



ecosupport

Kingscroft Farm, Havant

Dormouse Survey

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Client:

Foreman Homes

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Report	Dormouse Survey
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

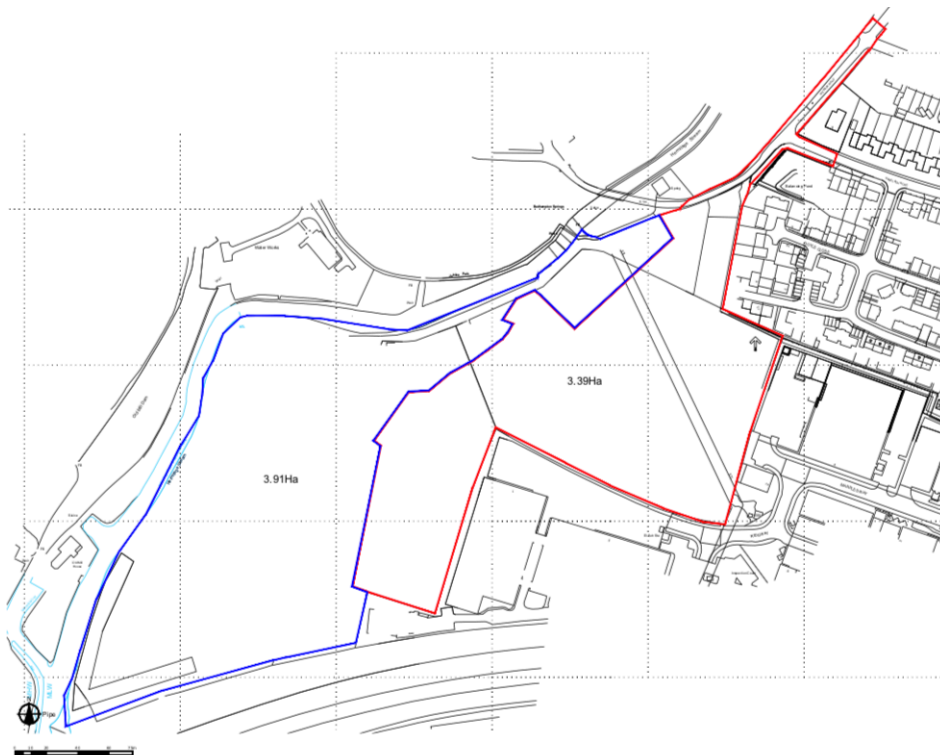
1.1 Summary

This document outlines the results of a nest tube survey undertaken for Dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) in support of a development of a parcel of land at Kingscroft Farm, Havant following a recommendation within the PEA (Ecosupport, 2021). The results of this survey provided within this document.

1.1.1 Site Description

The site comprises of a series of land parcels (some of which are used as horse pasture) located to the north of the A27, Havant, PO9 1QJ (centred on OS grid reference SU 704 061) (**Fig 1**). The north and west of the site are bounded by Hermitage Stream, the east by an industrial estate and the south by the A27. The immediate surrounding environ is predominantly urbanised although the site is located within 0.4 km of the intertidal habitats associated within the Solent area SPA, SAC and Ramsar.

Figure 1. Redline location plan of the site.



1.1.2 Proposed Development

The development will entail the construction of up to 120 new residential dwellings with landscaping and areas of POS.

2.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION & POLICY

2.1 Legislation

Dormice are fully protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981 as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats Regulations (2010). Under these two pieces of legislation acting in parallel it is an offence to:

- Deliberately or intentionally kill, capture, injure or take a Dormouse;
- Deliberately disturb a Dormouse;
- Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a Dormouse;
- Intentionally or recklessly damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place used for shelter or protection by a Dormouse &
- Keep, transport, sell or exchange, or offer for sale or exchange a live or dead Dormouse or any part of a Dormouse.

2.2 Planning Policy

2.2.1 National

Section 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment. They should do this by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity and minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including establishing coherent ecological networks.

The plan states to protect and enhance biodiversity plans should identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks. This includes the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them. Plans should identify the protection and recovery of priority species and opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact;
- development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

- development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity 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.

2.2.2 Local Plan – Havant Borough Council Draft Local Plan 2036

Policy E15 Ecological Conservation

Development on any site in the Borough should conserve and enhance the natural environment wherever possible. Planning permission on any site in the Borough will be permitted where:

- a) The applicant has identified and assessed the level of ecological value of the site through appropriate assessment(s) and any matters arising have been addressed through the development proposal at the earliest stage possible;*
- b) The development results in a net gain in biodiversity wherever possible;*
- c) Development avoids the fragmentation and isolation of habitats and wildlife corridors within or close to the development site;*
- d) The development is informed and influenced by the presence of woodlands, trees and hedgerows on site, particularly those protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) or within a conservation area. If the removal of any tree is unavoidable because it would be in best arboricultural practice a replacement tree of at least equal value to that lost should be planted on site unless it is shown to be impractical to do so; and*
- e) Any necessary mitigation plan includes provision for ongoing management and maintenance.*

