Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

Howards House Hotel

August 2023



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07/08/2023

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Document Control:

Project no.:		Project name:		
12270		Howards House Hotel		
Version:	**Written by:**	**Checked by:**	**Authorised by:**	**Date:**
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Non-technical Summary

Phlorum Ltd was commissioned by Chapman Lily Planning to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, and Bat Building Inspection (BBI), which was carried out at Howards House Hotel on the 5th and 26th July 2023, in order to determine whether any ecological constraints could affect the proposed works for the site.

Current proposals are for the redevelopment of the site to include an extension and additional parking, as well as internal modifications. The survey area extended over approximately 0.2 hectares (ha).

The main findings of the surveys are as follows:

- The site is within the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The closest statutory designated site is Teffont Evias Quarry / Lane Cutting Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is located 0.1km to the southwest.
- The site comprised buildings, hardstanding, amenity grassland, ruderal vegetation, vegetated garden, bare ground, hedgerows, trees, a pond, a wall, and a hay pile.
- Reptile surveys have been recommended for the site.
- In addition, a precautionary approach to site clearance in respect to birds, hedgehogs, otters, water vole, stag beetle, and badgers is recommended to minimise any adverse impacts on these species groups.

Further information on precautionary working practices together with recommended mitigation and enhancement measures are discussed in Section 5.

1. Introduction

Background

1.1 Phlorum Ltd has been commissioned by Chapman Lily Planning to undertake a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, with a Bat Building Inspection (BBI) to inform the potential ecological constraints of proposed future development of Howards House Hotel, Teffont Evias, Salisbury, SP3 5RJ (hereafter referred to as "the site").

1.2 The purpose of the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was:

- to identify the major habitats present;
- to identify the potential for any legally protected species to be present; and
- to recommend any additional ecological surveys, if required.

1.3 As part of the assessment, a desktop review and a site visit were carried out. The results of which were used to assess the nature conservation importance of the site and the potential of the site to support protected species.

1.4 This report has been compiled in accordance with current guidelines (British Standard 42020:2013 Biodiversity. Code of Practice for Planning and Development, 2013 and CIEEM, 2017 and 2018).

1.5 It is understood that the proposed development is for the redevelopment of the site to include an extension and additional parking, as well as internal modifications.

Site Location

1.6 The site is located in a semi-rural area in Teffont Evias. The immediate surrounds comprise fields, residential dwellings, and roads.

1.7 The National Grid Reference for the centre of the site is ST 99079 31314. The survey area extended over approximately 0.2 hectares (ha).

2. Methodology

Desk Study & Consultations

Database and Map Search

2.1 The desktop study involved conducting database searches for statutory and non-statutory designated sites, legally protected species and features of interest within a 2km radius of the site. The database and map search was based on available information provided by the following sources:

- Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC, 2023);
- Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside (MAGIC, 2023);
- Ordnance Survey mapping;
- Aerial photography; and
- The Woodland Trust online Ancient Tree Inventory.

Habitat Survey and Assessment

2.2 Phlorum Limited carried out an ecological survey of the site on 5th and 26th July 2023. The survey was carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist, Billie Clifford, who has over 2 years' professional experience of undertaking ecological surveys. The survey results and assessment was reviewed by Paul Carter (BSc (Hons), MBA and awaiting MCIEEM application), an ecologist with over 20 years of experience of managing ecological and landscaping projects, and by the project director Richard Schofield (BSc (Hons), MSc, CSJK, MCIEEM, MIEMA, CEnv), with over twenty years of experience in managing projects. The weather conditions during the survey were clear and warm.

2.3 The field survey comprised a walkover inspection of the land and habitats present. The survey followed standard Phase 1 survey methodology (JNCC, 2010) and covered all accessible parts of the site, including boundary features. The description of the site habitats has used the code/referencing from The UK Habitat Classification User Manual (UKHab 2023). UKHab uses primary habitat codes, either on their own or followed by one or more secondary codes. Each individual code is separated by a space. Habitats were described and mapped (Figure 1: Appendix A). A list of plant species was compiled, together with an estimate of abundance made according to the DAFOR scale. The DAFOR scale provides an estimate of the relatively abundance of plant species within the Survey Area (Appendix D).

2.4 This assessment provides information on the habitats in the survey area and identifies actual or potential presence of legally protected or otherwise notable species/habitats in or immediately adjacent to the site.

2.5 Target notes highlighting a particular feature of ecological interest are provided in Appendix A, with associated photographs in Appendix B.

2.6 Scientific names are given after the first mention of a species, thereafter, common names only are used. Nomenclature follows Stace (2010) for vascular plant species.

Protected Species Assessment

2.7 The potential for the site to provide habitat for protected species was assessed from field observations in conjunction with results of the desk study. The site was inspected for indications of the presence of protected species including:

- Habitat considered suitable to support widespread reptile species including areas with a scrub/grassland mosaic and potential hibernation sites;
- On-site ponds offering potential breeding opportunities for great crested newts (*Triturus cristatus*) and the presence of suitable terrestrial habitat including hedgerows and rough grassland;
- The presence of features in and on trees indicating potential for roosting bats (Chiroptera), including knot and rot holes and loose bark. Secondary evidence of bats including staining, droppings, and feeding remains were also looked for;
- The presence of nesting habitat for breeding birds, including mature trees, dense scrub, and hedgerows, and direct evidence of bird nesting including bird song, old nests etc.;
- Habitats considered suitable to support badger (*Meles meles*) setts, and evidence in the form of hair, pathways, and latrines;
- Presence of woodland and/or hedgerows providing suitable habitat to support hazel dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*);
- Riparian habitat supporting suitable features for water voles (*Arvicola amphibius*) and otters (*Lutra lutra)*; and the
- Presence of nationally protected and/or invasive plants.

2.8 The potential presence for protected species is categorised as **Negligible**, **Low**, **Moderate**, **High,** or **Present**, based on the findings of the field survey and on the evaluation of existing data.

2.9 The purpose of this assessment is to identify whether more comprehensive Phase 2 surveys for protected species or mitigation should be recommended.

Preliminary Roost Assessment

2.10 The inspection of the building was carried out on the 5th July 2023 concurrently with the initial habitat survey, in accordance with good practice guidelines (Collins, 2016).

2.11 The interior and exterior of the structures were inspected closely with the aim of identifying the presence of bats and any secondary evidence together with any potential roost sites. Secondary evidence includes droppings, feeding remains, scratch marks and oil and urine staining.

2.12 The external inspection comprised a detailed search of all accessible architectural features for bat droppings, urine staining, scratch marks, staining around suitable crevices and feeding remains. A high-powered torch was used to illuminate internal features at height, for instance the apex of the roof and associated supporting beams, and these were inspected using close focusing binoculars when required.

2.13 In accordance with current standing advice issued by Natural England (2015), the following types of bat roosts were considered during the assessment:

- Day Roost - where individual bats, or small groups of males, rest or shelter in the day
- Night Roost - where bats rest or shelter at night between foraging in the active period, but rarely during the day
- Feeding 'Perch' Roost - where bats hang to eat or catch their prey or rest at night between feeding sessions.
- Hibernation Roost - where bats are found during winter. These roosts typically comprise a stable environment where bats can enter torpor; these areas are normally of a constant temperature.
- Transitional or Occasional Roost - where individual or small numbers of bats gather at a temporary site before and after hibernation.
- Maternity Roost – where female bats give birth and rise their young.
- Satellite Roost – an alternative roost found in close proximity to the main nursery roost colony and sued by a few individual breeding females to small group of breeding females through the breeding season.

Caveat

Data Search Constraints

2.14 It is important to note that, even where data is held, a lack of records for a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that there is a lack of ecological interest; the area may be simply under-recorded.

Survey Constraints

2.15 Ecological surveys are limited by factors that affect presence of plants and animals such as seasonality. Whilst every effort has been made to provide a comprehensive description of the site, no investigation can ensure the complete characterisation of the environment.

2.16 The survey was carried out during the growing season and therefore most species would be expected to be visible and identifiable.

2.17 The appraisal does not constitute a full botanical survey, or a Phase 2 pre-construction survey that would include accurate GIS mapping for invasive or protected plant species. This survey provides a preliminary view of the likelihood of protected species occurring on the site based on the suitability of the habitat, known distribution of the species in the local area, and any direct evidence on the site. It is therefore used as a tool to recommend further protected species surveys (or other species of significant nature conservation interest) if on the basis of the preliminary assessment or during subsequent surveys, it is considered reasonably likely that protected species may be present.

2.18 It is however considered that the survey was sufficiently rigorous to assess the ecological value of the site.

Bat Survey Constraints

2.19 Bats are mobile animals which can move roost sites throughout the year. It is possible that surveys carried out in July may miss roosts not occupied until later in the year. However, where undisturbed, it is generally possible to find secondary evidence of bats throughout the year.

2.20 It is considered that the survey was sufficiently rigorous to assess the ecological value of the site for the purposes of this assessment.

Limitations

2.21 This appraisal also does not constitute as a full invasive species survey. All surveys are subject to the conditions on site at the time of the survey. Site surveys are non-intrusive and rely on the visual identification of aboveground growth. If parts of a site are inaccessible, then these areas can often not be surveyed unless they can be viewed from other areas. If any aboveground growth is being managed or has been disturbed or covered, or the below ground growth is dormant, then it may be impossible for us to identify invasive plants in these areas during our non-intrusive survey.

3. Baseline Conditions

Aerial Photography and OS Maps

3.1 Aerial photographs and OS maps show the site to be predominantly grassland, hardstanding, and buildings with areas of hedgerows and trees. There appear to be three ponds, one stream, and two drainage ditches within 500m of the site. There is one pond on site.

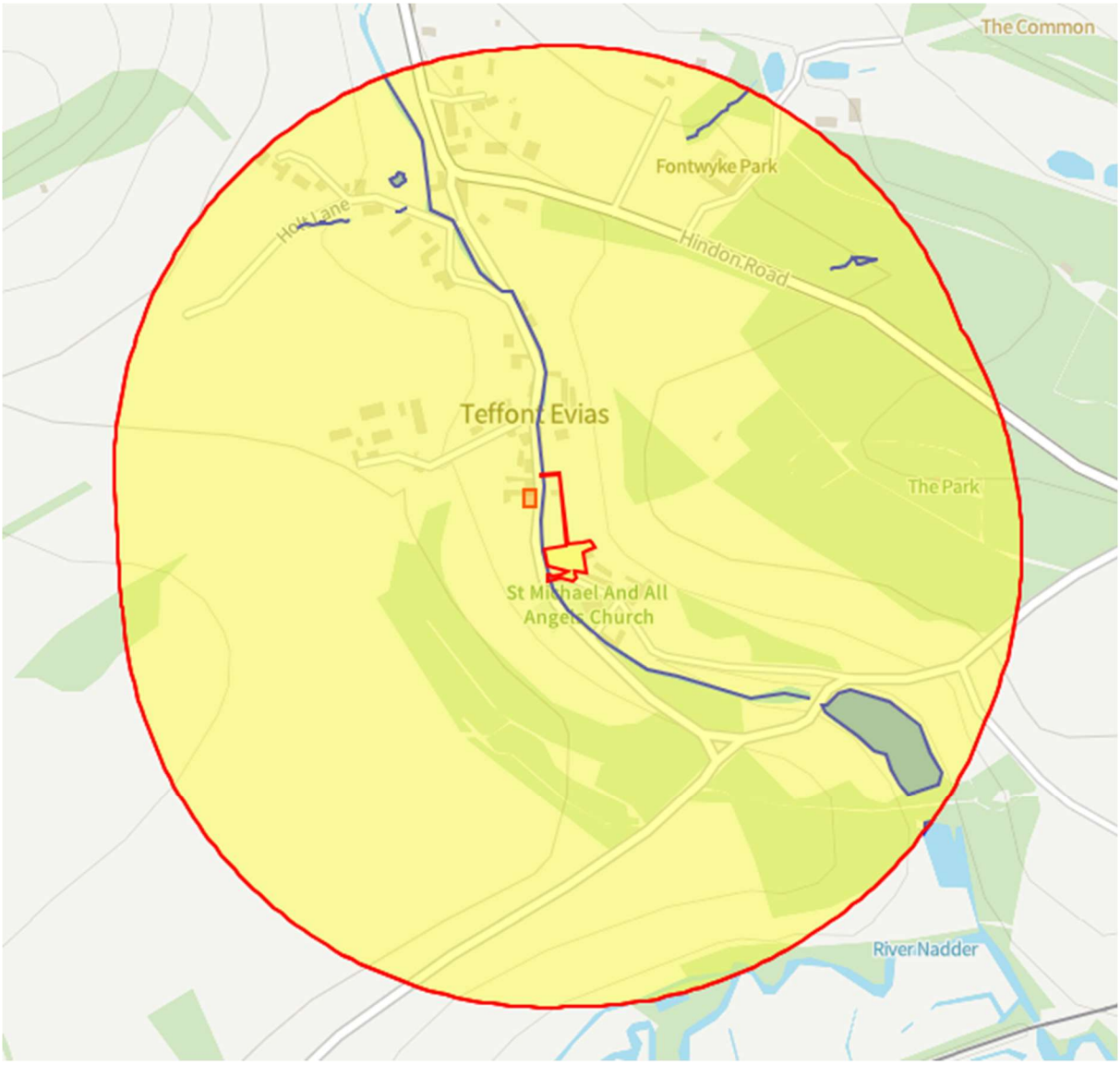


Figure 1: Picture depicting water bodies within 500m of the site

Statutory and Non-Statutory Designated Sites

Statutory Sites

3.2 The site is within the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Table 1 provides a list of statutory sites within 2km of the site.

