

**Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Additional Site Options  
Ecological Assessment:**

**Pheasant Oak Farm**

**Habitat Biodiversity Audit Partnership for Warwickshire, Coventry  
and Solihull**

**Warwickshire Wildlife Trust**

**Ecological Services Warwickshire County Council**



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- Ecological Constraints Relate to 23.7% of the Total Area

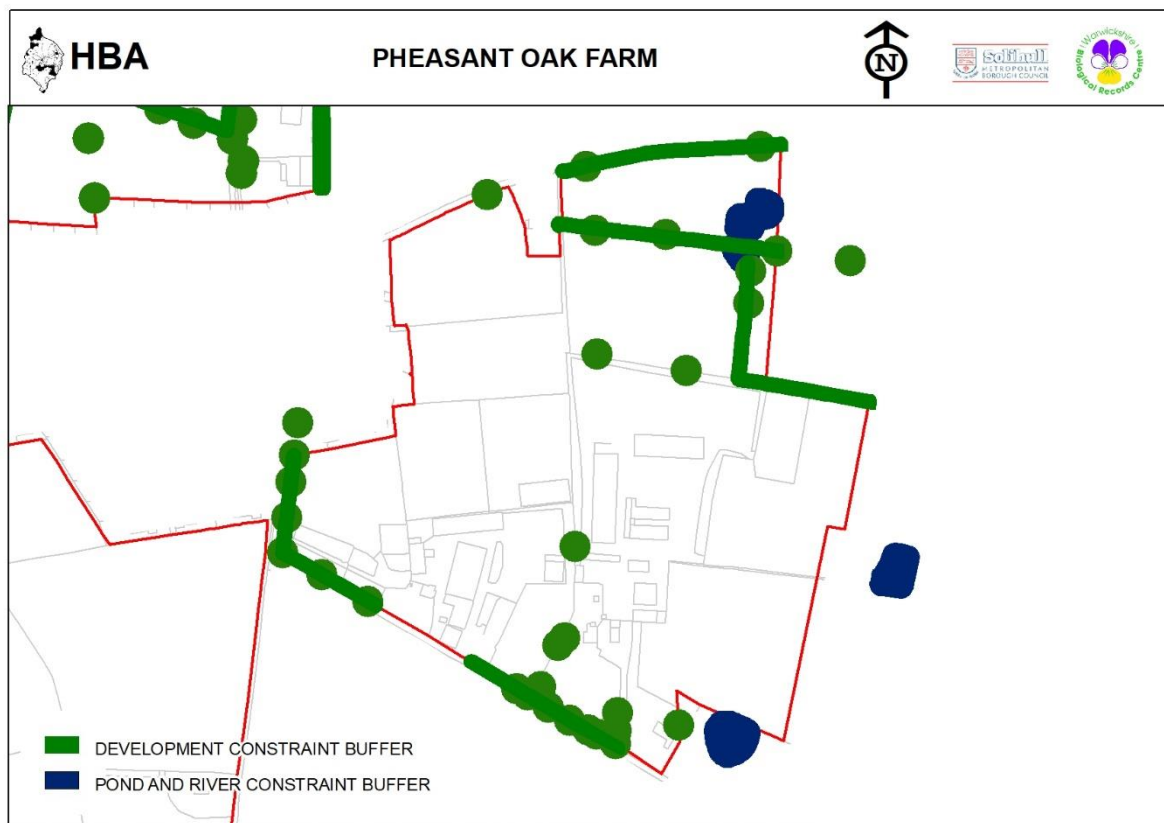
## **Recommendations**

The ponds should be buffered by eight metres especially during any construction works and incorporated as open green space. The ponds should be surveyed for their potential to support Great Crested Newts (*Triturus cristatus*).

A tree or arboriculture survey is recommended for the development parcel to determine the height of any tree and the spread of the tree's canopy so that adequate buffers can then be calculated. Trees should be utilised into development plans; to retain the development parcels most valuable features and to remove the need to re-create green infrastructure. The maintenance of any trees and allocation of green space should take place in and around the ponds present on site. Equally, the creation of ponds to complement the existing ponds on site would increase connectivity and ecological resilience of the pond network.

