



Land at Havant and South Downs College

Ecological Assessment

Prepared on behalf of Places for People Development

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Land at Havant and South Downs College

Ecology 7707

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1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Client is seeking to develop the land at Havant and South Downs College for use as a residential development. Pro Vision Ecology were commissioned to provide an Ecological Assessment of the site to inform the potential design of any development on the land. Surveys were initially conducted in 2021 with update surveys completed in 2024.
- 1.2 The land at Havant and South Downs College mostly comprises of a large disused car park with narrow broadleaved woodland along the east, south and west boundaries. Two buildings are also included in the development boundary which form part of the college.
- 1.3 The fields to the east of the site are listed in the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy. Mitigation measures will be included during the construction of the development to ensure this area is not impacted. These measures will be secured via a Construction and Environmental Management Plan.
- 1.4 Evidence of badger activity was recorded during the survey, and motion detecting cameras confirmed that the badger setts on the east and south boundary are active. Therefore, mitigation during construction has been provided and enhancements have been included within the design of the development.
- 1.5 During the Phase I assessment of the habitats on site, the potential value of bat commuting, and foraging habitats were assessed in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust guidance (Collins, 2016 and Collins 2023). The woodland along the east south and west boundaries provide potentially suitable habitat for commuting and foraging.
- 1.6 Activity surveys identified a total of seven bat species down to species level, with an additional unknown number of Myotis species which were identified to genus level. Rare Annex II species barbastelle were also recorded using the site infrequently. The boundaries of the site will be retained within the development and sensitive lighting will be included to retain these corridors.
- 1.7 The surrounding woodland offers good foraging opportunities and connectivity for dormice within the area. Surveys in 2024 recorded populations present within the woodland on site. The design of the development was subsequently altered to retain the eastern boundary and provide an area for compensatory planting. The final design will result in a net gain of dormouse habitat.
- 1.8 The woodland boundaries provide potential habitat for common reptile species. Surveys in 2024 recorded populations present. The final development design includes wildflower areas to mitigate any loss of habitat on the site.
- 1.9 The site is currently of low ecological value and the development provides opportunities to provide biodiversity net gains through the provision of wildflower planting, scrub and woodland planting within the landscape features.

2.0 Introduction

Background

- 2.1 Pro Vision Ecology were commissioned in April 2020 to carry out a preliminary survey with subsequent surveys in 2021 of land at Havant and South Downs College. For the site location refer to **Appendix A**. This report will contribute to the planning application for a residential development on the site. Proposed plans are provided in **Appendix B**.
- 2.2 This report describes the current ecological baseline of the site, based on the findings of the preliminary ecological assessment and the phase II surveys of the site completed in 2021 and 2024.
- 2.3 The planning application was submitted in 2022 (APP/22/00439) and is currently a live application. During the application there have been various consultation responses with the remaining ecological concerns relating to the following areas -
- Age of survey data.
 - Loss of woodland habitat on the eastern boundary resulting in the loss of connectivity around the site boundary.
 - Impacts to the badger setts and location adjacent to a residential development.
- 2.4 Update ecology surveys were subsequently instructed in 2024 and the design of the development has been altered to reduce the loss of woodland within the scheme (**Appendix B**). The development design now includes an ecological enhancement area on the eastern boundary which is discussed further in the mitigation section of this report. A badger mitigation plan is provided in **Appendix H** and is detailed further in **Section 5.0**.

Brief

- 2.5 To carry out ecological surveys of the land (habitats and species) within the application site, to inform the Client of the ecological implications and provide mitigation and enhancement strategies for the development.

Relevant Legislation and Planning Policy

- 2.6 The key legislative provisions of relevance to this report with respect to the development proposals and their potential effects on ecological features are listed below:
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017
 - The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
 - The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000
 - The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
 - The Protection of Badgers Act 1992
- 2.7 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was the Governments' response to the 1992 Convention on Biodiversity (The Rio Convention), with the aim of halting the loss of biodiversity in the UK. The new UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework replaced the previous BAP and is the government's response to the new strategic plan on the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

(CBD). Although the UK post-2010 Biodiversity Framework supersedes the UK BAP, the UK BAP lists of priority species and habitats still remain an important reference source for identifying habitats and species of principal importance within the UK. Within England, Section 41 of the NERC Act (2006) lists species and habitats of principal importance for the conservation of biodiversity.

- 2.8 The Government has set out its policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the planning system in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).
- 2.9 The application site is located within the administrative area of Havant Borough Council. The Havant Borough Core Strategy, 2011, includes the core policy CS11 relating to protecting and enhancing the special environment:

Policy CS11 Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough

Planning permission will be granted for development that:

1. *Ensures the key landscape and built form principles set out in the Havant Borough Townscape, landscape and Seascape Character Assessment are protected and where possible enhanced by partnership working with developers, groups and the wider community.*
2. *Protects and where possible enhances the borough's statutory and non-statutory designated landscape, habitats and features of biological, hydrological or geological interest. Protection and enhancement will be achieved by appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures including wardening, education and information and the creation of new habitats, water bodies/courses planting of new trees and woodland.*
3. *Has particular regard to the following hierarchy of nature conservation designations within the borough (as identified on the Proposals Map):*
 - (i) *Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar [International].*
 - (ii) *Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserves [National].*
 - (iii) *Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Local Nature Reserves (LNR), other Ancient Woodland not identified in (ii) above [Local].*
4. *Protects and where appropriate enhances the borough's statutory and non-statutory heritage designations by appropriately managing development in or adjacent to conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites, buildings of local historic or architectural interest.*
5. *Supports an ongoing programme of survey of habitats and species and designation of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.*
6. *Incorporates partnership working with conservation organisations to improve public understanding of biodiversity and to manage public access to designated sites, particularly on the coast, to reduce harm to nature conservation interests.*
7. *Incorporates partnership working with landowners and developers to ensure land management practices restore, enhance and where appropriate create new valued landscapes, habitats and their soil structure, particularly the ancient woodland remnants of the Forest of Bere and coastal salt marsh.*
8. *Protects wildlife habitats and wildlife corridors to prevent the fragmentation of existing habitats and to allow species, for example Brent Geese, to respond to the impacts of climate change by making provision for habitat adaptation e.g. coastal managed realignment and species migration.*

9. *Maintains undeveloped gaps between the settlements of Emsworth/Havant; Havant/Waterlooville; Havant/Portsmouth; Emsworth/Westbourne and Leigh Park/Rowlands Castle as shown on the Proposals Map.*
10. *Protects the best and most versatile agricultural land that has the greatest potential for local food security.*
11. *11. Responds to the emerging evidence from the Solent Disturbance and Mitigation Project, the published recommendations, and future related research.*

3.0 Methodologies

Desk Study

- 3.1 The desk study methodology is based upon guidelines set out by the Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM, 2017). A data-gathering exercise was undertaken to obtain any available information relating to statutory designated sites, non-statutory designated sites and priority habitats and species (**Table 1**).

Table 1: Summary of information sources used for the Desk Study

Organisation / Source	Information Sought
Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC)	Records of key protected & notable species and non-statutory wildlife sites within two kilometres of the site.
MAGIC	Locations of and citations for all national statutory wildlife sites, including SSSI, within two kilometres and all international sites including SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites within five kilometres of the site. Records of EPSM licences and class licence returns within two kilometres.
Ordnance Survey Maps	Large scale habitat information and identification of off-site habitats which may require consideration (such as ponds).

Ecological Assessment

Habitats

- 3.2 The site survey was carried out on 15th April 2020. The weather conditions during the survey were slightly overcast or cloudy, still, and dry with an ambient temperature of 20°C. The survey was completed by experienced ecologist Hazel Burridge.
- 3.3 An update site visit was undertaken on the 22nd August 2024 by experienced ecologist David Casson ACIEEM in cloudy and light rain, with wind and an ambient temperature of 16°C. The survey employed techniques based on the UK Habitat Classification System.
- 3.4 The collection of botanical information focused on the dominant and/or key indicator species for each habitat, to allow allocation of habitats to hierarchy levels 3 and/or 4 and where relevant to identify any priority habitats which are present on site.

Protected species

- 3.5 The Ecological Assessment included an assessment of the potential for habitats on or immediately adjacent to the site to support legally protected or conservation-notable species. The location and nature of any signs of the presence of protected species (such as droppings, footprints, burrows, etc.) were documented and mapped accordingly. Indicative methods for protected species are outlined below.

Badgers (Meles meles)

- 3.6 Any area that could be used for foraging by badgers or could potentially contain a badger sett was surveyed and any signs noted including:
- Evidence of active or disused setts;
 - Evidence of potential badger diggings;
 - Latrines / dung pits;
 - Evidence of badger foraging ('snuffle holes');
 - Footprints; and
 - Badger hairs.
- 3.7 Where setts are recorded these will be classified into four main categories, defined by the number of holes present:
- Main sett: A large well used and well established sett used for breeding. There is usually only one main sett within each clan of badgers.
 - Annex sett: These are additional setts often located close to the main sett connected by well worn paths.
 - Subsidiary sett: These are additional setts often some 150m from the main sett which are sometimes used for breeding but do not have obvious paths linking to other setts and are not always active.
 - Outlier sett: These setts are usually smaller in size than the other setts, intermittently used and located some distance from the main sett.
- 3.8 Motion detecting cameras were placed in various positions throughout the eastern and southern woodland boundaries of the site. Cameras were placed through November 2021 for the duration of between five and six days. Any activity of wildlife was picked up and recorded in 30 second videos. The purpose was to confirm the presence of badgers and to determine the use of setts and presence of cubs. Additional cameras were placed on the site the 23rd October 2024 and recorded for a 4 week period.

Bats

- 3.9 Bats use features within buildings such as stone crevices or cracks in brickwork, ridge beams, gaps between roofing materials and the main building structure, and any potential access points. An internal and external inspection of the building was conducted by bat licenced ecologist Louisa Jones (licence numbers available upon request) and David Casson on 13th January 2022 during clear, dry conditions, with no wind and an ambient temperature of 0°C. During the survey any evidence of bats such as droppings, urine staining, claw marks, feeding remains or bats themselves were recorded. Any droppings present were sent for DNA analysis through Swift ecology. An assessment of the potential of the building to support roosts was then made in line with BCT guidelines (2016) shown in **Table 2** below.