Table 1: Statutory sites within 2km of the site

Site Name	Reason for Designation	Area (ha)	Distance from the Site
Cranborne Chase AONB	It is a diverse natural landscape with a rich archaeological and historical significance. Cranborne Chase offers areas of rare chalk grasslands, scientifically important ancient woodlands, and chalk escarpments. The downland hillsides and chalk river valleys have a distinct and recognisable character.	1882	0km
Teffont Evias Quarry / Lane Cutting Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	The Purbecks of the Vale of Wardour provided much material in the last century for the first major study of British fossil insects. The majority of the former exposures are now gone; at present the best collecting site, and therefore a key one in an historic area for palaeoentomological studies.	1.6	0.1km to the southwest
River Avon System SSSI & Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	The River Avon and its tributaries are of national and international importance for their wildlife communities. The Avon is richer and more varied than in most chalk streams with over 180 species of aquatic plant having been recorded, one of the most diverse fish faunas in Britain and a wide range of aquatic invertebrates.	476	0.5km to the southeast
Chilmark Quarries SSSI & SAC	Geologically, it is of great importance for the exposures which the quarries provide through a sequence of rocks of late Jurassic age, some 135 million years old. Biologically, the site derives its importance from the large wintering bat roosts which the	9.7	1.2km to the west

	extensive system of undisturbed caves and their associated steady temperatures are able to support.		
Dinton Railway Cutting SSSI	This is a key site, on the western margin of the Wessex basin, which is important for the study of the non-marine late Portlandian-early Berriasian (Purbeck-Wealden facies) and the sedimentary history of the Wessex basin, particularly the problem of dating the arrival of the first Cornubian detritus (so far undetected here). This is a locality of considerable potential, which is currently being re-examined for the first time in a century.	0.3	1.5km to the southeast
Dinton Quarry SSSI	This long-disused quarry is of very great importance to British geology since it was the main source of the late Jurassic fossil insects described in the first book ever to be written on British fossil insects, published in 1845 by a Wiltshire vicar named Brodie. The fossils occur in an 'insect limestone' within the Middle Purbeck beds, laid down in a shallow lake some 135 million years ago, and are of vital importance to our understanding of late Jurassic insect faunas.	0.3	1.5km to the southeast

Non-Statutory Sites

3.3 The closest non-statutory designated site is Teffont Evias Meadow Local Wildlife Site (LWS). Table 2 provides a list of non-statutory sites within 2km of the site.

Table 2: Non-statutory sites within 2km of the site

Site Name	Reason for Designation	Area (ha)	Distance from the Site
Teffont Evias Meadow LWS	Watermeadow with mire and MG communities.	1.6	0.4km to the northwest
Lower Holt Copse LWS	Ancient woodland site east of Chilmark quarries made up of small	10.49	0.6km to the west

	plantations of sycamore, ash, beech, oak and some larch.		
Upper Holt Copse LWS	North of Lower Holt Copse, the wood consists of a steep south facing bank of mainly broadleaves and bracken with a beech, and some larch, plantation on the plateau above.	6.2	0.6km to the northwest
Brache Copse LWS	A strip of broadleaved woodland, mainly outgrown Ash over unmanaged coppice Hazel.	3.9	0.6km to the northeast
Furze Cottage Meadow LWS	A small pasture on a north-facing slope with moderately species-rich neutral grassland.	0.6	0.8km to the northwest
Cleeve Copse LWS	A small linear wood with areas of mixed broadleaves and plantations of beech, larch and sycamore.	3.9	1.1km to the northwest
Chilmark Bank LWS	A small field including a bank with limestone grassland and a small cave, probably an outlier of the adjacent Chilmark mines SSSI.	2.3	1.2km to the west
Dinton Woods LWS	An area of ancient woodland with substantial conifer plantings, formerly an RAF munitions store, now used as commercial storage including hazardous items such as fireworks.	34.3	1.3km to the southeast
Chicksgrove Wood LWS	Two distinct compartments of mixed broadleaved woodland joined by a short, linear piece of hazel coppice south of Chilmark quarries.	9.0	1.4km to the southeast
Lady Down Grassland, Chilmark LWS	An area of unimproved calcareous grassland	1.7	1.5km to the southeast

Ancient Woodland

3.4 There is no ancient woodland covering any part of the site or immediately adjacent to the site. No trees on or adjacent to the site are listed on the Woodland Trusts' Ancient Tree Inventory.

3.5 The closest area of ancient woodland is situated 0.5km to the northwest.

Habitats

Site Summary

3.6 The site comprised buildings, hardstanding, grassland, ruderal vegetation, vegetated garden, bare ground, hedgerows, trees, a pond, a wall, and a hay pile.

3.7 The main habitats recorded within the site are described below. The UKHab code is shown in the bracket after the habitat type (UKHab 2023). Additional details are shown on the habitat survey plan in Appendix A, and the target notes are listed in Appendix A.

Buildings u1b5 (Photographs 1-2 in Appendix B)

3.8 **Building 1:** Hotel with stone walls, built in 1623.

3.9 **Building 2:** Mobile wooden shepherd's hut.

Other developed land (hardstanding) u1b6 (Photographs 3-5 in Appendix B)

3.10 Slab patio, rockery area around pond, tarmac driveway, and tarmac parking area.

Modified grassland g4 (Photograph 6 in Appendix B)

3.11 Amenity grassland area dominated by perennial ryegrass (*Lolium perenne*), clover (*Trifolium spp.*), and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*).

Ruderal vegetation g4 81 (Photograph 7 in Appendix B)

3.12 Ruderal vegetation dominated by common nettle (*Urtica dioica*).

Garden u1 827 (Photograph 8 in Appendix B)

3.13 Disused fruit cage dominated by common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*).

Bare ground g4 510 (Photograph 9 in Appendix B)

3.14 Bare ground path.

Non-native and ornamental hedgerows h2b (Photograph 10 in Appendix B)

3.15 Hedgerows comprising European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), English yew (*Taxus baccata*), shrubby honeysuckle (*Lonicera nitida*), and Leyland cypress (*Cupressus x leylandii*).

Scattered trees g4 32(Photograph 11 in Appendix B)

3.16 Tree - *Prunus* species.

Ornamental pond r1 46 (Photograph 12 in Appendix B)

3.17 Small, man-made decorative pond lined with concrete. Little vegetation but some water lilies (*Nymphaea spp.*) present.

Built linear features (wall) u1e (Photograph 13 in Appendix B)

3.18 Built wall with European pear (*Pyrus communis*) and rose (*Rosa spp.*) growing up it.

Target Note (TN)

3.19 The following feature of interest was noted during the survey and have been marked on Figure 1:

- **TN1 –** Hay pile (Photograph 14 in Appendix B).

Preliminary Roost Assessment

3.20 The buildings on site were all examined externally for features that could indicate use by bats.

3.21 Building 1 was inspected thoroughly internally. There were no points of egress seen, nor evidence of use by bats. The building was built in 1623 with stone walls and is in a good state of repair with no mortar gaps.

3.22 The paucity of potential foraging habitat in the immediate vicinity (as seen in aerial photographs) made it unlikely that bats would use the building for roosting.

Protected Species

3.23 Legislation relating to the protected species referred to in this section is included in Appendix C.

3.24 The following paragraphs detail the suitability of the on-site habitats to support protected species and include information from the data search for protected, rare and otherwise notable species returned within a 2km radius.

Bats

3.25 The data search showed records of bats from the genera pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus*), long-eared (*Plecotus*), myotis (*Myotis*), serotine (*Eptesicus*), noctule (*Nyctalus*), barbastelle (*Barbastella*), and horseshoe (*Rhinolophus*) occurring within the 2km search area in the past 15 years.

3.26 During the survey no potential bat roosting features were seen in the building. The wisteria growing on Building 1 (Photograph 15 in Appendix B) was thoroughly inspected and no evidence of bats was observed.

3.27 Overall it was considered that the building offered **negligible** potential for roosting bats.

Amphibians

3.28 The data search showed no records of great crested newt within 2km of the site within the past 15 years. Aerial photographs and maps show 3 ponds within 500m of the site.

3.29 During the survey it was noted that a pond was present within the footprint of the works, however this was unsuitable for breeding great crested newts. The pond contained fish until recently when a heron took them. The pond was concrete-lined and the water was clear to the bottom, with no newts or other wildlife observed.

3.30 The terrestrial habitat on site was unsuitable for foraging and commuting newts, comprising mostly hardstanding areas. The site is also next to a road. The site is within a Green Zone for great crested newts. Green Zones have fewer areas with great crested newts.

3.31 The stream next to the site was running, making it unsuitable for breeding newts. The nearest pond is over 300m away, making it unlikely that great crested newts would commute to the site. "By far the most captures were recorded within 50m of ponds and few animals were captured at distances greater than 100m." (English Nature, 2004). "At distances greater than 100m, there should be careful consideration as to whether attempts to capture newts are necessary or the most effective option to avoid incidental mortality (this is dealt with in more detail along with related considerations below). At distances greater than 200-250m, capture operations with hardly ever be appropriate." (English Nature, 2004).

3.32 The nearest pond is surrounded by suitable habitat for great crested newts, including priority woodland. This makes it very unlikely that they would commute so far to the site.

3.33 The closest great crested newt pond survey (2017-2019) was done 5.6km away and great crested newts were found to be absent. The closest great crested newt class survey licence return is 5.5km away.

3.34 It was considered that the site offered **negligible** potential for breeding newts and **negligible** potential for foraging and commuting newts.

Reptiles

3.35 The data search showed records of slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*) within 2km of the site within the past 15 years.

3.36 During the survey no reptiles or signs of reptiles were seen, however the habitat contained features that could support widespread reptile species. This included a large hay pile and surrounding ruderal vegetation.

3.37 Overall the site was assessed as having **moderate** potential to support reptiles.

Birds

3.38 Several Red or Amber listed Birds of Conservation Concern[1] (BoCC), and notable[2] bird species were returned by the data search that may utilise habitats within the site. Species include fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*), and swift (*Apus apus*).

3.39 During the survey it was noted that the wisteria on the side of the building provided suitable habitat for nesting birds, however this was inspected and no evidence of breeding birds was found. The onsite trees and hedgerows also provided suitable habitat for nesting birds, however due to disturbance from nearby residential dwellings and gardens, it was considered that the site offered **low** potential for breeding birds.

Badgers

3.40 The data search showed records of badger within 2km of the site within the past 15 years.

3.41 Although no evidence of badgers was seen during the survey, the dense vegetation on site offered suitable habitat for breeding badgers. There were also suitable areas to allow badgers to commute and feed.

