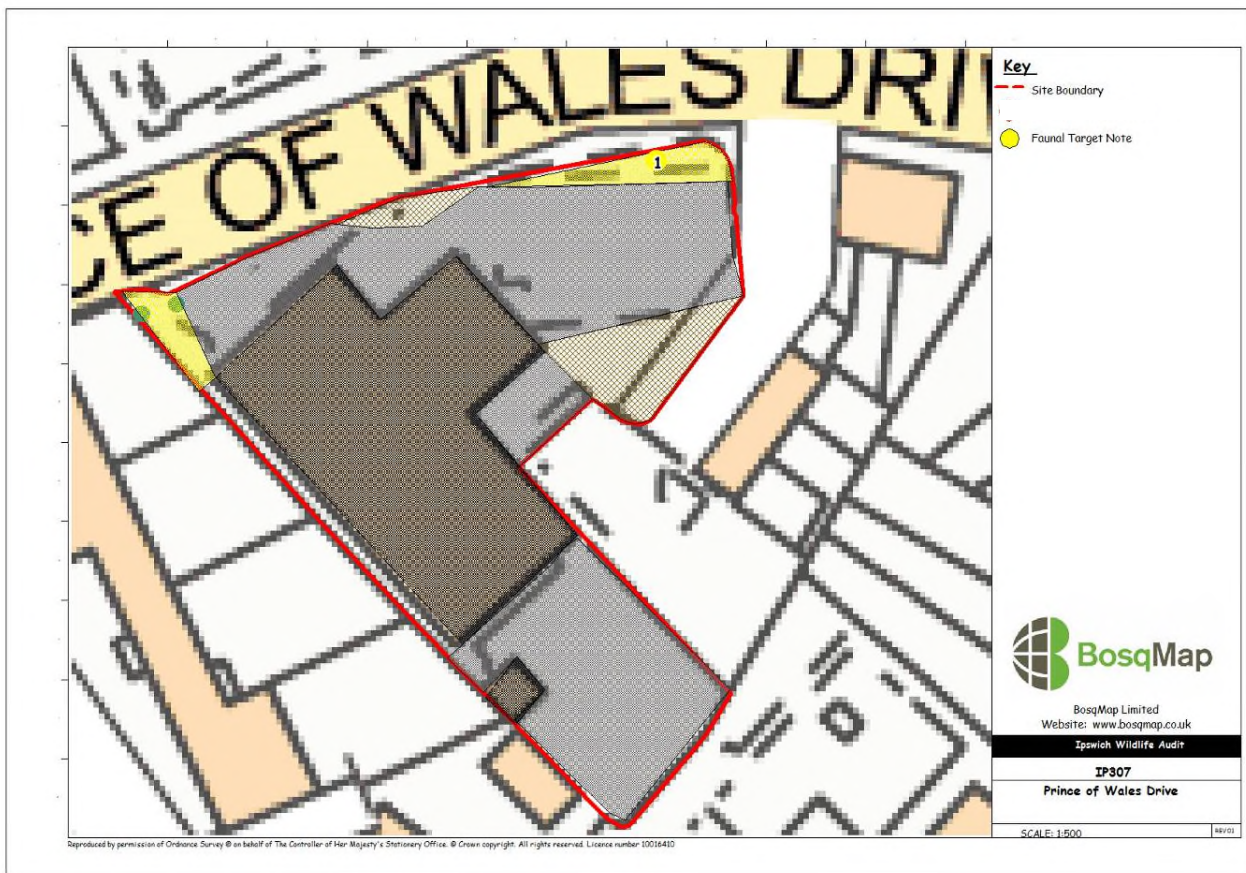


**Site name:** Prince of Wales Drive

**Site ref:** IP307  
**Site status:** No wildlife designation  
**Grid ref:** TM 15633 42785  
**Area:** 0.27 hectares  
**Date:** 8<sup>th</sup> August 2019  
**Recorder:** A Looser  
**Weather conditions:** Hot and sunny, 26°C  
**Ranking:** 5  
**Biodiversity value:** Low

**Map:**



**Photos:**



*View across car park*



*Holes made by ground nesting bees and wasps (Target Note 1)*

**Habitat type(s):**

Buildings, hard standing, introduced shrub, amenity grassland, scattered trees

**Subsidiary habitats:**

-

**Site description:**

This is a small site on the corner of Prince of Wales Drive and Aberdare Close. It consists of a shop with a small car park, some introduced shrub provided as a landscaping scheme and a small area of amenity grassland adjacent to the verge.

**Protected species seen or known:**

Species recorded in the area include:

Common pipistrelle bat

Soprano pipistrelle bat

Brown long eared bat

Noctule bat

Grass snake

Slow worm

Common lizard

**Protected species potential:**

-

**Priority habitats present:**

-

**Priority species seen or known:**

Species in the area include:

Hedgehog

Common toad

Stag beetle

House sparrow  
Starling

**Priority species potential:**

-

**Connectivity:**

The connectivity of this site is very poor, being surrounded by roads and residential housing.

**Structural diversity:**

The structural diversity is poor, apart from the introduced shrubs.

**Flora:**

Due to the nature of this site the flora is very limited.

The area of amenity grassland had a more interesting mix of species than is typical of this habitat. Species recorded include rye grass, wall barley, Canadian fleabane, smooth hawk's-beard, autumn hawkbit, gallant-soldier, petty spurge, black medick, common cat's-ear, swine-cress, fat-hen and groundsel.

The areas of introduced shrub contained primarily ornamental species with occasional fern grass, creeping thistle, rosebay willowherb, ragwort and Canadian fleabane. Occasional buddleia is also present.

There are a few scattered trees including wild cherry.

**Avifauna:**

The majority of the habitat is sub-optimal for this group, although the introduced shrubs provide some foraging and nesting opportunities for common species.

