



EXTENDED PHASE 1 ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

FORMER EMSWORTH SUREGERY, 6 NORTH STREET,
EMSWORTH, PO10 7DD

FINAL REPORT

March 2023

Report conditions

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Executive Summary

- This extended phase 1 ecological assessment report has been prepared in order to support a planning application for the proposed demolition, construction and alteration works at the former Emsworth Surgery, Emsworth.
- Hampshire Ecological Services Ltd carried out survey work in 2020. Low suitability roosting features were recorded on the building however no bats were recorded emerging during the emergence survey.
- An updating extended phase 1 ecological assessment of the application site was undertaken on the 27th February 2023 by Katy Goddard of Phillips Ecology.
- The survey area comprised the entirety of the site including the existing building and its immediate surroundings. A data search extended to a 1km radius for designated sites and notable habitats.
- The site is considered to support opportunities for protected and priority species including, bats, breeding birds and hedgehog.
- The preliminary roost assessment confirmed the presence of moderate suitability roosting features the building, mainly in the form of lifted roof tiles and missing mortar. No evidence of bats was recorded during the survey.
- In order to confirm the presence/absence of roosting bats, characterise any bat roosts, assess the extent that they may be affected by the proposed demolition, construction and alteration works and develop a proportionate and appropriate mitigation strategy, further survey work in accordance with Natural England standing advice and the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition) is required. The recommended survey effort for structures with moderate roost suitability is two presence/absence surveys. These surveys will be carried out in the 2023 survey season commencing in May.
- With the implementation of precautionary construction avoidance measures, impacts on designated sites and other protected species will be avoided.
- Information regarding the length of time the findings from this report are valid for can be found in section 13.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Report purpose

This report has been prepared in order to present the extended phase 1 ecological assessment undertaken the former Emsworth Surgery, Emsworth (central grid reference: SU 74905 05866).

1.2 Description of proposal

The proposals include the demolition of the southern single-storey structure followed by the construction of a replacement café structure, and the conversion of the two-storey structure into a hotel.

1.3 Report context

Robert Tutton Town Planning Consultants Ltd have prepared a planning application on behalf of their client BG Doodles Holdings Ltd (the Applicant) for the proposed works at the Former Emsworth Surgery. Phillips Ecology have been instructed by the Applicant to undertake an ecological assessment to support this application, which will be submitted to Havant Borough Council.

1.4 Scope of assessment

An extended phase 1 ecological assessment was carried out on the 27th February 2023. The survey comprised a field survey and desktop study in order to identify notable or protected sites, habitats or species potentially affected by the proposal under consideration.

1.5 Survey area

The survey area comprised the footprint of the proposals which comprised the existing structure and its immediate surrounds. A data search extended to a 1km radius for designated sites and notable habitats.

1.6 Limitations

Limitations which are specific to each phase of the assessment are given in the relevant sections, below.

2. Data search

2.1 Methodology

A desk-based assessment was undertaken by Phillips Ecology on the 8th March 2023 with Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC). The MAGIC database was consulted for records of statutory designated sites and priority habitats for the development site and a 1km radius.

2.2 Limitations

The data search results are bound by the following statement contained within MAGICs general disclaimer: “The materials contained on this website are of a general, informational, nature. We have used reasonable endeavours to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the contents of the pages on this site but the information does not constitute advice and must not be relied on as such.”

2.3 Results

2.3.1 Statutory designated sites

Four statutory designated sites are located within a 1km radius of the application site. These are all associated with coastal and estuarine habitat and comprise Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar, Solent Maritime Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Chichester Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Chichester and Langstone Harbours Special Protection Area (SPA). Details on these are given in table 1, below.

Table 1 Statutory designated sites within 1km of the application site

Site Name	Approx. distance and direction from the site	Reason for designation
Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar	0.3km S	Two large estuarine basins linked by the channel which divides Hayling Island from the main Hampshire coastline. The site includes intertidal mudflats, saltmarsh, sand and shingle spits and sand dunes. The site supports wintering bird assemblages of international importance and bird species of international importance, including: ringed plover <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>, Black-tailed godwit <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>, Common redshank <i>Tringa totanus tetanus</i>; Dark-bellied brent goose <i>Branta bernicla bernicla</i>, Common shelduck <i>Tadorna tadorna</i>, Grey plover <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>, Dunlin <i>Calidris alpina</i>; and Little tern <i>Sterna albifrons albifrons</i>.

Site Name	Approx. distance and direction from the site	Reason for designation
Chichester Harbour SSSI	0.3km S	Chichester Harbour is a large estuarine basin in which at low water extensive mud and sandflats are exposed, drained by channels. The site is of particular significance for wintering wildfowl and waders and also breeding birds both within the harbour and in the surrounding permanent pasture fields and woodlands. There is a wide range of habitats which have important plant communities.
Solent Maritime SAC	0.3km S	Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site: Estuaries, Spartina swards <i>Spartinion maritimae</i>; and Atlantic salt meadows <i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae</i>. Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site: Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time; Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; ▪ Coastal lagoons; Annual vegetation of drift lines; ▪ Perennial vegetation of stony banks; Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand; Shifting dunes along the shoreline with <i>Ammophila arenaria</i> (white dunes). Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection: Desmoulin's whorl snail <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>
Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA	0.3km S	The site supports populations of European Importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive: Little tern, Sandwich tern <i>Sterna sandvicensis</i> , Little egret, Bar-tailed godwit <i>Limosa lapponica</i> , Ringed plover, Black-tailed godwit, Dark-bellied brent goose, Dunlin, Grey plover; and Redshank <i>Tringa totanus</i> . The site is also a wetland of international importance, regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl.

2.3.2 Non-statutory designated sites

Two non-statutory designated sites, both Local Nature Reserves (LNR), are located within a 1km radius of the application site. These are detailed in table 2.

Table 2 Non-statutory designated sites within 1km of the application site

Site Name	Approx. distance and direction from the site	Reason for designation
Brook Meadow (Emsworth) LNR	0.14km	The meadow consists of 5 acres of grassland, surrounded by woodlands and flanked by two streams. Brook Meadow is full of birds, insects and wild flowers, and has water voles <i>Arvicola amphibius</i> in the river.
Eames Farm LNR	0.9km SE	The farm lies at the heart of the AONB (Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and boasts extensive coastal grazing marsh of national and international importance for its plants and bird life.