Trees along Hob Lane and the corner of Windmill Lane should be surveyed as potential Tree Preservation Orders (TPO; Town and Country Planning Act 1990) and thus would require consent from the local planning authority before such protected trees are cut down, topped or lopped.

## Constraints



**Figure 2 Constraints Map**

The areas marked in green and blue on the above constraints map as a component of a very early and preliminary assessment represent existing biodiversity value and should ideally be retained and incorporated into any development proposals. They indicate where development should be avoided, and ecological enhancement encouraged. The maps show's a feasible case scenario with the aim to meet no net loss and the net gain approach. The green and blue areas at the absolute minimum highlight the need for further ecological investigation.

They include:

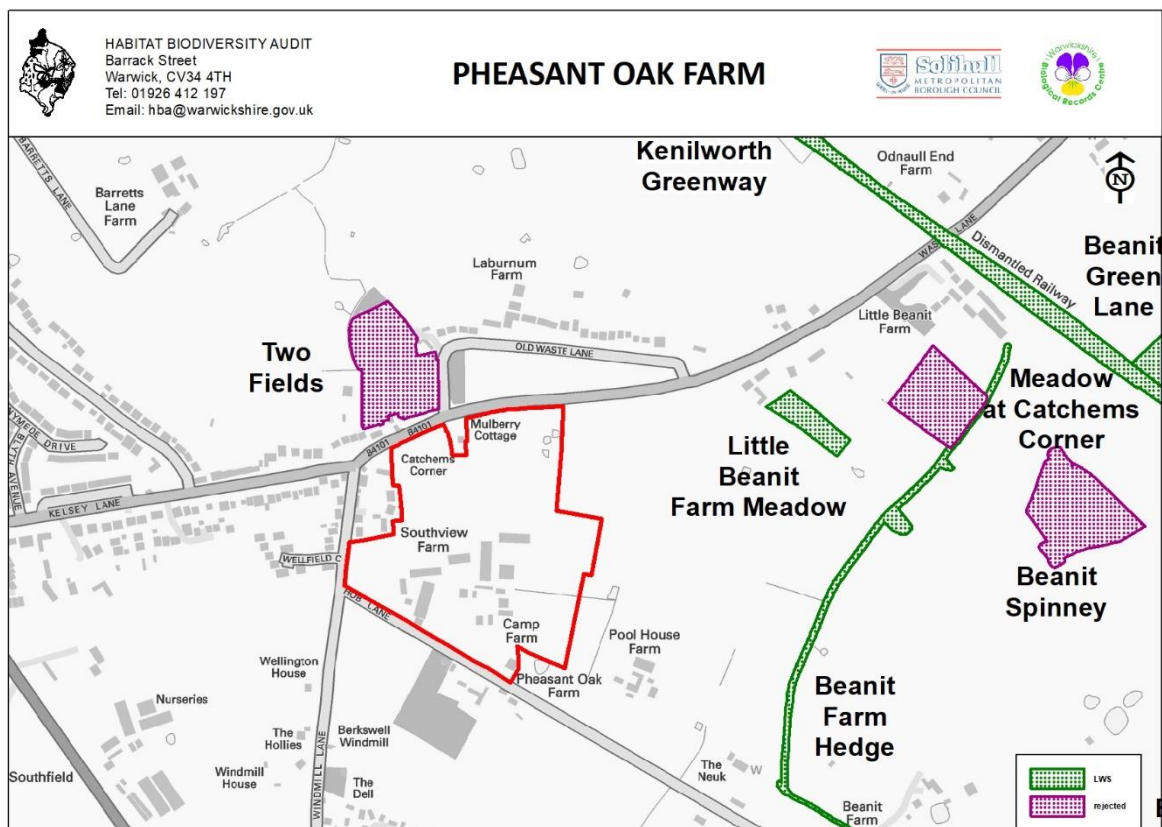
- 30m buffer around woodland
- 8m buffer either side of adjacent to watercourses
- 8m buffers around ponds
- 5m buffer either side of intact hedgerows
- Areas of medium to high distinctiveness habitats (Values 4, 5 & 6)
- Local Wildlife Sites
- Veteran/Notable Trees

