked for removal, further assessment for bats is required.
- 9.4 Evidence to suggest the presence of dormice has been recorded over 600m from the site. There are hedgerows present on site, however, these are isolated and not well connected to areas of suitable habitat within the wider landscape, including Ballan Wood. It is therefore considered unlikely that dormice are using the site at this time. Recommendations below include planting or new hedgerow to give better connectivity to and from Ballan Wood.
- 9.5 No live or dead badgers were recorded during the survey, and no features of interest are present on site for this species. Badger presence has been noted within Ballan Wood to the west. Therefore, occasional passage through the site by badgers cannot entirely be discounted. Appropriate precautionary measures must be taken during construction to ensure mammals are protected during construction works.
- 9.6 Habitat such as trees and hedgerow provides suitable habitat for birds to nest. All nesting birds, their chicks, eggs and nests whilst in use are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Recommendations for best practices regarding nesting birds are made below.

10 Recommendations

- 10.1 No further survey is required at the site at this time. It is highly recommended that all trees on site are retained and safeguarded as part of the proposals, this will help in retaining some ecological value on site. If any trees are proposed to be removed, further survey will be required, by way of assessment to determine their suitability for roosting bats.
- 10.2 It is recommended that the hedgerow is also retained and protected as part of the proposals. Recommendations below include enhancing the existing hedgerow on site, as well as re-instating the defunct hedgerow through planting. If any vegetation is to be cut down, it must be removed outside of the bird nesting season, which runs between March and August, inclusive. If, whilst the vegetation is being removed an active nest is discovered, all works within a 2m radius of the nest must be immediately stopped, and not recommenced until all chicks have fledged.
- 10.3 To protect any mammals that may pass through the site, any trenches dug forming part of the groundworks must be covered overnight, or left with a 45° sloping side to prevent any animal from becoming trapped. Similarly, any unconnected pipes must be capped overnight to prevent any animal from becoming stuck.
- 10.4 Potential presence of nocturnal animals, such as foraging bats on site requires considerate design of a sensitive lighting scheme. Any new lighting columns must not exceed 4m in height, and must be affixed with cowls, hoods or shrouds to minimise upward light spill. Luminosity will be limited to the absolute minimum required by Health and Safety standards, and will ideally be timed to be

extinguished for as long a period as possible during the night. All lights must face downwards and must not point directly at any natural features. This is also important for any temporary lighting installed for use during construction. Any external lighting affixed to the exterior of the proposed houses must be motion-activated and pointed in a downward facing direction, away from natural features. Any new lighting installed must adhere to the ILP (2023) guidelines for artificial lighting.

- 10.5 Works provide the opportunity to enhance the biodiversity of the site, and to comply with Planning Policy Wales 11 (PPW11). An area of the site must be set aside as an enhancement for wildlife. This area would benefit from the creation of a small pond, the margins of which must be left to grow, in addition to woodland and hedgerow planting. Hedgerow planting is recommended around the field margins to create new hedgerow features, and to re-instate the defunct hedgerow. Table 3 below includes a list of suitable native tree and hedgerow species, which can be planted as part of the proposals. Species used must be native, with a mix of at least five different species. It is essential that such plants are sourced locally in order to reduce likelihood of importing diseases. It is recommended that a strip of vegetation alongside the hedgerows is left to grow rank (at least 1m wide), this will provide additional shelter and add to the mix of habitats to be created at the site.