**Invertebrates:**

The short grass bank along the road has areas of bare ground which provides good habitat for ground nesting bees and wasps. An active colony of bee wolf which was preying on pantaloon bees were noted in the grassland (Target Note 1). Other common species including small white and painted lady butterflies were also seen.

**Herpetofauna:**

There is no habitat suitable for this group.

**Mammals:**

The majority of the habitat is sub-optimal for this group.

**Comments and recommendations:**

This site is proposed for residential housing for 12 dwellings at medium density.

This site is very small and located in a built-up area of the Town, so the opportunities for enhancement are limited. However, any landscaping scheme should include low-maintenance nectar and berry producing shrubs and perennial plants to provide some benefit for birds and invertebrates. As ground nesting bees and wasps are less common invertebrates, retention of a patch of short, sparse grassy habitat on site would be beneficial.

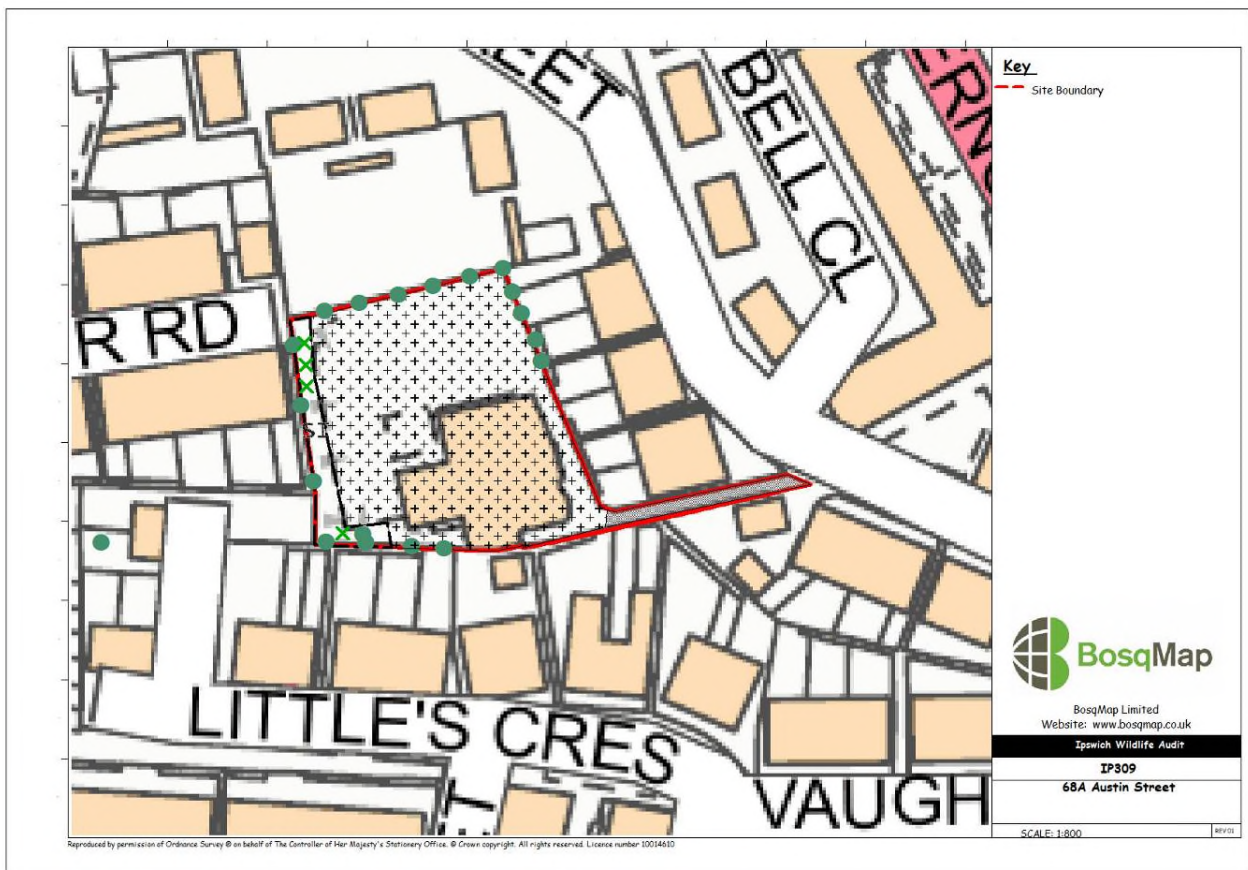
Holes in fences for hedgehog should be part of new housing proposals, to deliver landscape permeability for this wide-ranging, declining species.

It is unknown if houses or flats are proposed for this site. Swifts are a declining migratory species that are almost totally dependent on holes and crevices in buildings for nesting but leave no mess. Swift boxes should be integrated into taller new buildings using 'swift bricks' or 'swift blocks'. Externally mounted boxes can also be used but have a shorter life span than integrated features. Both types are most effective at attracting swifts when used with a swift 'call system'.

**Site name:** 68A Austin Street

**Site ref:** IP309  
**Site status:** No wildlife designation  
**Grid ref:** TM 16370 43680  
**Area:** 0.23 hectares  
**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019  
**Recorder:** A Looser  
**Weather conditions:** Hot and sunny, 21°C  
**Ranking:** 4  
**Biodiversity value:** Medium

**Map:**



**Photos:**



*View east showing developing vegetation and bare ground mosaic*



*Bank with rough grassland and scattered scrub*

**Habitat type(s):**

Buildings, hard standing, ephemeral short perennial, poor semi-improved grassland, scattered scrub, scattered trees

**Subsidiary habitats:**

-

**Site description:**

This is a small site accessed via a narrow lane off Austin Road. It is surrounded by the gardens of the residential dwellings fronting Little's Crescent, Austin Street and Seymour Road. The former Bridgewood Social Club building was demolished in March 2018 and the site has subsequently been colonised by ephemeral short perennial vegetation. Although this site contains a mixture of plant species typical of the Priority Habitat 'Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land' (Brownfield), the small size of the site means that it is unable to qualify. There are a number of patches of bare ground. A low bank with rough grassland and scrub is present on the southern and western boundaries and there are scattered trees around the margins.