2.3.3 Ancient woodlands

No compartments of non-statutory ancient woodland are located within a 1km radius of the application site.

2.3.4 Priority habitats

The data search revealed the following priority habitats within 2km of the application site:

- Coastal salt marsh, closest 0.95km SW
- Mudflats, closest 0.29km S
- Saline lagoons, closest 0.09km SW
- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, closest 0.21km NE
- Deciduous woodland, closest 0.12km NE
- Traditional orchard, closest 0.45km NE

2.3.4 Protected Species

A single record of a granted protected species licence was identified within 1km of the application site, the details are as follows:

- Bat: soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*, 2019-44235-EPS-MIT, 0.08km W

3. Habitats

3.1 Methodology

A field survey was carried out on the 27th February 2023 by Katy Goddard of Phillips Ecology. During the survey, all broad habitat types were identified, and a list was compiled of characteristic plant species within each habitat type. These habitats are described below in accordance with Phase 1 habitat terminology.

3.2 Limitations

The habitat survey was carried out during February which is outside the optimal period for recording vascular plant species. Whilst certain species would not have been evident if present, it was possible to identify vegetation to effectively classify habitat types in accordance with Phase 1 habitat terminology and no limitations were encountered.

3.3 Existing records

The data search revealed that priority habitats associated with the local landscape within 1km of the site comprise coastal and floodplain grazing marsh and deciduous woodland.

3.4 Results

The site sits on the corner of Havant Road and High Street in Emsworth, with vehicular and pedestrian access respectively. The site is composed of a large brick-built house which has been extended numerous times and converted into a doctor surgery. In front of the eastern elevation of the building, a narrow area of hardstanding separates the building from High Street, and Herras fencing is now also present. To the west of the building the vehicular access leads into a large gravel parking area. A small garden of lawn and ornamental planting is present to the north. Additional pedestrian access is present from a gate off West Street, leading to an alley between neighbouring structures and a courtyard between the eastern and western extensions of the site.

The following Phase 1 habitat types were recorded within the application site. See Appendix 2 for the Phase 1 habitat map.

3.4.1 *Amenity grassland (J1.2)*

The garden in the north-eastern section of the site is dominated by amenity grassland which is managed to a uniform short sward (Figure 1). Perennial rye-grass *Lolium perenne* and Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* grasses were recorded, interspersed with herb species including ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, dandelion *Taraxacum sp.*, cut-leaved crane's-bill *Geranium dissectum*, daisy *Bellis perennis*, sow thistle *Sonchus sp.* and petty spurge *Euphorbia peplus*. Colt's-foot *Tussilago farfara* is encroaching into the grassland from the gravel to the side.



Figure 1 – amenity grassland in the side garden

3.4.2 *Introduced shrub (J1.4) and scattered trees (A3.1)*

Inside the northern wall boundary and trees shrubs border the gravel and lawn (Figures 2 and 3). The species include heather *Calluna vulgaris*, ash *Fraxinious excelsior*, spotted laurel *Aucuba japonica*, buddleia *Buddleja* sp., cherry laurel *Prunus lauroceracus* and willow *Salix* sp.. Further species are encroaching through the gravel and pathways, including fleabane *Erigeron* sp., wall speedwell *Veronica arvensis*, buck's-horn plantain *Platnago coronopus* yellow corydalis *Pseudofumaria lutea*, ivy-leaved toadflax *Cymbalaria muralis* and pellitory-of-the-wall *Parietaria Judaica*. A bay *Laurus nobilis* is present in the south-western corner of the site. Ivy *Hedera helix* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* are growing along the boundary wall.



Figure 2 – shrubs along the western end of the boundary wall



Figure 3 – shrubs and trees along the eastern end of the boundary wall

3.4.3 *Boundaries (J2)*

A brick wall (J2.5) borders the majority of the western, northern and northern end of the eastern boundaries of the site. The southern boundary is formed by neighbouring buildings and one wooden gate at the end of the alley. Herras fencing now encloses the northern and eastern entrances to the site from Havant Road and High Street respectively.

3.4.4 *Buildings (J3.6)*

The application site supports a single building which is composed of a main structure and its extensions. This is described further in section 5.

3.4.5 Other – hardstanding (J5)

The western end of the site is composed of a large gravel driveway/parking area (Figure 4). Further hardstanding in the form of paved and concrete paths are present to the east (Figure 5) and south of the building.



Figure 4 – gravel driveway/parking area in the western section of the site



Figure 5 – paved and concrete path in the eastern section of the site

3.5 Assessment

The habitats on site are managed and consist of mostly buildings, hardstanding, amenity grassland and introduced shrub species. The site lacks any areas of extensive semi-natural habitat or notable areas of vegetation and therefore is considered to be of low botanical value.

4. Protected and notable species assessment

The scope of works, data search and habitat assessment have informed the scope of the protected and notable species assessment. On this basis, the following protected and priority species have been considered further within this report:

- Bats
- Badgers
- Dormice
- Hedgehogs
- Reptiles
- Amphibians
- Breeding birds

The surveyed site has been assessed for its potential to support the above- named protected species based upon the criteria in Table 3.

Table 3 Protected species grading criteria

<i>Grading criteria</i>	<i>Justification</i>
<i>Negligible</i>	Site is entirely unsuitable for species. Presence of species highly unlikely.
<i>Low Potential</i>	Minimal suitable habitat present or, if present, highly degraded/fragmented. Minimal linkage to suitable habitat beyond site. Presence of species unlikely.
<i>Moderate</i>	Presence of some suitable habitat features for species. Surveyed site within/close to known range or known occurrence but factors such as isolation/fragmentation may reduce potential. Presence of species is more likely than not.
<i>High</i>	Presence of optimal habitat features for species. Surveyed site within known range/close to known occurrence. Excellent connectivity to optimal habitat. No justification for discounting presence of species.
<i>Confirmed presence</i>	Species confirmed on site through direct sighting, presence of field signs (e.g. scat, hair, prints, nest, eggs, habitation etc.) or through desk-based assessment.