Table 3: Recommended Native Tree and Shrub Species

Common Name	Scientific Name
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Crab apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Downy birch	<i>Betula pubescens</i>
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Common hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Pedunculate oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Sessile oak	<i>Quercus petraea</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Spindle	<i>Euonymus europaeus</i>

- 10.6 Bird boxes and bat boxes are an effective way of attracting species to the site. At least four woodcrete/woodstone bird boxes are recommended to be installed at the site. Bird boxes are proposed to be of different designs, including; Vivara Pro Serville 32mm Woodstone nest boxes, and Vivara Pro Barcelona Woodstone Open nest boxes (or similar). Bird boxes must be approximately 3m above the ground, with a clear flight path. Boxes must be sheltered from prevailing wind, rain and strong sunlight. Boxes must not be positioned too close together, and can be attached to the trees on site.
- 10.7 With regard to enhancement bat boxes, it is recommended to install two bat boxes (Schwegler 2F bat boxes, or similar), on trees within the site. These are to be installed close to natural linear features such as a trees, and away from any artificial light source. Boxes must be at least 4m above the ground and sheltered from strong winds (usually south, south-east or south-west elevations).
- 10.8 It is important to implement good horticultural practice in any landscaping scheme, including the use of peat-free composts, mulches and soil conditioners. The use of pesticides (i.e. herbicides, insecticides, fungicides and slug pellets etc) must be discouraged to prevent cumulative fatal effects to animals via the food chain, particularly invertebrates, birds and/or mammals. Any pesticides used must be non-residual.
- 10.9 Any fencing must have a continuous gap of approximately 15cm beneath it, to ensure wildlife can continue to move across the site.

11 Bibliography

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Appendix I: Site Location Plan