The circular green dots represent notable/veteran trees which should be retained and incorporated into green infrastructure. They are currently buffered by default at 15 metres as recommended by Natural England. A tree or arboriculture survey is recommended for the site to distinguish on such issues,

determining height of tree and the spread of the tree's canopy so that adequate buffers can then be calculated. The buffers are not exact but illustrative based on the extent of the canopy from aerial photography. You could buffer these trees either by 5m from the extent of the canopy, or by the length of the tree trunk or by a standard length being 15 to 30m depending on results from an arboriculture survey. If veteran trees are identified, a buffer of 30m would be recommended. Trees within existing urban infrastructure may not be subject to such buffers as the root zone may well be established around such obstacles but should be left in-situ depending on the level of disturbance envisioned by proposed works. This is of note for trees along Hob Lane and Windmill Lane bordering existing road groundworks.

Ecological Constraints relate to 23.7% of the total area of the development parcel, yet veteran/notable trees and the pond network can be simply integrated into development scheme as the supplement of green space needed for a development of this size and nature.

## Designated Sites



**Figure 3 Designated Sites**

The development parcel does not encompass any designated sites. A rejected LWS named Two Fields sits across Waste Lane, north-west of the development parcel.

## Local Wildlife Site

Two Fields Rejected LWS<sup>1</sup> SP27N2

Area; 1.69ha

Survey Date; 24/08/19

## Habitat Description

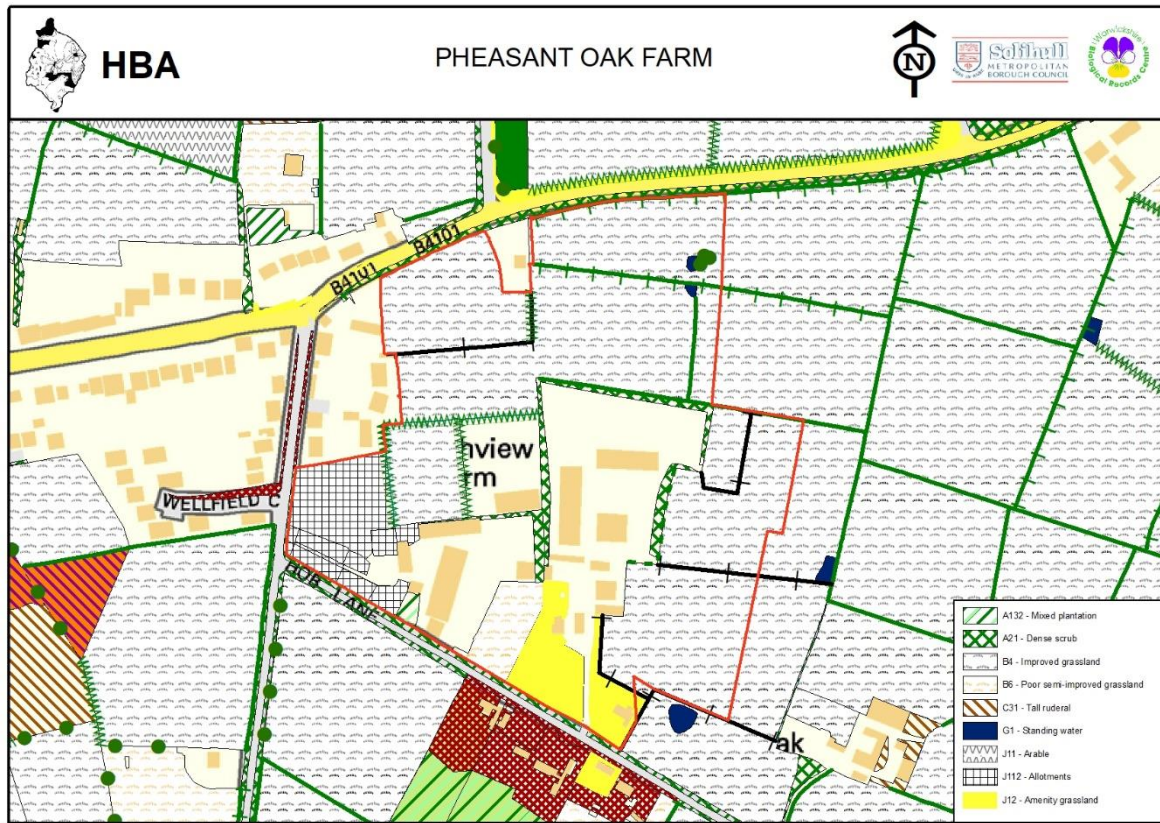
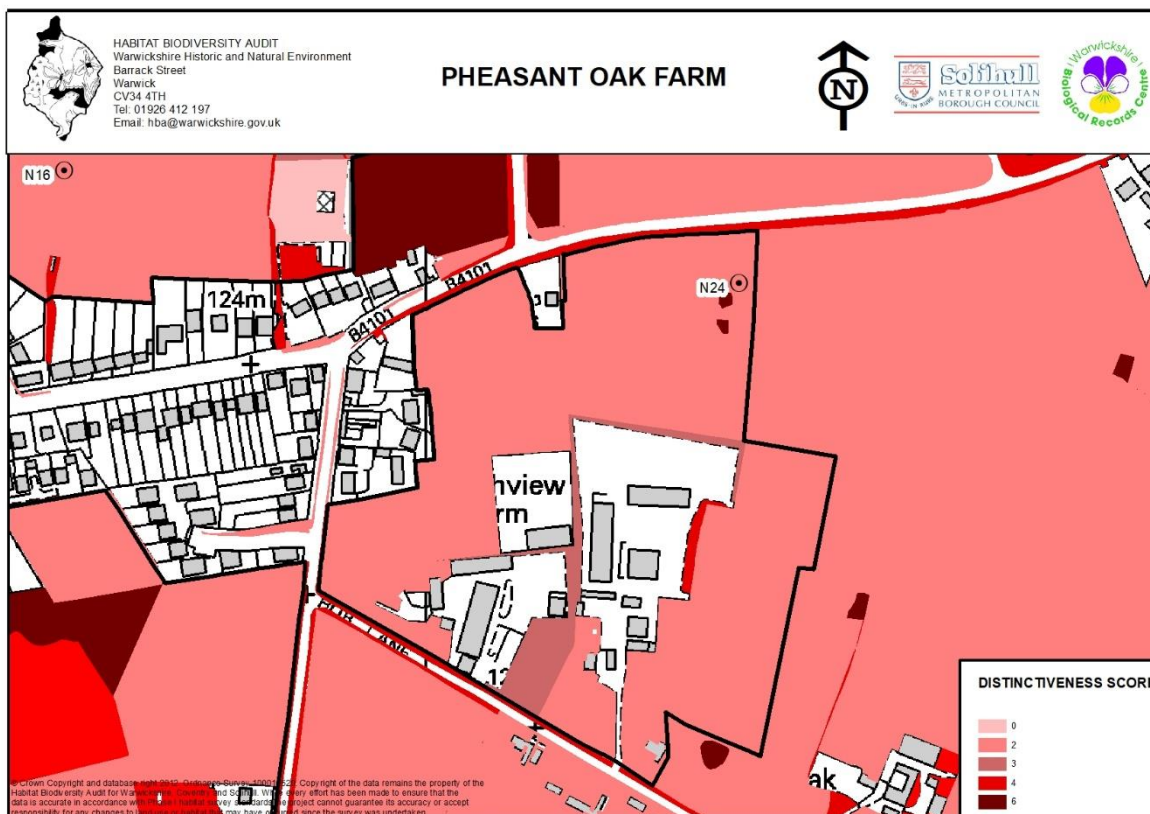


Figure 4 Phase 1 Habitats

The habitats within the parcel comprise predominately intensively grazed improved grassland. A large section of the parcel comprises a small holding (J112) for rearing poultry and domestic livestock. Amenity and poor semi-improved grassland shadow the frontage of the farm entrance off Hob Lane associated with the residential and recreational areas of Southview Farm, Camp Farm & Pheasant Oak Farm. Veteran and notable trees (A3) mark the border with Hob Lane and Windmill Lane. Several ponds lie within and just outside development parcel boundaries.