3.42 Overall, the site offered **low** potential for breeding badgers and **low** potential for foraging and commuting badgers.

Hazel Dormice

3.43 The data search showed records of dormice within 2km of the site within the past 15 years.

3.44 The site did not contain the type or density of vegetation that would be suitable for supporting either breeding or commuting dormice.

3.45 Overall it was considered that the site offered **negligible** potential to support breeding dormice and **negligible** potential to support commuting dormice.

Water Voles

3.46 The data search showed records of water vole within the 2km search area in the past 15 years.

3.47 The site did not contain the aquatic habitat and vegetation of a type that would support breeding water vole. However, the adjacent stream meant it could be suitable for commuting and foraging water voles.

[1] Birds of Conservation Concern status is prioritised into high concern (Red), medium concern (Amber) and low concern (Green) (Eaton et al, 2009). Red-list species are those that are globally threatened according to the IUCN criteria; those whose population or range has declined rapidly in recent years; and those that have declined historically and have not shown a substantial recent recovery. Amber-list species are those with an unfavourable conservation status in Europe; those whose population or range has declined moderately in recent years; those whose population has declined historically but made a substantial recent recovery; rare breeders; and those with internationally important or localised populations. Green-list species are those that fulfil none of the criteria.

[2] Notable Birds are based on a list of birds that are particularly scarce or vulnerable either at national or a regional level. The majority of these bird species are designated as Schedule 1 species, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), or listed as red or amber-listed BoCC.

3.48 Overall it was considered that the site offered **negligible** potential to support breeding water voles and **low** potential to support commuting and foraging water voles.

Otters

3.49 The data search showed records of otter within 2km of the site within the past 15 years.

3.50 The site did not contain the aquatic habitat and vegetation of a type that would support breeding otter. However, the adjacent stream meant it could be suitable for commuting otter.

3.51 Overall it was considered that the site offered **negligible** potential to support breeding otter and **low** potential to support foraging and commuting otter.

Hedgehogs

3.52 The data search showed records of hedgehogs (*Erinaceus europaeus*) within 2km of the site within the past 15 years.

3.53 No direct evidence of hedgehogs was seen on the site. However, the presence of dense vegetation and short grassland could have provided the hibernation and foraging areas for this species.

3.54 Overall, the site offered **low** potential for hedgehogs.

Stag Beetles

3.55 The data search showed no records of stag beetle (*Lucanus cervus*) within 2km of the site within the past 15 years.

3.56 No direct evidence of stag beetles was seen on the site. However, the presence of dense vegetation could have provided the dead wood required for this species.

3.57 Overall, the site offered **low** potential for stag beetle.

Invasive Plants

3.58 The data search showed no records of plant species listed as invasive in Schedule 9 Part II of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 amended) occurring within the 2km search area in the past 15 years.

3.59 During the survey specimens of montbretia (*Crocosmia x crocosmiiflora*) were seen. This plant is listed as invasive in Schedule 9 Part II of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 amended).

3.60 During the survey specimens of common snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) were seen (Photograph 10 in Appendix B). While not listed in Schedule 9 Part II of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 amended), it appears on the Non Native Species Secretariat (NNSS, 2022)[3] register of species that are of concern.

[3] GB Non Native Species Secretariate (NNSS) (2022). Accessed from www.nonnativespecieis.org

4. Evaluation

4.1 On the basis of the information available from the habitat survey and desk study, the site has been evaluated in terms of its potential for biodiversity, support of protected species and habitats, and the contribution the area makes as part of the wider landscape. The nature conservation value of the site has been assessed following standard criteria developed by CIEEM (2017 and 2018) and in accordance with BS 24040:2013 Biodiversity – code of practice for planning and development. This is provided below.

4.2 The biodiversity value of protected species within the site is a preliminary evaluation based upon the desk study records, habitat suitability, and the conservation status of the species in question. It should be noted that where European Protected Species (EPS) or species of Principle Importance for the Conservation of Biodiversity are present on-site they may be valued at a lower level/scale where it is considered likely that populations would not be of sufficient importance to justify designation at a higher level. However, regardless of their biodiversity value, such species are still subject to national and/or European legislation.

4.3 Key aspects of relevant planning policy regarding conservation, including an explanation of species referred to as being of 'Principal Importance for Conservation of Biodiversity' and European Protected Species and habitats, are provided in the Legislation section in Appendix C.

Geographic Evaluation

Features of International Importance

4.4 Features of International Importance are principally sites covered by international legislation or conventions. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 implements the Natural Habitats and Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EC) (Habitats Directive) in England and Wales. The Regulations mainly deal with the protection of sites with certain habitats and populations of species that are important for nature conservation in a European context, i.e. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).

4.5 The site is not subject to any international statutory nature conservation designations. The closest site of International Importance is River Avon System SAC located 0.6km to the southeast. The qualifying species of this SAC are its aquatic plants, diverse fish faunas, and aquatic invertebrates. The site does not provide any supporting habitat for this designated site or its qualifying species.

Features of National Importance

4.6 Features of national importance include Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) which are designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The site is within the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site does not provide any supporting habitat for this AONB.

4.7 It is not considered that any habitats or populations or assemblages of species within the site would meet the criteria for the designation of SSSIs at an appropriate geographic level[4].

4.8 The site is also located within the 2km Impact Risk Zone of the River Avon System SSSI, but the site does not have any supporting habitat for this SSSI.

Features of Regional (i.e. Wiltshire) Importance

4.9 The site does not include any features of value at this level neither is it likely to be selected as a SINC based on the results of the current survey.

Features of District (i.e. Nadder Valley) Importance

4.10 The site is relatively small and does not support any features that were considered to be of value at this level.

Features of Local (i.e. Teffont Evias) Importance

4.11 The site does not support any features that were considered to be of value at this level.

Features of Value Immediate Vicinity (c. 250m) of the Project

4.12 The on-site vegetation is of value within the immediate vicinity and provides suitable habitat to support protected species including birds and hedgehogs. It also forms part of the wider ecological network of habitats in the locality, providing wildlife corridors for mobile species to move through the landscape.

Summary

4.13 Overall on the basis of the survey results and the above criteria, habitats within the site are considered largely to be of ecological value within the immediate vicinity only. The site provides suitable habitat to support several protected species and groups including reptiles, hedgehogs, breeding birds, and foraging or commuting otters, water voles, and badgers. However, populations of these are unlikely to be locally significant.

[4] JNCC Guidelines for selection of biological SSSIs (see http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-2303#download).

Local Plan Evaluation

4.14 It is considered that the statutory Wiltshire Local Plan (Adopted 2015) contains the following nature conservation policies relevant to the site. A list of the policies is provided below. The full text of the relevant policies is contained in the Legislation section in Appendix C and this should also be referred to.

Wiltshire Local Plan (2015)

- Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and geodiversity.

5. Discussion and Recommendations

Discussion

5.1 The survey site is located at Howards House Hotel, Teffont Evias, Salisbury, SP3 5RJ. The survey area extended over approximately 0.2 hectares (ha). Habitats to be impacted by the development proposals include the building on site, hardstanding, grassland, ruderal vegetation, vegetated garden, bare ground, hedgerows, trees, a pond, a wall, and a hay pile.

5.2 Design proposals include the redevelopment of the site to include an extension and additional parking, as well as internal modifications.

5.3 The desk study has shown the immediate surrounds comprise fields, residential dwellings, and roads.

5.4 Habitats within the proposed development area were assessed as being of value to wildlife within the local vicinity with potential to support reptiles, hedgehogs, breeding birds, and foraging or commuting otters, water vole, stag beetle, and badgers, and these species may pose a constraint to works.

5.5 Reptile surveys are recommended for the site.

5.6 In addition, a precautionary approach to site clearance in respect to hedgehogs, otters, water vole, badgers, stag beetle, and breeding birds is recommended to minimise any adverse impacts on these species groups.

5.7 Details regarding specific mitigation, including precautionary working practices together with habitat enhancement measures are provided below.

Recommendations

Breeding Birds

5.8 The on-site trees and hedgerows provide suitable nesting habitat for a range of bird species. All nesting birds are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

5.9 In order to avoid any potential impact on breeding birds, the clearance of any trees and hedgerows should be undertaken outside the main bird nesting season which runs from March to August inclusive[5], with clearance works possible between September and February. Where this is not possible, an ecologist would need to check the vegetation for active nests and signs of bird breeding activity.

[5] It should be noted that this is the main breeding period. Breeding activity may occur outside this period (depending on the particular species and geographical location of the site) and thus due care and attention should be given when undertaking potentially disturbing works at any time of year.

5.10 In the event that a nest is found, an exclusion zone around the nest would be established. Works would have to cease within this buffer area until the young birds have fledged.

Reptiles

5.11 All reptiles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

5.12 The site provides a vegetation structure suitable for widespread reptiles therefore a reptile survey is recommended. This will entail a minimum of seven survey visits, following current guidelines (Froglife, 1999; English Nature, 2004), to determine the presence or likely absence and distribution of reptiles within the site.

5.13 Reptile surveys can be undertaken in the active period for reptiles taken to run between mid-March and October. The optimum time is generally late spring, from April to mid-June and in the early autumn during September.

5.14 The results of the survey will then be used to inform mitigation proposals for this species group.

Badgers

5.15 Badgers receive protection under The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

5.16 Due to the potential presence of badgers in the area, a series of general precautions are recommended. This will include the following;

- Throughout construction, all on-site contractors must be made aware of the potential presence of badgers in the locality and a tool box talk should be given by a qualified ecologist immediately prior to the start of construction works to discuss the potential for badgers to pass through the site and to provide information on legislation and the ecology of this species.
- All trenches should be covered at night or if this is not possible, ramps must be installed into the trenches to enable badgers to escape should they enter the excavations. All materials must be stored safely and lids securely fitted, particular waste and other potential food sources.

Water Voles

5.17 Water voles are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

5.18 The onsite habitats were considered to provide limited potential for water vole and therefore, at this stage, no further survey is considered necessary. It is however considered necessary to adopt a precautionary approach to works to safeguard this protected species. This will require a suitably qualified ecologist carrying out an updated walkover survey of the site immediately prior to works starting on the site. The ecologist will then give a toolbox talk to the on-site contractors prior to the start of works to discuss a precautionary approach to works.

5.19 It is also recommended that any on-site bankside vegetation is cut to ground level using hand held strimmers or similar prior to ground works commencing in order to make the pond unsuitable for this species group and discourage use of this feature during works. These works should be overseen by a suitably qualified ecologist.

Otters

5.20 Otters and their places of refuge are protected at a European level under the EC Habitats Directive (as amended 2010) and have full protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

5.21 Although potential habitat for otters was identified near the site, no otters or secondary signs of otters were found on the site. It is therefore recommended that a precautionary approach will be required to safeguard this protected species. This will require a suitably qualified ecologist carrying out an updated walkover survey of the site immediately prior to works starting on the site. The ecologist will then give a toolbox talk to the on-site contractors prior to the start of works to discuss a precautionary approach to works.

5.22 To help maintain the value of the offsite watercourse, the area should be litter picked at the start and end of works, and all construction related materials removed periodically through the contract period and on completion of works.

5.23 The use of high intensity lighting which would illuminate the watercourse should be avoided both during the works period and following on from the completion of the project, to ensure that suitable habitat for otter is maintained.

5.24 It is recommended that no works within 30m of the watercourse should be undertaken after dusk.

5.25 Otters are naturally inquisitive. Any excavations that are left overnight should include a ramp of 45 degrees or less on one face to allow otter and other wildlife to climb out should they fall into the excavation. Excavations should be inspected daily before the start of works.

5.26 Construction staff should be aware that otter may lie-up in stacked pipes or beneath pallets. These features should be inspected daily before the start of works.

Hedgehogs

5.27 Hedgehogs are listed on the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 Section 41 as a Species of Principal Importance. They are a rapidly declining species.