Table 2: Assessment of buildings to support roosting bats

Potential	Criteria
Negligible	Negligible features on site likely to be used by bats
Low	Potential features present which may support low numbers of bats irregularly but no suitable features for regular use by large numbers of bats.
Moderate	A building with one or more potential roost features that may be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, condition and habitats present. Unlikely to support a roost of high conservation value.
High	A building with one or more potential roost sites that are suitable for use by a large number of bats on a regular basis.

- 3.10 An update assessment was undertaken on the 22nd August 2024 during the update site walkover by David Casson ACIEEM in accordance with BCT guidelines (2023) shown in **Table 3** below.

Table 3: Assessment of buildings to support roosting bats

Suitability	Criteria
None	No features on site likely to be used by any roosting bats at any time of the year
Negligible	No obvious features on site likely to be used by bats
Low	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that could be used by individual bats opportunistically.
Moderate	A structure with one or more potential roost sites due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat but unlikely to support a roost of high conservation significance.
High	A structure with one or more potential roost sites that are obviously suitable for use by larger numbers of bats on a more regular basis and potentially for longer periods of time due to their size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat. These structures have the potential to support high conservation status roosts.

- 3.11 Bats use trees as potential roost sites and trees on the site were inspected from the ground and an assessment made for the potential of the tree to support bats. Features which may support bats include holes and crevices, ivy covering and peeling bark. The assessment for roosting potential is based on Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guidelines (Collins, 2016) shown below in **Table 4**.

Table 4: Potential of trees to support bat roosts

Potential	Criteria
Negligible	Negligible features on the tree
Low	A tree of sufficient size and age but features present have limited roosting potential
Medium	A tree with one or more potential roost features that may be used by bats due to their size, shelter, protection, condition and habitats present. Unlikely to support a roost of high conservation value.
High	A tree with one or more potential roost sites that are suitable for use by a large number of bats.

- 3.12 Bats use features in the landscape to navigate and habitats may also provide key foraging locations. Foraging and commuting habitat was assessed based on BCT guidelines (Collins, 2016) shown in **Table 5** below.

Table 5: Assessment of foraging/commuting habitat

Potential	Criteria
Negligible	Negligible features on site likely to be used by bats
Low	Suitable but isolated habitat that could be used by small numbers of bats.
Medium	Habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape and could be used by bats for foraging such as trees, scrub, grassland or water.
High	Continuous high-quality habitat that is well connected to the wider landscape and may be used by significant numbers of bats including annex II species.

Bat Activity surveys

- 3.13 The bat activity surveys were conducted in accordance with current guidelines (Collins, 2016) between May 2021 and October 2021. **Table 6** provides details of each survey visit, with sunrise/sunset time and weather conditions. The surveys were undertaken by two surveyors walking a pre-determined survey transect route around the site (**Appendix F**).
- 3.14 Further surveys were completed in August and September 2024 in accordance with current guidelines (Collins 2023). This gave sufficient coverage to determine how bats were using the site. The surveyors were equipped with an Echo Metre Touch Pro 2 connected to a mobile phone to obtain GPS locations. Recordings of bat echolocations were analysed with Kaleidoscope software to confirm the identity of the species encountered and call locations mapped with QGIS.

Table 6: Phase II Bat activity survey details (wind force measured using the Beaufort scale)

Date	Survey type	Duration	Weather Conditions	Sunset/Sunrise Time
25/05/21	Dusk	20:45-22:30	15°C throughout survey. Wind force 0. Cloud cover 40%. No rain.	20:30
30/06/21	Dusk	21:20-23:20	18°C at start and 17°C at end of survey. Wind force 0. Cloud cover 100%. No rain.	21:21

Date	Survey type	Duration	Weather Conditions	Sunset/Sunrise Time
29/07/21	Dusk	20:45-22:45	13°C at start and 12°C at end of survey. Wind force 0. Cloud cover 100%.. No rain.	20:45
18/08/21	Dusk	20:19-22:19	17°C at start and 16°C at end of survey. Wind force 0. Cloud cover 50%.. No rain.	20:19
23/09/21	Dusk	19:01-21:19	19°C at start and 17°C at end of survey. Wind force 0. Cloud cover 100%. No rain.	19:01
13/10/21	Dusk	18:17-20:17	16°C at start and 15°C at end of survey. Wind force 1. Cloud cover 100%. No rain	18:17
22/08/24	Dusk	20:10 – 22:10	17°C at start and 15°C at end of survey. Wind force 3. Cloud cover 100%. No rain	20:10
12/09/24	Dusk	19:24 – 21:24	13°C at start and 9°C at end of survey. Wind force 2. Cloud cover 10%. No rain	21:24

Static/automatic Surveys

- 3.15 Two Song Meter SM4BAT FS Bat Detectors with SMM-U1 Microphones were installed in two locations per month (see **Appendix F** for locations) for six consecutive nights during the months of May to October 2021 and August to October 2024.

- Static 1 – Located within the eastern woodland boundary close to the college buildings
- Static 2 – Located on the south woodland boundary, directed to the adjacent field.

Site Valuation Assessment for Bats

- 3.16 The surveys undertaken identified the bat assemblage using the site. This information was used to assess the importance of the bat assemblage in accordance with **Table 7** taken from the Bat Mitigation Guidelines (Reason and Wray, 2023)

Table 7: Criteria for assessing the importance of a bat assemblage in the southern region

Rarity category (points/species)	Species	Maximum score
Widespread all geographies (1)	Common pipistrelle Soprano pipistrelle Brown long-eared	Score 3
Widespread in many geographies, but not as abundant as all (2)	Whiskered Brandt's Daubenton's Natterer's Noctule	Score 10
Rarer or restricted distribution (3)	Alcathoe Serotine	Score 12

Rarity category (points/species)	Species	Maximum score
	Leisler's Nathusius' pipistrelle	
Rarest Annex II species and very rare (4)	Greater Horseshoe Lesser Horseshoe Bechstein's Barbastelle Grey long-eared	Score 20
Thresholds	Maximum possible	45
County importance threshold: 45%	County	20
Regional importance threshold: 55%	Regional	25
National importance threshold: 70%	National	32

Survey Limitations

- 3.17 Echolocation calls are reliably distinguishable between most bat species in the UK. However, the ability to distinguish *Myotis* species can be extremely difficult, calls have therefore been attributed to species where possible, but *Myotis* calls which did not reliably fit the parameters of an individual species were simply labelled as 'Myotis'.
- 3.18 Furthermore, Static 2 failed to collect any data during the May deployment in 2021. This is the only month data was not recorded and is not considered a significant limitation.
- 3.19 The surveys in 2024 only covered the end of the survey season but they are considered sufficient to update the previous surveys as the results were similar and no change in species assemblage was recorded.

Dormice (Muscardinus avellanarius)

- 3.20 The suitability of the habitat was assessed for dormice. Any small mammal feeding signs were checked and assessed, including:
- Examination of hazel nuts; and
 - Evidence of nest building.
- 3.21 The initial site ecological assessment highlighted areas of suitable habitat to support dormice and a series of presence/likely absence surveys were recommended. Current best practice survey guidance for dormice (English Nature, 2006) recommends the use of 'nest tubes' for ascertaining presence/likely absence. Natural England recommend at least 50 tubes are placed within areas of suitable habitat.
- 3.22 A total of 50 Dormouse tubes were installed within suitable habitat on site in May 2021 and allowed to 'bed-in' for at least four weeks. The surveys were conducted during recommended months between June 2021 and November 2021 giving an index of probability 'score' of 20. Update surveys were completed with the same methodology between August and October 2024.

Great Crested Newts (Triturus cristatus)

- 3.23 Ponds within the vicinity of the site were noted and the potential of the land to act as a commuting route, shelter or foraging resource for great crested newts was assessed. If present, areas of standing water present on-site were assessed in accordance with current Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment guidance (Oldham *et al.*, 2000) for their potential to support breeding newts.

Reptiles

- 3.24 A series of presence / likely absence surveys were conducted within the boundaries of the proposed development site, targeting areas of habitat with the potential to support reptiles. Artificial refugia were laid out within the site boundaries and left on 31st May 2021 to 'bed-in' for at least two weeks. Seven separate survey visits were conducted during suitable weather conditions as defined by Froglife (1999).
- 3.25 The surveys consisted of the following three methods, in accordance with current guidance (Froglife, 1999):
- *Visual Search* – The site was searched visually during each visit. Details of reptiles encountered basking in the open were recorded. Recorded data included; species, sex, age and location.
 - *Extant Refugia* – Any existing potential refugia present within the site boundaries were carefully searched by hand for reptiles. Such refugia included; logs and discarded wood.
 - *Artificial Refugia* – artificial refugia, consisting of bitumen roofing felt and profiled underlay were sited in areas of habitat with reptile potential. Such areas included; ruderal vegetation and grassland margins. All refugia were lifted during each survey visit and all reptiles present on, under or next to each refugia were recorded.
- 3.26 Update surveys were completed with the same methodology between June and October 2024.
- 3.27 Dates and weather conditions and are detailed in **Table 8**.

Table 8: Weather conditions during the reptile surveys

Date	Temp (°C)	Weather condition
2021 surveys		
10/06/21	19	dry, light cloud, wind 10mph
16/06/21	20	dry, light cloud, wind 4mph
17/06/21	18	dry, light cloud, wind 5mph
28/06/21	18	dry, cloudy, wind 3mph
15/07/21	17	dry, light cloud, wind 9mph
27/07/21	18	dry, light cloud wind 6mph
04/08/21	18	dry, light cloud, still
2024 surveys		
04/06/24	18°C	18°C, dry, thick cloud, still
10/09/24	18°C	18°C, dry, patchy cloud, light wind
12/09/24	12°C	12°C, dry, light cloud, light wind
16/09/24	16°C	16°C, clear sky, dry, light wind
18/09/24	18°C	18°C, clear sky, dry, light wind
26/09/24	14°C	14°C, light cloud, damp ground, still
01/10/24	14°C	14°C, thick cloud, dry, still

Terrestrial Invertebrates

- 3.28 An assessment was made of the site for the potential to support diverse communities of invertebrates, or any Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species. The assessment was made based on the presence of a number of habitat features which may support important invertebrate communities such as:
- An abundance of deadwood;
 - Presence of diverse plant communities;
 - Presence of varied woodland structure and sunny woodland edge;
 - Presence of ponds or watercourses; and
 - Presence of free draining soil exposures.
- 3.29 During the Phase I survey no attempt was made to identify invertebrate species and where habitats were identified capable of supporting important or rare species, further Phase II survey work may be necessary to assess the importance of the site.