<sup>1</sup> Local Wildlife Site



**Figure 5 Habitat Distinctiveness & Target Notes**

Much of the development parcel remains marginally distinct with a noticeable parcel of semi-improved grassland on the frontage of Southview Farm along with a small band of dense scrub associated with the storage of motorhome vehicles. The urban influenced hedgerow abounding Hob Lane and the corner of Windmill Lane containing veteran and/or notable trees remains highly distinct and constitutes an important feature for consideration.

## Target Notes

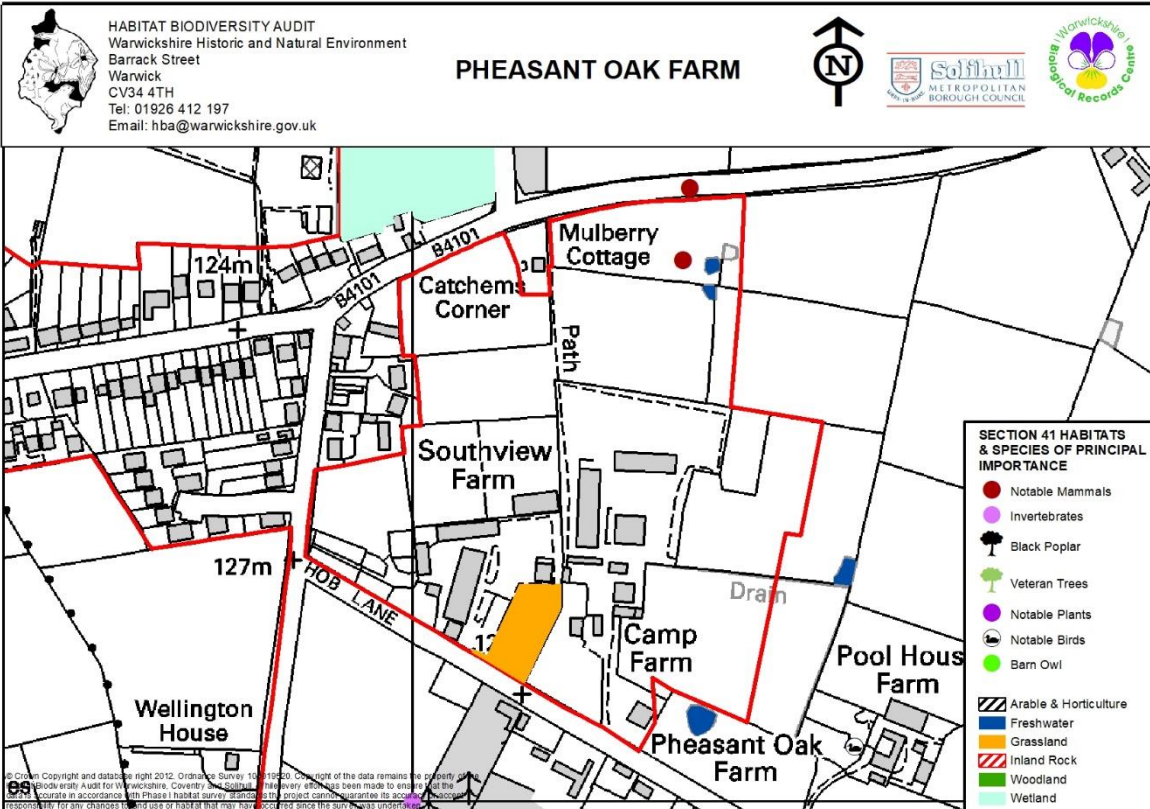
Number	Grid Reference	Survey Date
SP27N24	SP2523176398	21/07/1997

Mesotrophic pond shaded by pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), goat willow (*Salix caprea*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and surrounded by tall ruderal vegetation. The pond contains abundant duckweed (*Lemna* sp.), celery-leaved buttercup (*Ranunculus sceleratus*), water plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), floating sweet-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*) and soft rush (*Juncus effuses*). Moorhens (*Gallinula chloropus*) have recently nested.