**Protected species seen or known:**

Records in the surrounding area include:

- Common pipistrelle bat
- Soprano pipistrelle bat
- Brown long eared bat
- Natterer's bat
- Daubenton's bat
- Noctule bat

**Protected species potential:**

Slow worm

**Priority habitats present:**

-

**Priority species seen or known:**

Records in the surrounding area include:

Hedgehog

Stag beetle

BoCC Red List birds include: house sparrow and starling

BoCC Amber List birds include: dunnock and swift (Suffolk Character Species)

Cinnabar moth

**Priority species potential:**

-

**Connectivity:**

A limited degree of connectivity is provided by the surrounding residential gardens, although in general it is isolated by roads.

**Structural diversity:**

For a small site it currently has a good structural diversity with a mosaic of bare ground patches, short and taller vegetation, grasses, scrub and mature trees.

**Flora:**

For a small site this has a very good diversity of plants typical of disturbed ground. Species recorded include wall barley, false oat, cock's-foot, red fescue, Yorkshire fog, common couch and barren brome grasses with a good range of annual and perennial plants including sedge spp, Canadian fleabane, purple toadflax, wild parsnip, dandelion, ragwort, fine-leaved ragwort, perennial sow thistle, common cat's-ear, smooth hawk's-beard, rough hawkbit, bristly ox-tongue, prickly lettuce, hop trefoil, black medick, mouse-ear hawkweed, rosebay willowherb, great mullein, feverfew, scented mayweed, scentless mayweed, mugwort, spear thistle, common thistle, common stork's-bill, cut-leaved cranesbill, dove's-foot cranesbill, ribwort plantain, greater plantain, buck's-horn plantain, swine cress, sweet Alison, petty spurge, caper spurge, white clover, alsike clover, black horehound, poppy, white dead nettle, hedge bindweed, yarrow, common mouse ear, procumbent yellow sorrel, green alkanet, weld, broad-leaved dock, curled dock, fool's parsley, scarlet pimpernel, flixweed, fat hen, many seeded goosefoot and common orache. Moss was also noted in the area of the former building. Although the site is small, the species composition is suggestive of that of the Priority Habitat Open Mosaic Habitat on Previously Developed Land.

The trees and scrub surrounding the margins includes a mix of native species such as ash, sycamore, lime, blackthorn, elder, elm, willow and bramble along with some garden escapes including cotoneaster, privet and fuchsia. Considerable patches of ivy were noted along the boundaries.

**Avifauna:**

It was a sub-optimal time of year for recording this group. The margins of the site will provide some

foraging and nesting habitat for a range of common species and the ephemeral vegetation will also provide foraging opportunities for seed and insect eating species.

#### **Invertebrates:**

Brownfield sites are known to support rich invertebrate communities, often with interesting species assemblages. The patchy mosaic of vegetation and habitat types, structural diversity and edge habitats adjacent to open habitat provides shelter, sunny hotspots and variable microclimates. Cinnabar moths (Priority Species) larvae feed exclusively on ragwort which is present in a reasonable quantity on this site. A number of invertebrates were noted during the survey including small white, red admiral and meadow brown butterflies, several species of bee and hoverfly and crickets and grasshoppers. This site could also offer potential habitat for stag beetles (Priority Species), if there is any subterranean deadwood on the boundaries suitable for supporting their larvae as there are records of them in the vicinity.

#### **Herpetofauna:**

Although much of the site provides sub-optimal habitat for this group, the rough grassland and scattered scrub on the boundary banks provide potential habitat, particularly for slow worm. It could also provide hibernation habitat for them. Although relatively isolated, the presence of the surrounding gardens increases the likelihood that they could be present in small numbers.

#### **Mammals:**

The mature trees on the margins were generally considered to have a low suitability for roosting bats, however if any of these trees are affected by the development further assessment should take place. There are numerous hedgehog records in the area (Priority Species) and hedgehogs could access the site through holes in the fences alongside the neighboring gardens. The bramble scrub on the banks provides potential nesting and hibernation opportunities for them. Other common mammal species will also be present including grey squirrel and small mammals such as mice, voles and shrews.

#### **Comments and recommendations:**

This site is allocated for residential use with an indicative capacity of 15 dwellings at medium density (54dph) provided the site is no longer needed for community uses.

The wildlife interest of this site is improving as time progresses. Prior to any development a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal should be undertaken alongside any specific detailed surveys recommended in that report which may include, but not be limited to, botanical, reptiles and invertebrates. Due to the nature of the site, the report should also include the potential for invasive species.

Although further surveys for bats are not recommended, if any trees are to be felled or reduced in size a precautionary method of felling should be adopted and if any evidence of bats is found, then work must stop immediately and a suitably qualified ecologist be consulted.

Although currently there are only small amounts of woody vegetation, any clearance should only take place outside the main bird nesting season (March - August inclusive) or immediately preceded by a nesting bird check. Consideration should also be given to the likely impact of vegetation clearance



upon the local hedgehog population. Holes in fences for hedgehog should be part of this new housing proposal, to deliver landscape permeability for this wide-ranging, declining species.

This site contains cotoneaster and members of this group are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended, because they can become dominant to the detriment of other species. As such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause these species to grow in the wild. If this plant is removed as part of a vegetation clearance programme then it should be disposed of in a way as not to contravene the legislation.

This site is very small and located in a built-up area of the Town, so the opportunities for enhancement are limited. However, any landscaping scheme should include low-maintenance nectar and berry producing shrubs and perennial plants to provide some benefit for birds and invertebrates.

It is unknown if houses or flats are proposed for this site. Swifts are a declining migratory species that are almost totally dependent on holes and crevices in buildings for nesting, but leave no mess. Swift boxes should be integrated into taller new buildings using 'swift bricks' or 'swift blocks'. Externally mounted boxes can also be used but have a shorter life span than integrated features. Both types are most effective at attracting swifts when used with a swift 'call system'.