5. Bats

5.1 Methodology

The survey did not depart from the Bat Conservation Trust's (BCT) Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists: Good Practice Guidelines (3rd edition) which states that "A preliminary roost inspection survey is a detailed inspection of the exterior and interior of a structure to look for features that bats could use for entry/exit and roosting and to search for signs of bats".

The external features of the built structures which will be modified by the proposed works in such a way that bats or their roosts could be impacted (directly or indirectly) if present, were systematically inspected in detail to compile information on potential and actual bat access points and roosting places such as lifted or broken tiles, loose brickwork and open eaves. This included a thorough search for evidence of bat activity such as bat droppings, urine splashes and fur staining.

The interior of the building was inspected in order to identify potential or actual access points and roosting places and to record any evidence of bat activity or bats themselves.

5.2 Survey equipment

Survey equipment comprised:

- High-powered torch
- Ladders
- Camera
- Binoculars

5.3 Limitations

The alley way leading between sections of the buildings from West Street to the south of the site was not accessible, however, the roofs of those sections were largely visible from windows when inside the building. Due to the size of the hatch, the western void was viewed from the hatch only. No other limitations were not encountered during the course of the survey. Despite these limitations it was still considered that a robust assessment of the buildings' suitability for supporting roosting bats has been undertaken.

5.4 Assessment methodology

The suitability of the buildings for supporting bat roosts will be assessed against the guidelines within Table 4 which have been adapted from the BCT Good Practice Guidelines.

Table 4 Suitability assessment guidelines

<i>Suitability</i>	<i>Description of Roosting Habitats</i>
<i>Negligible</i>	Structure has no reasonable likelihood of supporting roosting bats i.e. no suitable roosting features present.

Low	A structure which could be used opportunistically by individual bats i.e. one or more potential roost sites which do not provide sufficient space, shelter, protection, appropriate conditions (e.g. temperature, light, humidity) and/or suitable surrounding habitat to be used on a regular basis or by larger numbers of bats.
Moderate	A structure which could be used by bats but is not likely to support a roost of high conservation status (e.g. maternity roost). This structure would support features which exhibit suitable size, shelter, protection, conditions and surrounding habitat for roosting bats.
High	A structure which is obviously suitable for supporting larger numbers of bats, on a regular basis and for longer periods of time.

5.5 Existing records

The site was previously surveyed in 2020 by Hampshire Ecological Services Ltd. Low suitability roosting features were recorded on the building and a single emergence survey was carried out. Activity levels were low during the emergence survey with no bats recorded emerging from the building and only five registrations of common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* foraging/commuting recorded heard not seen.

In addition, Phillips Ecology have recorded pipistrelle bats foraging over the Emsworth Mill Pond 0.09km to the west of the application site.

5.6 Results

5.6.1 Building description relevant to bats

The surgery building comprises several adjoined brick-built structures. The main section of the building is two-storey and rises to a multi-pitched, hipped and gable end design roof clad with clay roof and ridge tiles (Figure 6). The roof tiles support light moss growth. Small dormer windows clad with lead flashing extend from the eastern ends of both the northern and southern roof faces where there is a part loft conversion with the eastern section of the void previously converted into habitable space. The structure supports three brick-built chimneys; one extends from the western gable end, and one from each of the northern and southern ridges. Lead flashing and mortar cover the joins between the base of the chimneys and the roof. The elevations either remain as exposed brickwork or have been painted. The eastern elevation supports curved wooden soffits. The buildings support wooden windows set in brick frames.

Multiple single-storey extensions extend from the main building. To the west, a small pitched and gable end structure clad with traditional clay peg tiles extends from the western gable (Figure 7). The western end supports a brick-built chimney. A mono-pitched roof connects the southern elevation of this extension to a long, pitched and hipped extension clad with clay roof tiles, which extends south-west and meets the neighbouring building (see Figure 4, above). To the south, a pitched and gable end structure clad with slate roof and ridge tiles is present (Figure 8). It is surrounded on its northern, western and southern elevations with flat roof sections clad with roofing felt (Figure 9); the northern section connects the extension to the southern elevation of the main building. As with the

main buildings, the elevations of the extensions either remain as exposed brickwork or have been painted.

Internally, the main building and the western and southern pitched extensions each support a roof void. The main void has been part-converted into habitable space. The remaining void space is accessed from two side doors and supports bitumen lining, fibreglass insulation and is unboarded (Figure 10). The western void roof is unlined, unboarded and supports fibreglass insulation. The southern void is shallow, supports bitumen lining, fibreglass insulation and is unboarded (Figure 11). All three voids are moderately cobwebbed.



Figure 6 – northern elevation of the main building



Figure 7 – western gable and mono-pitched extensions



Figure 8 – eastern elevation, with the southern pitched and flat roof extensions



Figure 9 – westernmost flat roof extension



Figure 10 – main roof void



Figure 11 – southern roof void

An account of suitable access/egress features and recorded evidence of bat activity inside the zone of impact is given in table 5. 16

Table 5 Recorded features and activity

	<i>Suitability</i>	<i>Evidence</i>
<i>Exterior</i>	The following suitable access/egress and roosting features were recorded externally during the survey: - Lifted clay roof tiles. - Holes in the corner of the soffits on the eastern elevation of the main building. - Gaps and missing mortar leading to ridge and hip tiles on the main section of the building. - Lifted lead flashing.	No evidence of roosting activity was recorded internally during the survey.
<i>Interior</i>	The following suitable access/egress and roosting features were recorded internally during the survey. - Roosting space against and between beams.	No evidence of roosting activity was recorded internally during the survey.

5.6.2 Site grounds description relevant to bats

The site grounds comprise a managed lawn, ornamental planting, and hardstanding. Beyond this, Emsworth is comprised of residential properties and their associated gardens, commercial development and services. In addition, mill ponds, Brook Meadow Local Nature Reserve and the River Ems provide suitable habitats for bats in the local area. Further afield, the landscape is characterised by blocks of broad-leaved woodland, permanent pasture, arable farmland, mature hedgerows, scattered trees and coastal habitats. In this context, the habitats within the footprint of the proposal are considered unexceptional for foraging and commuting bats, however, given their location within a landscape which is suitable for commuting and foraging bats, it is possible that bats will commute and forage through the site.