5.28 Hedgehogs need short grass areas to search for invertebrate prey. Log piles and decaying vegetation are used to forage and hibernate in. Areas of leaf litter can be collected and used in nests. Dense scrub areas are also useful to build hibernation nests during winter. Wildlife friendly corridors allow hedgehogs and other wildlife to migrate across a site. These are discussed in the Wildlife Friendly Pathways Section below.

Stag Beetles

5.29 Stag beetles are a Species of Principle Importance for the UK, therefore a precautionary approach to the clearance of any dead wood should be taken during works. Where any dead trees pose a health and safety risk, the above ground section should be felled and the arisings stacked on the ground. The tree base and root system of these trees should be retained where possible.

5.30 Where it is not possible to retain these areas, the root system of the dead trees should be removed under an ecological watching brief and any larvae encountered should be removed to suitable retained deadwood habitat elsewhere around the site boundaries.

Habitat Retention

5.31 All retained trees, including all adjacent off-site trees should be protected in accordance with British Standards (BS 2012) 5837:2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction. The root protection areas of any retained trees must be left free from excavation and disturbance, and protected during any proposed works. Protection should be in the form of fencing and signs installed for the duration of the works.

Habitat Enhancement

5.32 New development offers the opportunity for habitat enhancement in accordance with national and local planning policy and some recommendations are included below.

Bird and Bat Boxes

5.33 Additional bird nesting and bat roosting provision could be incorporated into new design proposals. These could either be installed on trees or incorporated into the new building design. Some recommendations are made below as a guide.

5.34 Bat roosting opportunities could be provided through the installation of boxes on the outside of the walls or remaining trees, such as the Schwegler 2F, or other makes of a similar design, such as Chavenage Bat box. There are a range of bat boxes available and these can be selected to suit the development and bat species in the locality.

5.35 Bird boxes could be installed on the walls of the new extension or in the remaining trees which could include the following Schwegler bird house or 1B makes, or similar designs from alternative suppliers. If the client is happy for bird boxes to be installed on the walls of the new extension then a Schwegler sparrow terrace 1SP could also be used.

5.36 Further details of the bird and bat boxes are provided in Appendix F.

5.37 Bat boxes should be installed at appropriate locations ideally with south-east, south, or south-west facing aspects at least 3m from ground level. Ideally they need to be exposed to 6-8 hours of direct sunlight, but sheltered from strong winds. If installed on the building, these should ideally be positioned directly below the eaves.

5.38 Bird Boxes should be located out of prevailing wind, rain, and strong sunlight, ideally with a clear flight path to the entrance. Ideally they should be installed two to four metres from the ground facing north or north-east.

Wildlife Friendly Pathways

5.39 The increase in building can result in ecological areas which are unconnected. Effectively these are ecological islands, and often there is no way for wildlife to migrate to and from these areas. One way to reduce the impact and allow wildlife, including hedgehogs, to migrate across sites is to install wildlife friendly pathways across a site. This can include a range of things such as wildlife corridors, such as hedgerows and scrub or rough grassland corridors, but also installing holes in fences. Wildlife holes, often referred to as hedgehog holes, help wildlife migrate through areas. The holes need to be at least 13cm by 13cm, at ground level.

Compensatory Planting

5.40 Additional tree and shrub planting could be incorporated into the landscape proposals to compensate for any removal to facilitate the works. Planting should include a high proportion of native species and be of local provenance where possible. These should be carefully selected to ensure they contain species suitable for the area. Some species of known wildlife value are listed in Appendix E.

6. Conclusions

6.1 The site survey revealed the following habitats:

- Building;
- Hardstanding;
- Grassland;
- Ruderal Vegetation;
- Vegetated Garden;
- Bare Ground;
- Hedgerow;
- Trees;
- Pond;
- Wall; and
- Hay Pile.

6.2 The site is located within the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The closest statutory site is Teffont Evias Quarry / Lane Cutting Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located approximately 0.1km to the southwest at its closest point and the survey area does not support any features that contribute to the designation of this site.

6.3 Reptile surveys are recommended for the site.

6.4 In addition, a precautionary approach to site clearance in respect to hedgehogs, birds, otters, water vole, stag beetle, and badgers is recommended to minimise any adverse impacts on these species groups.

6.5 It has been recommended that the site is enhanced by introducing some compensatory planting and installing bat and bird boxes.

7. References

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8. Glossary of Terms

BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BRC	Biological Records Centre
CIEEM	Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management
Habitats Directive	Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora
INNS	Invasive Non-native Species
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MAGIC	Multi-Agency Geographical Information for the Countryside
NNR	National Nature Reserve
Nomenclature	The system of devising of names for plants
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PEA	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal- formerly referred to as a Phase 1 Habitat Survey
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

Figures and Appendices

Appendix A

Habitat Map and Target Notes

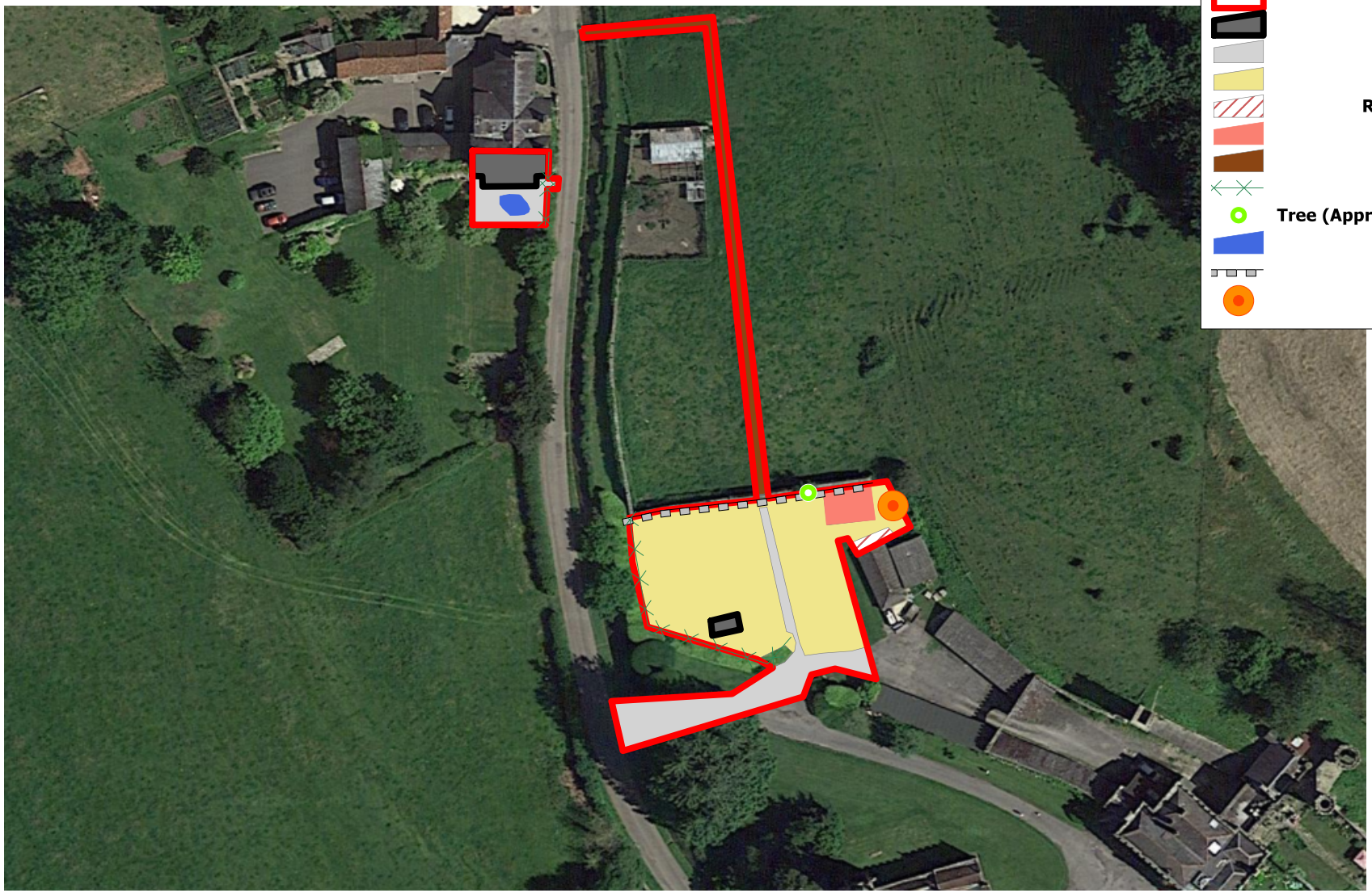


Figure 1: Howards House Hotel Habitat Survey Map

Drawn by: BC
On the: 04/08/2023
Not to Scale
Ref: 12270

Phlorum Limited, 12 Hunns Mere Way,
Woodingdean, Brighton, East Sussex,
BN2 6AH
Tel: +44(0)1273 307167
Web: www.phlorum.com
Email: info@phlorum.com

Target Notes (TN)

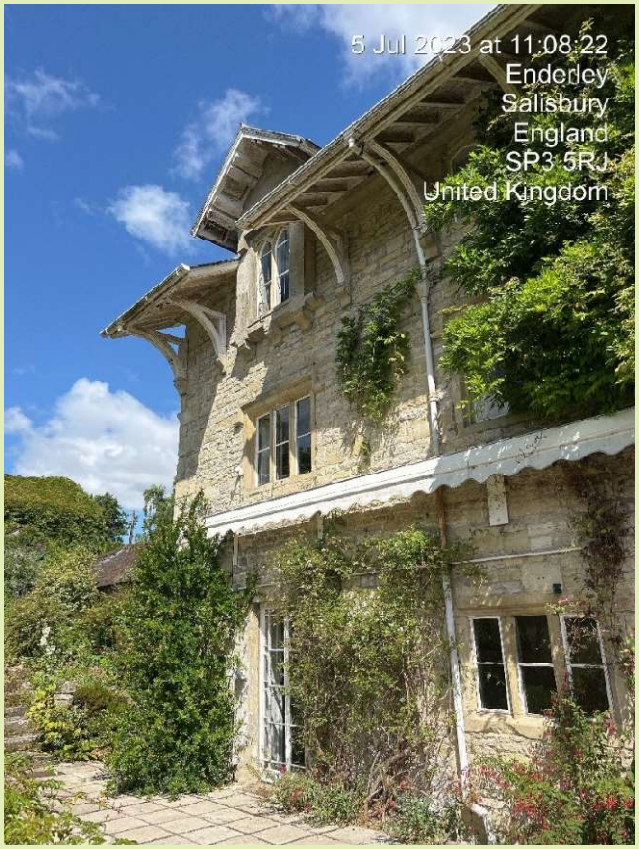
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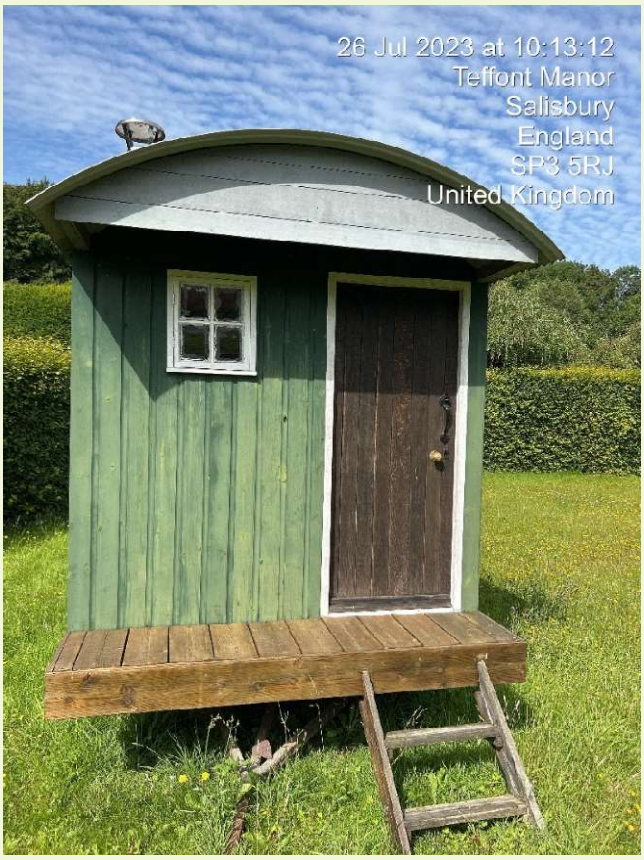
- **TN1 –** Hay pile.