A stag beetle habitat pile, created by burying stumps in an upright position, rather like a cluster of organ-pipes, should be constructed on the perimeter.

If there was a commitment to regular maintenance, then a wildflower area could be sown to benefit invertebrates. The mix should include species typical of the prevailing sandy and free draining soil conditions. Wildflower areas are left uncut until mid-July/August and then cut, with a second cut in September.

Rain gardens should also be incorporated into the landscape design as part of a sustainable drainage scheme. They are most effective when larger in size and slow down run-off from down-piped or paved areas. They require free-draining soils in trenches and can be planted with nectar producing species, which can be non-native as long as they are not invasive. They can provide important stepping-stone habitat in urban areas.

**Site name:** Land north of 447 and fronting Humber Doucy Lane

**Site ref:** IP344  
**Site status:** No wildlife designation  
**Grid ref:** TM 18286 46857  
**Area:** 1.02 hectares  
**Date:** 24<sup>th</sup> July 2019  
**Recorder:** J Crighton  
**Weather conditions:** Clear sky, no wind, *ca.* 32°C  
**Ranking:** 5  
**Biodiversity value:** Low

**Map:**



**Photos:**



*IP344 Northern boundary*



*IP344 looking to the south west, poplars on western boundary*

**Habitat type(s):**

Arable field, defunct species-poor hedgerow, scattered broad-leaved trees

**Subsidiary habitats:**

-

**Site description:**

This site lies to the west of Humber Doucy Lane. It was previously playing field but has not been in use since 2013. It is currently managed as a hay meadow, which had been topped and dried prior to this survey so any plant identification within the meadow was difficult. The western boundary is lined with a row of poplars amongst other species and to the north and south, there are small areas of scrub. There is a defunct hedgerow along the boundary with Humber Doucy Lane, which is associated with a dry ditch and is in a slightly elevated position compared to the site.

**Protected species seen or known:**

Records in the surrounding area include:

Soprano pipistrelle bat  
Common pipistrelle bat  
Noctule bat  
Serotine bat  
Barn owl

**Protected species potential:**

Badger  
Common lizard

**Priority habitats present:**

-

**Priority species seen or known:**

Records in the surrounding area include:

Hedgehog

Stag beetle

Common toad

Brown hare

Small heath butterfly

Wall butterfly

Grayling butterfly

BoCC Red List birds include turtle dove, skylark, house sparrow, starling, yellowhammer, linnet, lapwing, cuckoo, herring gull and lesser redpoll

BoCC Amber List birds include bullfinch, swift (Suffolk Character Species) and song thrush

**Priority species potential:**

-

**Connectivity:**

This site has moderate connectivity with surrounding habitat, via the hedgerow and the scrubby woodland abutting the site on both the northern and southern boundaries.

**Structural diversity:**

Although limited at time of survey, prior to cutting the longer grass and forbs would have provided a higher degree of structural diversity. Currently the main features are the defunct hedgerow and line of trees.

**Flora:**

Along the eastern boundary of the site, on the road verge, a species-poor mix of false oat, mugwort, prickly lettuce and common mallow are evident. The defunct hedgerow is predominantly hawthorn and elm with some cut-back sycamore and traveler's joy

On the eastern boundary, the mature trees include several white poplar with some silver birch, blackthorn and field maple.

**Avifauna:**

It was a sub-optimal time of year for recording this group, and the extreme hot weather meant there was little bird activity noted. However, the mature trees offer some nesting potential and seed-eating and insectivorous birds are likely to forage in the meadow.

**Invertebrates:**

Although this site had been recently mown at time of survey, the long grass would likely support a range of common invertebrates such as butterflies, spiders, grasshoppers and crickets. If there is any subterranean deadwood in the boundary features suitable for supporting their larvae, stag beetle could be present.

### **Herpetofauna:**

There are limited opportunities for this group within this site, however the hedgerow and field margin may be used as transitory habitat for reptiles and amphibians, including common toad and common lizard.

### **Mammals:**

The adjacent habitats may support roosting bats and therefore they are likely to use the linear corridor of trees for commuting, and potentially forage over the site.

A number of hedgehog records exist from Humber Doucy Lane and the associated residential areas, and they are likely to use the hedgerow and field margin for refuge and foraging.

No evidence of a sett was seen during the assessment, but badgers may forage around the field boundaries.

Other mammals such as fox, rabbit, brown hare and deer species are likely to move through this site. Common small mammals including mice, voles and shrews are also likely to be present in the field margins and hedgerows.

### **Comments and recommendations:**

This site forms part of a larger allocation (IPSA4) for 496 homes.

New development should retain as much of the existing habitat as possible and integrate it within a landscaping scheme, to deliver locally accessible natural greenspace. For example, the defunct hedgerow could be infilled with native species similar to those in the hedgerows to the south of the site. With long term good management practices, this will help retain and enhance the local biodiversity resource. Greenspaces should be interlinked to provide functional ecological corridors for a range of species and as much as possible they should connect with wider off-site ecological networks. New planting should seek to use native species typical of the local area.

Careful planning and design can integrate the requirement for sustainable drainage systems with the creation of new wildlife habitat. Such places can also create aesthetically pleasing features which can also be integrated into landscaping schemes. There is the opportunity to channel and store run-off through surface features such as swales, retention basins and ponds, resulting either in temporary or permanent water features. The design should incorporate a variety of features to maximise potential habitats niches and any planting should utilise native species.