4.0 Results

Desk Study

International Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.1 Six international statutory designated sites are located within five kilometres of the development site.
- **Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA)** is located 1.7 kilometres south of the site. The harbours provide habitat for internationally and nationally important numbers of overwintering and breeding bird species. Chichester and Langstone Harbour supports important numbers of birds including dark-bellied brent geese (*Branta bernicla*), bar-tailed godwit (*Limosa lapponica*), grey plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) and dunlin (*Calidris alpina alpina*).
 - **Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar site** is located 1.8 kilometres south of the site. They are two large estuarine basins linked by the channel which divides Hayling Island from the main Hampshire coastline. The sites include intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh, sand and shingle spits, and sand dunes.
 - **Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC)** is located 1.8 kilometres south of the site. The harbour is given this status for having a range of key habitats such as tidal rivers, estuaries, mud flats, sand flats and lagoons as well as terrestrial habitats such as salt marshes, salt pastures, salt steppes and coastal sand dunes and beaches. Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons (SAC) encompasses a series of coastal lagoons across the Solent and Isle of Wight. The Solent maritime has been designated for the combination of habitats present which includes coastal plain estuaries, areas of smooth cord-grass (*Spartina maritima*) and Atlantic salt meadows.
 - **Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC** is located 3.1 kilometre south of the site. The Solent on the south coast encompasses a series of coastal lagoons. The lagoons show a range of salinities and substrates which support a diverse fauna including large populations of three notable species, the nationally rare foxtail stonewort (*Lamprothamnium papulosum*), the nationally scarce lagoon sand shrimp (*Gammarus insensibilis*), and the nationally scarce starlet sea anemone (*Nematostella vectensis*).
 - **Portsmouth Harbour Ramsar** is located 4.4 kilometres south west of the site. The area is a large industrialized estuary consisting of saltmarsh, expanses of mudflats which support extensive beds of eelgrass, green algae and sea lettuce. These provide important foraging areas for over wintering birds with large populations of black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa*), grey plover and dunlin present.
 - **Portsmouth Harbour SPA** is located 4.4 kilometres south west of the site. The area supports large numbers of brent geese, dunlin, black-tailed godwit and red-breasted merganser (*Mergus serrator*).
- 4.2 The desk study data also revealed 17 sites for the Solent Waders and Brent Goose Strategy (2019) located within two kilometres of the development site. The fields located to the immediate south of the development site are listed as sites for SWBGS with two of them being listed as primary support areas and two being listed as secondary support areas.

- 4.3 The scale of the proposed development and the proximity to these statutory sites will likely result in impacts to these areas in the absence of mitigation. This is discussed further in **Section 5.0**.

National Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.4 **Farlington marshes Local Nature Reserve (LNR)** is located 1.7 kilometres south of the site and is included in the Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC. Farlington Marshes is internationally important for bird populations as well as being species rich in flora.
- 4.5 **Langstone Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)** is located 1.7 kilometres south of the site. The harbour includes one of the largest areas of mixed saltmarsh on the south coast and extensive cord-grass (*Spartina anglica*) marsh in an advanced state of degeneration.
- 4.6 The proposed development will result in a significant net increase in the number of residential dwellings locally. The measures set out for the international sites will also mitigate impacts to these national sites which sit within them. This is discussed further in **Section 5.0**.

Non-Statutory Designated Sites

- 4.7 The desk study data revealed 44 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) which fall within two kilometres of the land at Havant and South Downs College. Six of these lie within 0.5 kilometres north and east of the site:
- **Littlepark Wood West:** Located 0.1 kilometres north-east of the site. Comprised of ancient semi-natural woodland including a portion of yew woods and alder swamp woods. Split from Little Park Wood East by the A3(M). Littlepark Wood West has records of hazel dormouse.
 - **Gundymoor Main:** Located 0.2 kilometres north of the site, adjacent to Littlepark Wood West. Comprised of ancient semi-natural woodland.
 - **Gundymoor West:** Located 0.2 kilometres north of the site, separated from Gundymoor Main by College Road. Comprised of ancient semi-natural woodlands with a portion of yew woods and alder swamp woods.
 - **Littlepark Wood East:** Located 0.3 kilometres east of the site. Comprised of ancient semi-natural woodland including a portion of yew woods and alder swamp woods.
 - **Johnston's Coppice:** Lies 0.4 kilometres north of the site. It is mostly comprised of ancient semi-natural woodland with other woodland where a significant element of ancient semi-natural woodland is surviving. There are also records of hazel dormouse being present.
 - **Meadow adjacent to Johnston's Coppice:** This site is comprised of ancient semi-natural woodland, semi-unimproved grasslands and wetland areas of fens and inundation grasslands. There are records of hazel dormouse on this site.
- 4.8 Littlepark Wood West is located close to the proposed development site, however, it is separated by Havant and South Downs College which is an urban area. The site will therefore not be impacted by the works and no further mitigation is required.

Ecological Assessment

Introduction

- 4.9 The results of the Ecological Assessment are presented below. A habitat survey map is shown in **Appendix C**. The map illustrates the location and extent of the habitats surveyed on the site, along with additional notable features.

Habitats

- 4.10 The land within the site is predominantly a hardstanding car park with narrow woodland edges (**Figure 1**). Small areas and strips of ornamental shrubs are located throughout the carpark. Since the surveys were completed in 2021 only part of the car park is now frequently used.



Figure 1: Carpark hardstanding shown with ornamental shrub

Modified grassland

- 4.11 There are patches of modified grassland located on site which are currently unmanaged along the car park edges (**Figure 2**). These patches of grassland were comprised of yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), ivy (*Hedera helix*), St John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), black medic (*Medicago lupulina*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*) and vetch (*Vicia sativa*).



Figure 2: Small strip of unmanaged modified grassland.

- 4.12 An area of grassland is located to the south of the college buildings between the buildings and the car park. This portion of grassland is comprised of yarrow, common mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*), cat's ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), ragwort (*Jacobaea vulgaris*), perennial rye-grass, ribwort plantain, annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) and vetch. There were scattered trees across this portion of grassland comprising of oak (*Quercus spp.*) and field maple (*Acer campestre*) in 2021 but these have subsequently been felled.

Broad-leaved woodland

- 4.13 The east, south and west boundaries of the site are comprised of a strip of narrow broadleaved woodland (**Figures 3**). The woodland is predominantly comprised of field maple, dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), wild privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*), cherry (*Prunus sp.*), yew (*Taxus baccata*) and guelder-rose (*Viburnum opulus*). A species of cotoneaster is also present within the woodland boundaries. An embankment runs through the centre of the woodland and separates the site from the neighbouring fields.



Figure 3: Broad-leaved woodland lining the boundaries of the carpark

Ornamental shrubs

- 4.14 The sections of ornamental planted shrubs include field maple, false oat-grass, hazel, ribwort plantain, greater plantain (*Plantago major*), turkey oak and cotoneaster spp.

Protected and notable species

Badgers

- 4.15 There were four records returned by HBIC for badger presence within two kilometres of the site, dating from 2005 to 2017.
- 4.16 Badger setts of various activity were found along the embankment within the woodland boundaries from the east to the south of the site. A map of located setts can be found in **Appendix D**. The setts are located in two main areas: along the southern boundary and along the eastern boundary with well-worn mammal paths running along the embankment.
- 4.17 There are a total of seven sett entrances on the southern boundary which in 2021 were a mixture of partially active and active. This appears to be the main area of activity and it considered likely to be a main sett for a clan of badgers. During the update survey in 2024 the sett entrances all appeared partially used and some now disused.
- 4.18 There are four holes along the eastern boundary which are spread across a wider area which comprise partially used and active entrances. These are considered likely to be an annex or subsidiary sett. In 2024 these entrances were only considered to be partially used with some disused.
- 4.19 In 2021 two latrines were found on the site, one was located near setts along the south-east woodland boundary, the other was located on the amenity grassland within the area of scattered

trees lying adjacent to the college building. One sett on the eastern boundary had disturbed dirt, from digging, overflowing onto the carpark (**Figure 4**). No latrines were present in 2024.



Figure 4: Image of dirt overflowing onto hardstanding due to sett digging in 2021

- 4.20 Due to the evidence of possible badger activity, cameras were set up at different points in 2021, including outside active sett entrances and along used commuting and foraging paths, to determine activity levels of setts and whether the sett had cubs. Badger activity was regular on almost every placement of the cameras (**Figure 5**). No cubs were recorded during placements of the cameras but regular activity was recorded.



Figure 5: Image of badger from the cameras

- 4.21 Cameras were placed on the site in 2024 with no badger activity recorded on the cameras. Sticks were also placed in entrances with none being displaced over the camera monitoring period. The camera did record several cats using the woodland edge.
- 4.22 Badgers regularly used the site in 2021 and most likely the surrounding land for both commuting and foraging. Much of the site itself provides limited foraging for badgers and mainly comprises hardstanding. The badgers are considered likely to use the surrounding fields and woodland for foraging and have utilised the embankment within the woodland boundary for sett building. The

mammal paths within the embankment all lead to these areas rather than into the central car park area. The woodland surrounding the sett provides an important link to foraging areas. While activity levels on the sett had decreased in 2024 it is still considered partially active.

- 4.23 The proposed development will result in impacts to the setts present on the site. Further mitigation will be necessary as part of the development which is detailed further in **Section 5.0**.