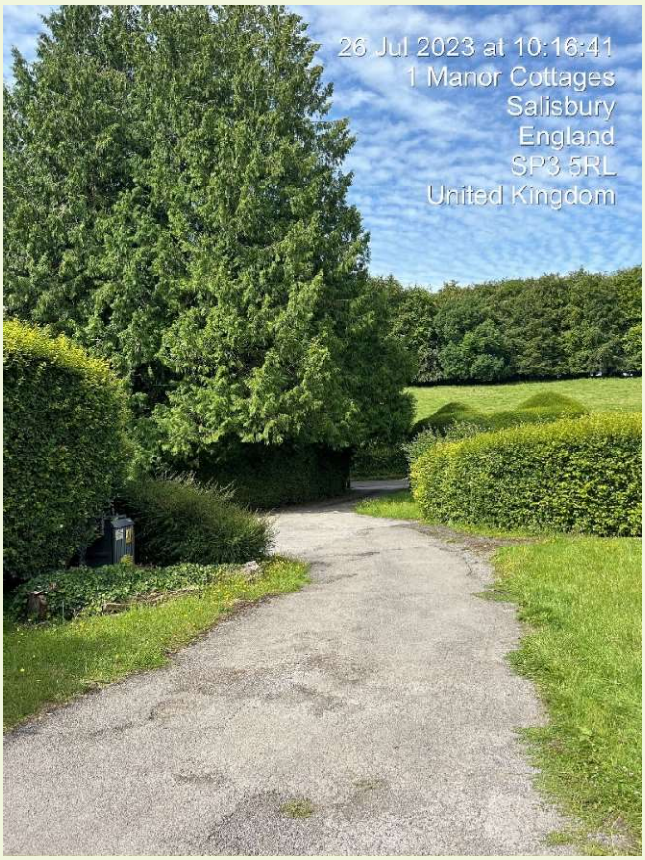
Appendix B

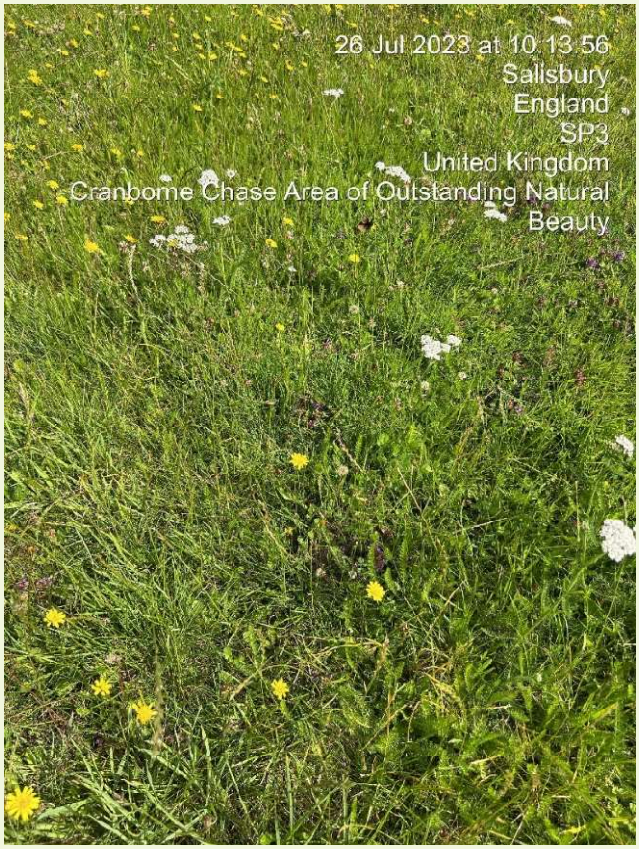
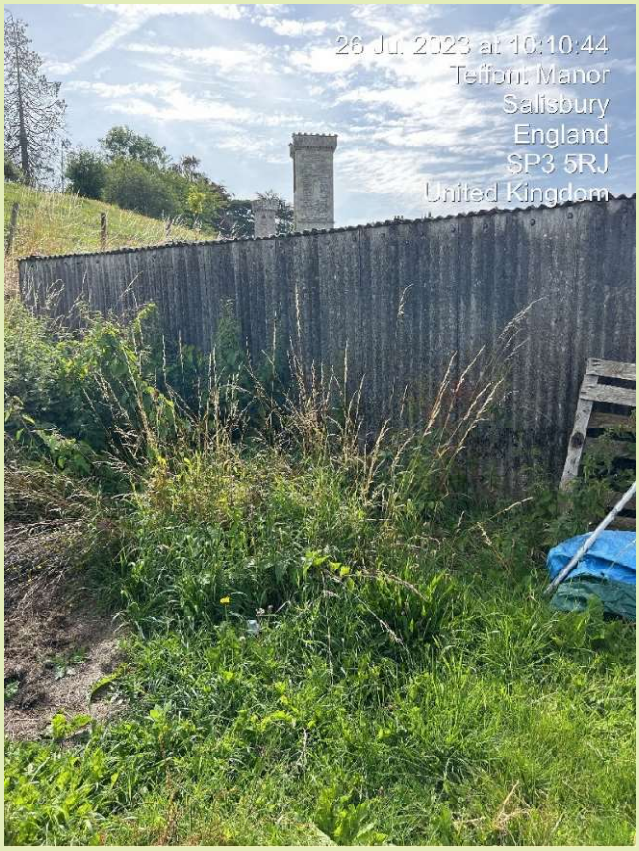
Photographs

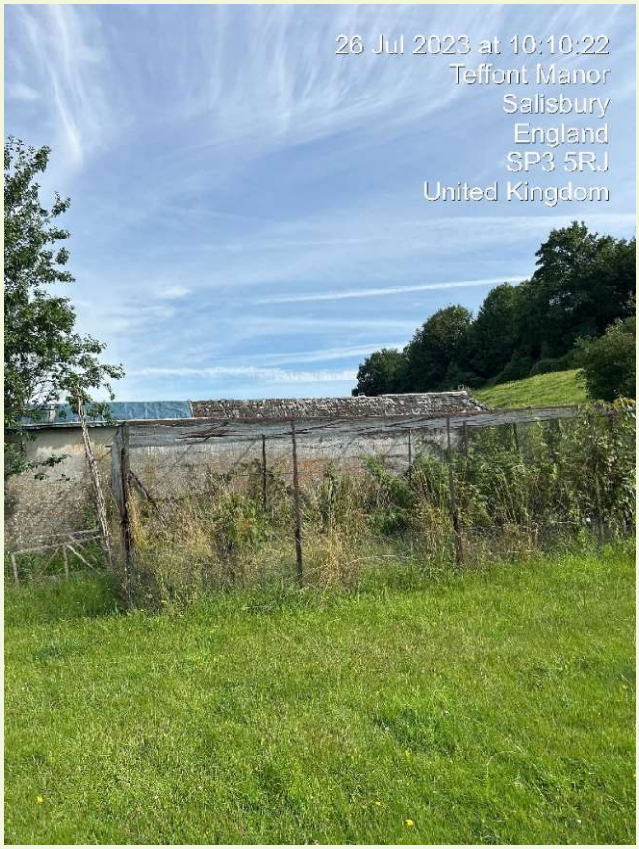
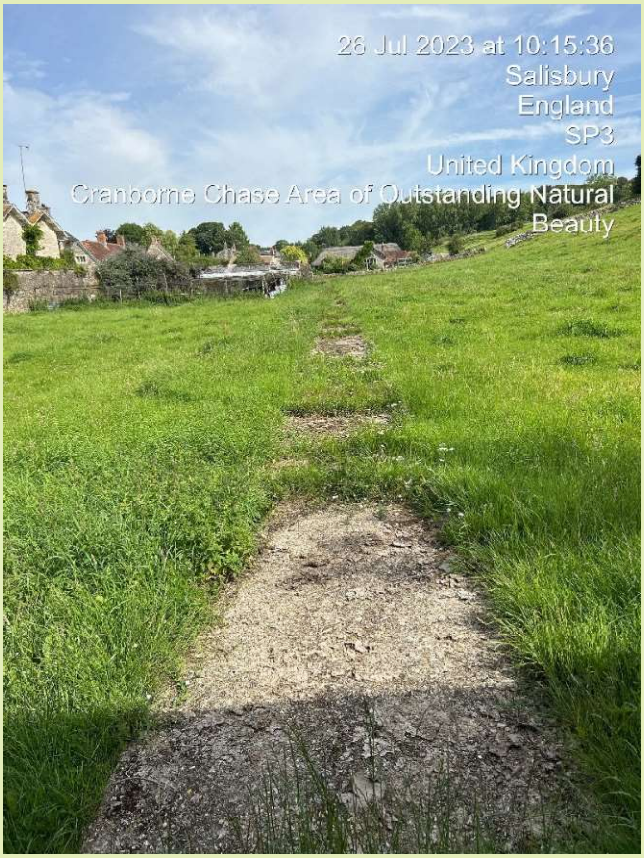
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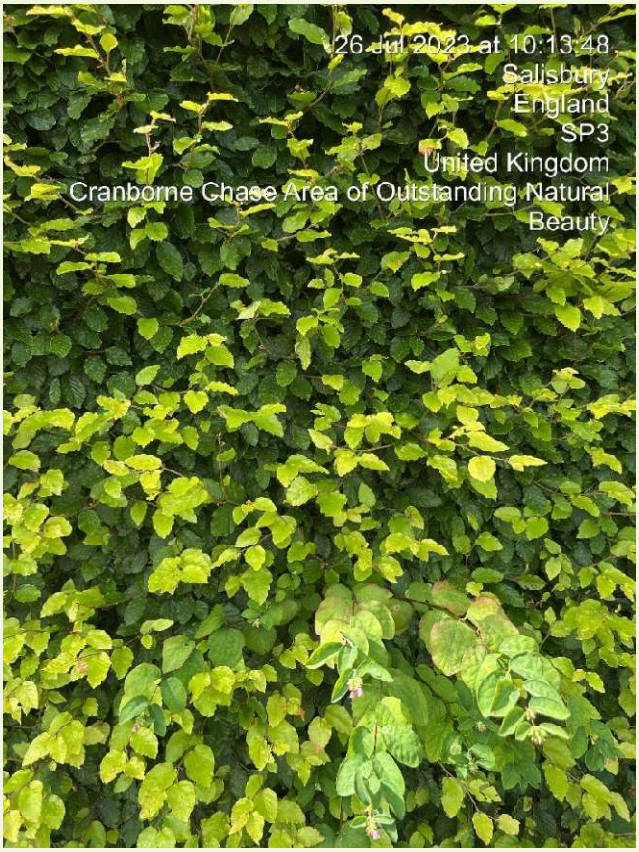
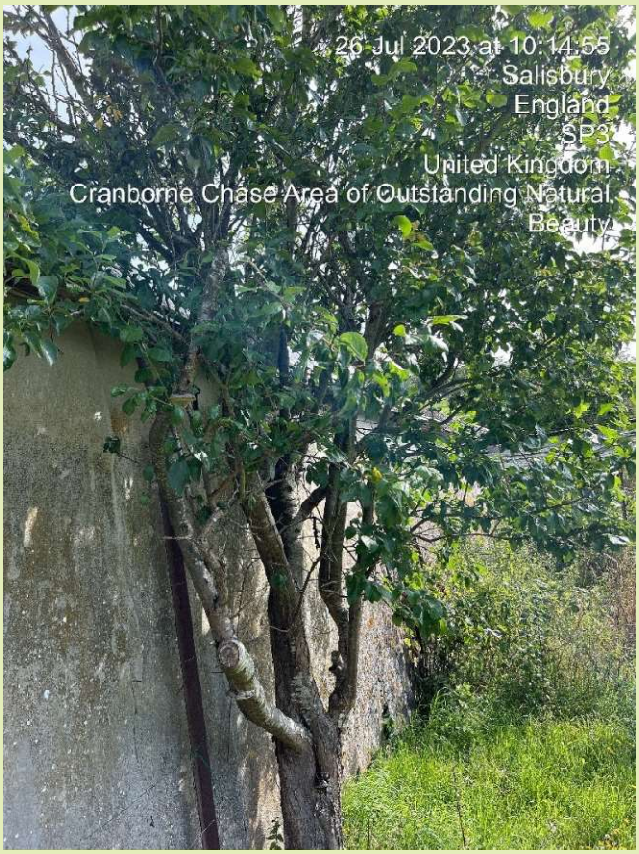
Photo No.	Feature	Photograph of Feature
1	Building 1 - Hotel	