5.7 Assessment

Compared with the preliminary survey carried out in 2020, more potential bat roost features, both in type and number, were recorded during this updating survey. When considered in view of the criteria set out in Table 4, the surgery is considered to support moderate suitability for roosting bats. This assessment is based on the type and number of features identified and evidence recorded during the survey.

In the context of the wider landscape, the habitats within the footprint of the proposal are considered unexceptional for foraging and commuting bats. They are, nevertheless,

suitable for commuting and foraging bats and it is likely that bats will commute and forage through the site as a compartment of their wider foraging range.

6. Badgers

6.1 Methodology

The survey involved a detailed investigation of the site to identify evidence of badger residence, foraging or territorial activity. This includes badger setts, latrine sites, dung piles, well-used trails, prints and hairs. Particular emphasis was placed on locating badger setts, paths and signs of territorial activity such as dung piles and latrines.

6.2 Limitations

Limitations were not encountered during the course of the survey.

6.3 Results

A mammal track was recorded running through the grassland. No evidence of mammal foraging activity or a badger sett was recorded on site.

6.4 Assessment

Badger setts are considered to be absent from the application site. There is considered to be low potential for badgers to utilise foraging opportunities within and surrounding the site.

7. Dormice

7.1 Methodology

An assessment was made of the suitability of habitat on site to support hazel dormice. Key habitats are woodland, scrub and hedgerows, particularly where these offer dense vegetation within which to nest/hibernate and key resources such as hazel nuts, fruiting/nectar-rich plants (e.g. hawthorn, bramble) to provide a continuum of food resources throughout the active season and honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* (for nesting material). Landscape-scale habitat linkages such as hedgerows are fundamental for dormouse presence where small scale or sub-optimal habitats are recorded within a site.

7.2 Limitations

Limitations were not encountered during the course of the survey.

7.3 Results

The habitats which form the application site (managed grassland, ornamental planting and buildings/hardstanding) are considered to be wholly unsuitable for supporting dormice because they do not support resources that would be required to support dormice. In addition, the site is isolated from suitable habitats.

7.4 **Assessment**

The site is considered to support negligible suitability for dormice.

8. Hedgehogs

8.1 **Methodology**

The site was assessed for its suitability to support hedgehogs based on the presence of favoured habitats such as woodland edges, hedgerows, grassland and suburban habitats.

Hedgehogs are most abundant within gardens, parks and amenity land close to or within human settlements. They are generally scarce in areas of coniferous woodland, marshes and moorland, probably because of a lack of suitable sites and materials for the construction of winter nests (Morris, 2006). Any evidence of hedgehog activity such as prints or droppings was recorded.

8.2 **Limitations**

Low detection rates are associated with evidence of hedgehog activity; therefore, absence of evidence does not confirm the absence of hedgehogs. For this reason, the assessment of the likely presence/absence of hedgehogs has largely been informed by the species' local distribution and the habitats within the site and local area.

8.3 **Results**

The garden has the potential to support foraging hedgehog although no direct evidence was noted.

8.4 **Assessment**

There is considered to be moderate potential for hedgehog to occur on site.

9. Reptiles

9.1 **Methodology**

An assessment was made of the site's suitability to support reptile populations. Key habitat features include: tussocky/patchy grassland; scrub edge; linear watercourses; ponds; compost heaps; brash piles and rubble/soil heaps. Linkage to suitable habitat within the surrounding landscape will increase the potential for reptiles to occur, although populations can occur within isolated/fragmented habitats even within urban areas.

9.2 **Limitations**

Limitations were not encountered during the course of the survey.

9.3 **Results**

While shrubs are present in the garden, the managed condition of the grassland and ornamental planting reduces the overall suitability of the site. The site is set within a small block of buildings, hardstanding and one other garden surrounded by roads.

Nevertheless, it is possible that transient reptiles may disperse through the site or use the site opportunistically given suitable habitat within the wider area. Without management, the site could establish habitat features which have greater suitability for reptiles.

9.4 **Assessment**

There is considered to be low potential for small numbers of reptiles to occur on site.

10. Great Crested Newts

10.1 **Methodology**

Great crested newts are only present in their breeding ponds during the spring and early summer – for the rest of the year, they will be dispersed across the surrounding area, generally in grassland, scrub, woodland and hedgerows, although they may be found in gardens and brownfield sites. They can travel some distance from their breeding ponds, and as a general rule, developments within 500m of such a pond may have the potential to have an impact on GCN, although to a certain extent, this does depend on any intervening habitat or barriers to dispersal.

An assessment was made of any waterbodies and terrestrial habitat within the site for their suitability to support populations of amphibians. Suitable waterbodies will generally be characterised by the presence of good quality water, diverse macrophyte cover and an absence of fish. For the European-protected great crested newt, each waterbody is normally assessed using the Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) system (Oldham et al., 2000) and assigned a grading score between zero (poor suitability) and 1 (excellent suitability).

10.2 **Limitations**

The HSI for great crested newts is a measure of habitat suitability. In general, ponds with high HSI scores are more likely to support great crested newts than those with low scores. However, in isolation, the system is not sufficiently precise to allow the conclusion that any particular pond with a high score will support newts, or that any pond with a low score will not do so (Oldham et al., 2000).

10.3 **Results**

The desktop survey has revealed that three waterbodies are located within 500m of the application site. However, these are either tidal mill ponds and/or connected to the River Ems. As such they will be subject to fish, fowl and water flow impacts. The vegetation on site provides limited refuge opportunities for GCN.

10.4 **Assessment**

Given the lack of a network of ponds within 500m of the site, there is considered to be negligible potential for great crested newt to occur within the site.

11. Breeding Birds

11.1 Methodology

An assessment was made of the site's suitability to support breeding bird species. Nesting birds will utilise a broad range of habitats, including: built structures, trees, scrub, isolated shrubs, dense herbaceous vegetation (terrestrial and aquatic) and open grassland. All bird species and evidence of breeding activity (active or inactive) observed on site were recorded.

11.2 Limitations

Limitations were not encountered during the course of the survey.