Figure 1: Site location plan



Appendix II: Site Photographs

Plate 1: Looking east across the site



Plate 2: Looking west across the site



Plate 3: Target note 1: mature oak with PRF and cavity



Plate 4: Looking north along eastern hedgerow boundary



Plate 5: Target note 2: mature oak with PRF



Plate 6: Looking south at the eastern end of the site



Plate 7: South-west boundary

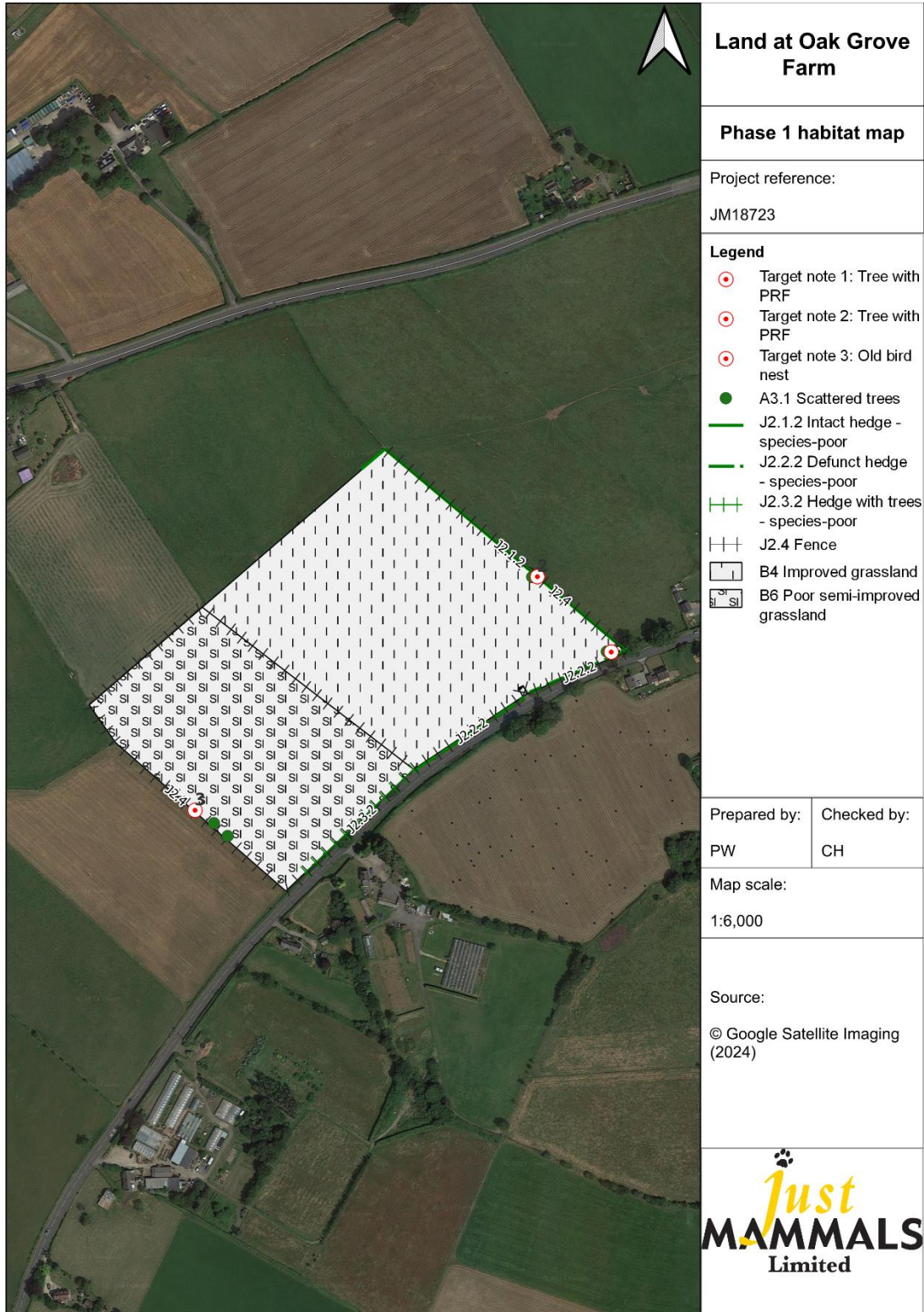


Plate 8: Looking west across the site



Appendix III: Phase 1 Habitat Map

Figure 2: Phase 1 habitat survey map



Appendix IV: List of Recorded Species

Table 3: List of Recorded Species

Plant Species		JNCC Broad Habitat Types					
Common Name	Scientific Name	B4	B6	A3.1	J2.1.2	J2.2.2	J2.3.2
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>				x		
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>				x	x	x
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>				x	x	
Bramble	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>				x	x	x
Buttercup, Creeping	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	x	x				
Buttercup, Meadow	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	x					
Chickweed, Common	<i>Stellaria media</i>	x	x				
Cleavers	<i>Gallium aparine</i>				x		
Clover, A	<i>Trifolium sp</i>	x					
Cocks foot	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	x	x				
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	x					
Dock, Broad-leaved	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	x	x				
Elder	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>				x		
Geranium, A	<i>Geranium sp</i>	x					
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>				x		
Groundsel	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>		x				
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>			x	x	x	x
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>						x
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>				x		x
Ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>				x	x	x
Meadow grass, Annual	<i>Poa annua</i>	x	x				
Oak, Pedunculate	<i>Quercus robur</i>			x			x
Oxe tongue, Bristly	<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>		x				
Plantain, Ribwort	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	x	x				
Rose, A	<i>Rosa sp</i>				x		
Rye grass, Perennial	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	x	x				
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	x					

Appendix V: Relevant Legislation

Wild birds

All wild birds, their eggs and nests are protected by The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). It is an offence, with certain exceptions, to:

- intentionally kill, injure or take any wild bird;
- intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;
- intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird;
- sell wild birds or put them on display for sale;
- use traps or similar items to kill, injure or take wild birds; and
- intentionally, or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nest building, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such a bird.

Penalties that can be imposed for criminal offences in respect of a single bird, nest or egg contrary to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) is an unlimited fine, up to six months imprisonment or both. In exceptional cases NRW and Natural England issues licences for specific purposes, so that legitimate work may be undertaken without breaking the law.

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We confirm that in preparing this document we have exercised reasonable skill and care, taking into account the project objectives, the agreed scope of the work, prevailing site conditions, the degree of manpower and resources allocated to the project, and in compliance with the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's Code of Professional Conduct.

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Clients include government departments, local and regional authorities, development agencies, commercial and industrial enterprises as well as statutory nature conservation organisations, wildlife trusts and other charitable bodies.

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Natural Problem Solvers

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