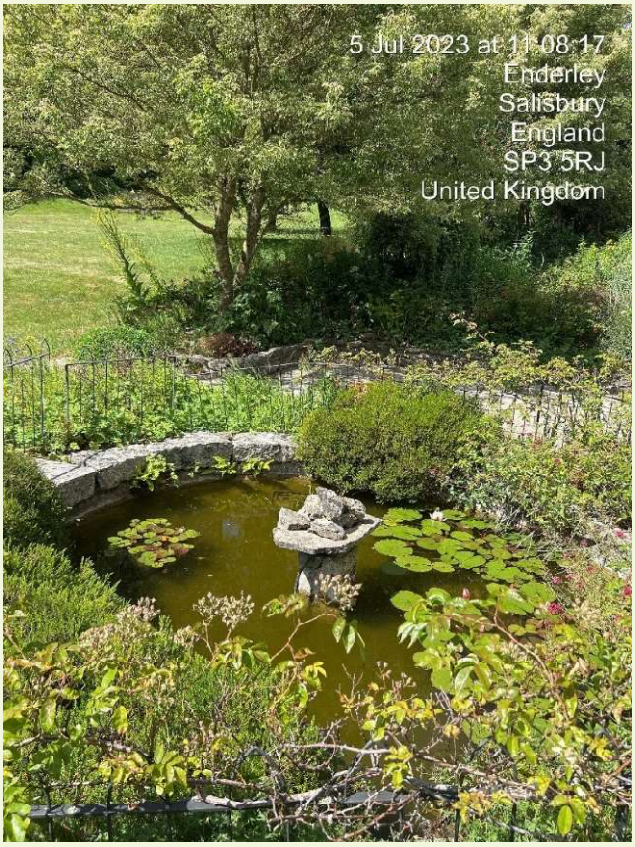
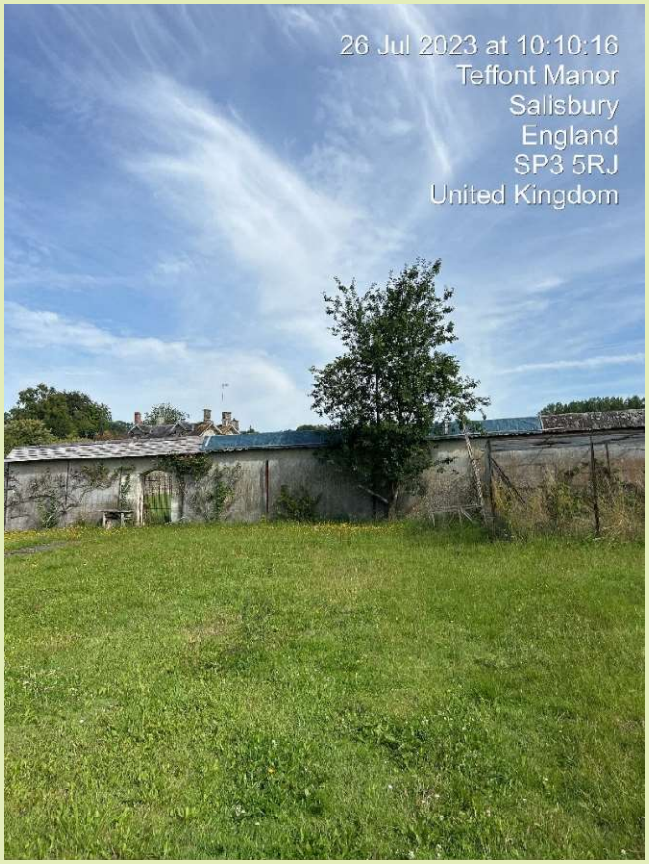
2	Building 2 – Shepherds' hut	
3	Slab patio	

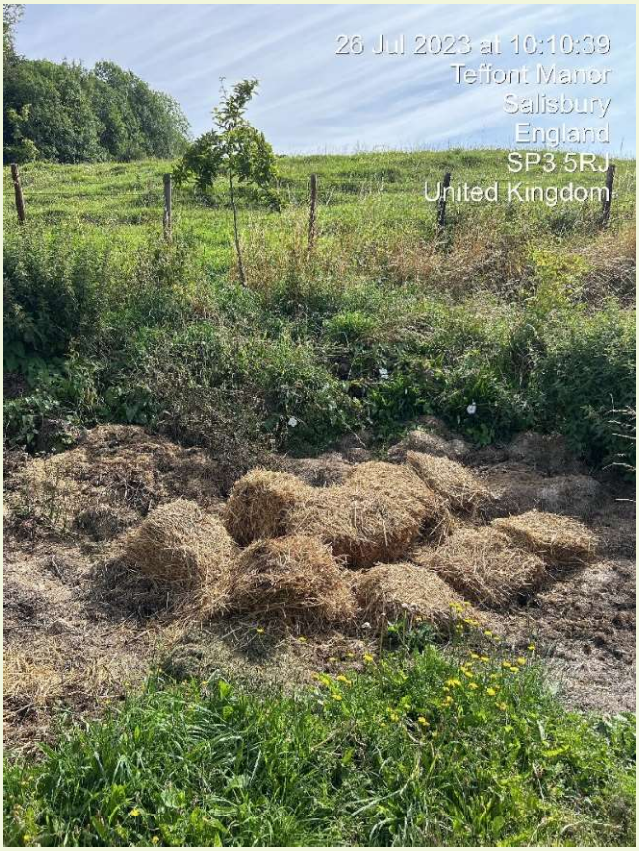
4	Tarmac driveway	
5	Tarmac parking area	

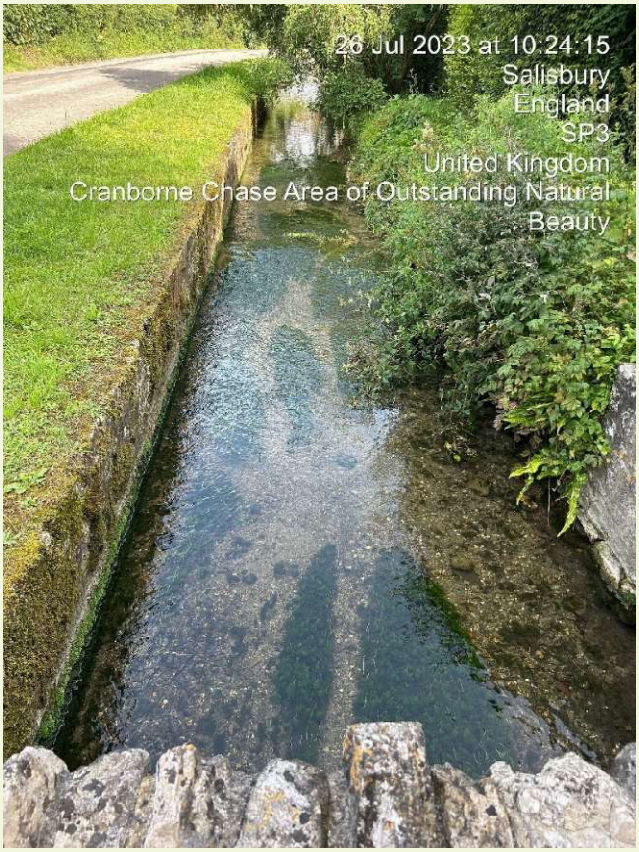
6	Modified grassland dominated by perennial rye (*Lolium perenne*)	
7	Ruderal vegetation dominated by common nettle (*Urtica dioica*)	

8	Disused fruit cage	
9	Bare ground path	

10	Hedgerow dominated by European beech (*Fagus sylvatica*). Common snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*) also seen.	
11	Tree (*Prunus spp.*)	

12	Pond – unsuitable for amphibians as it was shallow and contained no visible wildlife	
13	Stone wall with common pear (*Pyrus communis*) and rose (*Rosa spp.*) growing up it	

14	TN1 – Hay pile which is suitable habitat for reptiles	
15	Wisteria	

16	Running stream adjacent to site which could be suitable for commuting and feeding otters and water vole.	

Appendix C

Legislation

Legislation

This section contains information pertaining to the legislation and planning policy applicable in Britain. This information is not applicable to Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands. Information contained in the following appendix is provided for guidance only.

Species

The objective of the EC Habitats Directive6 is to conserve plants and animals which are considered to be rare across Europe. The Directive is transposed into UK law by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (formerly The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) and The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) implements the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and also implements the obligations set out for species protection from the Council Directive 2009/147/EC (formerly 79/409/EEC) on the Conservation of Wild Birds (EC Birds Directive) in Great Britain.

Various amendments have been made since the Wildlife & Countryside Act came into force in 1981. Further details pertaining to alterations of the Act can be found on the following website: www.opsi.gov.uk. Key amendments have been made through the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act (2000) and Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004.

There are a number of other legislative Acts affording protection to species and habitats. These include:

- Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000;
- Deer Act 1991;
- Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006;
- Protection of Badgers Act 1992; and
- Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996.

Badgers

Badgers and their setts are protected under the Protection of Badgers Act (1992), which consolidated and added to the previous Badger Acts of 1973 and 1991. Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- cruelly ill-treat a badger, including use of tongs and digging;

[6] Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora.

- intentionally or recklessly cause a dog to enter a badger sett;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to a badger sett[7] or any part thereof;
- intentionally or recklessly disturb[8] a badger when it is occupying a badger sett;
- possess or control a dead badger or any part of a badger;
- sell or offers for sale, possesses, or has under his control, a live badger; and
- wilfully kill, injure, take, or attempt to kill, injure, or take a badger.

A Development Licence will be required from Natural England for any development works affecting an active badger sett, or to disturb badgers while individuals are occupying the sett. Depending on the nature of the works and the specifics of the sett, badgers could be disturbed by work near the sett even if there is no direct interference or damage to the sett itself. Natural England has issued guidelines on what constitutes a licensable activity. There is no provision in law for the capture of badgers for development purposes and therefore it is not possible to obtain a licence to translocate badgers from one area to another.

Bats

Bats are protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This act protects individuals from:

- intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level);
- intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection; and
- selling, offering, or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale.

In addition, all species of bat are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- deliberate killing, injuring, or capturing of Schedule 2 species (all bats);
- deliberate disturbance of bat species as to impair their ability:

  (i) to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young; and

  (ii) to hibernate or migrate.

[7] A badger sett is defined in the legislation as *"any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger"*. This includes seasonally used setts. Natural England (2009) have issued guidance on what is likely to constitute current use of a badger sett: www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/WMLG17_tcm6-11815.pdf

[8] For guidance on what constitutes disturbance and other licensing queries, see Natural England (2007) Badgers & Development: A Guide to Best Practice and Licensing. www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/badgers-dev-guidance_tcm6-4057.pdf, Natural England (2009) Interpretation of 'Disturbance' in relation to badgers occupying a sett www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/WMLG16_tcm6-11814.pdf, Scottish Natural Heritage (2002) Badgers & Development. www.snh.org.uk/publications/online/wildlife/badgersanddevelopment/default.asp and Countryside Council for Wales (undated) Badgers: A Guide for Developers. www.ccw.gov.uk.

- deliberate disturbance of bat species as to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species;
- damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place; and
- keeping, transporting, selling, exchanging, or offering for sale whether live or dead or of any part thereof.

A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence issued by Natural England will be required for works liable to affect a bat roost or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake activities listed above. A licence is required to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and monitored.