11.3 Results

The trees, shrubs and buildings present on site are considered to support nesting opportunities for breeding birds. An inactive bird nest was recorded in the void of the westernmost structure.

11.4 Assessment

The site is considered to support high potential for breeding birds.

12. Discussion and Assessment of Impacts

12.1 Relevant legislation and policy

Circular 06/2005 identifies that applicants should not be required to provide information on protected species unless there is a reasonable likelihood that they will be present and affected by the proposed development. The site is considered to support habitats with suitability and potential for protected species and these may be affected by the proposed development. Therefore, the proposal triggers 'reasonable likelihood' under the Circular.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (commonly referred to as the Habitats Regulations) may apply should protected species be confirmed on site.

In the case that a European protected species (bats in this case) is found to be present and impacted by the proposal, the local planning authority will be required to engage with the Habitat Regulations. Permission will be granted unless:

- a) the development is likely to result in a breach of the Habitats Regulations, and
- b) is unlikely to be granted an EPS licence from Natural England to allow the development to proceed under a derogation from the law (under licence).

When considering whether Natural England would not be unlikely to grant a licence for the identified impact, the local planning authority must consider the three tests which are set out in the Habitat Regulations:

1. the consented operation must be for 'preserving public health or public safety or other imperative reasons of overriding public interest including those of a social or economic nature and beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment'; (Regulation 53(2)(e))
2. there must be 'no satisfactory alternative' (Regulation 53(9)(a)); and
3. the action authorised 'will not be detrimental to the maintenance of the population of the species concerned at a favourable conservation status in their natural range' (Regulation 53(9)(b)).

Natural England will grant a licence if the development proposal is able to meet the three tests.

Case-law (Morge vs. Hampshire County Council) has clarified that planning authorities are able to grant permission for developments that would cause a breach of the Regulations is likely (i.e. in the case of this proposal, destruction of a bat roost), provided that sufficient information is provided to give the planning authority assurance that the relevant EPSM licence is not unlikely to be granted - i.e. planning authorities also have a duty to assess planning applications against these tests.

12.2 Designated sites

The application site is located within proximity of Chichester and Langstone Harbours Ramsar site, Chichester and Langstone Harbours SPA, the Solent Maritime SAC, as well as the Chichester Harbour SSSI and two LNRs which are components of the aforementioned Natura 2000 designated sites. The proposed development will not result in the direct loss of any of the identified designated sites. Nor will it result in the direct loss of any habitat that could be considered functionally linked supporting habitat for the species for which the sites were designated.

However, the designated sites support a range of habitats and bird species that are vulnerable to impacts arising from development such as disturbance and pollution during the construction and operational phases of a development. As such, the proposals have the potential to impact the abovementioned designated sites.

Recreational disturbance

The proposals are to convert the surgery into a hotel which will bring an increased number of new people to the local area. The site is within 5.6km of the Chichester and Landstone Harbours SPA, the distance defined as the zone identified by recent research where new residents would be considered likely to visit the site. The SPA supports a range of bird species that are vulnerable to impacts arising from increases in recreational use of the site that result from new residential development. While one hotel on its own would not result in any significant effects, it has been demonstrated through research, and agreed by Natural England (the government's statutory nature conservation advisors) that any net increase in accommodation would have a likely significant effect on the SPAs when considered in combination with other plans and projects. Given that the nature of hotel users is considered highly variable, the impact of new hotel rooms is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Increasing nitrate levels

The Site Improvement Plan for the Solent (Natural England, 2014) identifies that “...*water pollution affects a range of habitat and bird species at the site through eutrophication and toxicity. Sources include both point source discharges (including flood alleviation / storm discharges) and diffuse water pollution from agriculture / road runoff. Environment Agency flood event discharge consents allow untreated waters to be discharged which end up in the SAC and are likely to have a negative impact.*”

Therefore, Natural England have advised that any new residential development that lies within the catchment of the Solent should achieve ‘nutrient neutrality’ in order to demonstrate that there is capacity to accommodate growth without resulting in a significant effect on the Solent sites.

The proposed development will generate wastewater as a result of new building occupancy.

Therefore, as part of a planning application, it must be demonstrated that the development can achieve nutrient neutrality with regard to nitrogen inputs into Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites within the Solent, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.

The methodology for assessing if the proposed development will achieve nutrient neutrality comprises four stages (Natural England, 2020):

- Stage 1 - Calculate the total nitrogen output in kilograms per year derived from the development that would exit the site into Solent catchments after treatment.
- Stage 2 - Calculate existing (pre-development) nitrogen output as a result of leaching from current land use of the development site.
- Stage 3 - Calculate the likely nitrogen output as a result of leaching from future land use, and the net change in nitrogen output as a result of leaching.
- Stage 4 - Calculate the net change in the total nitrogen output into the Solent that would result from the development.

As the proposals for the site progress, consideration must be given as to how the development can achieve nutrient neutrality to demonstrate that the proposal will not significantly effect the Solent sites by contributing to increasing nitrate levels.

12.3 Habitats

The buildings, hardstanding, amenity grassland and ornamental planting are the main habitats to be impacted. As the vegetation to be removed is managed, easily replicable and of low botanical value, it is considered that there will be no impact to habitats of ecological importance such as priority habitats as a result of its loss.

12.4 Bats

On the basis that surgery supports moderate suitability for roosting features for bats, there is considered to be a reasonable likelihood of impacts on roosting bats associated with the alteration works.

The application site is considered to support suitability for foraging bats and commuting bats leaving or returning to roost. Increasing lighting could impact this behaviour which would indirectly impact roosts.

12.5 Badgers

The site supports low suitability for badger. Therefore, impacts to badgers could occur during construction if trenches are left open. Impacts on badgers associated with loss or damage of setts or loss of foraging habitat are not anticipated.

12.6 Hazel dormouse

The proposal will not result in the loss of habitat which is considered to support suitability for dormice. Therefore, no impacts on dormice are anticipated.

12.7 Hedgehog

Impacts on hedgehogs are likely to occur if trenches are left open.

12.8 Reptiles

The proposal will not result in the loss of habitat which is considered to support potential for reptiles. However, precautionary avoidance measures are proposed for the construction phase given the potential for transient reptiles to pass through.