Bats

- 4.24 The HBIC data search returned 227 records of bats within two kilometres of the site between 1985 and 2019. Species recorded include:

- Unidentified bat species (*Chiroptera*)
- Serotine (*Eptesicus serotinus*)
- Unidentified *Myotis* spp.
- Alcaethoe (*Myotis alcaethoe*)
- Bechstein's (*Myotis bechsteinii*)
- Brandt's (*Myotis brandtii*)
- Whiskered bat (*Myotis mystacinus*)
- Natterer's (*Myotis nattereri*)
- Noctule (*Nyctalus noctula*)
- Unidentified pipistrelle bat (*Pipistrellus* spp.)
- Common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*)
- Soprano pipistrelle (*P. pygmaeus*)
- Unidentified long-eared bat (*Plecotus* spp)
- Brown long-eared bat (*Plecotus auritus*)

- 4.25 A search of the Government run website MAGIC revealed the presence of one granted European Protected Species Licence (EPSL) for bats within two kilometres of the site. These referred to the destruction of a resting place for common pipistrelle.

- 4.26 The site offers low suitability for foraging within the central area which is solely hardstanding. However, the boundaries and habitats beyond are of a higher quality and may provide important commuting routes for bats between adjacent areas. The records returned from HBIC indicate that a diverse assemblage of bat species is present in the area.

Buildings

- 4.24 The buildings located within the development boundary were assessed for potential bat roosts. The main college building located within the boundary is a two-storey brick construction with a small single storey section to the east. The single storey section has a pitch and hipped slate tile roof with skylights and the lead flashing present is well sealed.
- 4.25 The main portion of the college building has a slate tile pitched roof with some of the tiles slightly raised, the gables have wooden cladding (**Figure 6**). The mortar of the concrete ridge tiles is in good condition. Windows throughout the building are double glazed with wood frames, there is plastic piping across the building and external lights are present along every elevation. The soffit

boxes present are wooden and have holes on two of the ends with one having evidence of nesting birds.

- 4.26 The edging of the roof has a metal grid running along the south side, facing the car park. A wooden balcony is present on the east side of the building within the courtyard area, this has a glass roof. A brick bridge connects the target building to the main building of the college campus, this has a flat roof and well-sealed lead flashing. An atrium is present along the southern side of the building, this has a pitched tile roof and glass elevations.



Figure 6 and 7: Main College building

- 4.27 The building was well sealed and the minor raised slates on the roof were not considered suitable for bats. The large open soffits were considered too large to provide a suitable roost space and due to the location within a well-lit area of the site the building was assessed as having negligible potential to support bat roosts.
- 4.28 A second structure is present within the site which is an aircraft section replica used as part of the study course at the college (**Figure 8**). This structure is a metal cylinder which provides no suitable roosting features for bats.



Figure 8: Aircraft structure

- 4.29 It was considered that potential for bat roosts across the buildings is negligible and bat roosts are not present in these buildings. The buildings were unchanged in 2024 and therefore the buildings are still considered to hold negligible potential.

Trees

- 4.30 A large horse chestnut tree is present along the tree line that will be felled as part of the development near the new access point (**Figure 9**). The tree is in good condition apart from two broken branches. The branches have small holes but potential for bat roosts is negligible as the holes face upwards and would be exposed to the elements.



Figure 9: Tree at the proposed new access point

- 4.31 The trees within the tree line separating the north car park from the south are unsuitable for roosting bats as no PRF's were present.
- 4.32 The woodland boundary to the east, south and west of the site was assessed and no potential roost features were found within the trees with all trunks less than 0.5 metres diameter at breast height.

Phase II Bat Activity Transect Survey Results

- 4.33 The woodland boundaries provide suitable habitat for commuting and foraging bats in the wider area and provide pathways for bats to commute from the woodland areas located to the north of the site to the open fields to the south. The site is currently relatively unlit along the southern edge, with the car park lights rarely used in this half of the car park, and therefore provides dark corridors for commuting and foraging bats.
- 4.34 The results of the bat activity surveys are summarised in **Table 9** and shown in **Appendix E**. A total of five bat species were identified to species level during the transect surveys including common and soprano pipistrelles, long-eared bats, noctules, serotines, and an unknown number of *Myotis* bat species.

Table 9: Transect results

Date	Species Recorded
25/05/21	Common pipistrelle and soprano pipistrelle
30/06/21	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule and serotine
29/07/21	Common pipistrelle, and soprano pipistrelle
18/08/21	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and serotine
23/09/21	Common pipistrelle
13/10/21	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle, noctule, serotine, long-eared and Myotis spp.

- 4.35 Key areas of activity recorded during the surveys included the tree line in the northwest corner of the site separating the carpark from the main road. Common pipistrelle were the most frequently recorded species with noctules and Myotis only recorded during the October survey. Activity levels along the southern half of the site were relatively low with only intermittent passes recorded.

2024 Phase II Bat Activity Transect Survey Results

- 4.36 Updated activity surveys were conducted in 2024. The results of the surveys are summarised in **Table 10** and shown in **Appendix E**. Common pipistrelle bats were the only species recorded during the two surveys.

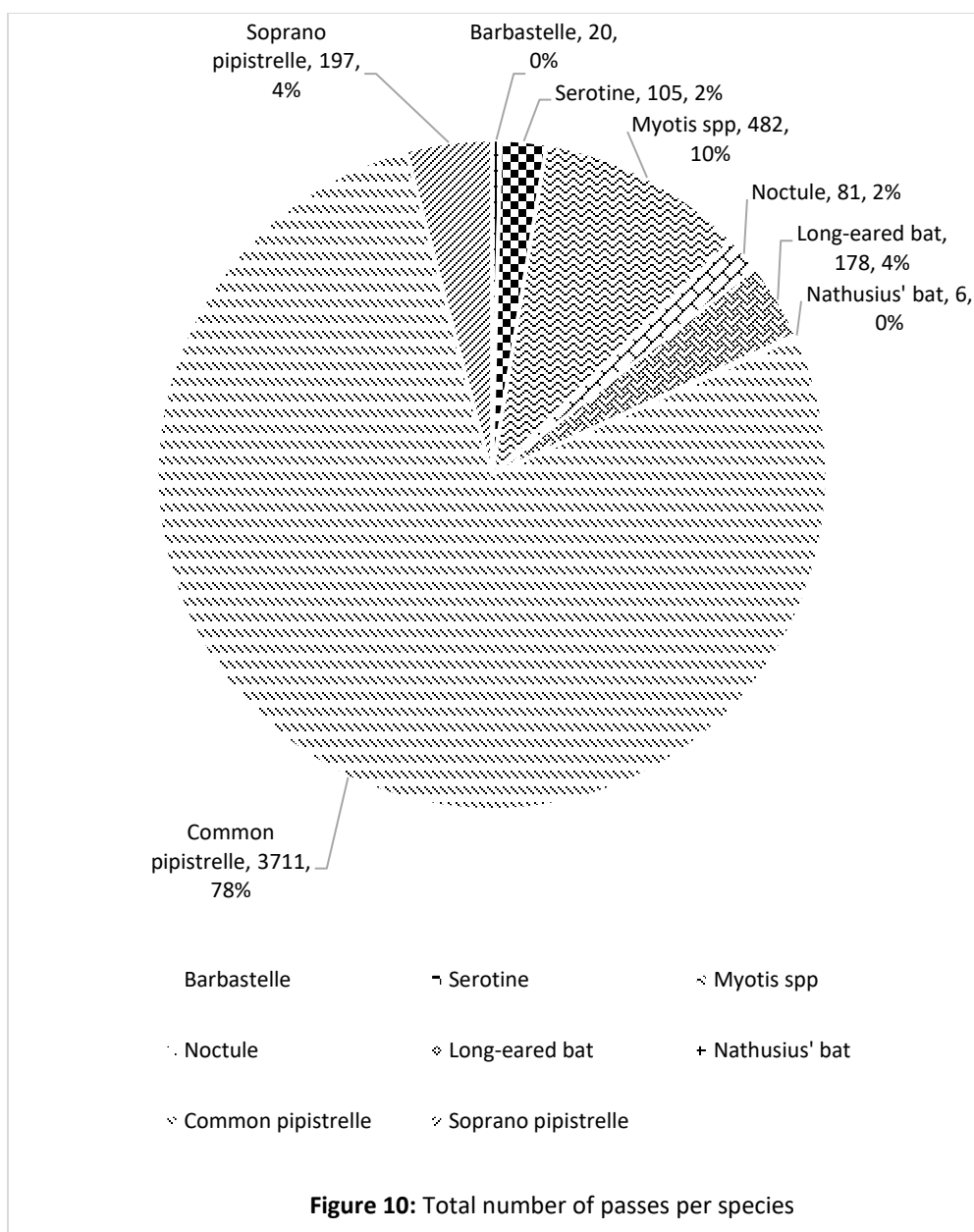
Table 10: Transect results

Date	Species Recorded
22/08/24	Common pipistrelle
12/09/24	Common pipistrelle

- 4.37 Key areas of activity recorded during the surveys included the southwestern corner of the site, with the majority of bats recorded along the southern site boundary in edge habitat where the woodland and hardstanding meet.

2021 Phase II Bat Activity Static/automatic bat detector survey

- 4.38 Static bat detectors were installed for six consecutive nights in two locations, one on the east woodland boundary and one on the south woodland boundary, between the months of May and October 2021. The results of these surveys have confirmed the presence of species recorded during the walked transect surveys and recorded additional species. A total of eight bat species were recorded and identified to species level. The results are summarised in **Figure 10**.
- 4.39 The static on the eastern woodland boundary which connects to the woodland to the north and has a semi-natural grassland adjacent to it, consistently recorded the most activity in all months. The microphones were placed facing along the woodland edge with the adjacent fields and the activity recorded highlights species which utilise the edge as commuting habitat away from the car park.