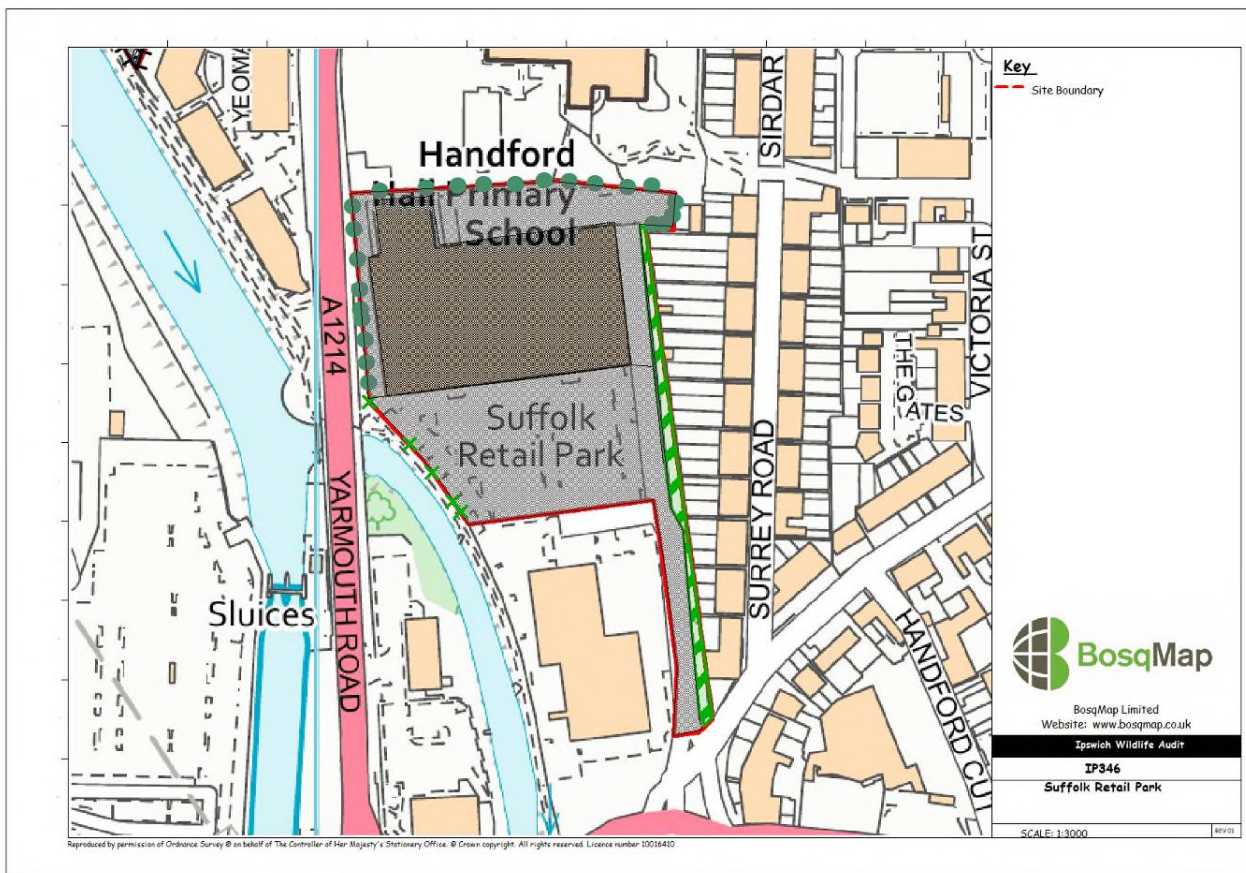
New habitats should be created taking into account local ecology and site conditions. If there was a commitment to regular maintenance, then a wildflower area could be sown to benefit invertebrates. The mix should include species typical of the prevailing soil conditions. Wildflower areas are left uncut until mid-July/August and then cut, with a second cut in September.

Holes in fences for hedgehog should be part of new housing proposals, to deliver landscape permeability for this wide-ranging, declining species. Toad, another UK Priority species, will also benefit from holes in garden fences.

**Site name:** Suffolk Retail Park

**Site ref:** IP346  
**Site status:** No wildlife designation  
**Grid ref:** TM 15098 44785  
**Area:** 2.1 hectares  
**Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2019  
**Recorder:** A Looser  
**Weather conditions:** Hot and sunny, 29°C  
**Ranking:** 6  
**Biodiversity value:** Low

**Map:**



**Photos:**



*View from river path adjacent to site*



*Tree belt along eastern boundary*

**Habitat type(s):**

Hard standing, buildings, plantation woodland, scattered broadleaved trees, scattered scrub, introduced shrub

**Subsidiary habitats:**

-

**Site description:**

This site is part of the Suffolk Retail Park and currently houses a large retail store and its car park. The western boundary is adjacent to the River Gipping which is a County Wildlife Site. There is a narrow belt of planted trees along the eastern boundary and a line of sycamore trees along the western edge of the building. To the north are the Handford Primary School playing fields. There is a short stretch of hornbeam hedge close to the river corridor and occasional patches of introduced shrub within the car park.

**Protected species seen or known:**

Species recorded in the surrounding area include:

Common pipistrelle bat  
Soprano pipistrelle bat  
Noctule bat  
Daubentons bat  
Grass snake  
Slow worm  
Otter  
Water vole

**Protected species potential:**

-

**Priority habitats present:**

River (adjacent to site)

**Priority species seen or known:**

Species included in the area include:

Hedgehog

Stag beetle

Common toad

BoCC Red List birds including herring gull, house sparrow and starling

BoCC Amber List birds including swift (Suffolk Character Species)

**Priority species potential:**

-

**Connectivity:**

This site is adjacent to the River Gipping which provides good connectivity for a range of species. The school playing fields to the north of the site also provide some degree of connectivity.

**Structural diversity:**

The structural diversity is poor, except for the margins.

**Flora:**

Due to the nature of this site the flora is limited.

Along the river corridor are species typical of this habitat type including cock's-foot and false oat grass with nettle, curled dock, mallow, horseradish and green alkanet with occasional cotoneaster, buddleia and sycamore bushes. There is also a short section of hornbeam hedge at the north-western end of the car park.