12.9 Great crested newts

The proposal will not result in the loss of habitat which is considered to support suitability for GCN. Therefore, no impacts on GCN are anticipated.

12.10 Breeding birds

The development of the site will likely result in the loss of suitable breeding bird habitat. The removal of this habitat has the potential to damage or destroy active bird nests if carried out during the breeding bird season which is generally seen as extending from March to the end of August, although may extend longer depending on local conditions. Development will also likely result in a net loss of bird nesting opportunities.

13. Requirement for further surveys

Further surveys are required where there is a reasonable likelihood that a protected species will be present and impacted by the proposed development. An assessment into the requirement for further surveys is presented below. In summary, further surveys are considered necessary for bats.

It is important that planning decisions are informed by current ecological survey data. Due to this, there is a limited time frame that phase 1 and phase 2 surveys are valid before becoming outdated. This time frame can vary depending on any changes in project circumstances or plans but it is generally considered that phase 1 ecological surveys are valid for a period of 18 months (CIEEM, 2019). Projects that take place over periods longer than 18 months might be required to carry out further ecological surveys to ensure planning authorities have the necessary up-to-date information to make well informed, evidence-based decisions.

13.1 Designated sites

Subject to the precautionary mitigation measures set out in Section 14, no further surveys are considered necessary in respect of designated sites.

13.2 Habitats

No further surveys are considered necessary.

13.3 Bats

The details of what the alterations will entail are to be confirmed. If any features detailed in Table 5 will be impacted by the works, further survey work will be necessary. In order to provide robust confirmation of the status of bat roosts at the site and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development as required by Circular 06/2005, further survey work in accordance with Natural England standing advice and the BCT Good Practice Guidelines is required. This same survey work will be used to inform the third test of the Habitat Regulations.

In accordance with these guidelines, further survey effort will take the form of dusk emergence and dawn re-entry presence/absence surveys undertaken during the bat active season. The recommended minimum number of presence/absence surveys for buildings with moderate roost suitability is two. Surveyors will be equipped with high-specification time expansion or full spectrum bat detectors with digital recording capability.

The surveyors will remain in place monitoring and recording bat activity from 15 minutes before sunset to up to 1.5 - 2 hours after sunset for a dusk visit or 2 hours before sunrise until up to 15 minutes after sunrise for a dawn visit. There needs to be a minimum of two weeks between the visits.

The bat active season extends from April until October. However, for a building with moderate suitability, it is recommended that all surveys are undertaken between May and September with at least one survey undertaken during the peak period (May to August, inclusive).

The affected areas of habitat within the site are not of significant value as a foraging or commuting resource. Therefore, further survey effort is considered unnecessary for understanding impacts on foraging and commuting bats, beyond the presence/absence surveys, subject to precautionary avoidance measures including a sensitive lighting scheme.

13.4 Badgers

Subject to the precautionary mitigation measures set out in Section 14, no further surveys are considered necessary.

13.5 Hazel dormice

As impacts on dormice are not anticipated, no further surveys relating to dormice are considered necessary.

13.6 Hedgehog

Subject to the precautionary mitigation measures set out in Section 14, no further surveys are considered necessary.

13.7 Reptiles

Subject to the precautionary mitigation measures set out in Section 14, no further surveys are considered necessary.

13.8 Great crested newts

As impacts on GCN are not anticipated, no further surveys relating to GCN are considered necessary.

13.9 Breeding birds

Subject to the precautionary mitigation measures set out in Section 14, no further surveys are considered necessary.

14. Mitigation recommendations

14.1 Designated sites

Appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures will be required to ensure that the proposed works do not adversely impact the nearby designated sites and supporting habitat.

Recreational disturbance mitigation

Havant Borough Council has adopted the Allocations Plan with the aim to deliver on its Local Plan (Core Strategy). The Allocations Plan includes policy DM24 regarding recreational disturbance to SPAs. Mitigation of recreational disturbance can be through a financial contribution which will be used for measures including rangers, education and monitoring, to prevent bird disturbance. A scale of developer contributions has been agreed that would fund the delivery of measures to address impacts on the coastal designated sites and to demonstrate that Havant Borough Council, as a competent authority under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations, has had regard for any potential impacts that the project may have. The scale of the contribution is set per dwelling. In the event that contributions are deemed necessary for this scheme, each additional hotel room is considered equivalent to the contribution rate of one flat.

Nitrate mitigation

In respect of nitrates, Natural England state that “If having undertaken the Nitrogen Budget Calculation there is a positive figure (Nitrogen surplus), then mitigation is required to achieve nitrogen neutrality. If the calculation identifies a negative figure (deficit) or zero, no mitigation is required.

The purpose of the mitigation measures is to avoid impacts to the designated sites, rather than compensating for the impacts once they have occurred. Avoiding impacts is achieved by neutralising the additional nutrient burden that will arise from the proposed development, achieving a net zero change at the designated sites in a timely manner.

To ensure it is effective mitigation, any scheme for offsetting nitrogen must meet the basic tests of certainty of delivery, enforceability and the need for securing the adopted measures for perpetuity, generally 80-125 years, or for the duration over which the development is causing the effects.”

Havant Borough Council state the following in respect of achieving nutrient neutrality: *“New dwellings and/or net gain in overnight accommodation which would cause a likely significant effect on the designated sites will need to provide a nutrient budget. Planning permission will then only be granted if a mitigation package is provided which will remove the likely significant effect. This mitigation can be provided though either:*

- *Financial contributions towards the Council’s strategic mitigation package; or*
- *A developer provided package of measures associated with the proposed development supported by evidence that it will avoid or mitigate any likely significant effect on the Solent European Sites; or*

- A combination of measures in (a) and (b) above.

Where these measures cannot be provided development proposals will be refused, unless the applicant can show, subject to meeting the tests of the Habitats Regulations, that there would not be a likely significant effect on the Solent European Sites either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.”

14.2 Bats

Further survey work is required to determine the impact of the scheme on bats and ensure that any mitigation is fit for purpose. If bat roosts are confirmed on site, an EPSM licence will be required in accordance with section 12.1 prior to any works which will impact roosting bats. Mitigation is likely to entail the provision of alternative roosts which are proportionate to the status of any identified roost, supervised removal of any identified roost features, exclusion of bats from crevice features and timing constraints on these works to minimise impacts on bats as necessary.