- 4.40 Due to a technical fault the static on the southern boundary failed to record any data in May. The highest overall levels of activity recorded were in the months of July and August for the eastern boundary static and June and August for the southern boundary static.
- 4.41 The static on the eastern boundary recorded the highest number of passes for each species recorded apart from Nathusius' pipistrelle which had more passes at the southern boundary. Barbastelle activity was highest in July with an average of 1.29 passes per night.
- 4.42 Myotis bats were most active in September with an average of 42.33 passes per night. Noctules activity was quite low with July and August having the highest levels of activity. Serotine activity was also low throughout the static surveys with the most activity during June followed by July and August.
- 4.43 Soprano pipistrelle activity was consistently low throughout the survey period with August having the highest level of activity followed by July. Common pipistrelle activity was highest of all species

of bats by a considerable number with many social calls occurring in August. The activity was higher between June and September with levels peaking in July with an average of 166.57 passes per night. The activity in May and October was comparatively very low.

2024 Phase II Bat Activity Static/automatic bat detector survey

- 4.44 In 2024 two static bat detectors were installed for six consecutive nights in the same two locations as during the initial surveys in 2021. One static detector was located on the eastern woodland boundary and the other detector was placed on southern woodland boundary during the months of August to October 2024. A total of six bat species were recorded and identified to species level. The results are summarised in **Figure 11**.

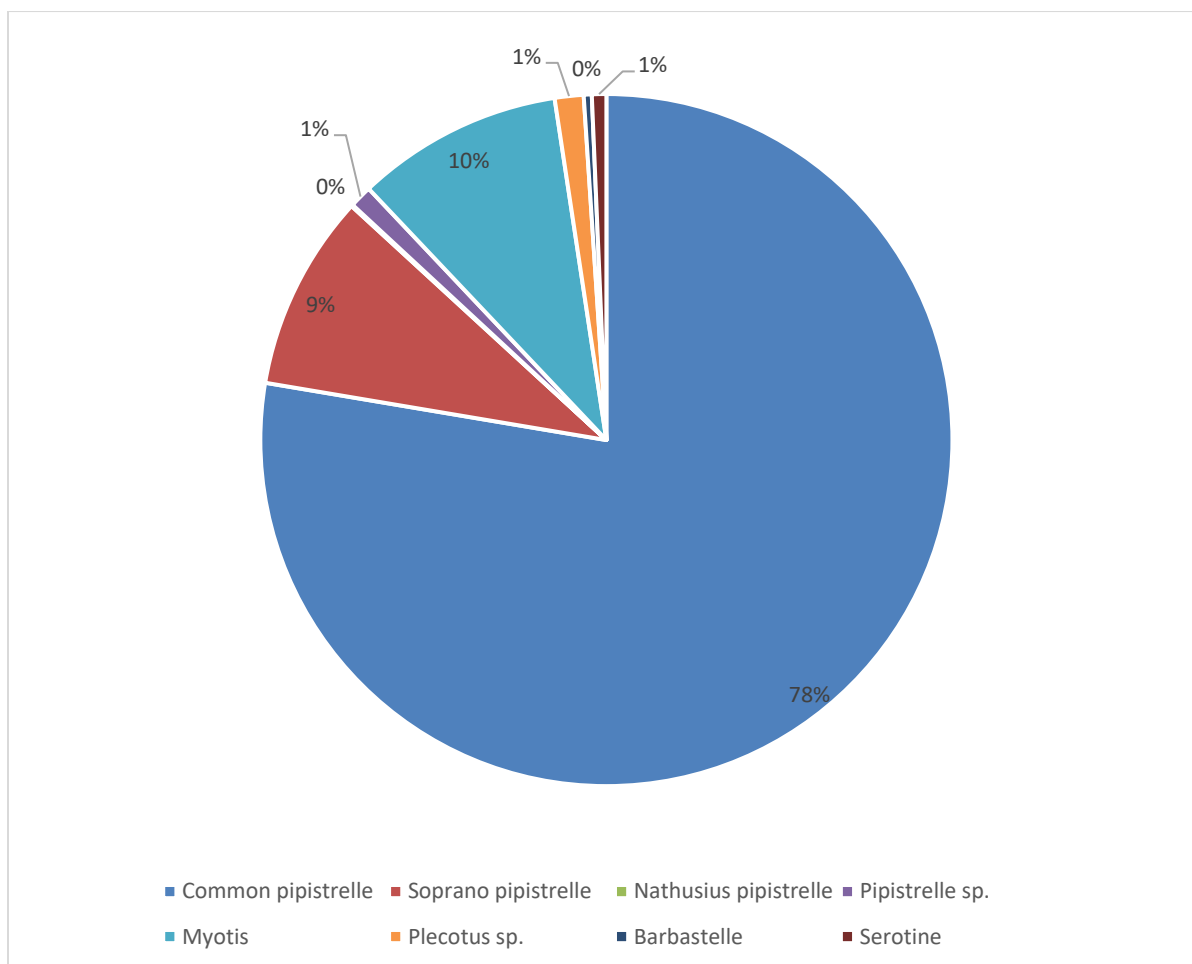


Figure 11: Percentage of bat calls per species

- 4.45 The static on the eastern woodland boundary which connects to the woodland to the north and has a semi-natural grassland adjacent to it, recorded the most activity overall, with the most calls recorded in August and October. A total of 1565 calls were recorded at static 1 recorded compared to 1055 calls recorded by the static 2 on the southern boundary. Activity levels fell consistently between August to October which is anticipated to be due to the changing seasons and weather reducing bat activity overall.
- 4.46 The static on the southern boundary recorded barbastelle bats during all three months, with the highest level recorded; 0.11 passes per hour, being recorded in September. The static on the

eastern boundary didn't not record any barbastelle bats. This is considered to be a low level of activity likely from intermittent foraging by an individual bat on the edge of the woodland

- 4.47 Myotis bats were recorded by both statics in all three months but were most active in September with a peak count of 1.69 per hour. The static on the southern boundary recorded the majority of the myotis calls, recording 1.67 calls per hour in September.
- 4.48 Noctule bat passes were only recorded in September, with a peak count of 0.08 calls per hour. Serotine bats were recorded in all three months, with the most activity recorded in August, with a peak count of 0.16 calls per hour. It is considered likely these were bats commuting over the site rather than consistently foraging across the site.
- 4.49 Common pipistrelle activity was the highest of all species by a considerable margin, with August having a peak count of 16.91 calls per hour, followed by a peak count of 13.30 for September, and 3.15 in October. Soprano pipistrelle activity was much lower throughout all three months, with the highest peak count being 1.64 calls per hour recorded in September.
- 4.50 Activity surveys indicate the site is used infrequently by low numbers of bats with a peak of 33 bat passes per hour for common pipistrelle bats at the static on the eastern boundary of the site.

Impact assessment for bats

- 4.51 Based on assessment utilising the method outlined in the Bat Mitigation Guidelines, the site has been assessed as being of county importance. This valuation has been reached using the values from **Table 8**. Points and justification for the points assigned are provided in **Table 11**.

Table 11: Impact assessment for bats

Rarity category (Points/species)	Points	Justification
Widespread all geographies (1)	3	Common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and long-eared bats were recorded..
Widespread in many geographies, but not as abundant as all (2)	8	Myotis bats were recorded on site. It was assumed that these could be whiskered, natterer's or Brandt's based on the habitats present. Noctule were also recorded.
Rarer or restricted distribution (3)	6	Serotine and Nathusius bats were recorded foraging and commuting across the site.
Rarest Annex II species and very rare (4)	4	Barbastelle bat were recorded utilising the site. No other bat species from this category were recorded. It was assumed that Bechstein's and grey long-eared are not present on site due to the absence of these recorded in the area.
Total	21	

- 4.52 The valuation of county importance would solely relate to the woodland edge habitat and not the majority of the site. This evaluation has been reached due to the infrequent passes of rarer species on the site. The most prevalent species on the site are widespread species which accounted for over 80% of the activity levels in both years of monitoring.
- 4.53 Further recommendations have been provided in **Section 5.0** to maintain and enhance the site for the local bat populations.

Birds

- 4.54 HBIC provided records for the following red list bird species of conservation concern that may be present on the site or in surrounding fields: skylark (*Alauda arvensis*), white-fronted goose (*Anser albifrons*), tree pipit (*Anthus trivialis*), ruff (*Calidris pugnax*), ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*), cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), lesser spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos minor*), yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*), pied flycatcher (*Ficedula hypoleuca*), black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa*), linnet (*Linaria cannabina*), grasshopper warbler (*Locustella naevia*), nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*), grey wagtail (*Motacilla cinerea*), yellow wagtail (*Motacilla flava*), spotted flycatcher (*Muscicapa striata*), curlew (*Numenius arquata*), whimbrel (*Numenius phaeopus*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), grey partridge (*Perdix perdix*), marsh tit (*Poecile palustris*), whinchat (*Saxicola rubetra*), woodcock (*Scolopax rusticola*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), redwing (*Turdus iliacus*), song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*), fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*), ring ouzel (*Turdus torquatus*), mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*) and lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*).
- 4.55 In addition to these records the following Schedule 1 and/or Annex I species were returned which may breed in the area: kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*), Cetti's warbler (*Cettia cetti*), little ringed plover (*Charadrius dubius*), marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*), hen harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*), hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), common crossbill (*Loxia curvirostra*), woodlark (*Lullula arborea*), red kite (*Milvus milvus*), bearded tit (*Panurus biarmicus*), black redstart (*Phoenicurus ochruros*), avocet (*Recurvirostra avocetta*), firecrest (*Regulus ignicapilla*), and barn owl (*Tyto alba*). All other red listed and Schedule 1 species returned in the HBIC search are unlikely to be found on site.
- 4.56 The areas of woodland along the boundary provide potential breeding habitat for birds. Further recommendations are provided in **Section 5.0** for the retention of breeding habitat and the creation of new opportunities.

Dormice

- 4.57 There were 11 records returned by HBIC for dormice within two kilometres of the site with the most recent record dated 2012. Several of the local SINC's mention dormice within their citations and these are linked to the habitats on the site.
- 4.58 The broad-leaved woodland boundaries provide good foraging and commuting habitat for dormice. The woodland habitat surrounding the site has coppiced hazel, which is favoured by dormice. The habitat has moderate connectivity to surrounding woodland patches and includes woodlands within 0.5 kilometres of the site with known populations of dormice.