## UPDATE 24/08/2019 GP

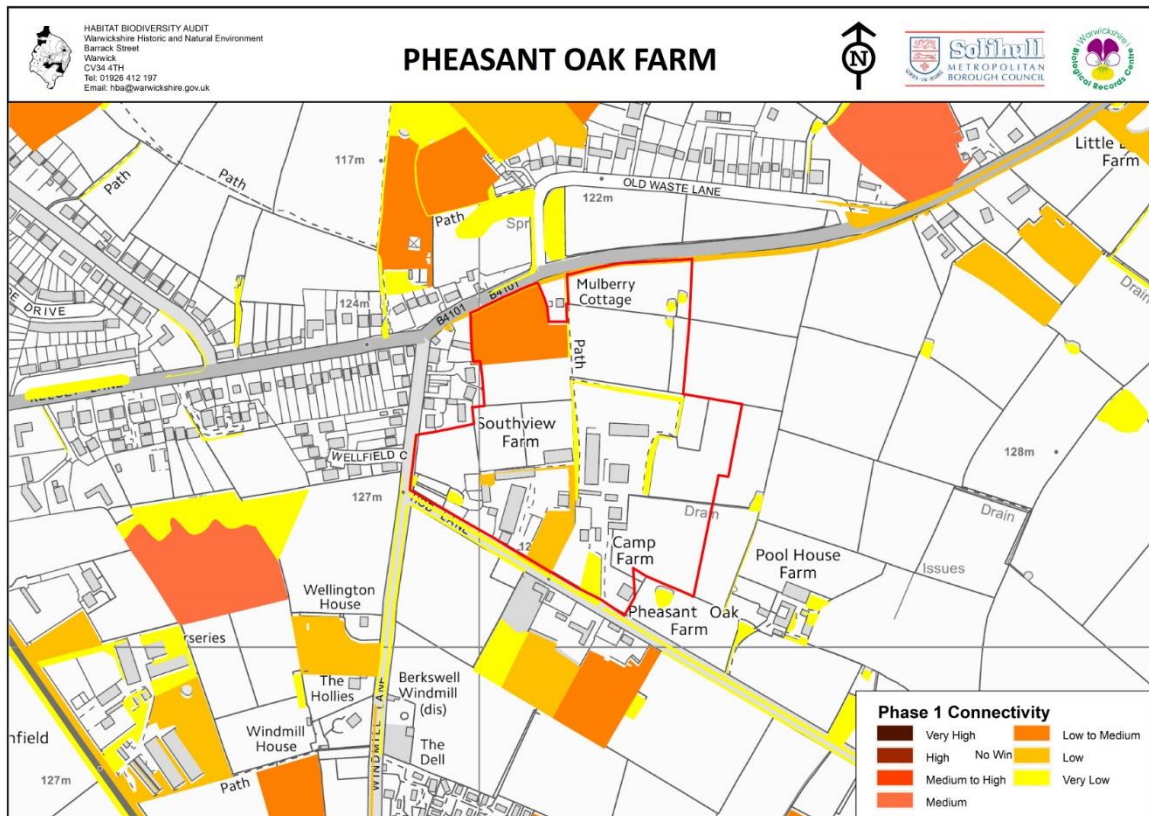
The pond remains as described.