In order to limit any effects on foraging and commuting bats, external lighting should be limited to only that which is absolutely necessary for safety purposes, both during the construction phase and once the proposals are complete. The following lighting measures are required:

- Lighting to the gallery should be as low brightness as possible, kept at a low level and directed away from all structures and boundaries. Lighting on sensors should not be so sensitive that foraging bats trigger them.
- All lighting must follow the Bat Conservation Trusts and Institute of Lighting Professionals guidance on bats and artificial lighting (BCT, 2018).

14.3 Badgers

In order to avoid harm to badgers during the construction works, any trenches will either be covered at night or fitted with a soil or plank ramp to enable any badgers which fall in to leave on their own accord.

14.4 Hedgehogs

In order to avoid harm to hedgehogs during construction works the following precautionary measures will be employed:

- Any trenches will either be covered at night or fitted with a soil or plank ramp to enable any hedgehogs that fall in to leave of their own accord.
- Any leaf litter or garden waste piles will be dismantled by hand in a sensitive and careful manner.
- No bonfires will be made or lit on site.

14.5 Reptiles

Care should be taken that the development does not kill/injure reptiles. Key habitat features for reptiles include brash piles and rubble/soil heaps. Linkage to suitable habitat

within the surrounding landscape will increase the potential for reptiles to occur, although populations can occur within isolated/fragmented habitats even within urban areas. Should any reptiles be encountered, they should be allowed to move away of their own accord. All waste shall be placed directly into a skip so that rubble piles and therefore potential hibernation areas are not created in areas which will subsequently be disturbed by site works.

14.6 **Breeding birds**

Care should be taken that development does not impact breeding birds. The bird nesting season is taken to be March to August, inclusive. Any removal of suitable nest habitat will either need to be undertaken outside of this period or else checked by an experienced ecologist to ensure that no nesting birds are present. If occupied nests are present, then the nest must not be removed and works around the nest can only recommence once the nest becomes unoccupied of its own accord.

15. Enhancements

The delivery of biodiversity enhancement on development sites is promoted by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

Where opportunities exist it is best practice to provide enhancement features which encourage greater biodiversity within development sites in accordance with the NPPF and Local Planning Authority's responsibilities under the NERC Act.

Opportunities for enhancement which are proportionate to the scale of the development will likely include:

- The provision of new bat roosting opportunities, in addition to what may be required as mitigation, could take the form of additional bat boxes. These should be installed as high as possible, at least 3m above ground, in different locations on the retained structures, away from the street lighting.
- The provision of additional bird nesting opportunities. These could be external boxes located on the walls of the structures or on the trees or walls on site. A total of two open fronted bird boxes, or dedicated swift nesting boxes at eave height would be appropriate.

16. Conclusion

The extended phase 1 ecological assessment has confirmed that the site supports opportunities for a range of protected species including bats, hedgehogs, and breeding birds.

The preliminary roost assessment has confirmed that the building supports moderate suitability for roosting bats. Therefore, further survey effort is recommended to confirm the presence/absence of roosts, characterise any bat roost/s, assess the extent bats may be affected by the proposed alteration works and devise an appropriate mitigation strategy to support the proposed works and address any breaches in the legislation. In accordance with Natural England standing advice and BCT Good Practice Guidelines, two presence/absence surveys should be undertaken between May and September. The surveys will be carried out in the 2023 season.

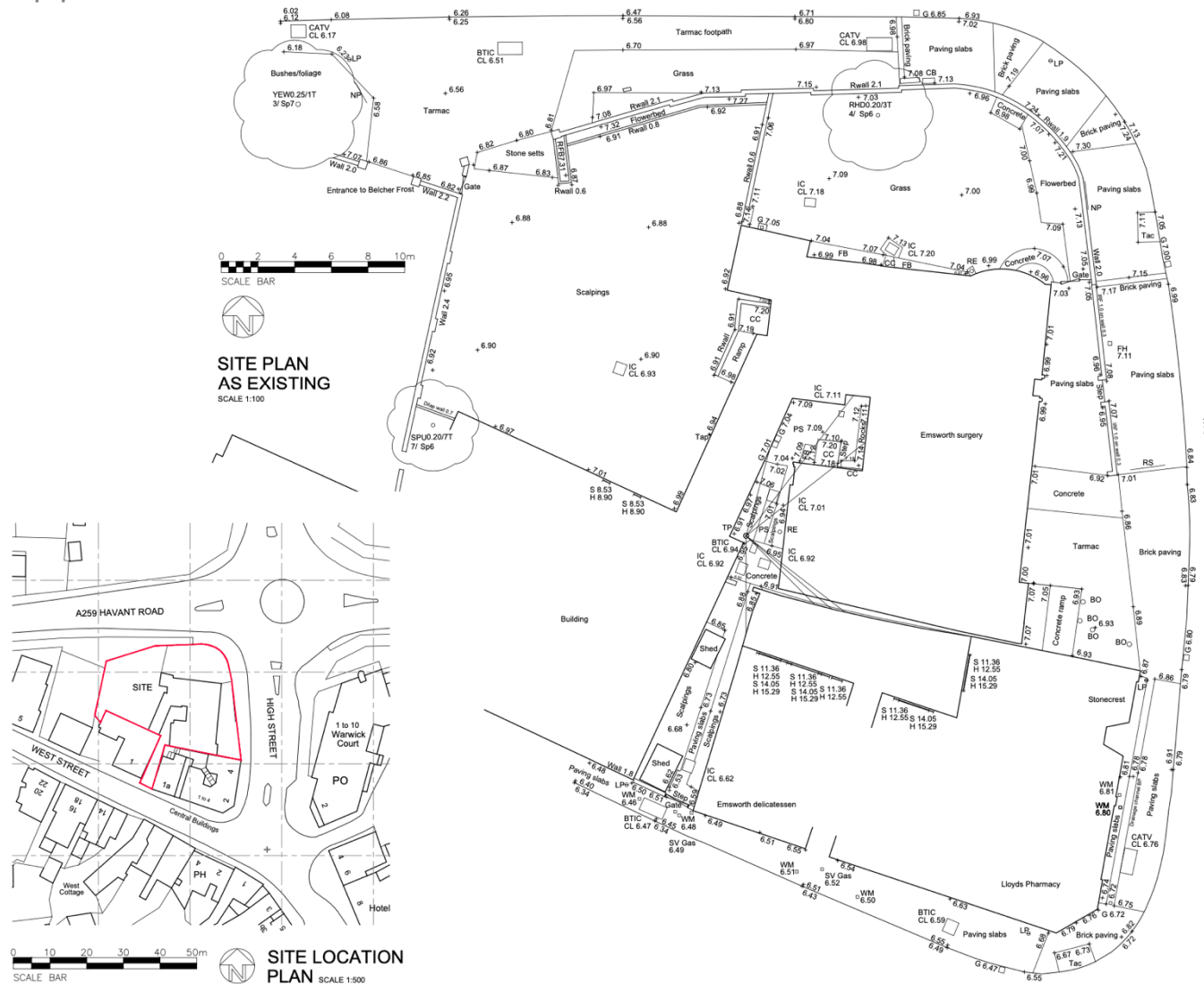
Given the scale of the proposal, it is possible to deliver the scheme with a range of measures which avoid impacts on the other identified protected and priority species. These include sensitive timing of the works, careful vegetation removal and sensitive lighting.