2021 Surveys

- 4.59 Due to the suitability of habitats within the works area, surveys were conducted to establish the presence/absence of the species. The results of the surveys are provided in **Table 12** below.

Table 12: Dormice survey results

Date	Temperature (°C)	Weather	Dormice	Other
17.06.21	19	Light wind, dry, partially cloudy	None	None
15.07.21	20	Light wind, dry, partially cloudy	None	Green leaves in 1 tube, wood mouse nest
24.08.21	19	Light wind, dry, partially cloudy	None	None
23.09.21	21	Still, dry and overcast	None	None
28.10.21	16	Still, dry, partially cloudy	None	Some wood mouse nests and ladders
26.11.21	8	Still, damp, light rain, mostly cloudy	None	Three wood mouse ladders on west boundary

2024 Surveys

- 4.60 Updated surveys for dormouse were conducted between September and November 2024. The results of the surveys are provided in **Table 13** below and shown in **Appendix F**.

Table 13: Dormice survey results

Date	Temperature (°C)	Weather	Dormice	Other
26.09.24	14	Light wind, dry, partially cloudy	None	2 wood mouse nests
23.10.24	17	Partially cloudy, dry, still	2	1 dormouse nest
20.11.24	7	Partially cloud, dry, still	1	5 dormouse nests

- 4.61 The updated 2024 surveys recorded a peak count of two dormouse, with nests present in five locations (**Appendix F**).
- 4.62 This species was previously absent from the site, and the initial design did not include any mitigation for this species. Hazel dormice are a European Protected Species and any development works which involve the clearance of suitable habitat will require a licence from Natural England to proceed. Natural England will only issue a licence where suitable mitigation has been incorporated into the scheme. This is discussed in further detail within **Section 5.0**.

Great crested newts

- 4.63 HBIC returned no records for great crested newts within two kilometres of the site. No EPSP for great crested newt were granted within two kilometres of the site.
- 4.64 While potential terrestrial habitats for the species in the form of semi-improved grassland and woodlands exist on-site, there were no ponds or water bodies in and within 500 metres of the site boundary.
- 4.65 Due to the absence of breeding ponds and suitable terrestrial habitats, great crested newts are considered absent from the site and further surveys and mitigation are not required.

Reptiles

- 4.66 HBIC returned 20 records for common species of reptiles within two kilometres of the site for common lizard (*Zootoca vivipara*) and slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*). The most recent records were dated 2016.
- 4.67 The patches of semi-improved grassland and woodland edges around the site provide potential sheltering and foraging habitat for common species of reptiles. The mixture of habitats present provide basking opportunities for these species.

2021 Surveys

- 4.68 Reptile surveys were completed on the site and the results are shown in **Table 14**.

Table 14: Reptile survey results

Date	Weather	Results
10.06.21	19°C, dry, light cloud, wind 10mph	No reptiles
16.06.21	20°C, dry, light cloud, wind 4mph	No reptiles
17.06.21	18°C, dry, light cloud, wind 5mph	No reptiles
28.06.21	18°C, cloudy, dry, wind 3mph	No reptiles
15.07.21	17°C, light cloud, dry, wind 9mph	No reptiles
27.07.21	18°C, light cloud, dry, wind 6mph	No reptiles
04.08.21	18°C, light cloud, dry, still	No reptiles, collected mats

- 4.69 No reptiles were recorded on site during the surveys.

2024 Surveys

- 4.70 Update surveys for reptiles were completed on the site between September and October 2024, and the results are shown in **Table 15** and shown in **Appendix G**.

Table 15: Reptile survey results

Date	Weather	Common lizard	Slow worm
04.06.24	18°C, dry, thick cloud, still	2 adult	2 female
10.09.24	18°C, dry, patchy cloud, light wind	1 adult	2 female 1 male
12.09.24	12°C, dry, light cloud, light wind	0	0
16.09.24	16°C, clear sky, dry, light wind	2 adult	4 female 1 male 2 juvenile
18.09.24	18°C, clear sky, dry, light wind	0	3 females 2 males
26.09.24	14°C, light cloud, damp ground, still	1 adult 3 juveniles	1 juvenile
01.10.24	14°C, thick cloud, dry, still	4 adults	5 females

- 4.71 The updated reptile surveys recorded populations of slow worms and common lizards on the site which were previously absent. A peak count of four common lizards and five slow worms were recorded in the grassland verges around the perimeter of the car park.
- 4.72 As reptiles are present on the site further details for mitigation measures are provided in **Section 5.0**.

Other mammals

- 4.73 There were records of European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) returned within two kilometres of the site. Hedgehogs are listed as species of principal importance and the final development design should incorporate enhancement measures for these species. This is discussed further in **Section 5.0**.

5.0 Impacts and Mitigation

Required Mitigation and Ecological Constraints

Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar and Special Protection Area (SPA)

- 5.1 Developments which result in an increase in residential units within 5.6 kilometres of Chichester and Langstone Harbours have been shown to increase recreational pressure on this designated area. Increased numbers of people and dogwalkers along the coast increase the disturbance to birds feeding within the harbour resulting in a significant impact.
- 5.2 To mitigate this impact the development will be required to pay a financial levy in line with the Solent and Waders Brent Geese Strategy. This levy funds wardens, rangers and other mitigation projects which act as off-site mitigation for this impact and has been agreed with Natural England.
- 5.3 The site is also located adjacent to areas identified as support areas for waders and brent geese within the Solent. These sites are important areas for the birds and provide refuge and foraging areas during high tide and are therefore functionally linked to the Solent designation and covered by the same protection. Primary support areas H113 and H125 are adjacent to the eastern boundary and secondary support area H106 is located to the south of the site.
- 5.4 These areas have been subject to winter bird surveys by HBIC and WYG, these were part of a proposed development for a major development at Campdown (APP/19/01101). These surveys recorded brent geese and curlew using the fields. The surveys by WYG recorded a peak count of 54 brent geese and 103 curlew on the neighbouring fields in 2017. The planning permission for this site will remove these support areas for the birds. However, this planning has not been approved and therefore mitigation has been provided on the basis of the fields as they currently stand for this application. If this development is approved and construction progresses prior to this application this mitigation will not be required.
- 5.5 The development will not result in any direct loss of these areas of land but will need to ensure birds are not disturbed or dissuaded from using the adjacent fields. The site is currently screened from these fields by the boundary woodland. This will be retained along the southern and eastern boundary. New planting will be instated along this edge to visually screen the development from the neighbouring fields. This will prevent any visual disturbance to the fields once the development is complete.
- 5.6 The neighbouring fields are on private land with no public access present. The addition of new residents to this area will not increase any recreational pressure or introduce new disturbance to these fields. The boundaries of the development will be secure with no access to the neighbouring fields. The LPA Have requested that a prospective new pedestrian and cycle connection is shown on the plans to connect to a future development on adjacent land. This this will only be installed if a planning application is approved on this land.
- 5.7 There is the potential risk of disturbance to birds using the adjacent fields during construction of the development. This can be mitigated through the timing of works which are likely to create loud percussive noises which may flush birds from the fields, this includes any piling and concrete breaking. These works will be timed outside the winter period when birds are present, considered to be October to March.
- 5.8 Measures to protect the adjacent field will be fully outlined within a Construction Environmental Management Plan.

Nutrient neutrality

- 5.9 The development site is within the East Hampshire catchment and due to the scheme resulting in an increase in residential dwellings there is the potential for impacts to the Solent sites due to an increase in wastewater. Natural England have advised councils within the catchment that increased nutrients are impacting Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation within and around the Solent. This is due to high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus entering the environment and causing eutrophication.
- 5.10 The current recommended approach is that all new developments must achieve nutrient neutrality. This applies to developments within the East Hampshire catchment.
- 5.11 A nitrate budget will need to be devised once the final number of housing units has been determined. It will not be possible to provide mitigation for these impacts on site and the client owns no other land to provide this. In line with the Havant Borough Councils Position Statement and Mitigation Plan for Nutrient Neutral Development the client will pay a contribution to the works at Warblington Farm.
- 5.12 With this mitigation in place there will be no significant impact on the designated site.

Badgers

- 5.13 Badgers are present within the embankment in the woodland boundary with setts present along the eastern and southern boundaries. A main sett is present along the southern boundary with an annex/subsidiary present along the eastern boundary. The design of the scheme has been altered to minimise impacts to badgers as far as possible through the retention of the embankment and eastern boundary woodland alongside additional woodland planting adjacent to the sett. Some sett entrances will be lost as part of the development and there will be disturbance to retained setts. Therefore, the works will require a licence from Natural England for the closure of setts and potential disturbance to the retained sett.
- 5.14 Prior to construction an update survey of the badger setts will be required which will also involve cameras. Badgers are highly mobile and sett locations can alter. This information will be required for the licence application to close some of the sett entrances. A mitigation strategy for badgers is provided below based on current information and shown in **Appendix H**. A final mitigation strategy will be incorporated into the licence based on the updated information.
- 5.15 The badger sett locations are all retained within the new design of the development however the removal of the existing car park to facilitate the development will result in impacts to the setts on the site.
- 5.16 The main sett will be retained within the development proposals alongside the woodland currently surrounding the sett. An area of fencing with a 20 metre radius will be installed around the badger sett during construction. Any works within this buffer will be conducted under ecological supervision to monitor any disturbance to the retained setts. Activity in this area will also only be conducted during July and November and under licence.
- 5.17 The sett on the car park edge be closed under licence to enable the removal of the car park and this will be completed between July and November. Partial closures of the retained setts may also be required during the removal of the hardstanding which forms the car park. The following procedure will be used:

- Setts will be closed with the use of one-way gates. A licence is required from Natural England to allow this, and the licence will only allow such interference with a sett between July and November when badgers are less sensitive in terms of their breeding cycle.
 - The gates will be checked by an ecologist every 3 days to note activity and ensure the gates are working and that badgers have not dug back into the setts.
 - Once the gates have been in place for twenty one days, with no evidence that badgers have regained access, any setts requiring permanent closure will need to be excavated under the supervision of the licensed ecologist.
 - Prior to works commencing the working area will be fenced with heras fencing to dissuade badgers from entering the site during the construction period, and to prevent construction traffic driving and storing materials close to the retained badger setts.
- 5.18 Prior to construction works commencing, all site contractors will be given a tool-box talk to ensure they are aware of the presence of ecological constraints and protected species issues, particularly badgers.
- 5.19 Any excavations left open once development works commence must be effectively covered or have a means of escape fitted should a badger fall in during non-operational hours at the site. A suitable means of escape would be a wooden board or scaffolding planks at a shallow enough angle to allow any trapped animals to climb out.
- 5.20 Hazardous materials should be securely stored to prevent access by foraging badgers. A secure compound should be used, and materials ideally stored in sealed containers or off the ground.
- 5.21 The design of the development will ensure that badgers can still commute through the area. The maintenance of the woodland boundary will ensure connectivity will be retained. Consideration will be required for the potential conflict between badgers and residential gardens, this is only an issue along the eastern boundary. Badger proof fencing will be installed in key locations along the green corridors with the new woodland planting providing an additional buffer.
- 5.22 The landscape scheme of the development provides additional foraging areas with the provision of scrub/woodland creation and native tree planting. With this mitigation in place badgers will still be able to utilise areas of the site and potential foraging areas will be increased.