There is a line of sycamore trees, with occasional elder, along the western side of the building.

The tree belt on the eastern boundary is dominated by sycamore with beech, ash, hazel, elder, tamarisk and laurel also present.

**Avifauna:**

The habitat is sub-optimal for this group, however herring gull (Priority species) and greater black backed gull were observed on the roof of the building. Carrion crow and swift (Suffolk Character species) were also seen. The trees provide limited foraging and nesting opportunities for this group.

**Invertebrates:**

The habitat is sub-optimal for this group, although some common species may be present around the margins of the site, particularly the river corridor. Large white and meadow brown butterflies were seen during the visit. The tree belt along the eastern boundary provides habitat for stag beetles (Priority species).

**Herpetofauna:**

The habitat is not suitable for this group.



### **Mammals:**

The habitat is sub-optimal for this group, although bats are likely to forage along the river corridor. Otter has also been recorded along the river although there is little suitable habitat for them to den or shelter adjacent to the site.

### **Comments and recommendations:**

We have no information regarding proposals for site IP346.

This site contains cotoneaster and members of this group are listed on Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended, because they can become dominant to the detriment of other species. As such, it is an offence to plant or otherwise cause these species to grow in the wild. If this plant is removed as part of a vegetation clearance programme then it should be disposed of in a way as not to contravene the legislation. There is also a record of Japanese knotweed (another Schedule 9 highly invasive species) about 75m to the south. This site assessment does not constitute an invasive species survey so more detailed surveys are advisable to check that this species has not colonised this site.

As this site is located next to the River Gipping CWS, the lighting scheme should be designed to prevent light spillage into this area. Bats are particularly sensitive to increased light levels, so it is important to maintain dark corridors to support local ecological networks.

There is an opportunity to strengthen the local ecological network by creation of new habitat adjacent to the river as part of a greenspace allocation. Careful planning and design can also integrate the requirement for sustainable drainage systems with the creation of new wildlife habitat. Such places can also create aesthetically pleasing features which can also be integrated into landscaping schemes.

Rainwater run-off can be channelled through and temporarily stored within surface features such as swales, retention basins and ponds, resulting either in temporary or permanent water features. The design should incorporate a variety of features to maximise potential habitats niches and any planting should utilise native species. Where possible, existing habitats should be retained and integrated into the system as this will result in greater species diversity. New habitats should be created taking into account local ecology and site conditions and should use native planting local to the area.

In addition, action can be taken for individual species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.

Swifts are a declining migratory species that are almost totally dependent on holes and crevices in buildings for nesting but leave no mess. Swift boxes should be integrated into taller new buildings using 'swift bricks' or 'swift blocks'. Externally mounted boxes can also be used but have a shorter life span than integrated features. Both types are most effective at attracting swifts when used with a swift 'call system'.

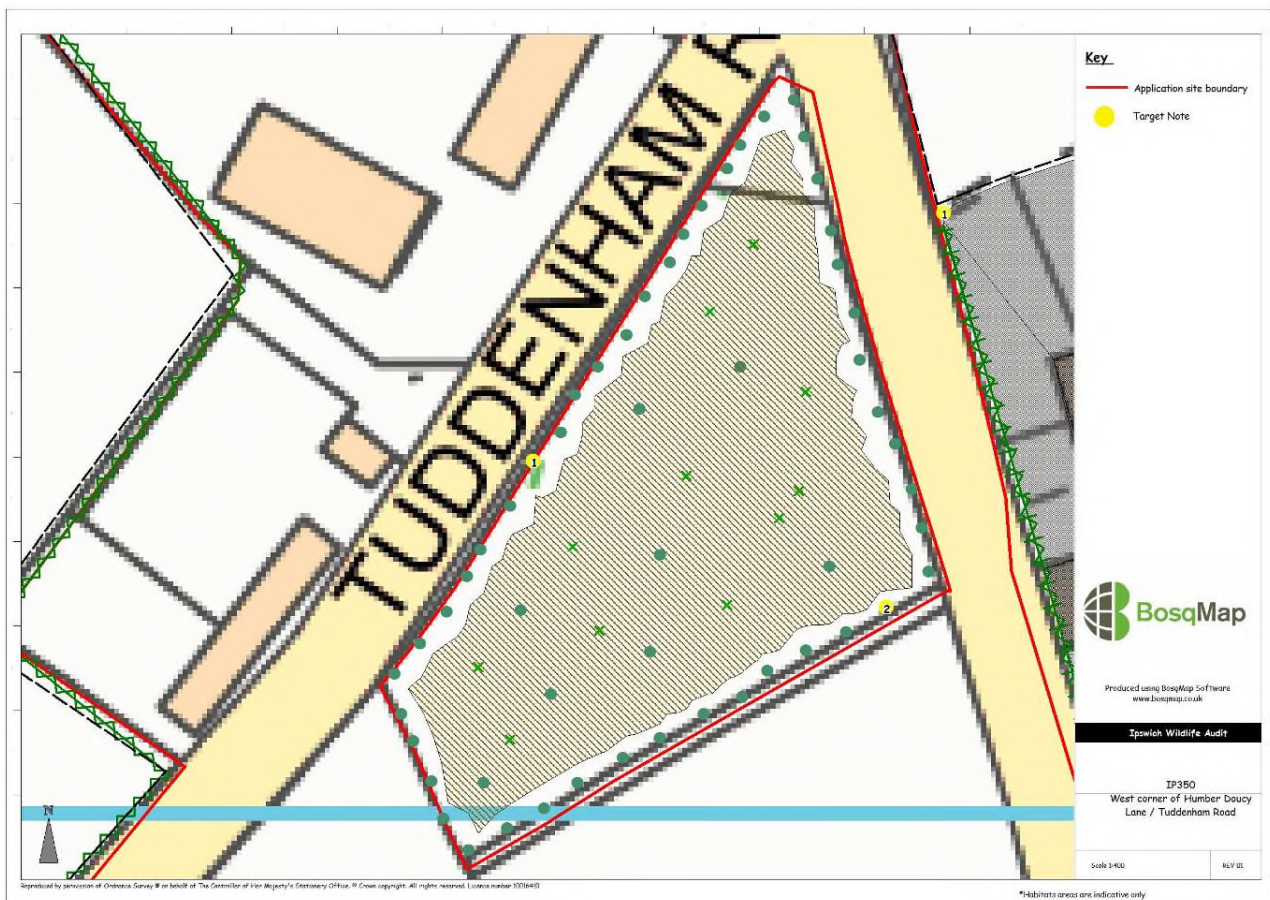
Bat boxes should also be integrated into any new buildings, or durable boxes placed on trees where there is a low risk of interference.