Opportunities for ecological enhancement have been suggested for the site.

17. References

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Appendix 1 – Site Location Plan



NOTES

THE CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR CHECKING ALL DIMENSIONS AND NOTIFYING ALL DISCREPANCIES TO THE DESIGNER.

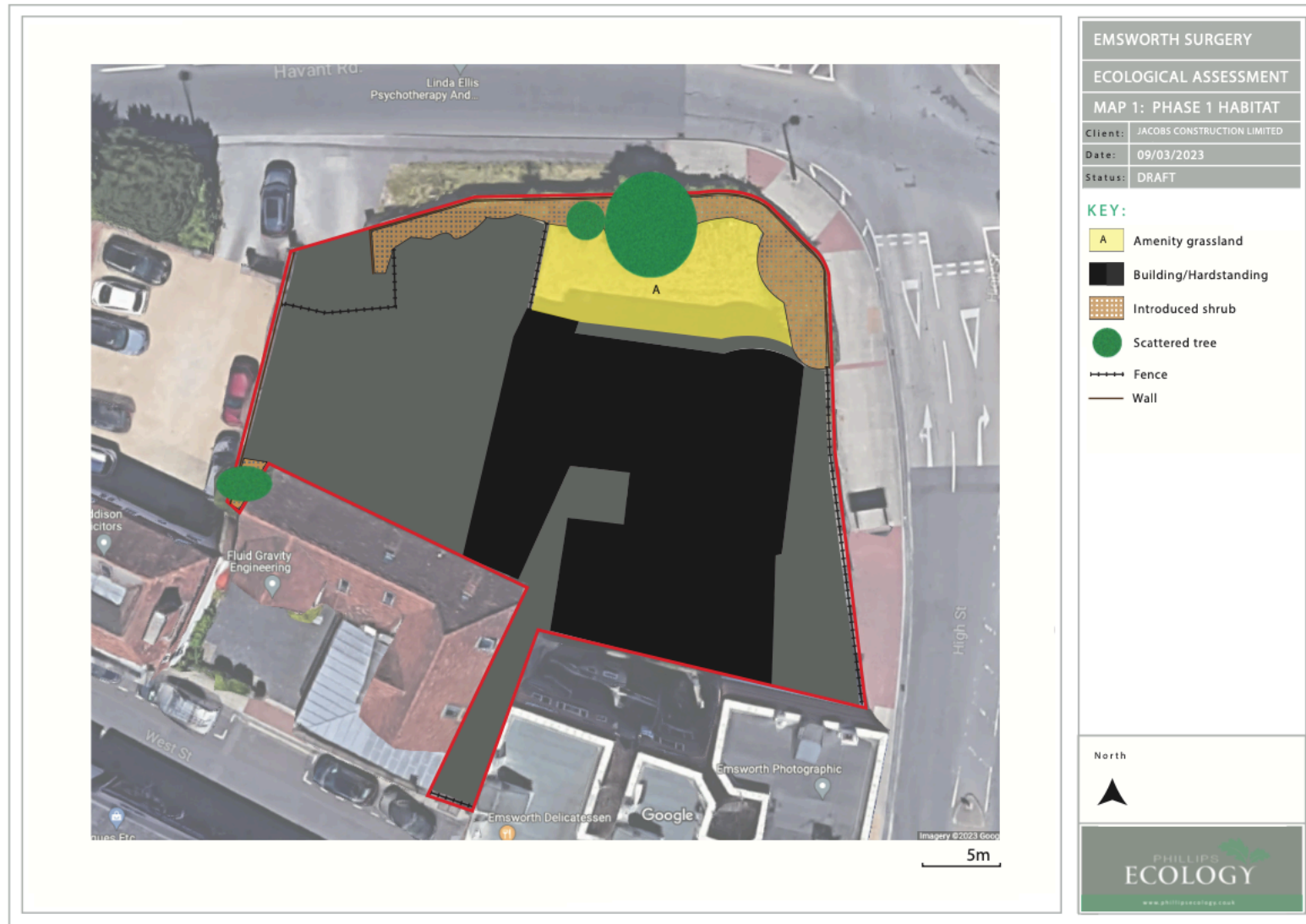
USE FIGURED DIMENSIONS IN PREFERENCE TO SCALED DIMENSIONS.

ALL WORK TO BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH CURRENT BUILDING REGULATIONS.

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REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE
AMENDMENTS		
CLIENT		
JACOBS CONSTRUCTION LIMITED		
JOB		
EMSWORTH SURGERY CONVERSION PO10 7DD		
DRAWING		
SITE LOCATION PLAN AND SITE PLAN AS EXISTING		
JOB NO.	DRAWING NO.	
2992	01	
SCALE		
1:500 / 1:100 @ A1		
DRAWN BY	DATE	
NAS	JUNE 2022	

Appendix 2 – Phase 1 Habitat Map





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