Bats

- 5.23 Activity surveys and static bat detector surveys recorded the presence of seven species with an additional unknown number of *Myotis* bats which were identified to genus level. This included the Annex II species barbastelle, although with only very low levels of activity recorded for this species.
- 5.24 Deciduous woodland, wet meadows and water bodies, such as woodland streams and rivers, riparian margins and unimproved grassland are used by barbastelles. This species commutes along hedgerows, riparian corridors and treelines.
- 5.25 Barbastelles were recorded by the static on the eastern boundary making passes in July, August, September and October. Due to the very low number of passes recorded, it is not considered likely that a barbastelle roost is present on or near site. Barbastelles are therefore likely using the woodland boundary as commuting habitat intermittently and the site is not considered to form part of the core sustenance zone associated with a roost.

- 5.26 The surveys showed higher levels of foraging activity along the eastern, southern and western woodland boundaries by common and widespread bat species. The woodland along the southern and eastern boundary will be retained with the eastern boundary enhanced with additional planting to maintain a functional green corridor.
- 5.27 The development of the scheme will retain the key areas for bats. The scheme will provide additional areas with the planting of scrub/woodland areas and native planting which have been incorporated within the landscape proposals. The inclusion of these elements will enhance the foraging opportunities on the site for the local bat populations.
- 5.28 Light spill within the development site may dissuade bats from utilising boundary woodland as foraging and commuting habitat, although the site is currently well lit due to the presence of lighting throughout the car park. The ambient light levels on the site are therefore currently very high.
- 5.29 The lighting design of the development will minimise any light spill along the woodland boundary to retain and enhance this corridor for bats. In line with current guidelines, on-site lighting will:
- not exceed 1lux on boundary features and lighting will be hooded or cowled to avoid light spill on these features (ILP, 2023).
 - Any necessary lighting within the development will utilise security timers where possible and be LED lighting of a warm white spectrum (<2700 Kelvin) which will feature peak wavelengths higher than 550 nm.
 - Only lighting with an upward light ratio of 0% will be used.
- 5.30 When the new cycle connection is adopted this will be largely unlit to retain the eastern boundary as a dark corridor. If lighting is required for safety purposes this will be low level down facing lighting .
- 5.31 The woodland boundaries of the site have been strengthened within the landscape design of the development through additional woodland and scrub planting to provide additional screening of the development.
- 5.32 Additional roosting features will be incorporated into the new buildings, outlined further in enhancement recommendations below.

Nesting Birds

- 5.33 The woodland boundaries provide habitat for nesting birds, the development will result in a loss of bird nesting habitat. This will be mitigated through native planting within the central area of the development and the inclusion of integrated bird boxes within the new dwellings.
- 5.34 It is an offence under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) to take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild bird while that nest is in use. To avoid contravention of protected species legislation, any vegetation removal associated with the development must be scheduled to avoid peak bird nesting season (which runs from 1st March to 31st August, inclusive), unless prior inspection by an ecologist concludes that there are no nesting birds present immediately prior to the commencement of works.
- 5.35 If the presence of nesting birds is confirmed, any works which may disturb them will be delayed until the young birds have fledged the nest of their own accord.

Hazel dormouse

- 5.36 Dormouse presence has been confirmed on site following the nest tube surveys. All connected habitat on the site is therefore considered suitable dormouse habitat. The design of the development has been changed to retain as much dormouse habitat as possible with the removal of units from a section of the eastern boundary. An area on the western boundary requires clearance to enable access to the development which cannot be altered.
- 5.37 A total of 0.094 hectares of dormouse habitat will be cleared to enable the development which will impact the dormouse on the site (**Appendix I**). The development will therefore require a European Protected Species Licence for hazel dormouse.
- 5.38 In order to carry out a lawful operation (e.g. development work which has full planning permission) that may result in an offence under the Habitats Regulations, it is first necessary to obtain a licence from Natural England. A licence will only be granted after Natural England has been satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternatives, that there will not be any adverse impacts on the favourable conservation status of the species and that the development is of overriding public interest. The licence will be applied for following the granting of planning permission and once all relevant wildlife conditions have been discharged. Mitigation measures are provided below and shown in **Appendix I**.
- 5.39 Scrub and tree removal will take place in two separate stages, timed according to the dormouse life-cycle. The first stage will take place between late-November and early-February (dormouse hibernation season) the hedgerow and woodland areas to be removed will be reduced to 300 millimetres above ground level. A hand search by a licensed ecologist will be carried out to look for signs of hibernating dormice.
- 5.40 The second stage of vegetation clearance will take place between May and November (dormouse active season). During this phase any remaining stumps and roots will be removed under supervision of a licenced ecologist.
- 5.41 The main area of clearance will include the area of woodland on the western boundary to create the new access road. This area currently includes hazel coppice stools and these stools will be translocated to the compensatory area which is included in the plans on the eastern boundary of the site. The new planting on the eastern boundary totals 0.075 hectares and will include additional planting of hazel, blackthorn, hawthorn, holly, honeysuckle and wayfaring tree. These species will provide foraging habitat for hazel dormouse.
- 5.42 Areas near the new access road will be replanted with a similar species mix which will total an area of approximately 0.021 hectares. The western boundary will be enhanced through the additional planting of scrub species to widen the woodland in sections. Due to the easement in this location the species here will be shallow rooted species and will comprise dogwood, wayfaring tree, dog rose, elder, guelder rose and honeysuckle. This will result in a net gain of dormouse habitat on the site.
- 5.43 There will be some clearance associated with the proposed new cycleway but this has been located in an area of the site where the eastern woodland boundary is thinner with a partial gap currently present. The cycleway will be approximately three metres wide and canopy cover will be maintained through the retention of the larger trees in this area. This will retain the connectivity along this boundary.
- 5.44 Dormouse boxes will be placed within the areas of retained woodland to provide additional nesting locations and enable future monitoring of the population.

- 5.45 The residential units may result in an increase in predation on site due to an increase in cat numbers. However, this is considered unlikely to be significant as the site is adjacent to a heavily urbanised area with the site is currently frequently used by the local cats, as evidenced during the trail camera surveys in relation to badgers. The inclusion of blackthorn, hawthorn and holly within the landscape plans will help dissuade cats from entering the boundary woodland areas.
- 5.46 With this mitigation in place the favourable conservation status of hazel dormouse will be retained.

Reptiles

- 5.47 Populations of slow worm and common lizard are present within the grassland areas of the site. These have likely colonised the site from the adjacent fields which provide suitable habitat.
- 5.48 The areas of suitable habitat on the site are limited to small areas and therefore these areas should be cleared with a trim and push methodology to encourage reptiles to move out of the construction zone of their own accord. This must be completed during the reptile active season (March to October, dependant on temperatures). This will involve an initial reduction of the onsite vegetation height to approximately 15 centimetres, followed by reduction of reptile habitats down to ground level. Strimming will be undertaken towards the retained grassland areas and woodland edges. If any reptiles are found, they will be moved outside the proposed works area by a suitably qualified ecologist.
- 5.49 The final development design includes areas of scrub/woodland and wildflower areas around the boundaries of the site. These areas will provide suitable habitat for the reptile populations. Two hibernacula will be constructed on the site to provide refuge areas (**Appendix J**).

Enhancement Measures for the Proposed Development

- 5.50 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024), development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.
- 5.51 The site is currently of low ecological value and the development presents opportunities to enhance biodiversity at the site scale through the incorporation of the following simple, cost-effective measures which are shown in **Appendix J**:
- Areas of wildflower grassland will be created along the boundaries of the woodland. This will EH1 Hedgerow seed mix from Emorsgate. These areas will provide additional habitat for local invertebrates.
 - Native hedgerow planting will be included within the landscape planting with species such as hawthorn, hazel, holly, and field maple. These species will provide additional foraging through the seasons for local birds and mammals including badgers.
 - The development provides the opportunity to install swift bricks at the eaves on the northern elevation of the new buildings. Groups of a minimum of four swift boxes will be installed under the eaves in shaded areas out of direct sunlight and away from windows. These bricks also provide nesting opportunities for sparrows as well swifts.

- New dwellings will be designed to include an integrated bat brick or bat tiles, these will be placed in dwellings along the boundaries or facing the retained woodland. These measures will enhance roosting opportunities for bats on site.
- Hedgehog friendly fencing will be incorporated within the design of the development to ensure hedgehogs can still move through the development. This can be achieved with the inclusion of gravel boards on the fencing or maintain a gap at the bottom of fences. The inclusion of wildflower areas will also provide additional foraging opportunities for hedgehogs.