Holes in fences for hedgehog should be part of new housing proposals, to deliver landscape permeability for this wide-ranging, declining species.

**Site name:** West Corner of Humber Doucy Lane/Tuddenham Road

**Site ref:** IP350  
**Site status:** No wildlife designation  
**Grid ref:** TM 18228 47045  
**Area:** 0.36 hectares  
**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2019  
**Recorder:** A Looser  
**Weather conditions:** Hot and sunny, 26°C  
**Ranking:** 4  
**Biodiversity value:** Medium

**Map:**



**Photos:**



*View across site from Tuddenham Road*



*View across site from north-east corner showing mature trees on boundary*



*Veteran Oak on Tuddenham Road (Target Note 1)*



*Veteran crab apple on southern boundary (Target Note 2)*

**Habitat type(s):**

Tall ruderal, scattered scrub, species poor hedgerows, scattered trees

**Subsidiary habitats:**

-

**Site description:**

This small field is situated on the corner of Tuddenham Road and Humber Doucy Lane. It is surrounded by mature trees and a gappy hedgerow on the road boundaries with a notable veteran

oak tree adjacent to Tuddenham Road (Target Note 1). Tall trees define the southern boundary along a ditch and bank, which along with a very old, mature crab apple tree (Target Note 2) implies that this may be derived from an ancient species-rich hedgerow that has been unmanaged for many years. There are also tall trees marking the western boundary.

The interior of the site is dominated by tall ruderal with scattered scrub starting to develop and was largely impenetrable. The history of the site is unknown, but the current species are indicative of previously disturbed ground. It is possible that this site had a brownfield use previously.

**Protected species seen or known:**

Records in the surrounding area include:

Soprano pipistrelle bat  
Common pipistrelle bat  
Noctule bat  
Serotine bat  
Barn owl  
Badger

**Protected species potential:**

Slow worm

**Priority habitats present:**

-

**Priority species seen or known:**

Records in the surrounding area include:

Hedgehog  
Stag beetle  
Common toad  
Brown hare  
Small heath butterfly  
Wall butterfly  
Grayling butterfly  
BoCC Red List birds include turtle dove, skylark, house sparrow, starling, yellowhammer, linnet, lapwing, cuckoo, herring gull and lesser redpoll  
BoCC Amber List birds include bullfinch, swift (Suffolk Character Species) and song thrush

**Priority species potential:**

-

**Connectivity:**

Connectivity is limited to the boundary features as this site is located within a largely arable landscape and is separated by roads to the north-west and north-east.

**Structural diversity:**

The combination of tall trees on the perimeter and tall ruderal and scattered scrub means that

structural diversity is reasonably good.

#### **Flora:**

The tall ruderal species are dominated by nettle, lesser burdock, hogweed and hedge bindweed with creeping thistle, spear thistle, green alkanet and willowherb spp. Some bramble and sycamore scrub is also present.

The roadside trees include oaks (including a large veteran oak on Tuddenham Road Target Note 1) and sycamore.

The roadside hedgerows are gappy, although there is a reasonable diversity of species including hawthorn, blackthorn, hazel, elm, dogwood, elder, and buddleia along with traveler's joy and black bryony. The hedgerows are infilled with sprawling ivy. Midland hawthorn is also present on Humber Doucy Road which is indicative of an old hedge. There is a damson growing in the northern corner, but there is no record of there ever being an orchard on this site.

The southern and western tree belts include tall sycamores, although the southern is more diverse including a very old crab apple tree (Target Note 2).

#### **Avifauna:**

The survey took place at a sub-optimal time of year for this group. The mature trees are likely to provide nesting opportunities for hole-nesting birds. If there are significant patches of bramble scrub within the site then these will be utilised by a range of bird species for nesting. A blackcap was heard calling.

#### **Invertebrates:**

Ruderal species can support a range of common invertebrates. Small white and speckled wood butterflies were seen during the visit.

#### **Herpetofauna:**

The dense vegetation of the site was suboptimal for reptiles, but slow worm could be present in low numbers, particularly if there are occasional more open patches in the vegetation to enable basking.

#### **Mammals:**

This site will provide nesting habitat for hedgehog and is particularly suitable for hibernation. Suitable hibernation sites can be a limiting factor for hedgehogs and patches of suitable habitat can therefore be used by a number of animals in the winter. Consequently, the loss of such features can have a significant impact upon the local population.

The mature trees are likely to have potential bat roosting features and the site may also be used by commuting and foraging bats.

As this site was difficult to access and a large proportion was not assessed, it is possible that badger may be present.

Other common species of mammal will be present such as grey squirrel, fox and muntjac deer.

**Comments and recommendations:**

The site now forms part of a larger allocation for 496 homes, see site allocation ISPA4.

Further detailed surveys for bats, reptiles, badger, breeding birds and priority species should be undertaken. Given the nature of the site, invasive plant surveys should also be carried out.

The boundary trees and hedgerow shrubs should be retained and the significant trees protected during construction through a root protection zone. Any lighting scheme should be designed to prevent light spillage onto these features. Bats are particularly sensitive to increased light levels, so it is important to maintain dark corridors to support local ecological networks.