Breeding Birds

Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), a wild bird is defined as any bird of a species that is resident in or is a visitor to the European Territory of any member state in a wild state. Game birds, however, are not included in this definition (except for limited parts of the Act). They are covered by the Games Acts, which fully protect them during the closed season.

Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), all birds, their nests and eggs are protected under Sections 1-8 of the Act and it is an offence, with certain exceptions, to:

- intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) kill, injure, or take any wild bird;
- intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) take, damage or destroy (or, in Scotland, otherwise interfere with) the nest of any wild bird while it is in use or being built;
- intentionally take or destroy the egg of any wild bird;
- have in one's possession or control any wild bird, dead or alive, or any part of a wild bird, which has been taken in contravention of the Act;
- have in one's possession or control any egg or part of an egg which has been taken in contravention of the Act;
- use traps or similar items to kill, injure or take wild birds;
- have in one's possession or control any bird (dead or alive) unless registered, and in most cases ringed, in accordance with the Secretary of State's regulations; and
- in Scotland only, intentionally or recklessly obstruct or prevent any wild bird from using its nest.

Certain rare species receive additional special protection under Schedule 1 of the Act and Annex 1 of the European Community Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (2009/147/EC). This affords them protection against:

- intentional or reckless disturbance while it is building a nest or is in, on or near a nest containing eggs or young;
- intentional or reckless disturbance of dependent young of such a bird;

- in Scotland only, intentional or reckless disturbance whilst lekking; and
- in Scotland only, intentional or reckless harassment.

The British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) has a list of birds that are Species of Conservation Concern. These birds are not legally protected but where they are found on site they should be given planning consideration. The criteria for birds listed as amber (medium conservation concern) include:

- historical population decline during 1800-1995, but recovering: population has more than doubled over last 25 years;
- moderate (25-49%) decline in UK breeding population over last 25 years;
- moderate (25-49%) contraction of UK breeding range over last 25 years;
- moderate (25-49%) decline in UK non-breeding population over last 25 years;
- species with unfavourable conservation status in Europe (Species of conservation Concern);
- five year mean of breeding pairs in the UK;
- ≥50% of UK breeding population in 10 or fewer sites;
- ≥50% of UK non-breeding population in 10 or fewer sites;
- ≥20% of European breeding population in UK; and
- ≥20% of NW European (wildfowl), East Atlantic Flyway (waders) or European (others) non-breeding populations in UK.

Hazel Dormice

The hazel dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) is fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 through its inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- deliberate killing, injuring, or capturing;
- deliberate disturbance as to impair its ability:

  (i) to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young; and

  (ii) to hibernate or migrate.
- deliberate disturbance as to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species;
- damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place; and
- keeping, transporting, selling, exchanging, or offering for sale whether live or dead or of any part of this species.

The hazel dormouse is also currently protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through its inclusion on Schedule 5. Under this Act, this species is additionally protected from:

- intentional or reckless disturbance;

- intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection; and
- selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale.

A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence issued by Natural England will be required for works liable to affect dormouse breeding or resting places (N.B. this is usually taken to mean dormouse 'habitat') or for operations likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above. The licence will allow derogation from the relevant legislation but will also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and monitored.

Herpetofauna (Reptiles and Amphibians)

The following species receive full protection under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 2.

- sand lizard (*Lacerta agilis*);
- smooth snake (*Coronella austriaca*);
- natterjack toad (*Epidalea calamita*);
- great crested newt (*Triturus cristatus*); and
- pool frog (*Pelophylax lessonae*).

Under this legislation, Regulation 41 prohibits:

- deliberate killing, injuring or capturing of species listed on Schedule 2;
- deliberate disturbance of any Schedule 2 species as to impair their ability:

  (i) to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young; and

  (ii) to hibernate or migrate.
- deliberate disturbance of any Schedule 2 species as to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species;
- deliberate taking or destroying of the eggs of a Schedule 2 species;
- damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place; and
- keeping, transporting, selling, exchanging, or offering for sale whether live or dead or of any part of a species.

With the exception of the pool frog, these species are also currently listed on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level);
- intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection; and

- selling, offering or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale.

Other native species of herpetofauna are protected solely under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). These species include:

- adder (*Vipera berus*);
- grass snake (*Natrix natrix*);
- common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*); and
- slow-worm (*Anguis fragilis*).

Under this legislation, for these species it is prohibited under Section 9(1) & (5) to:

- intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) kill or injure these species; or
- sell, offer, or expose for sale, possess, or transport for purpose of sale these species, or any part thereof.

The following species are listed in respect to Section 9(5) of Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which only affords them protection against sale, offering or exposing for sale, possession, or transport for the purpose of sale:

- common frog (*Rana temporaria*);
- common toad (*Bufo bufo*);
- smooth newt (*Lissotriton vulgaris*); and
- palmate newt (*L. helveticus*).

Water Voles

The water vole (*Arvicola amphibius*) (=*terrestris*) is fully protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This makes it an offence to:

- intentionally kill, injure, or take (capture) this species;
- intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection;
- intentionally or recklessly disturb water voles while they are occupying a structure or place used for shelter or protection; and
- sell, offer, or expose for sale, or have in his possession or transport for the purpose of sale, any live or dead water vole or part of this species.

Where development works are liable to affect habitats known to support water voles, Natural England must be consulted. All alternative design options must have been explored and communicated to Natural England in order to demonstrate that works have tried to avoid contravening the legislation e.g. the use of alternative sites, appropriate timing of works to avoid times of the year in which water voles are most vulnerable etc. Conservation licences for the capture and translocation of water voles may be issued by Natural England for the purpose of development activities if it can be shown that the

activity has been properly planned and executed and thereby contributes to the conservation of the population.

Otters

Otters (*Lutra lutra*) are fully protected under The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 through their inclusion on Schedule 2. Regulation 41 prohibits:

- deliberate killing, injuring, or capturing of otters;
- deliberate disturbance as to impair their ability:

  (i) to survive, breed, or reproduce, or to rear or nurture young; and

  (ii) to hibernate or migrate.
- deliberate disturbance as to affect significantly the local distribution or abundance of the species;
- damage or destruction of a breeding site or resting place; and
- keeping, transporting, selling, exchanging, or offering for sale whether live or dead or of any part of this species.

Otters also receive protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) through their inclusion on Schedule 5. Under this Act, they are additionally protected from:

- intentional or reckless disturbance (at any level);
- intentional or reckless obstruction of access to any place of shelter or protection; and
- selling, offering, or exposing for sale, possession or transporting for purpose of sale.

A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence issued by Natural England will be required for works liable to affect breeding or resting places or for activities likely to result in a level of disturbance which might impair their ability to undertake those activities mentioned above. The licence is to allow derogation from the relevant legislation but also to enable appropriate mitigation measures to be put in place and monitored.

Wild Mammals

All wild mammals are protected against intentional acts of cruelty under the Wild Mammals (Protection) Act 1996. Under this legislation it is an offence to:

- mutilate, kick, beat, nail, or otherwise impale, stab, burn, stone, crush, drown, drag or asphyxiate any wild mammal with intent to inflict unnecessary suffering.

To avoid possible contravention of this legislation, due care and attention should be taken when carrying out works that have the potential to impact any wild mammal as described above.

Plants

Wild plants are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) which makes it an offence for an 'unauthorised' person to intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) uproot wild plants. An authorised person can be the owner of the land on which the action is taken, or anybody authorised by them.

Some rare plant species also receive full protection under Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). This prohibits:

- intentionally (or recklessly in Scotland) picking, uprooting, or destruction of any wild Schedule 8 species (or seed or spore attached to any such wild plant in Scotland only); and
- selling, offering, or exposing for sale, or possessing or transporting for the purpose of sale, any wild live or dead Schedule 8 plant species or parts.

In addition to the legislation outlined above, several plant species are fully protected under Schedule 5 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Regulation 45 makes it an offence to:

- deliberately pick, collect, or destroy a wild Schedule 5 species; and
- be in possession of, or control, transport, sell, or exchange any wild live or dead Schedule 5 species or anything derived from it.

A European Protected Species Mitigation (EPSM) Licence issued by Natural England will be required for works liable to affect species of plant listed under The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017.

Invasive Plant Species

Certain plants are listed on Part II of Schedule 9 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) in respect to Section 14(2). Species include:

- Japanese knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*);
- giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*);
- Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*);
- certain species of rhododendron (*Rhododendron* sp.); and
- certain species of cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster* sp.).

Species listed are non-natives whose establishment or spread in the wild may be detrimental to native wildlife. Inclusion on Part II of Schedule 9 therefore makes it an offence to:

- plant or otherwise cause these species to grow in the wild.

This legislation makes it is an offence to cause species listed to grow in the wild. Therefore, if they are present on site and development activities have the potential to cause the further spread of these species to new areas, it will be necessary to ensure appropriate measures are in place to prevent this.

Habitats

International Statutory Designations

- Special Protection Areas (SPAs): Terrestrial SPAs are afforded protection by The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 ((as amended by The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019) and offshore SPAs are afforded protection under The Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended by EU Exit Regulations 2019). SPAs are designated under the EC Birds Directive (Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds). SPAs are areas recognised as important habitat for rare and migratory birds within the European Union (rare birds as listed on Annex I of the Directive).
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs): These areas are designated under the EC Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora), designated for the habitats and (non-bird) species listed on Annexes I and II to the Directive under the same regulations as detailed for SPAs.
- Ramsar sites: These areas are wetlands designated under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (1971). Wetlands can include areas of marsh, fen, water, or peatland and may be natural or artificial, permanent, or temporary. Ramsar sites are underpinned through prior notification as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and as such receive statutory protection under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) with further protection provided by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000.

National Statutory Designations

- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): These sites are designated by the countryside agencies (for example Natural England) under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Prior to 1981 these were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Improved mechanisms for the protection of SSSIs have also been introduced by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (in England and Wales).
- National Nature Reserves: These sites are also designated by the countryside agencies under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Local Statutory Designations

- 1949 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs): These sites are designated by local authorities under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. These are sites recognised for their wildlife or geological interest at a local level and are managed for nature conservation.

Non-Statutory Designations

- Local Wildlife Sites: Areas of local conservation interest may be designated by local authorities. The terminology for these sites varies depending on the county. They can be called Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI's), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), County Wildlife Sites (CWS), Listed Wildlife Sites (LWS), Local Nature Conservation Sites (LNCS), and Sites of Biological Importance (SBIs). The designation criteria may vary between counties. Local Wildlife Sites are of material consideration when planning applications are being determined.
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997: These have been compiled to protect 'important' countryside hedgerows from damage or removal. A hedgerow is considered important if it (a) has existed for 30 years or more; and (b) satisfies at least one of the criteria listed in Part II of Schedule 1 of the Regulations. Under the Regulations, it is against the law to remove or destroy certain hedgerows without permission from the local planning authority. Hedgerows covered by these regulations include those on or adjacent to common land, SSSIs (including all terrestrial SACs, NNRs and SPAs), LNRs, land used for agriculture or forestry, and land used for the keeping or breeding of horses, ponies, or donkeys.

National Planning Policy

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) replaces the former NPPF 2019, 2018 and 2012, and the former PPS9 document and emphasises the need for sustainable development. The Framework specifies the need to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, identify and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks including the hierarchy of international, national, and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors; and stepping that connect them. Plus partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration, or creation. The Framework aims to promote the conservation, restoration, and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks, and the protection and recovery of priority species. In determining a planning application, planning authorities should aim to conserve and enhance biodiversity by ensuring that: designated sites are protected from adverse harm; appropriate mitigation or compensation measures are in place where significant harm cannot be avoided; opportunities to incorporate biodiversity in and around developments are encouraged; and planning permission is refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats including aged or veteran trees and also ancient woodland.

Local Planning Policy

Wiltshire Local Plan (2015)

Core Policy 50: Biodiversity and geodiversity

Wiltshire's natural environment is one of its greatest assets and includes a network of identified wildlife sites:

• International – Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar

Sites

• National – Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves

• Local – County Wildlife Sites, Protected Road Verges and Local Geological Sites.