Policy E18 Protected Species

Development proposals which are likely to affect protected species and/or their supporting habitats will only be permitted where:

- a) Appropriate surveys are undertaken to establish the presence/likely absence of protected species. If protected species are likely to be present, planning permission will only be granted where either:*
- b) A Mitigation Plan is provided which is based upon appropriate ecological assessments to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority; or*
- c) A Compensation Plan is provided if it is not possible to mitigate the impact; and d. Review and monitoring plans are put in place, where appropriate.*

*For sites that contain or are **adjacent to sites likely to contain Bechstein's bat**, planning permission will only be granted where:*

- e) Survey methods appropriate to Bechstein's bat are used and undertaken by a suitably-qualified ecologist. If the presence of Bechstein's bat is established, planning permission would only be granted where:*
- f) The net loss of woodland (including groups of trees) is avoided;*
- g) Impacts on Bechstein's bat breeding habitat (i.e. net loss of/excessive disturbance to woodland or trees containing maternity roosts) are avoided;*
- h) Proposals include appropriate buffers to woodlands, hedgerows and other flight corridors, taking into account the location of roosts and foraging/commuting habitats; and*

i) Review and monitoring plans are put in place, where appropriate.

Where the above measures cannot be met planning permission will be refused, unless the applicant can show, subject to meeting the tests of the Habitats Regulations, that there would not be an adverse effect on the population of the relevant protected species.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (Ecosupport 2022) identified suitable habitat for Dormouse (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) on the site and consequently recommended a survey should be undertaken to determine their presence or likely absence. Methodological guidance for Dormouse surveys is provided in the *Dormouse Conservation Handbook* (Bright *et al* 2006) whereby a minimum of 50 tubes is recommended to be used per site, at a spacing of 20m. A total of 50 tubes were deployed on site in March 2022 however, due to some gaps in the hedgerow/scrub it was not always possible to spread these out at 20m intervals. The approximate locations of the tubes set out across the site is indicated in **Fig 2** below. The *Dormouse Conservation Handbook* uses an “index of probability” to assess the likelihood of a survey detecting dormice. This assigns a score for each month which nest tubes are on a site (see **Table 1**) and recommends that a total of 20 points is necessary. The surveys were carried out between April and September 2022 to ensure that all key parts of the season were covered and sufficient survey effort was achieved. The tubes were checked by Ashley James of Ecosupport Ltd (Dormouse licence number 2018-35528-CLS-CLS) and Chris Drake.

Table 1. Index of probability of finding Dormice present in nest tubes in any one month. From the Dormouse conservation handbook (Bright *et al* 2006).

Month	Points	Month	Points
April	1	August	5
May	4	September	7
June	2	October	2
July	2	November	2

Figure 2. Approximate distribution of Dormouse tubes covering the suitable habitats both on site.



3.1 Limitations

As explained in the methodology section above, the deployment of tubes at 20m intervals was not achievable on site due to the gaps in the hedgerow/scrub. Given the lack of local records and no other issues during the survey time – it is not considered that this has an impact on the validity of the survey results.

4.0 BASELINE DATA

4.1 Suitable Habitat Description

The majority of the habitat on site is considered to be of limited value to Dormice (i.e. grassland) however the boundary scrub including the planting along the A27 and the outgrown scrub within the central area of the site and around the perimeter are considered favourable for the species. Given the previously recorded presence within 2 kilometres and considering the suitable scrub habitats (**Fig 3**), the site is considered to be of **Moderate** potential for Dormice.

Figure 3. View of the hedgerow located on the site's southern boundary (taken May, 2022).



4.2 Pre-existing Information

HBIC have returned 5 records of records of Dormice (*Muscardinus avellanarius*) from within 2km of the site the most recent being in 2009. All of these are associated with habitats adjacent to the A3 1.7 km to the north west of the site (**Fig 4**).

Figure 4. Locations of the 5 Dormouse records returned by HBIC approximate 1.7 km to the NW of the site.



4.3 Survey Results

Table 2 below indicates the dates on which the tubes were checked and any findings within the tubes.

Table 2. Results of the Dormouse nest tubes survey work on site carried out between April – September 2022. GEC = grey eyes closed, GEO = grey eyes open.

Survey No	Date	Time	Air Temp (°C)	Wind (Beaufort)	Cloud cover (%)	Other Occupancy	Dormice				Dormice Evidence
							GEC	GEO	Juvenile	Adult	
1	14/04/2022	12:00	16	1	50	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence of Dormice identified.
2	16/05/2022	13:30	15	1	30	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence of Dormice identified.
3	15/06/2022	10:00	20	2	30	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence of Dormice identified.
4	15/07/2022	10:15	21	1	20	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence of Dormice identified.
5	19/08/2022	11:30	19	1	50	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence of Dormice identified.
6	27/09/2022	10:00	16	1	15	-	-	-	-	-	No evidence of Dormice identified.

5.0 EVALUATION OF RESULTS

With no evidence of Dormice identified on site and no records within 1km, it is considered unlikely Dormice are present on site. No further works are therefore considered necessary in respect of this species.

6.0 REFERENCES

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