The proposals indicate that only part of the site may be residential. Consequently, there are opportunities for greenspace provision and careful planning and design can also integrate the requirement for sustainable drainage systems with the creation of new wildlife habitat. Such places can also create aesthetically pleasing features which can also be integrated into landscaping schemes.

There is the opportunity to channel and store run-off through surface features such as swales, retention basins and ponds, resulting either in temporary or permanent water features. The design should incorporate a variety of features to maximise potential habitats niches and any planting should utilise native species. Where possible, existing habitats should be retained and integrated into the system as this will result in greater species diversity. New habitats should be created taking into account local ecology and site conditions.

Reptiles are associated with the nearby railway line corridor and potentially could be on site in low numbers. A log pile for basking reptiles over the top of a below-ground hibernacula should be incorporated into an undisturbed area of greenspace. Hibernacula can be created by filling holes (minimum 2m long by 1m wide, and up to 50cm deep) with log sections. This should be covered with topsoil and turf, allowing access opportunities so that reptiles can easily enter the hibernacula at the appropriate time. This feature can also benefit stag beetle larvae who will feed on the logs once they start to decay.

Holes in fences for hedgehog should be part of new housing proposals, to deliver landscape permeability for this wide-ranging, declining species. Toad, another UK Priority species, will also benefit from holes in garden fences.

**Site name:** 79 Hutland Road/Sidegate Lane

**Site ref:** IP356  
**Site status:** No wildlife designation  
**Grid ref:** TM 18026 45337  
**Area:** 0.09 hectares  
**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> July 2019  
**Recorder:** J Crighton  
**Weather conditions:** Warm, clear skies with moderate breeze, *ca.* 24°C  
**Ranking:** 4/5  
**Biodiversity value:** Medium/Low

**Map:**





**Photos:**



*Looking north-east across site*



*Dwelling on site*



*Outbuilding with potential bat roosting features*

**Habitat type(s):**

Amenity grassland, scattered trees, dense continuous scrub, buildings

**Subsidiary habitats:**

Rubble piles, log piles, bare ground, ivy covered trees/wall, compost heap

**Site description:**

This site was previously an employment site with a small vacant property, an outbuilding and several sheds. It lies on the corner between Hutland Road and Sidegate Lane in a residential area in the west of Ipswich. The majority of the site is short-mown amenity grassland but also contains some trees and dense scrub. A local resident maintains the site on a bi-weekly basis, cutting grass and general tidying. The site also contains a water tank and oil tank.

**Protected species seen or known:**

Records in the surrounding area include:  
Badger

Common pipistrelle bat  
Soprano pipistrelle bat  
Noctule bat  
Serotine bat  
Slow worm

**Protected species potential:**

-

**Priority habitats present:**

-

**Priority species seen or known:**

Records in the surrounding area include:  
Female stag beetle found and several records in the area  
Hedgehog  
Common toad  
House sparrow  
Starling  
Swift (Suffolk Character Species)

**Priority species potential:**

-

**Connectivity:**

The surrounding gardens offer a degree of connectivity to this site.

**Structural diversity:**

Although the site is small and largely short-mown, there are a number of features which offer some structural diversity including mature fruiting trees, scrub, buildings, bare ground and piles of differing substrates.

**Flora:**

The amenity grassland on the site is heavily dominated by mouse-ear hawkweed in dense swathes, typical of mown, dry grassland. Other species present include autumn hawkbit, white clover, daisy, dandelion, common cat's ear, yarrow, lesser trefoil, ribwort and greater plantain and occasional dove's foot crane's bill. Some more sparse areas have buckthorn plantain and bryophyte cover. Around the edges of the garden, alongside the brick wall boundaries and scrub areas there is taller vegetation including common poppy, wood avens, greater celandine, wall barley, smooth sow thistle and sun spurge. There is also some ornamental planting with lesser periwinkle encroaching into the garden. Around the foot of the buildings pellitory-of-the-wall and green alkanet are present.

The trees on site include plum, hazel and holly, several of which are covered with ivy and in some of the corners, an ornamental bramble species is growing.

### **Avifauna:**

The areas of scrub and open grassland provide moderate foraging, nesting and roosting opportunities for a range of common bird species in this built up environment.

### **Invertebrates:**

Although this site is not particularly botanically diverse, there are a range of habitats offering variable microclimates and refuge areas and a large number of invertebrates were noted during the survey. These included painted lady caterpillars, red admiral, ladybirds, spiders and grasshoppers. A dead female stag beetle was also found.

### **Herpetofauna:**

This site contains some limited features which could be used by slow worm, which are known to be found in the area. The rubble piles provide basking and hibernation opportunities and the long vegetation on the edge, wood piles and compost heap are also particularly attractive.

### **Mammals:**

Although the buildings on site had no external signs of bat activity, such as droppings or staining, they did contain features which could be used by roosting bats.

The short-mown grassland provides foraging habitat for hedgehogs, and the log piles and scrub patches offer nesting and hibernation sites. There are a number of records of hedgehog from the surrounding area.

The site is also likely to be visited by common species of mammal such as fox and grey squirrel.

### **Comments and recommendations:**

We have no information regarding proposals for this site.

The outbuilding and dwelling could support roosting bats and consequently further surveys are recommended. A reptile survey is also recommended.

Although a declining species in the UK, this area of the County is a stronghold for stag beetles which can often be found in relatively small garden habitats around Ipswich. As a stag beetle was found on site a habitat pile in a corner of the site should be created by burying stumps in an upright position, rather like a cluster of organ-pipes. Any larvae discovered during excavation can be reburied beneath this structure under the supervision of an ecologist.

The site is relatively small and located in a built-up residential area of the Town, so the opportunities for enhancement are limited. However, any landscaping scheme should include low-maintenance nectar and berry producing shrubs and perennial plants to provide some benefit for birds and invertebrates.

Holes in fences for hedgehog should be part of this new housing proposals, to deliver landscape permeability for this wide-ranging, declining species.