**Figure 6 Section 41 Habits and Species of Conservation Importance**

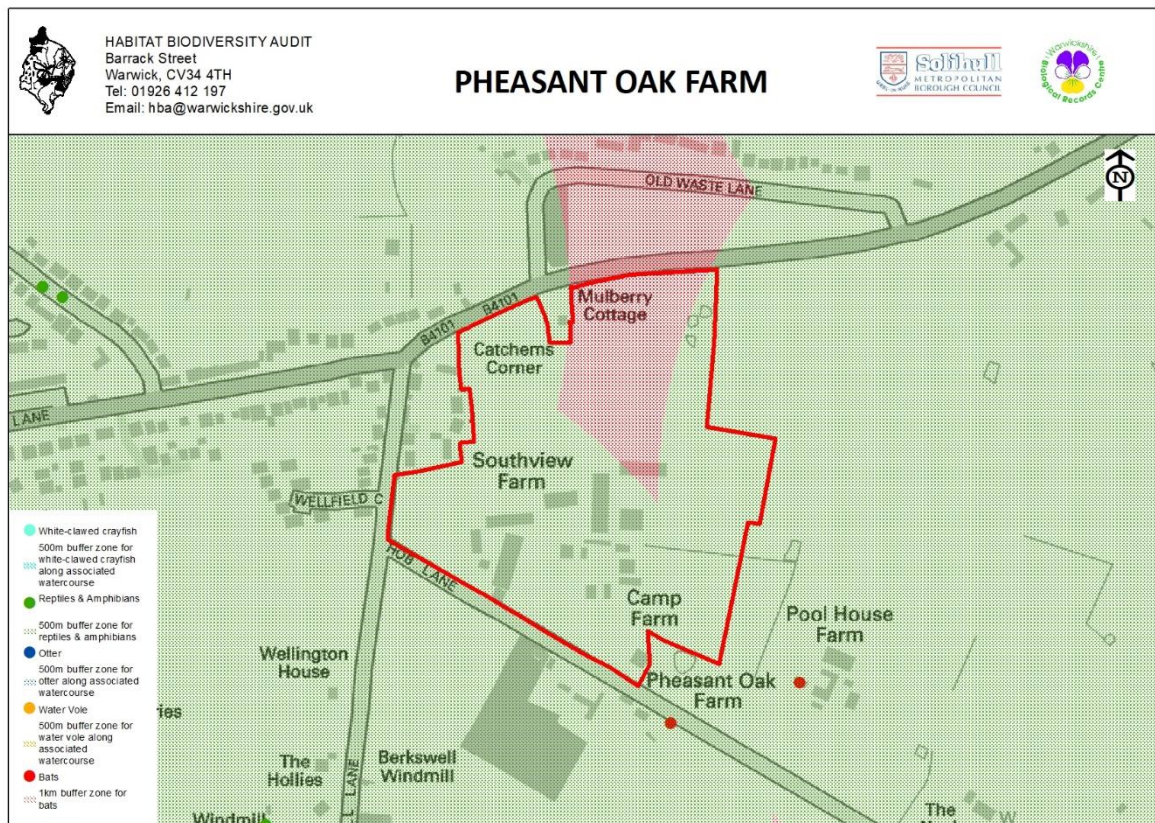
# Habitat Connectivity



**Figure 7 Habitat Connectivity**

Grassland and scrub connectivity continue to range from Low to Medium with several component parts scattered across the farm network.

## Protected Species



**Figure 8 Protected Species**

There are no protected or notable species records located within the development parcel but immediately adjacent and within farm buildings, is the potential for roosting bats. Foraging and roosting records dating from 2014 exist for Pool House Farm and along Hob Lane in 1981 for common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)

The presence of such records and the habitat provision provided by the network of farm buildings within the complex of Pheasant Oak Farm demands that bats should be thoroughly considered in development proposals, in mitigation and in survey effort.

The network of farm-ponds across the parcel should be surveyed for their potential to host Great Crested Newts.

A toad crossing ensues for Windmill Lane recorded in 2016, not far from the development parcels south-western corner boundary.

We recommend that protected species are taken into consideration through more detailed ecological assessments regarding works taking place to farm buildings and in relation to any farm-ponds. Please take note that an absence of species records does not mean an absence of species.