Proposed development on land within or outside a SSSI likely to have an adverse effect on a SSSI will be determined in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 118 of the NPPF and Circular 06/2005. The valuable natural environment includes not only identified sites, but also other features of nature conservation value including:

• priority species and habitats (including those listed in the national and Wiltshire Biodiversity Action Plan)

• areas of habitat with restoration potential (particularly those identified on the South West Nature Map or through other landscape scale projects)

• all waterbodies covered under the Water Framework Directive

• features providing an ecological function for wildlife such as foraging, resting and breeding places, particularly wildlife corridors of all scales which provide ecological connectivity allowing species to move through the landscape and support ecosystem functions.

For the purposes of evaluation in ecological impact assessment, the value of undesignated habitats and species should be measured against published selection criteria where possible. However, statutory protection will only ever apply to those sites which have been formally notified by Natural England.

Collectively these sites and natural features make up the local ecological networks necessary to underpin and maintain a healthy natural environment. Core Policy 50 seeks to ensure protection and enhancement of these sites and features, and is necessary to help halt and reverse current negative trends and meet new challenges particularly from climate change adaptation and pressures associated with the increasing population.

It is vital that all stages of sustainable development are informed by relevant ecological information, from site selection and design to planning decisions and longterm management. All effects should be considered, including positive and negative, direct

and indirect, cumulative, and on and offsite impacts over the lifetime of the development (including construction, operational and restoration phases), also giving consideration to disturbance effects such as noise, lighting, recreational pressures, trampling, traffic, domestic pets, vandalism etc.

All effects upon the natural environment should be addressed sequentially in accordance with the principle of the 'mitigation hierarchy':

• Avoid e.g. site location, buffers

• Reduce, moderate, minimise

• Rescue e.g. translocation

• Repair, reinstate, restore

• Compensate or offset.

Compensation is a last resort, but will be necessary in some instances where other approaches cannot guarantee 'no net loss' of biodiversity and any unavoidable losses are outweighed by other sustainability considerations. Such measures should be delivered within the development site where possible; however, where this is not feasible, it may be more appropriate to deliver offsite measures through legal agreements and landscape scale projects. Appropriate compensatory measures should demonstrate no net loss of the relevant local biodiversity resource in the short and long-term, and be delivered as close to the development site as possible to avoid the degradation of local ecological networks or 'ecosystem services'.

Additional guidance is available to help clarify appropriate ecological avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures to demonstrate compliance with Core Policy 50, which should be proportionate to the scale of any predicted impact.

A number of strategic plans and guidance documents are also available to ensure that the most commonly occurring effects upon international sites can be avoided as efficiently and effectively as possible.

• The Stone Curlew Management Strategy – applicable to residential development

within distances up to 15km of Salisbury Plain.

• Wiltshire Bats SAC Planning Guidance – applicable to all development types in

the areas within and surrounding Bradford on Avon, Box, Colerne, Corsham,

Trowbridge, Westbury, Fonthill and Chilmark.

• River Avon Planning Guidance – applicable to any new development in proximity

to the Salisbury Avon, or major development within the wider catchment.

• Other plans and guidance documents will be produced by Wiltshire Council as

necessary. Wiltshire Council has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with

Natural England to ensure that all of these measures are effectively delivered.

Wiltshire Council will support production and implementation of a New Forest Mitigation Strategy, in partnership with Natural England and other partners as appropriate. This will set out the delivery mechanisms and funding requirements (either through CIL, S106 or other appropriate mechanism) such that the impacts of the plan upon the New Forest SPA are fully mitigated. After adoption, the New Forest Mitigation Strategy will be a relevant planning consideration. Prior to this, planning applications will be subject to individual Habitats Regulation Assessments and bespoke mitigation secured as necessary.

Sustainable development also provides opportunities to enhance the natural environment for wildlife and Wiltshire's communities, particularly through landscaping, public open space, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems and features of the built environment e.g. bird and bat boxes. Such measures should contribute to delivery of relevant Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and River Basin/Catchment Management Plan objectives, but also be tailored to local landscape character (see Core Policy 51).

Development may also open up opportunities to bring degraded or neglected features back into favourable condition through sensitive management to encourage wildlife; such restoration will be particularly valuable where it contributes towards Nature Improvement Areas or other landscape scale projects identified by the Local Nature Partnership or objectives in relevant River Basin / Catchment Management Plans.

Additional guidance will be produced to aid the design and incorporation of suitable ecological enhancement measures to demonstrate compliance with Core Policy 50, which should be proportionate to the scale of development.

Core Policy 50 - Biodiversity and geodiversity

Protection

Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and geological value as part of the design rationale. There is an expectation that such features shall be retained, buffered, and managed favourably in order to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. Where it has been demonstrated that such features cannot be retained, removal or damage shall only be acceptable in circumstances where the anticipated ecological impacts have been mitigated as far as possible and appropriate compensatory measures can be secured to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource, and secure the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services.

All development proposals shall incorporate appropriate measures to avoid and reduce disturbance of sensitive wildlife species and habitats throughout the lifetime of the development.

Any development potentially affecting a Natura 2000 site must provide avoidance measures in accordance with the strategic plans or guidance set out in paragraphs 6.75-6.77 above where possible, otherwise bespoke measures must be provided to demonstrate that the proposals would have no adverse effect upon the Natura 2000 network.

Any development that would have an adverse effect on the integrity of a European nature conservation site will not be in accordance with the Core Strategy.

Biodiversity enhancement

All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character.

Local sites

Sustainable development will avoid direct and indirect impacts upon local sites through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts:

i. cannot reasonably be avoided

ii. are reduced as far as possible

iii. are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest

iv. where appropriate compensation measures can be secured through planning obligations or agreements.

Development proposals affecting local sites must make a reasonable contribution to their favourable management in the long-term.

Appendix D

Plant Species List

Plant Species List

Scientific nomenclature follows Stace (2010) for vascular plant species and British Bryological Society (BBS) Special Volume No. 5 *English Names for British* Bryophytes for bryophyte species. Vascular plant common names follow the Botanical Society of the British Isles 2003 list, published on its web site, www.bsbi.org.uk. The plant species list was generated as part of a Phase 1 Habitat survey and does not constitute a full botanical survey.

Abundance was estimated using the DAFOR scale as follows:

D = dominant, A = abundant, F = frequent, O = occasional, R = rare, L = locally

Key to qualifiers: G = garden origin, P = planted, Y = young, S = seedling or sucker, T = tree, H = hedge, W = water, ? = identification uncertain.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Abundance	Qualifier
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow	O	G
Cupressus x leylandii	Leyland cypress	O	H, P
Fagus sylvatica	European beech	F	H, P
Lolium perenne	Perennial ryegrass	A	G, P
Lonicera nitida	Shrubby honeysuckle	O	H, P
Nymphaea spp.	Water lily	O	G, P, W
Prunus spp.	Plum	R	P, T
Pyrus communis	European pear	F	G, P, T
Rosa spp.	Rose	O	G, P
Rubus fruticosus	Bramble	F	H
Symphoricarpos albus	Common snowberry	O	H, P
Taxus baccata	English yew	F	H, P
Trifolium spp.	Clover	F	G
Urtica dioica	Common nettle	F	G
Wisteria spp.	Wisteria	R	G, P

Appendix E

Suggested Compensatory Planting

Suggested Compensatory Planting

This section provides a list of plants which are of proven value to wildlife. The list is not exhaustive and merely provides a guide for suggested planting for wildlife value. Planting should be tailored on a site by site basis. The list includes some native and ornamental species however the emphasis should always be on the use of predominantly native species.

N = Native, NN = Non-native.

This list includes species that may be harmful if handled or ingested. Schedule 9 (Part 2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended) includes a list of invasive plants, including aquatic species, that should always be avoided in planting schemes.

Large Shrubs

Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) N

Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) N

Rose: dog rose (*Rosa canina*), field rose (*R. arvensis*), burnet rose (R. *pimpinellifolia*) N

Wild privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*) N

Common holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) N

Viburnum (*Viburnum* spp.): wayfaring tree (*V. lantana*) N, guelder rose (*V. opulus*) N, laurustinus (*V. tinus*) NN. Note: *V. lantana* can become invasive in more open habitats.

Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) N

Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*) N

Buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*) N

Spindle (*Euonymus europaeus*) N

Tutsan (*Hypericum androsaemum*) N

Yew (*Taxus baccata*) N

Trees

Cherry (*Prunus* spp.): wild cherry (*P. avium*), bird cherry (*P. padus*), domestic plum (*P. domestica*) N, or cherry plum (*P. cerasifera*) NN

Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) N

Apple (*Malus* spp.): edible apple (*M. domestica*), crab apple (*M. sylvestris*) N

Small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*) N

Silver birch (*Betula pendula*) N

Yew (*Taxus baccata*) N

Black poplar (*Populus nigra*) N

Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) N

Climbers

Ivy (*Hedera helix*) N

Honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.): (*L. periclymenum*) N

Hop (*Humulus lupulus*) N

Bulbs

English bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) N

Squill species (*Scilla* spp.) N/NN

Snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*) N

Wild Daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*) N

Onion species (*Allium* spp.) N/NN. Note: *Allium triquetrum* (three cornered leek) and *Allium paradoxum* (few-flowered leek) are Schedule 9 invasive plant species.

Wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) N

Lesser celandine (*Ficaria verna*) N

Appendix F

Bird and Bat Box Designs

Bird and Bat Box Designs

Bird Boxes

Example	Type	Dimension D x W x H (cm)	Target Species	Location
	**Schwegler Nest Box 1B** Hole-fronted 26mm entrance hole	16 x 16 x 23	Multi-purpose, including: blue-, marsh-, coal-, and crested tit, and possibly wren. All other species are prevented from using the nest box due to the smaller entrance hole.	Suitable walls or semi-mature/mature trees and shrubs; attached to a tree trunk or hung from branches. Ideal points include discrete areas away from predators, such as against walls, plant, and metal supports.
	**Schwegler Bird House** 32mm entrance hole	15 x 21 x 33	Multi-purpose, including: great-, blue-, marsh-, and coal tit, redstart, nuthatch, pied flycatcher, and sparrows.	Fixed to a semi-mature/mature tree trunk, wall or fence using the hanging bracket on the back. Between 1.5 m and 3 m high, and should be sited higher if area has a particularly high cat population.

Example	Type	Dimension D x W x H (cm)	Target Species	Location
	**Schwegler Sparrow Terrace 1SP**	20 x 43 x 24.5	House sparrow. It may also occasionally attract tits, redstarts, and spotted flycatchers.	In an elevated position such as on post/platform within dense shrub/tree planting or on top of lighting columns. Alternatively, they could be attached to the side of a building. The terrace can be fixed on to the surface of a suitable wall or incorporated into the wall. It is suitable for all types of houses in built-up areas, and on industrial and agricultural buildings such as barns, sheds, and factories. Due to its weight (15kg), it is not suitable for fences or garden sheds. Ideally place the terrace two metres or more above the ground. Either install on the surface of the wall using the plugs and screws provided or install directly into the wall. Cleaning is not necessary. The front panel can be removed by turning the screw hook.

Bat Boxes

Example	Type	Dimension D x W x H (cm)	Target Species	Location
	**2F Schwegler Bat Box (General Purpose) with or without Double Front Panel**	16 x 16 x 33	Without panel: Particularly successful with brown long-eared bat. Also used by noctule. With panel: Ideal for crevice-dwelling species: pipistrelles, Myotis species (particularly Daubenton's), Leisler's, and serotine.	On trees or buildings and at a height of 3 to 6m. In open sunny positions and in groups of 3 to 5 facing different directions. Please note that once bats have inhabited a roost site they may only be disturbed by licensed bat workers.
	**Chavenage Bat Box**	10 x 18 x 38	Small crevice-dwelling bats: e.g. pipistrelles.	On trees in gardens or woodland and also on house walls. 2.5 - 5m high on a building, mature tree, or vegetation line (trees/tall hedge) or on a feeding/flight route in partial daytime sun. Please note that once bats have inhabited a roost site they may only be disturbed by licensed bat workers.



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