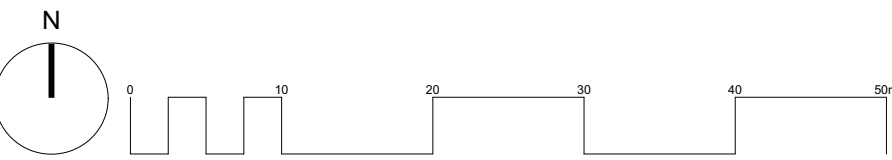
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Appendices

Appendix A: Site Location

Appendix B: Proposed Plans



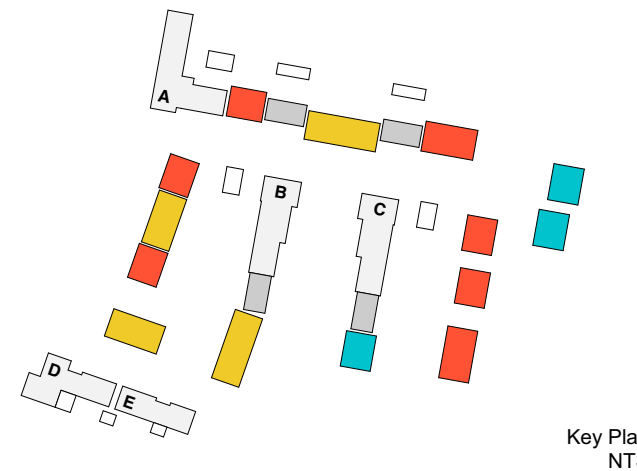
Please Note:

This drawing can only be scaled for planning purposes. Dimensions to be checked on site and any discrepancies are to be highlighted to the Architect prior to construction.

Topographical / Ordnance Survey information shown has been prepared by a third party. HGP accept no responsibility for accuracy or completeness of the survey.

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other project drawings, construction notes and / or project specifications including those by other project consultants and specialists. All discrepancies should be reported immediately.

Design subject to detail development / approval. Measurements and accommodation schedules subject to amendments following coordinated input by others. Costings cannot be finalised until approval / confirmation by relevant authorities and client



- Apartment Blocks
- HT21 - FOG 2B4P @ 70.5m²
- HT23 - 2B4P @ 79.2m²
- HT37 - 3B6P @ 108.6m²
- HT42 - 4B7P @ 113.5m²
- Outbuildings

17	For Planning	12.03.24	VF / CK
16	Amended in accordance to Highways	15.02.24	VF / CK
15	Central PCIS updates	09.01.24	VF / CK
14	Central apartments moved south. Internal play areas indicated. SE corner updated	14.12.23	VF / CK
13	Free tender / cycle route added. turning head update, parking rearrangement	01.12.23	VF / CK
12	General layout improvements	08.11.23	VF / CK
11	Amended layout to fit with following consultation with HBC	05.10.23	CK / CC
10	Updated tree key	20.09.23	VF / CC
09	Updated fence	15.09.23	VF / CC
08	Updated walls	14.09.23	VF / CC
07	Sheds indicated in gardens	27.04.23	VF / CK
06	Areas updated	26.04.23	VF / CK
05	Layout amended. Retaining wall indicated.	08.01.23	VF / CK
04	Layout amended	08.01.23	VF / CK
03	Layout amended	08.01.23	VF / CK
02	Layout amended	26.03.22	VF / CK
01	For Planning	18.03.22	VF / CC

23	Potential cycle this school	05.02.25	TM / CK
22	Levels and parking courts amended	05.02.25	TM / CK
21	PLANNING REGULATIONS	05.12.24	VF / CK
20	Increased PCIS to SE corner. Reduced density	08.12.24	VF / CK
19	Reconfiguration and tree retention / enhancement to 24-32, 30 & 51 now 45	08.11.24	VF / CK
18	Plots 24 to 27 joined as staggered terrace, step to plot 26 entrance	20.03.24	VF / CK
Rev	Description	Date	DB CB



Block Plan

PROJECT Havant College	JOB NO 20.001
SCALE 1:500@A1	DATE Mar 2024
DRAWN BY/CHECKED BY VF / CC	REVISION P23
DWG# 20.001.101	STATUS For Planning

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Appendix C: Habitat Map

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

The proposal presented here is subject to review by specialist consultants, and is to be read in conjunction with all relevant specialist's drawings and information where available. Any discrepancies between this and any other consultant's drawings and information should be reported to Pro Vision immediately.

Legend

- Red Line
- Existing Medium Urban Tree
- Existing Small Urban Tree
- Developed land; sealed surface
- Introduced shrub
- Modified grassland
- Other woodland; broadleaved
- Building



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	28.01.25	Mapping	LSJ	AH

CLIENT:	Places for People Development		
PROJECT:	Havant College		
DRAWING:	Habitat Map	1:1400	
NUMBER:	7707-XX-E0-01	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	28.01.25	

Appendix D: Survey Results – Badger Sett Locations

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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Legend

- Red Line
- Main sett
- Single entrance
- Two entrances



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	28.01.25	First issue	LSJ	AH

CLIENT:	Places for People Development		
PROJECT:	Havant College		
DRAWING:	Badger survey results	1:1500	
NUMBER:	7707-XX-E0-03	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	28.01.25	



Appendix E: Survey Results – Bat Activity Map

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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Legend

 Red Line

 Static locations

Bat Activity - Darker areas indicate higher levels of activity



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	29.01.25	First issue	LSJ	AH

CLIENT:	Places for People Development		
PROJECT:	Havant College		
DRAWING:	Bat Activity 2021 and 2024	1:1500	
NUMBER:	7707-XX-E0-03	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	29.01.25	

Appendix F: Survey Results – Hazel Dormice

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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Legend

- Red Line
- Tube locations
- Hazel dormouse
- Nest



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	28.01.25	First issue	LSJ	AH

CLIENT:	Places for People Development		
PROJECT:	Havant College		
DRAWING:	Dormouse Survey Results	1:1500	
NUMBER:	7707-XX-E0-04	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	28.01.25	



Appendix G: Survey Results – Reptiles

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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Legend

- Red Line
- Common Lizard
- Slow Worm
- Reptile Mats



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	28.01.25	First issue	LSJ	AH

CLIENT:	Places for People Development		
PROJECT:	Havant College		
DRAWING:	Reptile Survey Results	1:1250	
NUMBER:	7707-XX-E0-05	A4	
ISSUE:	v1	28.01.25	

Appendix H: Badger Mitigation

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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Legend

- Red Line
- Badger fence location
- Area of concrete removal within 20 metre buffer
- 20-metre buffer
- Closed sett
- Retained sett



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	09.01.25	First issue	U	AH
v2	03.03.25	Update map	U	

CLIENT:	Places for People Development		
PROJECT:	Havant College		
DRAWING:	Badger mitigation plan		1:800
NUMBER:	7707-XX-E0-04		A4
ISSUE:	v2		03.03.25

Appendix I: Dormouse Mitigation

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

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Legend

-  Cleared areas of dormouse habitat
-  Newly created areas of habitat
-  Re-instated areas of habitat
-  Dormouse nest boxes



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	09.01.25	First issue	U	AH
v1	03.03.25	Update map	U	

CLIENT:	Places for People Development		
PROJECT:	Havant College		
DRAWING:	Dormouse Mitigation	1:1250	
NUMBER:	7707-XX-E0-06	A4	
ISSUE:	v2	03.03.25	

Appendix J: Ecological Enhancements

The plan shown here is for the purpose of supporting a planning application only. Only scale from this drawing for the purposes of determining a planning application. Do not scale from this drawing for construction purposes.

The proposal presented here is subject to review by specialist consultants, and is to be read in conjunction with all relevant specialist's drawings and information where available. Any discrepancies between this and any other consultant's drawings and information should be reported to Pro Vision immediately.

Legend

-  Red Line
-  Bat box
-  Group of swift boxes (Approximate location)
-  Hibernaculum
-  Dormouse nest boxes
-  New scrub/woodland creation
-  Wildflower grassland



ISSUE	DATE	DESCRIPTION	DRAWN	CHECKED
v1	09.01.25	First issue	U	AH
v2	03.03.25	Update base map	U	

CLIENT:	Places for People Development		
PROJECT:	Havant College		
DRAWING:	Enhancement plan	1:1250	
NUMBER:	7707-XX-E0-08	A4	
ISSUE:	v2	03.03.25	

Appendix K: Protected Species Legislation

CONSERVATION OF HABITATS AND SPECIES REGULATIONS 2017

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations) transpose Habitats Directive into UK legislation. The Habitats Regulations provide for the designation and protection of European Sites and European Protected Species. European Sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), which form part of the Natura 2000 network of protected areas across Europe.

European Protected Species (EPS) are those listed under Schedule 2 of the Habitats Regulations and include dormouse, great crested newt, otter and all species of bat. The regulations prohibit the deliberate capture, killing or disturbance of any EPS; it is also an offence to damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of any of these species. In order to carry out a lawful operation (e.g. development work which has full planning permission) that may result in an offence under the Habitats Regulations, it is necessary to obtain a licence from Natural England. EPS Licences will only be granted after Natural England has been satisfied that there are no satisfactory alternative and that there will not be any adverse impacts on the favourable conservation status of the species.

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 is the principal piece of legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain. Various amendments have occurred since the original enactment. The Wildlife and Countryside Act contains both habitat and species protection. Certain bird, animal and plant species are afforded protection under Schedules 1, 5 and 8 of the Act. Measures for the protection of the countryside, National Parks, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are also included within the Act.

COUNTRYSIDE AND RIGHTS OF WAY ACT 2000

The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 adds to the protection afforded in the WCA to SSSI's and other important sites for nature conservation. In addition, under the Act it became a criminal offence to "recklessly disturb" Schedule 1 nesting birds and species protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act. It also enabled heavier penalties on the conviction of wildlife offences.

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND RURAL COMMUNITIES ACT 2006

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 improved wildlife protection by amending the WCA. The main function of the NERC Act was to raise the profile of biodiversity amongst public authorities. Section 40 (S40) of the Act places a 'Biodiversity Duty' on all public bodies to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity when carrying out their normal functions.

PROTECTION OF BADGERS ACT 1992

The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 consolidates previous legislation (including the Badgers Acts 1973 and 1991 Badgers (Further Protection) Act 1991). It makes it a serious offence to kill, injure or take a badger; attempt to kill, injure or take a badger; or to damage or interfere with a sett. The 1992 Act defines a badger sett as "*any structure or place which displays signs indicating current use by a badger*".

